

JOHN JAY'S

FINEST

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**outstanding writing from across
the undergraduate curriculum**

Jeffrey Heiman
Adam Berlin
Editors

A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

The last thirteen years at John Jay, under the guidance of President Jeremy Travis and Provost Jane Bowers, have been active and transformative. While honoring the college's original mission, the President and Provost ensured that the study of justice would flourish in the liberal arts. The spirit of this publication, *John Jay's Finest*, which features the best writing across the undergraduate curriculum, is inextricably bound to the new John Jay. Justice, touched upon directly and tangentially, unifies the work in this book and is a link to the Travis/Bowers years. President Travis and Provost Bowers have piloted the college toward its best self, and we dedicate this thirty-second issue of the *Finest* to their fine work.

The book in your hand features twenty-four pieces of writing from eleven disciplines at the college, a most accurate representation of who we are. And this year we are writers of expository essays and research projects, realistic stories and raw poetry, analyses of literary works and capstone papers that build on four years of study. This is the life of a vibrant academic institution.

Writers who make it to the *Finest* have struggled with thought, with language, with argument form, with creativity, and we, editors, can see the productive engagement on every page. And as these college writers know well, all this meaningful work doesn't come together in solitude. The professors who sent us the best work from their classes have also helped students refine each piece with suggestions for revision, for extended analysis, and for attention to language. One of the perks of college writing is that the often-solitary pursuit becomes much more. There are many hands on the proverbial keyboard, and we want to commend the team effort in these pages.

The launch of *John Jay's Finest* is a highlight of the academic year. The day would not be possible without the support of many at the college. We thank President Travis and Provost Bowers for their ongoing commitment to excellent writing. For the volume itself, we are indebted to Alex DeLeon and the print shop staff. We thank Ayishah Ferrer and Raeanne Davis in the President's office for expedient oversight, with a special note to Rulisa Galloway-Perry for her enthusiastic support, both moral and logistical. Our gratitude to Jerry Mastriano for his creative cover designs over the years, and this year a special thanks to our invaluable intern Dalyz Aguilar. For setting up the launch event, we thank Ainsely Kelley. And to John Jay College's professors, who inspire, who challenge, and who demand careful, responsible and effective writing, we salute your dedication. The most significant tip of the hat goes to the students featured in this year's volume. Congratulations on your fine work.

Jeffrey Heiman and Adam Berlin, Editors
Department of English
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♦ Corrections 101

INTERVIEW WITH DAVID SMITH, INMATE AT WOODBOURNE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

ELIZABETTE PRIVAT

Mr. Smith granted permission to reveal his identity to readers of this interview. David Smith is my stepfather. I assisted him with his parole package in preparation for his parole hearing in August 2016.

E.P: Good afternoon, Mr. Smith. First, thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. I am going to be asking you a series of questions pertaining to your life before and during your prison time. I will also be asking you questions about your experiences in preparing for your upcoming parole board hearing, and what you expect in the event that you are released. The purpose of this interview is for readers to get a first-person account on how prison affects you socially, emotionally, psychologically, and even physically.

D.S: Good afternoon Ms. Privat. You don't have to thank me, in fact, I'd like to thank you for sharing my story.

The Assignment and the Writer: COR 101, Introduction to Corrections, provides an overview of current institutional practices, policies and legal issues. In this expository essay assignment Elizabethte Privat interviews David Smith, her stepfather, who is presently incarcerated at Woodbourne Correctional facility. He granted permission to reveal his identity. Elizabethte fulfilled the assignment's requirements with compassion and determination and is working tirelessly as David's advocate. She is currently assisting him in preparing his parole package, evidence of her commitment to him.

– Professor Anastasia Raptis

E.P: Mr. Smith, what were the charges that resulted in you being sent to prison, and what was your original sentencing.

D.S: I am in prison for murder in the first degree. I was sentenced to 25 years to life with the possibility of parole after 25 years. I've been denied parole 6 times, which means I am in my 35th year in prison.

E.P: Tell me about your life before prison. Would you say that your circumstances in any way led you to prison? To clarify the question even further, seeing things retrospectively, do you feel like the social structure of your personal life, and of society as a whole, had any sort of role in your position today?

D.S: Personally, I don't blame anything or anyone for the decisions I've made to put myself here in prison. I take full responsibility for my actions. But to answer your question, I'm going to start by saying this: In the moment that I committed this crime, in my head, it was the only rational choice that I had. It was either me or him. I grew up on the streets. I was 12 years old when I had to go out there and hustle. I was out there being a knucklehead because I had nothing better to do. School was a mess. The best reason I had to go to school was my beautiful wife, who I'm lucky to still have today. I was making money, making a living, and I knew the consequences that came with this lifestyle, but in my head it all made sense to me. That's what I was surrounded by; that's what I grew up with. My mother was a junky, and I thought drugs was normal. That was my normal. You know how some things are just normal to you? Like studying is normal to you? Well drugs was normal to me. That was my environment.

E.P: Interesting. It's interesting that even though your environment clearly had a significant impact on your position, you still take personal responsibility for your actions. So with that in mind, do you feel like you deserved your sentence?

D.S: Hmmm, that's a tough question. I don't think any human being has the right to take the life of another human being. I don't think it is ever really and truly justified. I think that there should always be consequences to such an act. As for me, and as for a lot of my brothers in here, I think at some point we get it. At some point it just becomes excessive, expensive, and pointless, to keep us in here. I'm 54 years old, I don't want to be on the streets. At this point, I just want to work, pay taxes, drive, go to the supermarket, take care of my family, watch the game on Sundays, and go to the gym like a normal person. I've spent more time in prison, then I've spent as a free man. I've never even driven a car before. To my knowledge, the purpose of prison is to keep the bad guys from doing more bad things, but that's the thing...I've already proven to have grown out of my bad guy years. I was young when I committed this crime. Now I'm older, I'm wiser, I am no threat to anyone, so why am I still here? I feel complete remorse for the family of my victim. In fact, I pray for them every night. I never stop thinking about that day. Just having that type of thing on your conscience is a psychological prison within itself. That's something that is never going to go away. I'm going to carry that to the grave. That's the punishment God has inflicted

upon me. As far as me being in prison, I don't necessarily think I *deserve* to go home, but I think that I won't be a bother; in fact, I would be a contributor to society.

E.P: Mr. Smith, I want to add that this conversation is extremely enlightening, as most of our conversations are. I'm not a psychologist, but it seems like you have all your marbles up there! *laughs* (*D.S laughs along*) How did you manage to maintain your psychological health during these 35 years in prison?

D.S: I do a lot of reading. I've done every single program they've had to offer in here, like welding, carpentry, baking. I got my G.E.D here, my Associate's degree, my Bachelor's degree. I talk to a lot of young guys that come in here too. I'm like a positive mentor to them. They see me, and they respect me because I'm an old cat you know, but I'm not in a gang, I'm not fighting, I'm not causing trouble. I lead a very peaceful life in here. I wake up in the morning, I go for a run. I exercise, like doing pushups, pull ups, sit ups. Then I do my little jobs around here and watch some TV to stay in tune with the outside world. I know all about the latest fashions, politics, cellphones, computers, even though I don't know how to use them yet. I heard they're touch screen now! and I love calling my wife.

E.P: Wow, that is amazing. I like that you mentioned that you are a mentor to the younger men coming in prison. The notion that is accepted in the sociological community is that young men going to prison actually heightens their risk of repeated criminality because they are exposed to seasoned criminals. You are defying those odds because here you are, a seasoned criminal, a man who's "been there done that," teaching the generation behind you that there is more to life than crime, and teaching responsibility. That is honorable. Moving on to my next question, what was one of your worst experiences while in prison?

D.S: When I was up in Green Correctional facility. These three officers got mad at me because I refused to accept a package I knew wasn't mine. David Smith is a pretty common name. It was addressed to this older guy named David Smith that I know. His family put together a nice care package. It had food, briefs, some nice boots that were my size by the way, but I couldn't accept it. It wasn't mine. I don't know how hard his family worked to put this together. I don't know if this man was expecting it. I wanted it to go to its rightful person. So I told the officer that the package wasn't mine and they refused to believe me. Next thing I know my teeth were knocked out. I explained what happened during the hearing and it turned out that I was right. I knew I was right. I was mad about my teeth but happy that the other David Smith got his package, and also happy that I was gonna get some new pearly whites (ha ha). I couldn't wait to get out of that place. It was a nightmare.

E.P: Wow, I am so sorry that you had to go through that but again it is extremely honorable for you to have done the right thing. This interview is coming to a close, and I have one final question. You mentioned earlier that you were denied parole 6 times. Your next parole is coming up this August. I understand that you and I have been working together for the first time ever, reaching out to organizations such as the

Vera Institute, and such. My question to you is, what if this is it? What if you go to the parole board, and they say to you "David Smith, congratulations, you're going home?" What would you do in that moment, what do you plan to do when you get home?

D.S: The first thing I would do is thank God. I'm really not sure what I would feel like. Just a mixture of emotions. I would be almost overwhelmed with joy. When I go home, notice I said when, and not if, because I'm speaking it into reality, but anyways when I go home I really want to get into social work. I'm hoping I can get a job as a counselor at a high school, and not one of those 'good' high schools. I want to go to a high school where I can make a real impact and prevent other cats from making the same mistakes as I did. I want to stress to them the importance of education. I want to see my baby girl graduate from college, law school, walk her down the aisle in her marriage and carry my first grand baby. I want to maybe coach a sport, or get involved in some sort of athletics. I'm going to be hitting the gym to stay in shape and I'll be able to eat healthier. I'm definitely going to make sure my wife gets healthy, and your brother too. I just want to live peacefully, that's all. I don't necessarily regret anything. Prison has actually kept me alive all these years. Prison has nurtured me, given me the discipline that I lacked. Without it, I wouldn't be the man I am today, as a matter of a fact I probably won't even be alive.

E.P: I'm at a loss for words. Thank you for participating. I won't be giving you any luck for your parole board, but rather love and prayer.

SUMMARY

Interviewing David Smith was enlightening. He is proof that 'criminal' and 'evil' are not synonymous. This interview, and many other conversations I've had with people who share the same experiences, have shed a new light on my perspective of what it means to be a criminal. Prior to delving into learning about the criminal justice system, I was an advocate for harsh penalties and stricter rules, but I see now that some, if not most, criminals are actually victims of their environments. They are victims to social conditioning that in some indirect way led them into a negative 'normal' as David mentioned in the interview. This conversation has only added fuel to my fire to make a real impact on society, and especially in the criminal justice system. But first things first, I need to bring David home.

♦ Philosophy 102

LIMITS OF KANTIAN ETHICS TO FAMINE PROBLEMS

YEJIN BAE

ONORA O'NEILL CLAIMS THAT KANTIAN PHILOSOPHY can serve as a good guideline in responding to certain famine problems. In defense of Kant, she maintains “to show the implications of a Kantian moral theory for action toward those who do or may suffer famine” (O'Neill 561). However, O'Neill's argument fails to provide sufficient explanation in applying Kant's principle to famine problems and lacks clarification in relating its implications in the context of such situations.

First, Kant's moral philosophy allows duties of beneficence to be subjective. Kantian ethics uphold a fundamental ideal of moral autonomy—a belief that each person has certain inviolable rights as well as policies underlying his or her actions, decisions, and intentions. O'Neill reiterates this ideal, emphasizing the importance of respecting one “as a rational person with his or her own maxims” (563). The ideal of moral autonomy, however, raises an issue which Kok-Chor Tan refers as an “overload of obligation” problem in his paper “Kantian Ethics and Global Justice”. He claims that a duty of beneficence, then, is “left ultimately to the discretion of the agent,” and points out the problem in which “the choice as to whose ends to promote and how to

The Assignment and the Writer: In PHI 102, students are asked to think critically and systematically about ethical problems. They are introduced to classical theories about the foundations of ethics and to specific case studies of contemporary ethical dilemmas. The focus throughout is on evaluating one's reasons for believing X or doing Y. This particular assignment requires students to critique a philosopher's argument about what we are ethically required to do. Yejin considers the nature of our ethical obligations to people living in famine conditions in foreign countries. She persuasively argues that Onora O'Neill's presentation of Kantian “duties of beneficence” is insufficient for representing our ethical obligations in these situations. In particular, Yejin articulates the crucial difference between supererogatory acts and genuine obligations.

– Professor Michael Brownstein

promote them is left ultimately to the agent" (Tan 1997). Since Kant does not set specific standards on the duties of beneficence, the duties become "self-legislating duties," according to Tan. O'Neill realizes the problem, as she states, "it is a matter for judgment and discretion which of their ends we foster" and later concludes, "it follows that beneficence has to be selective" (563).

Because this idea of a selective beneficence does not entail the moral agent to be obliged to help all the victims in need, the agent may simply argue that he or she would rather direct beneficence elsewhere and to a lesser extent. For example, a person could choose to drop a few coins in the Salvation Army Christmas kettles in the streets rather than sending monetary relief to famine victims far away. O'Neill mentions this problem, noting that a Kantian moral theory "forbids us to use others as mere means but does not require us to direct our benevolence first to those who suffer most... and leaves other questions, in particular the allocation of beneficence, unresolved" (563). When she discusses Kantian implications in response to famine problems and lists comparisons in which taking one action "would be better" or "would be nice" than another action, she claims that the suggestions "are not a detailed set of instructions for allocation of beneficence by Kantians" (566). In other words, these beneficent acts would be performed only when those Kantian agents choose to do so at their own discretion.

Moreover, the idea of a selective beneficence could raise more serious and complicated dilemmas in which agents would be conflicted about whose ends they should foster; agents would have to decide on their own whether they should help those whom they either dislike or perceive as unfit to deserve the beneficence, such as thieves, serial killers, or personal enemies. Consequently, agents would be conflicted by having several factors to consider in allocating their beneficence, such as problems of proximity and personal judgement as addressed above. Thus, if acts of beneficence depend upon agent discretion, it can be said that Kantian approaches to famine problems are not robust enough to guide a moral agent in dealing with such issues.

Second, Kant's weak emphasis on duties that require positive action allows what his critics call the idea of "moral laxity" (Ohreen and Petry 2012). In addition to the problem of selective beneficence, Kantian duties could even allow agents to practice no act of beneficence at all. O'Neill makes "a sharp distinction between the requirements of justice and of beneficence in Kantian ethics," where "justice requires that we act on no maxims that use others as mere means," and "beneficence requires that we act on some maxims that foster others' ends" (563). She further asserts that "[d]uties of justice are, in Kant's view, the most important of our duties" (563). Following her words, Kantians are given two kinds of requirements: a negative requirement (duty of justice) and a positive requirement (duty of beneficence). However, Kant's Humanity Formula is not so clear on the positive requirements, as the explicit demand is simply not to treat others as mere means but as ends; it does not mention guidelines on the extent of treating others as ends. Ohreen and Petry discusses this problem of Kantian ethics when applied to corporate philanthropy, pointing out, "Kantian ethics seemingly allows managers to provide minimal levels of beneficence as a way of fulfilling their moral requirements or, worse still, gives them opportunities to take a moral holiday and not give at all" (Ohreen and Petry

2012). Most importantly, O'Neill later acknowledges that a conscientious Kantian "would not be obliged to help the starving, even if no others were equally distressed" (563). Following this conclusion, then, one is not necessarily entailed to direct his or her beneficence to others; in this sense, it can be said that beneficence is not just selective, but for worse, sometimes optional according to Kantian ethics.

Implications of Kant's moral theory need more groundwork in order to address situations like these famine cases, where alleviating the problem requires further taking active steps than simply avoiding harm. O' Neill repeatedly acknowledges the indeterminate demands of Kantian ethics and fails to provide sufficient explanation on how moral agents can overcome the problem of having a selective or for worse, optional beneficence posed by Kant's morality. Therefore, unlike what O'Neill claims, Kantian moral philosophy seems insufficient to serve as a comprehensive moral guide in responding to famine problems.

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♦ Philosophy 102

A RESPONSE TO PETER SINGER'S DROWNING CHILD

SAMUEL KESELMAN

PETER SINGER ARGUES in his paper *Famine, Affluence, and Morality* that charity is not a supererogatory action but a moral obligation. He postulates that the perception of charity that society currently holds – that, while undoubtedly a good and just action to take, it is not wrong not to do, and rarely if ever considered a viable alternative to superfluous spending – is wrong. Singer bases his arguments off simple, relatively uncontentious principles and an example case of a drowning child. However, the radical lengths to which Singer's school of thought leads to result in extremely detrimental effects on its would be agents and are simply ineffective in the face of sheer numbers.

Like any utilitarian and most rational human beings, Singer believes suffering is bad, and like any utilitarian, Singer believes that suffering should be alleviated or mitigated as much as possible. Furthermore, if it is within a person's power to prevent suffering without sacrificing something of comparable moral significance (that is to say, without causing similar suffering to themselves or another or hurting some greater good), that person is morally obligated to do it. An exemplary case of this principle is Singer's drowning child: a person comes across a drowning child. This individual,

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who is capable of saving the child, would ruin their clothing if they did. Because the suffering accrued by saving the child (ruined clothes) is so much less than the suffering caused by allowing the child to die, the person is morally obligated to save the child. Singer has not proposed anything wildly unacceptable or deviant – almost everyone would agree that saving the drowning kid is the right thing to do, and that his seemingly innocuous principles are entirely right. (“Famine, Affluence, and Morality” 231).

Neither of the principles make any sort of reference to “proximity or distance” of others (“Famine, Affluence, and Morality” 231). That a person is more likely to help their neighbor than somebody suffering from a famine on the other side of the world is, to Singer, merely what is the case, and that, according to his principles, clearly not what ought to be the case. While helping a person on the other side of the world may have been unfeasible just a century ago, it is fully within humanity’s power today. Thanks to incredibly fast modes of travel and transportation, and even faster modes of communication, as well as whole organizations of trained professionals in crisis management and humanitarian aid, helping somebody on the other side of the world is just as easy as helping a neighbor. Similarly, the impassivity of others should have no bearing on the morally correct course of action – just because other people in the same position won’t jump in and save the drowning child, doesn’t mean that everybody shouldn’t.

Issues stem from the sheer radicalism of Singer’s final proposal. He voices two versions of his second primary principle: that if it’s within a person’s power to prevent suffering without sacrificing something of comparable moral significance, they ought to do it, and that if it’s within a person’s power to prevent suffering without sacrificing something of moral importance, they ought to do it. (“Famine, Affluence, and Morality” 241). The former requires the agent to sacrifice everything until they are just above the level of the suffering of the world. The latter version gives the agent some leeway; they may decide what is morally important enough not to sacrifice, so while they are still obligated to sacrifice something, they need not give up too much. However, Singer uses the second version merely as an example of how such a small change would radically impact society; he believes strongly that the former version is what should be adopted. This means, essentially, that people should all but beggar themselves with their sum donations to the suffering of the world, reducing themselves to the point of marginal utility to make sure others don’t suffer. Adopting the latter, more moderate version would potentially allow people to avoid putting themselves and their families at the poverty line, but Singer “[sees] no good reason for holding the moderate version of the principle rather the strong one” (“Famine, Affluence, and Morality” 241).

In fact, none of Singer’s philosophy really accounts for a person’s children or family. He only briefly mentions that an individual bringing their family to the point of poverty may be morally important and an undesirable end, but goes on to say the more severe principle – the one that would require an individual to bring themselves and their family to poverty – is still the correct principle to follow. It is, as Howard Darmstadter explains, that because “all suffering counts equally” in Singer’s

viewpoint, then an individual's children should get no greater precedence than that of any other person ("Peter Singer Says You Are a Bad Person" 2). Singer also claims that his students' parents at Princeton potentially wasted the money on tuition that could and should have gone to the suffering to the world, unless it is an "investment in the future" that will benefit others (by giving up almost all of their income and convincing their colleagues to do the same). However, Singer considers the company they would keep would corrupt them because their colleagues will convince them "they can't possibly drive anything less expensive than a BMW" or other ideas that are contrary to his philosophy. (*The Life You Can Save* 138). It's also very difficult to send somebody to college when one's income is just above the poverty line.

Singer's argument also falls in the weight of sheer numbers. If an individual runs into hundreds of drowning children in a single day, unlikely as the case may be, wouldn't the individual's accumulated suffering caused by saving each and every single one eventually outweigh the suffering caused by letting the child drown? Similarly, he's right to say that other's apathy has no bearing on the righteousness of the decision to jump in and save the drowning child. However, Singer's hypothetical situation "assumes that [only one person] who can help the child" ("Peter Singer Says You Are a Bad Person" 5). However, does the obligation to save the child still the same if hundreds of people are around the drowning child? Saving the child is the correct choice, but who will actually save the child? Should it fall to the person physically closest to the child because the child would suffer the least by the time they got there, or to the person with the strongest emotional connection because they would suffer the least? Or should it fall to the person with the cheapest clothing, because they would suffer the least by jumping in and ruining their clothing, or a lifeguard who would run the lowest risk of drowning and therefore suffering themselves? ("Peter Singer Says You Are a Bad Person" 5).

Peter Singer's philosophy is certainly well-meaning, and the basic premises that make up it up are uncontroversially just. However, the radical lengths to which he follows these premises make it difficult for anyone to want to follow his philosophy, let alone for anyone to be able to follow it. Singer's works should instead be taken more as a call to action; he works fervently for animal rights, human rights, and humanitarian aid, and these are all just causes that anyone can support, without begging themselves and their families.

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♦ Art 111

THROUGH THE EYES OF ANOTHER: ANALYSIS OF ARTWORK

MACY DRAKE

Title: *Marine* - 1650

Subject: Transport vessels on a river in Holland.

Artist: Salomon van Ruysdael

Medium: Oil on wood (Realism)

FIRST SEEING RUYSDAEL'S *MARINE* is a powerful experience. Though it is a relatively small piece, it is absolutely filled with motion. Every element in the foreground moves with the wind, while the background remains peaceful and distanced from the trembling waters. The foreground is also brighter than all else, creating a dynamic that places the viewer within darkness. You find yourself enveloped by shadow; a ship seeking the security of the land before you.

The Assignment and the Writer: In Art 111 students write a studio analysis of a painting. In the analysis they are asked to use appropriate terms from the vocabulary of art, to define the application of each term within the painting, and to describe specifically their path of vision. Macy Drake insightfully recreates the pictorial balance through its elements, eliciting the emotional power of this intense, tumultuous narrative. Macy's path of vision becomes so involved in the journey, the painting comes to life—the mood, the wind, the trembling waters. Through her evocative description, the reader becomes absorbed in the scene.

– Professor Stella Nicolaou

The first thing you see when you look at this painting is the sky. The sky takes up the most space and dominates the scene. Like many of his other works, Ruysdael portrays the sky not as a background element, but as a prominent figure to be seen with as much importance as anything else. With thick brushstrokes, he forms the winds that sweep the clouds. They are turbulent yet somehow calm; the memory of a storm. A flock of birds, so insignificant in size, manage to find their way through. The sky is cool in color, with glimpses of the warm yellow sun against the lighter clouds and in the distance.

However, before you can be pulled in, your eyes are quickly drawn down to the focal point of the piece: the first vessel. With sails forced one way and water another, the small vessel seems fragile; it has not yet emerged from the dark where you stand. Onboard are small shadowy figures. Drawn with only a few strokes, they are expressionless but not without emotion. Hunched over and bundled against the winds, they continue onward with purpose. The water on which they sail is much like the wind: it is both dangerous and essential to their survival. With quick movements of color, it is molded into something agitated and restless. If you focus for too long, it turns into a consuming and terrifying abyss that you can feel yourself drifting further into.

You escape as your path of vision moves beyond the ship and onto the town resting in the background. The cathedral stands out tall, above the homes dotting the land. Prominent, poignant, yet comprised of so little. From afar, it is the likes of Notre Dame, but close up it disappears into a form of small lines and smaller colors. Around it, splashes of green and brown form trees and town. The horizon draws you in, but you can only get so close. All the way on the end, four white smudges become grazing cows, or maybe sheep? All the while, still more boats make their way inland. You can see thin plumes of smoke rising up into the sky, as your path of vision moves upward, and this is where you remain.

Ruysdael's *Marine* is asymmetrical, with most of the balance lying in the lower left of the painting. It is not so much of narrative piece, as it is a piece about movement. The only thing that appears still and resolute, is the cathedral on the horizon. It also uses scale, perspective and distance to place the viewer within the scene and continuously draw them in. What attracted me to this work was its ability to affect those that see it. I felt lost at sea and longing for the warmth and stability of land. It is a feeling that can last long after you break away.

♦ English 110

HISPAÑOLA: ONE ISLAND DIVIDED BY RACES

CALVIN DEL ORBE

AS A CHILD, I LIVED IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC in a rural province called Villa Tapia, knowing one language, one culture, and one belief system. I believed that there was only one kind of people, and that was my kind of people, the Dominicans. There were no other languages spoken but Spanish, and I would frequently hear the pleasant music of Merengue and Bachata being played in the homes of my neighborhood. Villa Tapia was a friendly and helpful community full of joy, respect, and unity. Everyone in my neighborhood knew each other and acknowledged one another with jovial cheer. Everyone in Villa Tapia shared the same cultural ideals and moral upbringing and lived in accord.

The majority of the Dominicans in Villa Tapia had a white skin complexion with blue and green eyes. The ones that weren't white had a light caramel complexion with hazel eyes and light brownish hair. Everyone's house in Villa Tapia was big and sat on a large piece of land that was filled with horses and coconut trees; it looked as if they lived in paradise. Beside the Dominicans that lived in Villa Tapia, there were different kinds of people that occasionally walked amongst the Dominicans and would sometimes appear and vanish quickly out of sight. They were the Haitians.

The Assignment and the Writer: For their English 101 inquiry-based paper, students were asked to transform their personal essays about race and identity into research papers. Calvin did so brilliantly, taking his essay about racial mores in the Dominican Republic and turning it into a nuanced, vivid analysis of how and why these racial ideologies came to be. Not only is his work highly original and complex in its reading of race as a colonial construct, it also goes above and beyond in locating superb supporting texts for this argument.

– **Professor Baz Dreisinger**

The Haitians that I saw in the community of Villa Tapia had a very dark skin complexion and were quiet, mysterious, and spoke in a foreign language. Later on in life I came to find out that the language that the Haitians spoke was actually French Creole. As a child I perceived the Haitians as antisocial, grumpy, and sticking to themselves. The majority of the Haitians that I saw in Villa Tapia lived in poverty and would walk around barefoot in the dirty and rocky roads of my town. Many worked construction jobs and in farms owned by the Dominican patrons who lived in my town. The Haitians were considered hard labor workers because they would do the difficult jobs that the Dominicans refused to do, working all day and non-stop under the burning afternoon sun without complaint. I would sometimes watch the Haitians walk by my neighborhood wearing raggedy shorts with no t-shirt and holding a machete in one hand. The Haitians would walk down the streets of my neighborhood and the Dominicans would look at them with disgust. Tensions would momentarily fog the air like a heavy cloud of smoke when these two groups of nationalities encountered each other in public. But nothing would happen, and in return, the Haitians would just stare back with subtle discomfited looks on their faces and continue their course of travel.

When I was six years old, Marvin and Elvis—who were actually my friends and neighbors—started throwing rocks at the Haitians passing by our street. My friends shouted out derogatory names at the Haitians referring them as “ladrones” (thieves) and “demonios” (demons), and flipped out their middle fingers at the Haitians in a spiteful and playful manner. Marvin and Elvis were fraternal twins and were eight years old. They were polar opposites and looked nothing alike. Marvin was a pudgy kid who always wore sandals, shorts, and a shirt that fitted him a little too tightly and exposed his belly button. Marvin had dirty blond hair combed to the side and a light tan complexion. He was clumsy and could never restraint himself from eating. Every time we hung out, Marvin was trying to knock down a mango or guava fruit from the trees in our neighborhood. Marvin was also taller than his twin brother Elvis. Elvis, on the other hand, was skinny and short and a shade darker than his twin brother Marvin. Elvis had black hair with a big head that resembled a human bobble head doll and would easily get upset for anything.

“Hey, why are you throwing rocks at the Haitians?” I asked Elvis.

“Because they’re thieves!” he said. “We got to keep them away from our property somehow before they steal something.”

Marvin shook his head, as if agreeing to what his brother Elvis said, and added, “It’s true, those “pendejos” (punks) stole my bike last week from my front porch and took my Power Ranger sandals from my back yard.”

I shook my head and looked away to prevent myself from laughing, because I was trying to picture a dark-skinned Haitian wearing a pair of Power Ranger sandals.

After hanging out with Marvin and Elvis, I headed home to speak with my grandma so that she could give some type of understanding of who the Haitians were. When I arrived home, I saw my grandma watching television, sitting on her wooden rocking chair and wearing her famous night gown. Her night gowns were also like her day gowns because she would also wear them throughout the day with a pair of matching slippers. My grandma was tall, slim, with short salt and pepper hair and was so pale that I can see the blue and green veins webbed around her transparent skin.

She made a living by farming and selling chickens and I think that every dinner table in Villa Tapia had a roasted or fried chicken that was bought from her. She was very loving and kind but had a sharp, lethal mouth when she spoke. One minute she would hug me and tell me that she loves me, and in the next minute if I became a little annoying, she'd tell me to go play with "shit on a stick." I once hear my grandma tell a man that he was an incompetent fool and that his wife was sleeping with the goats in his farm. Now that was brutal!

"Grandma, why everyone dislikes the Haitians?" I asked grandma. She gave me a bothered look and said, "Stay away from them! The Haitians practice witchcraft and use little boys for sacrificial rituals. They are like "El Cuco" (The Boogey Man); they will snatch people up and eat them if they catch anyone wandering the streets at night."

It seemed that everyone I knew shared the same stigmatizing views about the Haitians. The Dominicans in Villa Tapia would say that the Haitians are thieves, murders, witches, and traitors that the Haitians were not to be trusted. The Haitians were unwelcome and ostracized in my community and I never understood why.

In those times I was only a child and I didn't understand much of what was going on around me. When I was six years old, my parents and I moved to the United States and made the South Bronx in New York our new home. I was bombarded by the endless of different races and cultures that surrounded my neighborhood, and had never seen so many "Haitians" together in one place.

"Was this the Haitian world?" I asked myself. The "Haitians" in New York dressed differently and spoke a different type of language. I later came to realize that the Haitians in New York are considered "Blacks" or "African Americans." Later on I would ask my mother, "Mah, What is an African American?" Her reply was, "African Americans are the New York version of the Haitians. They're thieves, murderers, and traitor! They are Not to Be Trusted!"

As time elapsed, I learned English and educated myself while going to school in New York. I learned English so fast and spoke it so fluently that it surpassed my native tongue. By the time I was in second grade, I was transferred to a monolingual class and I was surrounded by English speaking classmates. Throughout the years of attending school in New York, I befriended people of different races and cultures and learned so much about their history and racial backgrounds. I've learned that they are more Spanish speaking countries, not just the Dominican Republic, but also Puerto Rico, Mexico, Spain, Andorra, Cuba and many more. I've also learned that there are different types of "Blacks" too, like the Haitians, Jamaicans, Africans, West Indians, and African Americans.

As I educated myself and I exposed myself to different races and cultures, I began to nullify banal and inane ideas about Haitians and African Americans that were taught to me as a child. I read books on Nelson Mandela and South African Apartheid, and the history of African Americans in the United States. But in order to understand the disdain that the Dominicans have towards the Haitians, I had to sit down and read the history of these two countries.

I discovered the roots of the detestations between the Dominicans and Haitians. Before there were Dominicans and Haitians, there were only Spanish people who settle n an island of the Caribbean called Hispaniola. After the French invasion,

the country of Hispañol was ceded to the French and was renamed Haiti. For twenty-two years the Haitians (a mixture of white French and formerly enslaved Africans) were oppressing the Spanish people and raping the Spanish women in all efforts to "Haitianize" the whole country, to eradicate Spanish roots entirely. The Spanish then retaliated and regained two-thirds of the country and renamed their share of the conquered land the Dominican Republic.

Since then, there has been an outrageous amount of antipathy between the people of these countries. They're too prideful to help each other because they are arrogantly stuck in the past. Poverty is spreading on both sides and their economy is slowly collapsing. Their history of bad blood has created grudges that lasted for generations. Instead of helping each other, people are still blaming each other. Parents are creating the next generations of hate and racism and teaching fallacies about one another" so much ignorance is being spread and only education and the awareness of our mistakes can terminate the absurd perception of our people, my grandma and my mother may have lied to me about the Haitians and African Americans while growing up, but they were right about one thing: "In this world, if you know nothing, you're worth nothing!"

After much research and personal experience, I argue that an island with two races divided by historical, racial, and personal difference will never be unified as one. For now, Haiti and the Dominican Republic will still continue to rival each other while sharing the same island in the Caribbean. Maybe in some distant day, if knowledge overpowers ignorance, these two countries could see eye to eye and may unite for the greater good of the people. Only education can empower the minds of those who live in the mental state of myopia, and can change the wrongful and offensive perceptions of the people that they once thought of as inferior or degenerates.

♦ Sociology 232

SURFING AND SUBARU-ING THROUGH FINANCIAL/SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

ANDREW BANDINI

I FIRST LEARNED THE TERM “STRATIFICATION” in my eighth grade Earth Science class. As a river cuts through a valley, the water carries rocks to a basin. Once in the basin—which is typically a lake or an ocean—the rocks are stratified, or sorted by size. When the rocks settle in a basin, the biggest rocks touch the ocean floor while the smallest rocks settle near the surface. When I studied for my Earth Science final exam, I was concerned with how different rocks are sorted at the bottom of a lake. When I came to college, however, I decided that I wanted to learn more about how people are sorted in our society. The first thing I learned (which I knew before I opened a textbook) is that, unlike the rocks, the most powerful people stay near the top while the helpless members of society sink to the bottom. Second, as small and large rocks

The Assignment and the Writer: Social Stratification concerns how inequality is perpetuated along such lines as race, gender and migration status, and the effects of these structures of exclusion on our everyday lives. With nuance and finesse, Andrew Bandini relates his experiences with inequality to one of our readings, Robert Putnam's elegy for the declining middle class, *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis*. As Andrew points out, the diversity of John Jay's students provides an apt laboratory for grappling with the widening divide between the rich and the poor in the contemporary United States.

– Professor Robert Garot

are solely sorted by size, people are stratified by color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and education. Although humans have so many criteria that determine their social status, this essay touches upon one of the most important catalysts of social stratification: money. Yet for Robert Putnam, the author of *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis*, and me, money can go so far as to establish divides between two neighborhoods, as a river divides two land masses. Money is the water that sorts every rock in the United States, and, as a stream cuts through a valley, money creates a barrier between two financially-different individuals in a capitalist society.

I lived in a neighborhood where I was considered “the rich kid” if I lived north of Hillside Avenue and deemed “the poor kid” who lived south of the Long Island Expressway. Although this absurd street-based stratification can be quite confusing for out-of-towners, Robert Putnam explains his experience with neighborhood segregation in a clear and compelling manner. In his examination of the growing inequality gap titled *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis*, Putnam discusses income inequality—with an emphasis on the distribution of low-income and high-income families throughout a geographical region—in his hometown of Port Clinton, Ohio. When Putnam attended Port Clinton High School back in 1959, everyone in his town had a fair shot of success after he or she graduated. Each student in Putnam’s graduating class lived in a different environment—some students were rich and had supportive (at times, maybe even helicopter) parents, while other students were not as well-off and had busy parents (Putnam 2015: 1-2).

Putnam begins Chapter One with the discussion of two similar boys who lived two very different lives. The first boy mentioned is Don, a high school quarterback whose family couldn’t even afford a car. Although he lived the first eighteen years of his life in poverty, Don didn’t even realize he was poor until he took Economics 101 in college, for, as an athlete, everyone on the field is judged by his or her athleticism—not by his or her family’s income. A few blocks away from Don lived Frank, a member of a very wealthy aristocratic lineage. Frank’s father owned several success businesses in a number of different enterprises—from fishing to real-estate to catering—and Frank’s mother graduated from the University of Chicago with a master’s degree; but, Frank still attended the same high school as Don, and Frank was no stranger to manual labor and hard work (Putnam 2015: 3-6). Putting his affluence aside, Frank was not too different from Don.

Unfortunately, today, a member of a family like Frank’s would live an extremely different life than a member of Don’s family would live. Putnam briefly touches upon the economic crises that Port Clinton has faced since 1959. Due to the invasion of big businesses and an attractive coastal real-estate market, the economic downfall of Port Clinton has caused the rich to get richer and the poor to get poorer, and this phenomenon began to take place in small towns across the United States (Putnam 2015: 19-22). After describing the deindustrialization of the town, Putnam talks about the lives of two children in modern-day Port Clinton. Chelsea, a wealthy girl residing in the lakeside town, is the daughter of Wendy, who herself had a lavish childhood in her home state of Michigan. Even though Wendy’s parents were not too strict with her, Wendy makes sure that she is a “helicopter parent”—she constantly hounds Chelsea for good grades. Wendy is concerting Chelsea’s cultivation much more than Frank’s parents did for him, for Wendy wants Chelsea to maintain her

economic and social status when she becomes financially independent. Meanwhile, on the opposite side of town lives David, an impoverished resident of Port Clinton. Unlike Chelsea's mother Wendy, David's parents were not raised in a wealthy Michigan neighborhood—in fact, David's mother is missing-in-action, and David's father is incarcerated. Since both of his parents are absent, David does not receive the same guidance as Chelsea receives. David barely graduated from high school and worked intermittently in fast-food restaurants to support himself. Although David's absentee parents played a huge role in his predicament, David doesn't spare his neighbors and colleagues in Port Clinton from being blamed, for they could've helped him out but, out of fear, deliberately chose to avoid him. After hearing Wendy say that she wouldn't fund better education for less fortunate students because she believes that the poor are lazy (Putnam 2015: 24-29), I'm inclined to support David's claim that the residents of Port Clinton—specifically, the wealthier ones—are also at fault for his poverty.

The differences between the Frank/Don scenario and the Chelsea/David scenario are extremely unsettling. Back in 1959, Don had a fair shot at reaching Frank's financial security one day, and Frank needed to work hard and rely on his own intelligence to maintain his status. Today, Wendy is paying nearly \$60,000 a year for Chelsea and her brother to attend a prestigious Big Ten University, and David can barely afford to feed himself. This overwhelming widening of the gap between the rich and the poor is easily seen on The Great U-Curve. This line graph represents the changing length of the gap between the rich and the poor in the United States throughout the twentieth century. At the turn of the nineteenth century, the gap between the rich and the poor was large—but, after The Great Depression and two world wars, the rich lost a large portion of their wealth and the poor received new, high-paying factory jobs. In fact, according to sociologist Douglas Massey, the gap between the rich and the poor was steadily short for a number of years after World War II ended, all the way up until about 1975. This was mostly due to the emergence of new jobs and government initiatives for struggling families (Putnam 2015: 34).

But, during the mid-1970's, financially, the rich began to separate themselves completely from the poor. From 1979 to 2005, the yearly income of the lower-fifth of Americans rose by \$900, the annual earnings of the middle-fifth increased by \$8,700, and the yearly income of the top one-percent of Americans rose by \$745,000 (these numbers are adjusted for inflation). One of the major causes of the widening income gap is the increasing importance of higher education, with the earnings of full-time college-educated U.S. males increasing by 56% between 1980 and 2012 for men who held post-baccalaureate degrees. Meanwhile, the annual income of high school dropouts fell significantly over these years, decreasing by 22%. Even though the income inequality between the rich and the poor briefly lessened during the 2008 economic crisis, the gap has been widening lately at an alarming speed (Putnam 2015: 35). With what Putnam has been gathering from recent data, it's safe to assume that The Great U-Curve will continue its shape as the rich become richer and the poor become poorer. Although I had only studied income inequality recently, I have experienced the gap between the rich and the poor first-hand throughout my years in elementary school, in middle school, and in high school.

In the first grade, my friend Nick gave me a birthday present—a surfboard keychain. I was extremely excited that Nick had directly given me a present, for usually, at that age, my friends' parents would purchase and give birthday gifts. I immediately clipped the keychain to my backpack, and I proudly walked into school the next day with my new present happily dangling from the zipper. I walked into my first-grade classroom, placed my backpack in my cubby, and took my seat. When I grabbed my book-bag at the end of the day, however, my coveted keychain was missing! I vigilantly searched my classroom, but it was not there. Then, suspecting that a classmate had stolen the surfboard, I began to interrogate a few of my peers. Again, my hunt had led to no answers, until I realized that I had never asked Nick what happened to the keychain. I awkwardly approached Nick, knowing that the question I was about to ask him was going to be quite peculiar. “Hey...did you take my keychain?” Nick responded with a subtle nod.

I could not believe my eyes. Why would Nick take back a present he gave me? What did I do to deserve this? I continued to ask Nick questions as he refused to give me a straightforward answer. He replied, “because I wanted it back. It’s mine; not yours.” Although I was only in the first grade, I knew that Nick had a deeper motive to steal the surfboard keychain. A week after Nick had repossessed his present, I was invited over to his house for a playdate. This was not my first time in Nick’s cramped cape-style home. Nevertheless, I was prepared to make some observations during my visit today. I took a good look around Nick’s room; it was small, and clothes littered the carpeted floor. I noticed a lot of Old Navy t-shirts, camouflage shorts, and white socks on the ground, but I did not see a lot of toys. In this instant, everything became clear – the eighteen-year-old sedan in the driveway, the small house on the busy street, the frequent fast-food runs, and the lack of toys in the bedroom. Nick wanted the surfboard because he did not have a lot of toys. Nick was not as wealthy as I was.

In the first grade, my friend Nick helped me understand social stratification. He did not sit down and have a conversation with me about the intricate topic; instead, through the observation of his situation and actions did I grasp this social reality. My parents leased luxury cars, I lived in a 1.1-million-dollar house, and we took three-week vacations in Greece once a year—the whole time, I assumed that everyone else could afford to live the same lifestyle. After speaking with my parents about Nick’s financial situation, they began to explain social stratification to me from an economic standpoint. Turns out, I was much better off than my other friends. My parents did not neglect to point out, however, that humility is extremely important. So, the next day, I forgave Nick, and I did not mention anything that I had recently learned from my parents. He accepted my apology, and our friendship continued as if nothing had ever happened. But, I was a changed forever.

In the eighth grade, I was admitted to a prestigious, male-only Catholic high school. When I stepped through the doors of my new school on my first day of freshman year, I became Nick. Most of my classmates were from rich north shore Gatsby-esque towns, where, in certain areas, the average home sells for two million dollars. I did not encounter any issues with economic stratification in my high school until I received my first car. My car is nineteen years old, and my grandmother had owned it until she had stopped driving two years ago. When I began to park in the

school parking lot, my peers would give me condescending looks, as if my old Subaru should be towed out the parking lot, away from the brand-new Acura and Mercedes-Benz cars. Although I have always lived an upper-class life, I consider myself to be humble and grounded, and I knew that the most important thing was that I had a car—a reliable vehicle that suited my needs. But, many of my high school friends did not care about reliability, miles-per-gallon, and the fact that my grandmother had signed her car over to me without receiving any monetary compensation; instead, my classmates were concerned with the emblem on the grill.

From Nick's surfboard keychain to my 1997 Subaru Outback, I have witnessed the effects of social stratification. I am extremely grateful that I was able to experience social stratification on both sides of the spectrum, for I have been the privileged boy with many toys, as well as the teenager nobody parked next to in the student parking lot. At John Jay, I have encountered some students who are well-off like I am, and I have met many others who are barely scraping by. This dichotomy is familiar to me, and my hands-on knowledge with social stratification has helped me immerse myself in John Jay's striated social environment.

I had already read Putnam before I wrote about my encounters with social stratification. I was born in 1996, a year when The Great U-Curve was back on the rise (but, of course, the curve wasn't at the unfathomable height at which it sits today). As I grew older, societal stratification became more and more tangible for me. Of course, this could just be because I had been maturing, and, as I took social studies classes year after year, my acquired critical thinking skills allowed me to see the stark distinction between America's rich and America's poor. Putting puberty and educational progression aside, I think that the distinction between the rich and the poor *has* become more concrete, regardless of my change in perspective over my childhood years (and The Great U-Curve proves my theory to be correct). Back in 2003, when I had received the surfboard keychain from Nick, Nick assumed that he was giving the keychain to a boy just like him. That's how it should be—a perfect, harmonious relationship between someone from a wealthy background and a member of a poor family. Nick and I lived only two minutes away from each other, and it's safe to assume that Frank's estate and Don's home were a similar distance away. There wasn't much of a distinction between Nick and I until I found out that my best friend stole my favorite keychain. When the keychain was stolen, mine and Nick's relationship went from Frank and Don to Chelsea and David in the blink of an eye. Although the roles are reversed in the Chelsea and David scenario (for Wendy, the rich mother, is the offender who said that poor students are lazy), I was frustrated, like David was, when Nick repossessed his surfboard keychain. Why couldn't he give me a break? Nick and I attended the same elementary school, we read the same books, and we watched the same TV shows—so, why were we so inherently different? It's the phenomena documented by The Great U-Curve at play here.

Although we have so many things in common, Nick and I *are*, unfortunately, inherently different, and it's all because of our family's money. Nick and I could have had a Frank and Don relationship if we lived in Port Clinton, Ohio in 1959. But, the bottom line is that, today, rich Americans and poor Americans are too financially different to seamlessly blend without money and status being brought up in the conversation. Although I go to a school where most of the students are members of

the lower-middle class and lower class, I have managed to surround myself with college friends who have just as much money as my family does. But, when I surrounded myself with upper-class white males when I chose to attend a prestigious private high school, I still had a Chelsea-and-David-like struggle in the school parking lot.

Social stratification—especially in the financial realm—is not very clear-cut. Even though I have the money and the mindset to be a member of the upper class, there are still elites ahead of me. Some of those boys who parked their BMW's and Mercedes-Benz's in the student lot have parents who graduated from Ivy League universities and parents who belong to powerful social clubs. Although the Great U-Curve stands as a good guideline for understanding financial stratification in the United States, this hierarchy is much more intricate than the graph illustrates. As far as family income goes, most of my classmates in high school and I had a similar amount of money—but some of my peers' families had just the right amount of extra money to receive fancy cars from their parents and spend \$67,000 per year on their undergraduate education at elite private universities. I come from a fairly-wealthy background—that doesn't matter, however, to my slightly-richer high school peers because, after all, I drive a 1997 Subaru Outback and I attend a CUNY school. If my high school classmates can find ways to stratify the members class of 2015—which, for the record, consisted of only upper-middle class and upper class financially-stable males (with a tiny percentage of exceptions)—the people outside of my high school's walls that are found at the lower end of the spectrum must feel extremely isolated from America's wealthy, as The Great U-Curve shows year after year.

The once mellow meandering river of the 1950's is now turning into whitewater rapids, sorting rocks at an alarming distance from each other. If I, an upper-class white male, feel the waves holding me down at times, I can only imagine how turbulent the waters are for members who aren't as well-off as I am. In my eyes, the solution to calm the waters lies in funding education. If a public school in David's neighborhood were to be just as prestigious as Chelsea's private prep school, maybe David would have a fighting chance. I completely support affirmative action in college admissions; but, ultimately, one's high school education determines his or her ability to attend a prestigious university and excel in this advanced setting. According to a recent *Motor Trend* article I read, Germany has more manufacturing jobs than the United States because Germany's citizens are better-educated (and, thus, better equipped) to make intricate car parts. If we focused more on reforming high school education, we could cause some of those boulders at the bottom of the lake to start rising to the top while simultaneously expanding the U.S. job market. Putting high school education aside, as I have observed from my personal experience and from what I analyzed in Putnam's work, the waters are rough. Although I don't have the surfboard keychain anymore and my outdated Subaru Outback doesn't transform into a boat, I have the expertise I need to navigate the financially-tormented whitewater rapids ahead.

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♦ English 201

ANALYSIS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD SEXUAL FLUIDITY

KAY KOLBUC

WHEN IT COMES TO SEXUALITY, people tend to think of two categories: heterosexuality and homosexuality. Although there are many more, there is one in particular that seems frequently overlooked. The attraction to both men and women (bisexuality) has been recorded for centuries. According to an online article by Dr. David Delvin entitled “Bisexuality in Men,” sexologist, Alfred Kinsey developed a theory in 1948 that sexuality isn’t necessarily black or white but based on a spectrum of 0-6. Although 0 and 6 are the extremes of heterosexuality and homosexuality, his conclusion was that most individuals fall somewhere in the middle of the scale. Throughout my life as a young woman, I have been surrounded by other young women. I have listened to their conversations and opinions. “I would never have sex with a guy who slept with another guy.” *Woah. That’s pretty ignorant and hateful*, I thought. Then, I started to hear similar ideas more and more. Maybe there’s more to this than one girl at a restaurant in Rochester, New York. That’s Rochester. It’s not really known for its acceptance. Maybe things will be different in the “big apple” and maybe it’s just straight women. So I questioned, how responsive are 18-21 year-old women (both heterosexual and homosexual) in New York City to sexually fluid partners?

The Assignment and the Writer: In English 201, students find a focus for an individual investigation of a question that piques their curiosity, search for evidence to answer their question, and share their discoveries in a traditional documented research paper. The initial challenge is to locate an itch or curiosity, then sculpt it into a specific, narrow, thus "researchable" question, which Kay Kolbuc accomplished impressively well, asking “how responsive are 18-21-year-old NYC women (both heterosexual and homosexual) to sexually fluid partners?” Her evidence included a survey of fellow dorm residents as well as print resources, and the resulting paper is engaged, informative, lively, and very polished. Kay concluded, “It was astounding to me that a group of people who have been oppressed because of their sexuality would do the same to others.” — **Professor Margaret Fiore**

The way men approach sexual situations with bisexual women is vastly different from how women approach sexual situations with bisexual men. According to Delvin, to men, a woman who has been with another woman sexually is perceived as a “turn-on” whereas to women, men who have been with other men are seen as repulsive. In surprising contrast, in a survey I conducted of 47 young people ages 18-21 in New York City, 100% of male participants said they would not be open to a sexual encounter with a woman who had been with another woman sexually. Only 40% of women had the same to say about men. Oddly enough, some of the same women who were bothered by bisexual male partners were somewhat open to a sexual encounter with a woman. Participants of the survey were asked on a scale of 1-5 (1-Not a chance, 5-Very), how open were they to having a sexual encounter with a person of the same sex. The average number for male was a 1.7 while the average for women was a 3. Interestingly, women are more likely to be bisexual (or admit to it) than men, but less likely to accept bisexual men as sexual partners. Delvin says, “Often, we have been contacted by wives who say: 'But how could he have had sex with another man? After all, he's my husband, and the father of my children!'” Delvin’s conclusion as to why women are less likely to accept bisexual men is because they are seen as closeted homosexuals. In contrast, women who experience both male and female sexual partners are perceived as experimental, but ultimately heterosexual. So, if bisexual men are considered to be gay to straight women, then how do homosexual women react to bisexual partners?

In theory, the hypothesis that all lesbians accept bisexual partners seems to make the most sense, but from my research, that is not the case. In a news article by Faith Cheltenham entitled “Op-ed: NYC Pride Harmful to Bisexuals,” she discusses her experience during New York City’s LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) Pride Festival. She says that she and many other bisexuals are treated poorly and rejected as potential partners even though they make up more than half of the LGBT community. My survey reaffirmed this statement. Of all the women who claimed to be exclusively homosexual, only 55% said they would be fully open to a sexual encounter with a bisexual woman. That’s hardly more than the heterosexual women! I conducted an interview with a lesbian New Yorker named Brittany Thomas to figure out what the reason was for her rejection of bisexual sex partners. She stated, “Bisexuals are greedy. They’ve been with so many different partners.” She said she would turn away a girl she thought was attractive if she found out she were bisexual. I then asked her, “Why would it matter if she had been with say twenty partners before you?” She responded saying, “I don’t want someone who’s so promiscuous in a relationship. They’re probably gonna run off with some guy.” That has to be it. That’s the answer to my big question. Competition. Women tend to be more insecure than men are, so if the person they are in a relationship with could potentially like any person they pass on the street, that’s threatening to them. I went back to my survey to see if this conclusion held up. I read the responses of those who were not open to a sexual encounter with a bisexual. Over and over I received the same kind of answer. “He’s probably gay and I want someone who I know is interested in me.” Straight women already have a hard enough time trusting their boyfriends with other women. This can be seen repeatedly on television and in movies. From my personal

experience, I've noticed women tend to have trust issues with their male partners in association with other women. Add a man into the equation and that could drive a woman crazy. Homosexual women are afraid of the same thing. Thomas said, "I've had it happen to me. It was heart-breaking. I looked like an idiot. The last thing I want is to fall in love with another girl and six months later she leaves me for a guy." My survey responses for homosexual women were just as consistent. "I want to be secure with in my relationship. I don't want to think about the girl I'm with looking at men." But couldn't that potentially happen with anyone? Not just bisexuals. That is why I'm confident it is a confidence issue with women. I have never heard of a man being worried that his bisexual partner will leave him for a woman. Why? Because men tend to have more confidence than women. They're more secure. It's as simple as that.

During my research, I found three contrasting sources. One of the sources I found was a news article by Cheltenham in *Advocate*. The medium is text with a defensive tone, defending bisexuals and their culture. The audience for this article are members of the LGBT community because it is a gay news outlet. Because this *is* a gay newspaper article written by a bisexual, it has the potential to offer biased opinions and information.

The interview with Thomas also proved to be very interesting. She had a very aggressive tone. Since she is a young gay college student, she isn't exactly qualified to make some of the claims she did. They were very opinionated and with little factual evidence at all.

I found the article by Delvin most informative because it demonstrates scientifically using confirmable evidence that bisexuality is real and explains the reason why there is a negative stigma against bisexual men by heterosexual women. The author is credible because Dr. Delvin is a member of the College of Sexual and Relationship Therapists and the International Society for Sexual Medicine and seems unbiased when it comes to the information he supports. The medium is text with a sincere tone. The audience for this article are young adults, which my paper focused on specifically.

A person's sexual preference is like a person's preference for food. If given a choice between a hamburger and a hotdog, there will be people who only like hotdogs and people who only like hamburgers. But there are an abundance of people who like both. Maybe it's offensive to compare a person's sexuality to meat we buy from a street cart, but shouldn't sexuality be that simple? Some people like men. Some people like women. Some like both. It was astounding to me that a group of people who have been oppressed because of their sexuality would do the same to others. Everyone deserves love and as silly as it may sound, I look forward to a day where people can talk about their sexuality as freely as they do about what they want for lunch.

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Appendix
Sexuality Survey (Male Results)

1. Please select your age range.
A. 18-21 B. 22-27 C. 28-35 D. 35-45 E. 46+
15
2. Please select your gender.
A. Female B. Male
15
3. Have you ever thought about having a sexual encounter with a person of the same sex?
A. Yes B. No
2 13
4. Have you ever experienced a sexual encounter with a person of the same sex?
A. Yes B. No
2 13
5. On a scale of 1-5 (1-Not a chance, 5-Very), how open would you be to having a sexual encounter with a person of the same sex?
1 2 3 4 5
10 3 0 0 2
6. *Answer the following only if interested in the opposite sex*
 - a. Would you be open to a sexual encounter with a person who has also had a sexual encounter with a person of the same sex?
A. Yes B. No
13 0
 - b. If you answered "No", please explain.

7. *Answer the following only if interested in the same sex*
 - a. Would you be open to a sexual encounter with a person who has also had a sexual encounter with a person of the opposite sex?
A. Yes B. No
2 0
 - b. If you answered "No", please explain.

Sexuality Survey (Female Results)

1. Please select your age range.
A. 18-21 B. 22-27 C. 28-35 D. 35-45 E. 46+
2. Please select your gender.

A. Female B. Male
32 15

3. Have you ever thought about having a sexual encounter with a person of the same sex?

A. Yes B. No
25 7

4. Have you ever experienced a sexual encounter with a person of the same sex?

A. Yes B. No
15 17

5. On a scale of 1-5 (1-Not a chance, 5-Very), how open would you be to having a sexual encounter with a person of the same sex?

| | | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 10 | 1 | 8 |

6. *Answer the following only if interested in the opposite sex*

a. Would you be open to a sexual encounter with a person who has also had a sexual encounter with a person of the same sex?

A. Yes B. No
13 19

b. If you answered "No", please explain.

7. *Answer the following only if interested in the same sex*

a. Would you be open to a sexual encounter with a person who has also had a sexual encounter with a person of the opposite sex?

A. Yes B. No

Of people who only filled out 7 and not 6

5 9

b. If you answered "No", please explain.

♦ English 233

BERNING UP THE YOUTH VOTE

RAVENNE REID

HER MIND AND MOUTH WORK IN SYNC as she formulates her next argument. The posters and stickers plastered along her bedroom walls emphasize the rhetoric that Bernie Sanders has her support no matter what. Although she prides herself on good judgment, her biggest challengers are convinced otherwise. She calls them Mom and Dad.

“My parents and I have disagreements about this every day. They’re voting for Hillary,” said Rachel Spence, a junior at John Jay, as she rolled her eyes. “I would have, but Bernie represents everything that I’m passionate about- civil rights, equal pay, and things like that. So, he definitely has my vote.”

This student is one of many who have been feeling the Bern. With his stance on key issues like free college education, healthcare reform, and corporate regulation, he has won the majority of support from millennials.

In the New York primary, which took place on April 19th, an exit poll by the *New York Times* showed that Bernie won 65% of the vote in people under the age of 30. That was the only age demographic where he received more than half the vote. Whereas Hillary’s strongest lead was 73% in people 65 and older.

The Assignment and the Writer: In ENG 233: News Reporting and Writing, students learn the basics of journalistic work. They start with a couple of news stories and eventually develop, report and write a news feature on a topic of their choosing. Ravenne chose to write about the appeal of Bernie Sanders among young voters, weaving together the voices of John Jay students, the expertise of a national politics blogger, and statistical evidence from carefully vetted sources. Her story flowed so smoothly and carried so much information along the way, that it was nearly flawless. Ravenne's classmates agreed, because it was the top vote-getter when the class selected stories for its semester-end edition of the *John Jay Sentinel*.

– Professor Alexa Capeloto

Clinton, who served as a former First Lady, Secretary of State, and Senator of New York for eight years, was thought to be the sure winner of the Democratic nomination. However, Sanders, who was born in New York and went on to become the Senator of Vermont, has been giving her a run for her money. However, lately, his chances of becoming the nominee are debatable.

One of the few critiques of Bernie's policies is his tendency to overpromise. Instead of being praised for their optimism, Sanders fans have been criticized for wanting "free stuff." According to Eugene Glukh, a 19 year old political activist and student at University of North Carolina at Greensboro, this is a common misconception of Bernie enthusiasts.

Glukh, who created the blog Eugene's Politics and A Teen 4 Bernie on Twitter, has a combination of over 10,000 followers. Despite his age, he represents a majority of young voters who share the same views on the Senator.

"People like to come down on Bernie because he wants to make college education and healthcare a right, instead of a privilege," he said. "It wasn't that long ago when public education was made available universally, so it will happen with college as well. Especially with Bernie's economic plans to impose tax on Wall Street, which affects the income of the working middle class every day. He's helping the bottom by starting from the top. Unlike Hillary, he knows what has to be done to give the American people hope again."

Both candidates have the qualifications, experience, and knowledge that are required of, arguably, the toughest job in America. However, when approximately fifty John Jay students are asked who the most viable contender is, there is an overwhelming response for Sanders.

"There are things that Bernie wants to do that will alleviate the stress and poverty that is on the shrinking middle and lower class," said Shayne Courtemanche, a senior. "The one percent is made up of millionaires and billionaires that find loopholes in the law, so we need to tax them to let the money trickle down to people like us."

The statement, "people like us," comes up constantly when young voters discuss the likelihood of Sanders becoming president. With his refusal to take donations from big businesses and plans to take down Wall Street, which was responsible for the 2008 financial crisis, Bernie has been regarded as a once-in-a-lifetime candidate.

"Bernie has been fighting for the same things for years- longer than Hillary even existed in the media," said Courtemanche. "While he's supported equal opportunities all his life, Hillary was against the rights of gays and saw black people as an obstacle. I don't believe that what she's saying is sincere. It's all coming from the Super PACs and the people that are paying her to seem appealing again."

Clinton's support of the Defense of Marriage Act in 1996, which federally defined marriage as a union between opposite-sex couples, has been one of the primary examples in showcasing her tendency to "flip-flop" on issues. As well as the crime bill of 1994, which built more prisons and implemented harsher sentencing. However, despite the fact that Bernie also supported this proposal, Clinton is the only candidate receiving backlash for it.

“Bernie supporters need to stop blaming everything on Hillary,” said Anisah Singh, a freshman. “She apologized for the crime bill and changed her stance on gay marriage. It’s not flip-flopping, it’s called a change of heart. Everyone does that, so why can’t Hillary? She’s more qualified and learned from her mistakes.”

Unlike Singh’s, the reasoning behind other Clinton supporters at John Jay is not an optimistic one. A sophomore, Austin Morales, was apathetic in his response when he said, “Hillary has more delegates.”

According to Associated Press, out of the 2,383 delegates needed to be the nominee, Hillary has acquired 2,165 as of May 1st. Meanwhile, Bernie Sanders trails behind with 1,357.

Clinton supporters among the younger crowd are more interested in numbers, where she is in fact leading. As for the older generation, Spence acknowledges another reason as to why the frontrunner has come this far.

“She’s realistic and that’s what my family is trying to drill into me,” she said. “But, when you grow up hearing your parents complain about how high the rent is or how little they’re making at their dead-end job, it encourages you to want better.”

Hope is a common theme found among Sanders supporters, especially now when most students have adopted an “Anyone but Donald Trump” ideology. The business mogul and Republican frontrunner has risen in the polls thanks to a loyal following. However, his views on some aspects like illegal immigrants, Muslims, and women are enough to make Bernie enthusiasts swallow their pride and support Clinton if she becomes the nominee.

“We cannot have Trump in power,” Courtemanche said adamantly. “He’s racist, sexist, xenophobic, and if it comes down to it, I will vote for Hillary if she gets the nomination.”

Like this student, voters may have to make the tough decision of electing a candidate who they consider dishonest or one whose political correctness is virtually non-existent. When this is taken into consideration, Bernie supporters believe that they are justified in their opinions.

“Would you rather want a president who’s been on the right side of history for seventy years or seven?” said Spence. “And, since we’re talking about Hillary, I even think seven is an overstatement.”

♦ Literature 237

MAUS VS. WHEN THE EMPEROR WAS DIVINE: AUTHENTICITY TRUMPS IMAGINATION

DAVID KIM

ABSTRACT

Both *Maus* and *When the Emperor Was Divine* deal with the similar experiences of two very different groups during World War II. In her essay, *Witness: The Inward Testimony*, Nadine Gordimer requires that witness literature be a complete account, with no omissions and interpretations by the author. Of the two, only Art Spiegelman's *Maus* succeeds in adhering to the principles set forth by Gordimer because of its strict dialogue pertaining only to what its central character speaks about and its thorough approach of total inclusion. Julie Otsuka's *When the Emperor Was Divine* fails to deliver because it opts for fictional narrative and characters instead of the very real experiences it was based on.

The Assignment and the Writer: In LIT 236, Literature as Witness, students investigate how literature may act as a surrogate, allowing them to vicariously explore situations that they can never experience firsthand. In this specific assignment, students were asked to determine, through comparison of two works studied, which work provided a fuller and more genuine experience based on the criteria set forth by one of our literary theorists. Here, David Kim, an online student, skillfully utilizes an essay by Nadine Gordimer to rigorously critique the effectiveness as witness literature of *Maus* and *When the Emperor was Divine*, two works on human rights abuses that took place during WWII.

– Professor Mark Alpert

SUPERFICIALLY, THERE IS SOME INTERSECTION between Julie Otsuka's *When the Emperor Was Divine* and Art Spiegelman's *Maus*. Both address the struggles of two distinct marginalized groups during World War II, Japanese Americans and European Jews. Both are penned by second generation authors, whose source material derive from the hardships of their parent: Otsuka's mother during her internment and Spiegelman's father Vladek during the Holocaust. However, under the lens of Nadine Gordimer's ideals and standards for witness literature, outlined in her essay *Witness: The Inward Testimony*, only one of the two stands firm. To Gordimer, witness literature is about presenting all that one knows from a personal perspective, without omission and alteration. Though *When the Emperor Was Divine* is based on the genuine experiences of Otsuka's mother, they only serve as a blueprint for a fictional story. On the other hand, *Maus*, is the comic representation of the experiences of Spiegelman's father in his own words, meticulously tape recorded through constant collaboration. For Gordimer, only *Maus*, would attain status as witness literature from its consistency to Vladek Spiegelman's life, while *When the Emperor Was Divine* stumbles from its foray into fiction.

A pithy summation of Gordimer's stance on witness literature: "writers cannot and do not indulge in the hubris of believing they can plant the flag of truth on that ineluctable territory . . . we can exclude or discard nothing" (Gordimer, 2002, p. 91). Though the aforementioned similarities may show some semblance of overlap, they become picayune when contextualized by the premise and direction of both works. *Maus*, though in comic format, is the near verbatim recounting of Vladek's life during the Holocaust in his own words. Spiegelman includes a conversation with his father where Vladek insists on provident omissions within the book, but Art counters with "it's great material. It makes everything more **real** . . . I want to tell **your** story, the way it really happened" (Spiegelman, 1996, p. 25). Spiegelman subsequently includes every conversation and encounter Vladek requested to be omitted, even humorously drawing the very correspondences containing those orders. At the expense of breaking his promise with his father, Spiegelman keeps the greater one demanded of witness literature: exclude and discard nothing. *When the Emperor Was Divine*, Otsuka deviates from the traditional biographical approach, as she molds the experiences of her mother and grandmother to lay the foundation for what she believes to be the archetypal internment story, essentially co-opting the Issei/Nisei struggle to produce a novel of generalizations (Kawano, 2005). Following the conclusion, Otsuka goes on to credit sources which have helped her construct this false narrative of her fictional family, writing, "the author gratefully acknowledges the following works for their help in writing this book . . ." (Otsuka, 2002, p. 147). Integrity as witness is lost when the very literature in question was not real to begin with.

Concerning the malleability of information, however vital it may be to cement the authenticity of a piece of literature, Spiegelman avoids such licenses while Otsuka embraces them. While discussing daily life, Art brings up the curious appearance of an orchestra that performed during the marching of prisoners to and from work stations. However, Vladek insists there was no such thing, exclaiming "I remember only **marching**, not any orchestras . . . How could there be an orchestra?" (Spiegelman, 1996, p. 214). To deny such an unusual and well documented entity of

the concentration camps certainly incurs myriad suspicions and questions about this overt inconsistency. Spiegelman could have written that his father did indeed hear the orchestra, or simply refrained from including this bit of conversation and avoid the topic altogether. Yet, staying true to that integrity of writers and their role in witness literature, nothing was discarded. However, in *When the Emperor Was Divine*, aside from the internment camp location, not much else is definitive; for instance, Otsuka includes a section focused on the thoughts of other Japanese Americans, “‘A kitchen’s a kitchen, it’s all the same to me . . . Me happy, come here. Better than Mt. Eden. No cook, no work, just do laundry fine’” (Otsuka, 2002, p. 56). Otsuka had already committed the critical misstep of fabricating an experience instead of using her mother’s genuine one, but she compounds the issue through her presumptions of how the real prisoners truly felt, and it is rather egregiously apathetic for those who were caught in such straits. Otsuka cannot be the one to speak on behalf of over a hundred thousand, when witnessing is far more intimate than what she has penned.

Witness literature demands complete transparency and submission, and at times, it is not a redeeming task. In *Maus*, Spiegelman there is a scene with Art, his father, and his girlfriend Françoise, the driver, picking up a hitchhiker who happened to be black. Of all people, Vladek displays prominent prejudice, demanding Françoise to “push quick on the gas” because the “shvartser” would “steal us the groceries from the back seat” (Spiegelman, 1996, pp. 258-259). Though an extremely unbecoming scene, it presents the lack of empathy from someone who had been a victim of their ethnicity; it shows the intricacies and nuances of human nature. Despite Vladek’s rationale of “it has nothing to do with Hitler, with the Holocaust,” it is another fine demonstration of Art Spiegelman’s all-encompassing inclusion and honest humility, this time at the cost of damaging his father’s integrity and image (Spiegelman, 1996, p. 25). In this respect, *When the Emperor Was Divine* conveniently avoids any sort of realism of what life truly was like for Japanese Americans, including her mother, during World War II. It avoids the uncomfortable and volatile situations that existed in those racially charged times. The closest it ever approaches to a real encounter of prejudice occurs when the girl asks her mother, “‘is there anything wrong with my face?’” as she begins to feel what it is like to wear a Japanese face (Otsuka, 2002, p. 15). Her mother simply replies, “‘you look fine,’” and diffuses what should have been a real moment of tension and raw expression (Otsuka, 2002, p. 15). Otsuka’s glossing over of genuine racism only solidifies the case of her temerity in deciding what should and should not be mentioned in what is a sham example of an attempt at witness literature.

If total inclusion and presentation are the pillars which support witness literature, then “an exploration of inward testimony” is what they are housing (Gordimer, 2002, p. 95). It is personal, intimate. It is a singular journey into a period in which the witness stands alone, not a representation of the masses, but as a solitary existence. *Maus*, while littered with characters of varying import, always has its light on Vladek and his time. Every so often, Vladek’s recollection would evoke powerful emotions for his wife, as they were separated for most of the Holocaust and she was the primary driving force which kept him alive, day after day. This inward look into his past, he admits, “brought in [his] mind so much **memories** of Anja,” and what is really developed from the story is the exploration of Vladek’s love for his wife

(Spiegelman, 1996, p. 106). The emotional connection is what the witness must establish for those on the outside peering in, and is thoroughly fulfilled by the end of the story as Vladek reunites with his wife (Spiegelman, 1996, p. 296). In *When the Emperor Was Divine*, there are not one, but three central characters, already a point of conflict with the singular, inward objective. In addition, the use of dynamic perspective from chapter to chapter prevents anything more than a shallow glimpse of emotion from the characters; the first chapter is the perspective of the mother, the second is of the daughter, the third is of the son, and the fourth a combined outlook. In the first chapter, the mother has a cathartic moment as she comes to grips with the evacuation order over a bottle of wine, “she . . . began to laugh . . . her shoulders were heaving and she was gasping for breath . . . until finally the tears were running down her cheeks. She picked up the bottle again and drank” (Otsuka, 2002, p. 20). It so perfectly sets the stage for that inward dive, but is cut short as the next page is a new chapter and a new perspective. This time, it is the daughter’s turn to be cut short, as she states, “I dreamed about Papa . . . He was wearing his fancy French shoes and we were in a boat going to Paris and he was singing that song again” (Otsuka, 2002, p. 45). Again, this baring of the innermost desires, the yearning for her father, is not fleshed out, and it is tantamount to half a scene. There is no inward travel, no personalization, without emotional depth.

The pivotal decision to produce fact or fiction has made all the difference between these two writers’ works. *Maus* succeeds in capturing the entirety of Vladek Spiegelman’s Holocaust journey, sparing no detail and producing a great deal of characterization. On the other hand, taking the fictional route and showcasing hollow characters, *When the Emperor Was Divine* relegates itself to secondhand generalizations when it could have been a more factually compelling narrative. While both well-written, only *Maus* fits Gordimer’s definition of witness literature.

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♦ Literature 237

FEMALE FACES OF A NATION: A ROLLING JOURNAL

LYNETTE LEWIS
Entry #3**Name:** Primrose Williams**Race/Ethnicity:** English American**Date:** April 30, 1789**Time Period:** Newly Independent U.S.A.

TODAY IS AN EXCITING DAY for the birth of our nation. I, Primrose Williams, can barely contain my excitement! I had just finished sowing new clothes for my little girl Prudence when I heard the commotion outside. My fellow New Yorkers were running to Federal Hall, where George Washington was sworn in as our first president. With Prudence in my arms, I gazed in awe and cheered, with tears of joy running down my face, as Washington's grand figure got ready to speak to us and take the Oath of Office. This is required for all Presidents according to Article II, Section I, Clause Eight of *The Constitution of the United States*: "Before he [the President of the United States] enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:— 'I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect

The Assignment and the Writer: Students in my Literature 237 class were asked to imagine having found journals with entries from the 1700s to the mid-twentieth century. With course readings as their guides, my students wrote in the voices of Native Americans and of slaves and in some instances slave owners, overseers and abolitionists. In her imaginative rendering of the experiences of an 18th Century English American and a 19th Century slave, Lynette Lewis eloquently contributes to the tradition of witness literature.

– Professor P.J. Gibson

and defend the Constitution of the United States.” President Washington expressed tremendous honor in being the man chosen to lead our young country into greatness but he also seemed anxious, like much of us are, about embarking on this experiment we call American democracy. After he completed the Oath of Office, I waved my white handkerchief in the air until my right arm no longer had any energy left, and at that point I clutched the cloth to my heart. Never in my life have I seen a human being that looked as great and noble as he. I pray to God that He bless our dear President Washington.

There were not too many women in the audience, and although I wish the opposite were true, I understand why. A woman’s job revolves around managing the home and children. But today was the day to break with convention – I know Prudence will not remember what happened on this day, but I will be proud to tell her we were both there and witnessed history get made right before our eyes. After hearing President Washington add “So help me God” at the end of his Oath, it made me realize that “We the People of the United States” must truly band together for the common good. Once we do so, then will we truly flourish as the force we are, one to be reckoned with.

Entry #4

Name: Cecelia

Race/Ethnicity: Mulatto Slave

Date: July 4, 1862

Time Period: American Civil War & Slavery

WHEN I WAS VERY YOUNG, about six years old, I was fortunate to spark a friendship with Miss Susannah. She is my old masters’ youngest daughter, and is also around the same age I am. I vividly remember approaching her by the large willow tree on the border of the Collins property one warm spring day and asking her what she was doing. “I’m reading fairy tales from the new book Poppa got me,” she replied. I will never know how she interpreted my blank stare, but I am thankful she asked, “Why, you know how to read don’t you?” I shook my head no, and she proceeded to read aloud to me. After that day, we agreed that after I finished all my chores in the house, she would read to me for a few minutes in the little room under the main staircase before going off to bed. Our little secret made me feel as if I was doing something special and important. After a few years, Miss Susannah said she would no longer read to me, but lent me an empty book along with one of her pens, so that I could practice writing the words I remembered from our stories. I used to hide this book under my bed and take it out every night...until I was sold to a new master.

To my dismay, I found no Miss Susannah at the Johnson estate. Neither the whites nor my fellow slaves seemed to like me very much, so I made sure only to read and write when everyone was asleep. Despite the fact that I don’t practice as often as I would like, for I am constantly afraid a fellow slave will snitch on me to Master Johnson, I try to sneak behind the stables when the moon is at its brightest. When I feel dawn approaching, I run back to my quarters and hide my journal in a small hole

in the wall I found under my bed, which I have covered with a loose brick for extra protection.

It is ironic that today my master and his family and friends celebrate Independence Day – independence for who? “Virginia”, that’s my name on this plantation, wants to ask all of the white people around here, how can you celebrate freedom when not all of this country’s inhabitants are free? I view Independence Day as a paradox, because any celebration for the whites isn’t one for us slaves. Each day that passes, I get more consumed with thoughts of freedom. In the beginning, when I was first sold to Master Johnson at the age of sixteen, I tried very hard to suppress those thoughts. I told myself that the more I thought about freedom, the worse my soul felt, for I was told in Church that we all have to endure what God puts before us. But the preacher’s assertions are lies, for freedom brings hope and happiness. There is nothing wrong with seeking out a better life for yourself and your kin.

I have recently become inspired by Harriet Jacobs’s narrative *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. Although I did not exactly read it, I have heard whispers among the other slave girls about what tidbits of discussions among our master’s friends they were able to overhear. In the narrative, “Linda” was able to escape the South by getting smuggled into a ship that was on its way North. But before then she suffered for seven years, hidden in the attic of a friend’s house, all for the sake of her children. After persecution from her master, Dr. Flint, and betrayal from the father of her children Mr. Sands, *she made it*. I want to buy my own children’s freedom and go North. Our masters tell us runaway slaves die of starvation up there, but I would much rather die trying to get to New York than die in the hypocrisy that is my existence here. Perhaps some of the other slave girls can help me out. They say it’s risky business running away to the Northern states, especially now in the middle of the Civil War, but it’s worth a shot.

♦ English 255

SAVING PUERTO RICO

NUNO PEREIRA

A VOLATILE DEBATE about the economy and Central America is causing an uproar in the political world; this time—surprisingly enough—it does not involve a man with small hands screaming about a wall. Congress, and much of the United States, are currently debating the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act (PROMESA), also known as the Puerto Rico Debt Restructuring Bill, which aims to address Puerto Rico's seventy-two-billion-dollar debt, the country's request to the United States Congress for a restructuring of the debt, and the livelihood of the 3.5 million United States citizens who call Puerto Rico their home (Peterson and Timiraos). The provisions of this legislation include the creation of a federal finance board to oversee and monitor spending, leeway to negotiate reduced debt with hedge

The Assignment and the Writer: In English 255, Argument Writing, I assign arguments of increasing complexity and students are asked to choose from a variety of templates. Written as a second argument paper, Perreira's thoughtful essay examines the debate surrounding the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act (PROMESA), a debt restructuring bill that would, if enacted, serve as a crucial step in addressing the "economic and humanitarian crisis" afflicting Puerto Ricans. While calling for the enactment of PROMESA, Perreira incisively examines what is at the heart of the resistance to such a bill. Acknowledging the opposition's claims as valid, Perreira argues that providing Puerto Ricans with an opportunity to become economically stable is more important. He concludes that "it is time to view Puerto Rico as a piece of home and not just a failed business plan."

– Professor Livia Katz

funds and investors, the ability to file under Chapter 9 of bankruptcy protection, and expansion of access to social programs such as Medicaid (“Save Puerto Rico”). This proposed Congressional intervention potentially serves as an effort not only to implement legislation to create a manageable debt crisis, but also to prevent a situation in which the total burden of the cost falls upon the shoulders of all United States citizens. In pursuing these goals, the United States Congress would do well to enact PROMESA as a first step towards addressing this economic and humanitarian crisis afflicting United States citizens.

Despite Puerto Rico being a United States territory, and thus making its inhabitants United States citizens, there has been considerable resistance to passing PROMESA, or any form of debt relief. Opposition to the bill complains that the Puerto Rican government and businesses are at fault for having made poor financial decisions and, therefore, they should be held accountable for the municipal bonds they took out (Aoidh). At the heart of the resistance is the complaint that legislation such as PROMESA would deliver the short end of the stick, so to speak, to the creditors and investors who are also being affected by the crisis. The opposition states that if Puerto Rico is able to access Chapter 9 of bankruptcy protection, or any of the negotiation rights in the provisions, it will result in forcing creditors to take reduced settlements, and thus decrease the payments they are due (Reuters); similar compromises occurred in a 30 and 75 cents on the dollar settlement in Argentina during a separate financial crisis (Joffe). For those who oppose PROMESA, these sudden and unprecedented legislative changes are unfair as many hedge funds, mutual funds, and investors could face a substantial loss in revenue of money that was borrowed in the form of bonds. Many suggest that rather than having Congress institute these legislative interventions, Puerto Rico should transition to privatization of government-owned businesses and programs in order to shoulder the costs of its debt (“Save Puerto Rico”). By doing so, Puerto Rico would be able to generate the revenue needed to pay off the debt over time. There is an accompanying fear that PROMESA will set a precedent for future cases involving debt crisis. The opposition claims that if PROMESA is allowed to pass, then other states in the United States will also request the same generous provisions, resulting in bailouts in which the American taxpayer will shoulder the burden of debt (Aoidh). Multiple attack ads on PROMESA have championed the opposition’s belief that any intervention is a form of a bailout, which must be avoided at all costs if social programs, such as Social Security in the United States, are to be preserved (Stewart).

Much of the opposition to PROMESA has adequate, factual, and understandable foundations to support these claims. As with any other bill presented in Congress, the task of assessing cost-and-benefit is arduous and does not always produce the perfect legislation. However, what is being debated should not be about punishment for past decisions, but instead these arguments should focus on providing the 3.5 million United State citizens that inhabit Puerto Rico with an opportunity to become economically secure. The territory of Puerto Rico has been placed on a crash course of economic failure, and its people are suffering. A provision in Article VI Section 8 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico states that “in case the available revenues including surplus for any fiscal year are insufficient to meet the appropriations made for that year, interest on the public debt and amortization thereof

shall first be paid, and other disbursements shall thereafter be made in accordance with the order of priorities established by law," which is at the root of the humanitarian crisis on the island ("Welcome to Puerto Rico"). Due to this single constitutional provision, the government of Puerto Rico has been forced to strip funding from crucial public resources, such as public education and medical care, in order to continue paying its debt. Over one hundred schools have been closed throughout the island to make available a larger portion of the federal budget for allocation to payments of the debt (PanamPost). Estimates show that, if the financial crisis does not improve, over 600 more schools are expected to close within the next five years; doing so would jeopardize a child's development and future prospect (PanamPost). Equally as detrimental to the development of children are the slashes to the health care system. Despite paying equal taxes as citizens from any of the other fifty states, Puerto Rico has suffered budget cuts in the Medicare and Medicaid program which have affected more than sixty percent of the population enrolled in these programs (Alvarez and Goodnough). In one case, a hospital in San Juan had its power cut off due to its accumulation of four million dollars in unpaid bills (The Big Story). This hospital was only able to regain its electricity and remain fully functional and continue treatment for patients after a court ruling forced the company to return power. Puerto Rico has also been facing a food crisis, as more than eighty-five percent of all food on the island is imported (PBS News Hour). Due to a struggling agricultural sector, in which only one percent of all food is accounted for in domestic product, the Agriculture Secretary of Puerto Rico warns that only a month's supply would remain before all food is depleted on the island if there is a failure to import shipments (PBS News Hour). Only by passing PROMESA will Puerto Rico be able to recover from decades of economic bleeding and the deplorable living conditions which are growing at an exponential rate.

To allow Congress the opportunity of continuing this debate while millions of citizens are stricken by hunger, illness, and deprived of education would be contrary to decent human principles. Every day that passes without intervention is another nail in the coffin, so to speak, for the children and families who are without opportunity. It is time to view Puerto Rico as a piece of home and not just a failed business plan. Now is the time to demand that Congress approve the provisions of PROMESA so that the lives of these United States citizens may be saved and the economic wellbeing of the United States be protected from the looming crash.

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♦ English 255

HARROWING THE HEROINE: HOW SCRUTINY OF AMERICA'S FIRST FEMALE PRESIDENT WOULD ONLY ENFLAME GENDER ISSUES

RAVENNE REID

PRIOR TO 2008, a look into American democracy revealed an unwavering pattern among our presidents in terms of race and sex: white males. From 1789 onward, America flourished under the rule of elected officials who possessed similar complexions as well as anatomy. Gradually, our representative government became more reflective of its name, initially, through steady diversification of race. Although the complexity of ethnicities in government positions was a milestone that laid the foundation for inclusion of marginalized individuals, women were omitted from these

The Assignment and the Writer: Written for English 255, Argument Writing, Reid's paper introduces a unique argument that explores the notion why Hillary Clinton, the potential first female president, would not have been successful in appeasing sexism. Using the first black president as a reference, Reid illustrates a connection between the role that Obama played in inadvertently intensifying racial tensions by "validating black stereotypes" and the likelihood that Clinton would have exacerbated gender issues by becoming a paradigm for all women in leadership positions. Reid argues persuasively that instances of Clinton's past reveal a tendency to disregard the rights of her gay counterparts, something that demonstrates her inability to recognize intersectional and inclusive feminism. With clarity and conviction, Reid concludes that problems pertaining to race and gender can only be solved by a competent leader, regardless of his or her distinctive characteristics. — Professor Livia Katz

measures that sought to break down the invisible barriers that polarized the nation. In other words, women had yet to shatter the so-called “glass ceiling,” coined by Ann M. Morrison in a *Wall Street Journal* article in 1986 (“The Glass Ceiling,” 2009). In the piece, Morrison formulated the expression upon observing the rarity of women making considerable strides in business despite their vast representation in the working class. Subsequent to her discovery, variations of the “ceiling” emerged to demonstrate a similar barricade that women encountered in their careers; the most notable is the “marble ceiling” aimed at women in government (Zimmer, 2015). Although a woman’s livelihood in politics was neither probable nor attainable a century ago, increasing involvement in these types of upper echelon occupations has shown that females usually land these leadership roles under the most unusual circumstances (Beckwith, 2015). To be more specific, this theory is known as the “glass cliff phenomenon,” according to which women are chosen to take the reins when institutions are already displaying signs of a downward spiral (Bruckmüller & Branscombe, 2009). Consequently, these women are condemned for their failure to revive deteriorating businesses, organizations, and schools caused by the incompetence of their male predecessors, so an entire nation would be no different.

In 2008, American constituents saw two Democratic candidates who had the potential to alter the semblance that former presidents had embodied since George Washington’s tenure: Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. Obama’s supporters and critics saw him as a sign of a post-racial era, the answer to finally resolving racial tensions that existed between African-Americans and their Caucasian counterparts. On the other hand, Clinton was also adamant about crossing over a threshold that had only been open to those individuals who were born with such privileges. The results were not in her favor, and she ended her campaign on June 7 of that same year. In her concession speech, she stated, “Although we weren’t able to shatter that highest, hardest glass ceiling this time, thanks to you, it’s got about 18 million cracks in it, and the light is shining through like never before” (“Yes We Can,” 2008). Clinton’s bold proclamation was correct in the technical sense: the first female president would set forth a standard that has long been claimed by white and, now, black men. But in the literal sense, her words implied that gender issues would have seen the presumed changes in her presidency that Obama’s was supposed to solve in terms of race relations. Eight years later, racial tension is still prevalent and may have even intensified under a black president. Who is to say that sexism would not exacerbate, too? What Clinton and other optimists fail to realize is that equality of the sexes would not be easily achieved under a female president’s wing. Hillary Clinton would not have been the solution to gender discrimination because not only would her presidency have produced similar results with sexism that the first black president’s did with racism, but she would have also reinforced the glass cliff principle as well as misrepresented intersectional feminism.

Although it is said to be non-existent, white male privilege excludes those involved from conjectures that demean their whole group. In other words, the minority in that category do not reflect the entirety. For instance, via Twitter, Republican nominee Donald Trump wrote the following: “Sadly, because President Obama has done such a poor job as president, you won’t see another black president for generations!” (2014). Given the source, one could argue that Trump’s perceptions of

reality have already proven to be distorted; however, his claim is germane in the fact that it engenders one of the major issues that marginalized people face: the damning threat of predisposed stereotypes due to the actions of predecessors. For nearly three centuries, America has seen commanders-in-chief come and go without the slightest inclination that the successor would be inept in his position because his race and gender matched that of the last president. It seems that such uncertainty was only valid once the first black president came into play, and a female president would be no different. For people akin to Trump, the expression “first of many” only applies to those who started the trend; this notion excludes individuals who embrace the representation that matters in a country as diverse as America. But as mentioned before, diversity has its drawbacks when one person sets a precedent for an array of people, especially when those standards do not adhere to all groups. Similar to Obama, Hillary Clinton would have been an outsider, one that was expected to be a paradigm for how all women would take on the role of president. If she was inadequate in her venture, then the entire gender would have borne the burden—the sexist, unjust burden—that would only derive from her actions as another patient zero. Obama was the first victim, so to speak, to take on a country that sought a president who not only promised change, but also embodied it by virtue of his race. Clinton, on the other hand, would have been the next scapegoat to possess a nation that sees marginalized people in power as the definitive quintessence for all who may follow, and a nation that sees its future on the edge of a precipice.

At this time, a female president would have only reinforced the glass cliff phenomenon. If Hillary Clinton had been victorious on November 8, she would have presided over a country that is commonly referred to as a “superpower in decline” (Klare, 2015). Although the glass cliff theory is often brushed off as a conspiracy, bear in mind the circumstances that the Clinton administration would have had to contend with: terrorism both home and abroad, a shifting economy, and an increasing deficit—just to name a few. By the year 2017, the person who will be held accountable for any further regression will not be the predecessor, but rather the sitting president. In this case, she would have been criticized for the aftermath of a country that was already on decline. As mentioned before, she could have set a precedent for all women who want to follow in her footsteps; however, the question arises: would this notion only limit itself to the presidency? Clinton’s performance as leader of the free world could have potentially become a benchmark for all women in leadership roles. Take into consideration the scrutiny that President Obama faced in regards to his work ethic: “Shrinking work, claiming success when he was not entitled to do so, and hiding his failures... does it seem he just doesn’t like to do hard work? A friend of mine once criticized [him] for not having an honest bone in his body. I responded that... he sure does have plenty of lazy ones” (Lasky, 2009). Inept and unwilling to do hard work—where have we heard those typecasts before? In spite of the fact that this article was written not even a year into his presidency, to some, Obama inadvertently validated black stereotypes. Perhaps the first female president would have done the same, continuing gender pigeonholes that hinder women, especially in the workplace. Similar to what Obama critics had done in terms of using negative stereotypes to demean his character, Clinton’s opponents would have used any opportunity that they could to reinforce their bias. Therefore, since the potential first female president was

essentially set up for failure, one can only imagine how her denunciation could have affected those who also yearn to shatter the glass ceiling in their respective fields.

Despite the fact that a majority of women have yet to advance considerably in positions of power, in other countries, the highest office in the land has long been attained by female trailblazers. Take into consideration Margaret Thatcher, who served as Britain's first female prime minister from 1979 to 1990 (Biography.com Editors, n. d.). Given the moniker "Iron Lady" because of her conservative ideologies and unrelenting persona—oftentimes referred to as a man (Ribberink, 2010)—Thatcher became an instrumental and controversial figure in the political arena. With the exception of her policies, most of the controversy stemmed from her opposition to feminism. During her first term in power, she famously declared, "I owe nothing to women's lib" (Anderson, 2012). Even though she had practically normalized the idea of women in power, she did not acknowledge her feat as a service to women's empowerment. Contrary to popular belief, a similar accomplishment by Clinton would not have mirrored Thatcher's because of the fact that she has fortified the notion that her success would have been a victory for all women. Whereas Thatcher "froze child benefit, criticized working mothers, and appointed only one of her eight female administrators to progress past junior level" (Berlinski, 2016), Clinton promised to make issues that impact women as one of her top priorities. The argument that may arise is that a female president who actually intends to combat gender discrimination can only benefit women in the long run. In some aspects, such a belief is pertinent until it affects the validity of a woman's judgment. Clinton inadvertently appealed to a portion of constituents who did not vote for her because of her qualifications, but simply because she is a woman; however, she should also procure her fair share of the blame in pushing that narrative. A prime example of Clinton using gender-specific rhetoric is her response to moderator Anderson Cooper, who asked how she would not be a third term of President Obama (Rumpf, 2015). Initially, instead of noting the policies in which she and Obama take different stances, her comeback was simple: "Well, I think... being the first woman president would be quite a change from the presidents we've had up until this point" (Rumpf, 2015). Not only was her answer vague, but it was also one of countless instances in which Clinton reminded us all that she would bring about change because the most valued aspect of her presidency that she could provide to American democracy is her gender. Eventually, for some, these reminders implicitly influenced their greater beliefs and judgment that followed them into the voting booths. Instead of banking on the rarity of her anatomy, she should have kept in mind a quote by Margaret Thatcher: "You don't say, 'I must get on because I'm a woman' ... [but] because you have the combination of talents which are right for the job" (Berlinski, 2016). The comparison between these two women is moot because, while Thatcher was adamant in proclaiming that her crack in the glass ceiling did not belong to every woman, Clinton promised quite the opposite; however, the cogency of this guarantee was dependent on whether or not this triumph would have truly included all women.

The first female president would have potentially undermined the recognition of intersectional feminism. This term, coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, is a concept that states that women experience varying degrees of discrimination based on race, class, and sexuality (Vidal, 2014). Hillary Clinton, a woman who embodies the

most privileged aspects of all three aforementioned categories—white, affluent, and heterosexual—would have possibly overlooked the importance of intersectionality, and she has received criticism in regards to challenging the status quo. On June 8, 2016, the day that Clinton became the first female presidential nominee of any major party, Wintana Melekin wrote the following on Twitter: “It’s black and brown women who sweep the floors after white women break glass ceilings” (Melekin, 2016). Melekin, a black woman, received mixed responses for her tweet; while some considered Clinton’s achievement to be one of their own personal endeavors, others argued that her victory only promotes leeway for white women and leaves the others to figure out a way to play catch-up. Therefore, when Clinton accepted her nomination, it was not a win for all women, but rather a win for all women like her. Ultimately, by just being who she is, Clinton would have potentially influenced policies that disregard her marginalized complements. Take into consideration her wavering stance on gay marriage. Back in 2008, during her first run as president, Clinton supported civil unions, but opposed legal gay marriage (Sherman, 2015). Prior to that statement, in 2000, she said, “Marriage is a sacred bond between a man and a woman” (Siegel, 2000). However, before that, Clinton publicly supported the Defense of Marriage Act in 1996, which federally defined marriage as a union between opposite-sex couples (Friedersdorf, 2014). It was not until 2014, the beginning of her second campaign for the presidency, when she adopted the position most suitable for her political party: pro-marriage equality. She had finally recognized the rights of her gay counterparts; however, one may ask, after nearly two decades of the same stance on the same issue, what tempted her to alter her beliefs? Could her fairly new position on gay marriage be the result of changing times or change for the time being? For a person who aspired to be a champion for all woman, her past entails a series of roadblocks which contradict that desire and facilitate any doubts that those of a different race, class, and sexuality may have had about Clinton’s real virtues and visions for America.

Unfortunately, Hillary Clinton was unsuccessful in her approach to resume the trend that President Barack Obama had initiated. Instead, her former contender and current President-elect, Donald Trump, will fulfill constituents’ desires to revert to a standard once thought to be obsolete after 2008; this election year gave leeway to the possibility of a new norm. The appointment of a black president prompted accurate assumptions that there was a need for change in our democracy, but Obama’s re-election incited misconceptions about a post-racial era, in which racial tension was considered to be on the verge of demise. Nearly a decade later, some would argue that Obama, despite changing the semblance of the presidency by virtue of his distinctive race, did nothing to heal the plights that threatened black individuals. The precise argument that could be made is that racial issues will always persist, rather than be eliminated completely, and the same can be said about gender issues. Since it is safe to say that racism and sexism can never cease to exist, these issues will remain stagnant in our society. Having a president who embodies a certain race or gender will not eradicate prejudice that is, arguably, innate. Even though Hillary Clinton promised that her primary role as president would be to uphold women’s rights, it is more than likely that her efforts would have exacerbated gender bias. This notion is based on the evidence that Clinton would have acquired a nation that, as mentioned above, is not

only considered a declining superpower, but is also divided in terms of race. Similar to Obama, Clinton would not have placated racial tension successfully. Moreover, through her tendency to alienate gay women from her idea of feminism and engender skepticism from minorities who felt as though she did not represent them, Clinton was not a true champion for women after all. Yet, her attempt to do so did not go unnoticed. In spite of the diversity that Barack Obama brought and Hillary Clinton would have brought to the table, a president's characteristics cannot ensure that said problems will be solved. When these tensions are appeased, then it will take a competent leader to maintain this progress. For that reason, a president should not be judged by what is on the outside, but rather his qualifications that make him fit for office.

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♦ Interdisciplinary Studies Program 255

HUMAN, I THINK NOT

MARCO GRAZIDE

“HUMANITY” IS MANKIND'S MOST FLAWED CONSTRUCT. The use of that all-encompassing word to define an entire species - a frustrating word so deeply and so eternally buried in us, is now an overused crutch to simplify what we think we are. As far as we know, only *Homo sapiens* have created a word so subtly and so needlessly complex. While the very fabrication of such a word seems to give evidence towards our “humanness”, it doesn't account for any possible existence of a superior, or even more “human” life-form. At its core, I take humanity to mean any characteristic we possess that is uniquely ours - sentience being the most highly regarded. What is uniquely ours beyond our creations? With our race becoming a vast network of collective consciousness, I believe we have outgrown our label of human beings. We are in the process of creating and becoming new entities entirely. For instance, brain-mapping will help develop a whole new organism, a consciousness without the limitations of biology. We are already in the process of becoming so much more than the word “human” could ever begin to define. As our own evolutionary path is destined to grow alongside the path of our technologies, we must break away a traditional perception of humanness.

The Assignment and the Writer: *Technology and Culture: Replacing Humans* culminated in a self-reflection essay in which students made and supported an argument reflective of the themes addressed in the course (questioning what it means to be human at a place and time when humanness is changing rapidly, and in some ways, being replaced). Students were asked to draw from course texts and the writing they produced throughout the semester to construct a paper demonstrating in-depth analysis, articulation of their own interpretations, and thoughtful reflection of others' ideas. Marco Graziade's paper met these requirements while making a sharp and insightful argument that synthesized and transcended course content.

– Professors James Christopher Head and Michael Blitz

Our species is constantly trying to learn its place in the universe. What are we? We are a race of such deep conflict. So much internal strife stems from our attempts to break away from animal instinct. People now feel they can be independent outcasts from society, determined to make successful lives for themselves. Bearing children can bring thoughts of horror to some, but sex and immediate gratification are deemed as treasures. If Homo sapiens had started thinking in this way further back on our developmental timeline, we would not exist. Society, reproduction, cooperation, cornerstones of man's survival on this planet are now being turned aside. We have evolved to a point in which our old instincts aren't needed anymore. In vitro fertilization has made it possible to reproduce beyond conventional methods. Our palates have adapted to so many varieties of flavors, that we are beginning to lose our poison detectors (i.e., as in our sudden appreciation of cilantro). It is becoming much easier to live than it once was. If we can alter basic laws of nature by choice, how could we ever be defined in such simple terms as human?

On a more identifiable level, our physical realm is dramatically changing. Hari Kunzru described how we are in many ways a cyborg consciousness. We have developed along with the machines we are creating, so are they made in our image or are we made in theirs? According to Kunzru (1997), we are increasingly treating our bodies as if they are "high-performance machines". We can sculpt ourselves through modern exercise and diet, honing our musculature to optimize us for certain tasks. We are utilizing technology to change our physical selves, thus speeding up the process of evolution. The vestigial finger bones inside of whale flippers point to millions of years of gradual change to best suit them for aquatic life. We've created flippers to attach to children's feet in order to make them swim faster. There is no doubt that the body modifications found in John Varley's *The Ophiuchi Hotline* (1977), are happening already. Sex changes are part of the common vernacular. Pacemakers are keeping thousands of people alive at this moment. Should those of us wanting sex changes or people with artificial heart valves be considered less human? They still possess the other qualities defined by "humanity", but they have been "enhanced" with the help of machines. If not, what are they?

Why are the machines we create the first things people turn against in order to justify our humanity? Are they not our creations? We made them to help us through life on this planet. Our inventions can be incredibly nuanced and complex, relating to us in ways we didn't think possible. I believe our creations are an extension of our species. They evolved from us, were molded by us. In a more basic thought, I cannot think of anything more symbolic of our species than an archetypical robot. We learned from our past, from our conception of how our own lives were created and we emulated it. We made something out of our machines to look like us, do things we can do, and eventually help us better our own lives. Nothing screams "human" more than a representation of ourselves in a machine. If people say that machines are far from "human", I whole-heartedly disagree. I believe that machines have the uncanny ability to project our own flaws back at us, and what is more human than to be flawed? When I look at a calculator for example, I see something we created in order to compensate for our brain's lack of processing power. I can look behind the facade of plastic and microchips to see the frustrated mathematician, spending hours toiling over a complex problem. We would not thrive without machinery. From the wheel, to the inner

workings of a NASA space shuttle, machinery has helped us push our evolutionary leaps much greater distances. Our cyborg qualities are helping to rapidly advance us as a species. The world is connecting in ways that early man would never have thought possible. From a network as vast as Facebook to something more personal like a text message, our planet is becoming so much smaller, with many points of view coinciding. It would be just wrong to say that Donna Haraway (1991) wasn't onto something when she was claiming we were part of a cyborg revolution.

We are in an amazing time. We are at the point where talk of the singularity - the point in which all our knowledge and history will blend with a new intelligent entity is now fathomable. We have the chance to transcend our previous limitations and be part of a new build. We have written warnings, tales of caution and fail-safes though. That's what makes this time so fascinating, we are getting ready for its inevitability. The choices we need to make, however, carry immense weight. Both James Barrat and Murray Shanahan, just two of the writers on the topic of the singularity, express their concerns and give advice for the impending shift. Barrat (2013) takes a gloomier approach as he is concerned that we will be powerless and may not survive an A.I. controlled world. Shanahan's view (2015) is a bit more practical, and showcases the moral dilemmas involved in artificial intelligence duplication and transhumanism. Fascinated by this, I imagine a day in which sci-fi becomes reality in which conventional humanists are at war with transhumanists. Harkening back to Kunzru and Haraway's beliefs (1997) that we are already cyborgs, an athlete who takes performance enhancing drugs could be considered, among other things, a transhumanist. They are fusing bio-technological advancements with their bodies. This is a touchy subject with people as it seemingly marks a line between old-fashioned "human" strength and lab-made "inhuman" fitness. The distinction isn't as shocking as people think. Athletes have surgery to repair torn tissue, and the end result usually ends in more muscle integrity than before. Transhumanism, then, is alive and surging in our society already.

Being human is to a dog being a dog. It is a name we came up with using our limited language skills to describe an entire species. While "humanity" is revered by most, its definition is quickly evolving- just like us. As we approach the singularity, the creation of a new species will mark the end of the "human" in the traditional sense. The evidence is all around us. We are all transhumanists and cybernetic organisms in some way, whether it be the phones practically attached to our bodies to the life prolonging surgeries being performed every minute. Looking towards the future, we will accomplish what we have set out to do, attempt to better our existence with the help of our technological creations. Whether we succeed, or fall prey to our own ambition, remains to be seen.

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♦ Anthropology 208
C.R.E.A.M.

UMMER ALI

URBANIZATION IS DEFINED AS THE SHIFT OF POPULATION to urban areas from rural areas, and the ways in which society adapts to that change. Humans, it seems, decide to be either homo politicus or homo economicus. Homo Politicus, focusing on the political, asserts that without politics nothing else can be done; political powers influence jobs, transportation, and the economy. By channeling energy into influencing and dealing with the political, one stands a better chance of improving the rest of society. Homo Economicus is focused on the economy, relating to the old saying *cash rules everything*. The economy influences everything: political powers make more money through the economy; jobs follow the economy, and with economic success comes power and progress in society. By comparing the examples of a rural village named Tar in Pakistan with the Brooklyn centered Pakistani community known as Coney Island, I will argue that human beings are more homo economicus than homo politicus. With Jane Jacobs' concept of innovation mentioned in her *The Economy of Cities*, I will show how changes and evolutions in the economy have influenced the focus on economic success. I will link this to globalization and the influence of American values on the traditional community, as evident in Lessinger's

The Assignment and the Writer: In Anthropology 208, students study urbanization and its relationship to immigrant populations and their collective experiences, and the constant tension between urban development and urban sustainability. Students discuss the varied ways in which a city becomes urban and the mechanism it employs to operate, function, and navigate the gentle space between human development, technological advancement, and environmental policies and ethics. For his final essay, Ummer skillfully navigates this complicated space between the immigrant person, his homeland and his new urban home. He engages urbanization through an examination of political economy—homo economicus and homo politicus. Ummer focuses on two sites (Tar, rural Pakistan and Coney Island, Brooklyn) to demonstrate the global correspondence between these two locations and how life, liberty, and global capital, are dancing partners.

– Professor Atiba Rougier

From the Ganges to the Hudson, to show how in certain aspects the American influence on Pakistani society has made the communities more focused on economic success than anything else. Economic success is valued to such a degree that by achieving it, an individual from the community assumes that economic success is followed by political power, social mobility, access to better transportation and education, and a better life.

Tar is a small village located a few miles from the city of Kharian. It's linked to many other small villages by the main road known as GT Road. The town itself is relatively small, having a few hundred residents, some say as many as a thousand, some say as low as five hundred. The town historically has been a farming town; many of its residents make their living by growing and then selling wheat, or by driving trucks. Many other residents rely on their relatives working in the cities or in the United States to send them money back to pay for basic amenities. The towns being interconnected by a main road hugely impacts how the individuals interact with one another, but also how information about jobs and economic success gets around. Coney Island on the other hand is an avenue that runs through south Brooklyn, the large Pakistani area runs about a 7 block stretch, from Beverly Road, all the way to Avenue I. This avenue itself is not very residential, but the streets that flow into the avenue house a large Pakistani community. These people mostly use the neighborhood as a shopping center, and as a community gathering area. They connect to their home culture here much as the Indians in Little India (Lessinger pg. 28), and in the same respects it serves as a center for many Pakistani's who are not from the area to congregate here and recollect about the home country. In addition to this there are many shops that offer employment, however most of the employment comes from further into the city. The residents and people coming to the neighborhood to visit use cultural centers such as mosques, butcher shops, and restaurants to talk amongst one another; topics often include politics, religion, food, the economy amongst other things. Both communities have one major thing in common, and that is the focus on economics. Both believe that with economic success will come success in many other facets of everyday living.

Coney Island has residents from different areas of Pakistan residing in its outskirts and within its borders. There are people from agricultural communities like Tar, but also those who come from big cities like Islamabad. The common link for both of these populations is simple, and that is that there is a demand for their labor."...developed countries like the U.S., which receive immigration, new industries and new technologies, have rapidly created new demands for workers."(Lessinger pg. 72). This is very much related to Jacobs concept of innovation; the idea that cities only come around if new work is added to old work and the division of labor is created (1969). Given the fact that cities have created specific jobs for specific types of people, a massive job market has appeared that is available to multiple skill levels. Pakistani immigrants realize that whether they are poor farmers who are used to physical labor, or doctors and accountants who have a specialized field, there is a demand for their labor within the states. These immigrants come to the United States in hopes of finding a better tomorrow with a fire in their eyes; a fire fueled by the pressure to succeed. For the immigrant there is nothing more valuable than economic success, it has been drilled into their heads since day one that

with money will come an easy life. This was not always the case; in its history Pakistan has leaned towards being an Islamic state. This would seem to imply that monetary goals and success be tossed aside in favor of religious virtue and connection to one's beliefs, however this has not been the case at all. Lessinger remarks in her text that, "Indian immigrants pride themselves on the ability to combine tradition with modernity and innovation" (Lessinger pg. 31). Pakistani immigrants also pride themselves on this ability as well, when making their journey to America they combine their traditional values and the pride of being from an Islamic community, with newfound American values based on economic success. The globalization of urbanization has manifested itself within the core values of these communities. The American dollar says "In God We Trust" written on the back, so this original push to be closer to Islam is now sparring with the new god of currency. This is showing itself in the American community every day, instead of going to the Friday *jummah* prayer, many individuals choose to work. They miss the early morning *fajr* prayer because they are exhausted from working all night, or because they have to get up early to go to work the next day. The community seems to have internalized the belief that with monetary success comes success in every other aspect of life. There are many common beliefs within the community one of them being that the government is run by money. Without the money flowing through it, nothing can be done, and no changes can be made. A second belief is that there needs to be more jobs. Many people argue that kids in the community aren't as religious as they should be, but that all seems to take a backseat to the focus on them being employed, and gaining economic success. The parents have worked their whole lives and migrated to America to provide them with a better opportunity for a future, and the kids would be foolish to waste such an opportunity. So while the estrangement from their religion is a constant point of conflict, more conflict arises from the lack of drive in pursuing economic success.

The residents are homo economicus; cash rules everything around them. The cash will bring their families better futures, political entities run on the cash, and religion even takes a backseat to economic ventures. At a certain point in Pakistan's history there was an issue brought up; Pakistan is not Islamic enough. Pakistan sought its independence as an Islamic country; Muslims were not getting fair treatment so they sought their own country (whether this was actually the real reason for the independence of Pakistan is highly controversial, some argue that it was just a competition to see who was stronger). As the innovation of the economy brought about global urbanization, this attention to Islamification seemed to take a back seat to the economy. There were innovations in the job field; the outsourcing of labor to Pakistan. Companies such as Nike outsourced its labor to Pakistan in order to raise their profit margins. This was only accomplished through the implementation of a global economy. Originally Pakistanis would not be involved in this field; they had ways of sustaining themselves whether it was farming, or working in a local sweatshop. As the global economy grew; individuals realized that there was more work out in the countryside working for American countries. They abandoned this old work, and saw the value in American employment. However a problem arose, there was no money being employed in Pakistan. These individuals were affected by the American dream of wanting monetary success, but were impacted with the Pakistani reality of poor wages and a stagnant economy. There was only one solution, and that

was to innovate. Bring the skills learned in Pakistan (as explained in the next paragraph), and take it to the global market. Religion all took a backseat to this; the pious values of Islam were discarded for the American values of cash. Again people missed prayers to work; people adopted the religion of the economy. Fridays were no longer a day off as they were in Pakistan, time was not spent at mosques learning about religion instead they were spent at work attempting to make money. Money would bring their families status; and it would implement them a sort of special religious status. They would be seen as successful because god wanted them to be. When people in America would invest into making money, they would always be sure to ask Allah for help. If they scorned the lord, or didn't pay enough attention to him then their economic ventures would dry up; they would lose that success that they so desperately crave. Religion was important, but economic success seemed to come first at times; homo economicus became a way of life.

Tar has gone down a similar path; money seems to be the focus of the rural village. Kids are taught two things; how to be religious, and to bring money home to sustain the family. The ideology behind this is that they are all very poor; all they have are their virtues and dreams. The dream to live a more American life, and this was caused by the mass migration to the states. Often times in order to prove that they made it Pakistani immigrants came back home and built houses for their families, bought land, or set up businesses to help those back home. Even if they weren't as financially successful as they could've been, they still did these things because the thought process behind the immigration was that; if you're in America you've made it. Much like the Indian's from Lessinger's text, if you did not succeed in America you were seen as a failure and looked down upon (1995). So the primary focus of the area (and areas similar to this) is to raise your kid to have good work ethic and values so when he migrates to find work he will succeed without any issues. Economics plays such a crucial role in Pakistani society; children are working from extremely young ages, starting as young as eleven or twelve. These children are being taught the value of hard work, and are also taught a diverse set of skills so by the time they are ready to provide for their family they have many avenues to walk down. A male child could be able to know how to paint buildings, drive a truck, lay bricks, graze cows, run a shop and take care of a mosque. Jacobs's concept of innovation mentioned above, also very much applies to Tar and other villages. The innovation of labor has created specialized fields; there is labor available for many different skill sets out in the global economy, Jacobs states on page 49, "Economies that do not add new kinds of goods and services, but continue old work, do not expand much nor do they, by definition develop". The division of labor part of this is very interesting because as industries have developed they have created demands for new types of labor. "...the work demanded its own divisions of labor... designing... making... packing... advertising..." (Jacobs pg. 56). Many industries developed like this and created a demand for labor, a demand that could not be satisfied by just the U.S. employees, but required a global playground. However this innovation has not just extended to labor, but to the value system as well. Pakistanis are more focused on being American than ever before. The innovation of the media has led a lot of American values seep into the small villages of Pakistan. This alongside American born Pakistani kids returning with the success of their parents has let the American ideal seep into Tar. They have

financial success, they have happiness, they have cars, they eat meat every day, and that is all do to being homo politicus. The focus on the economy has given them everything they desire and more, so Pakistani's have begun to focus on this as well.

The development of a global economy has created a demand for laborers. This pushes these future laborers to have a diverse set of skills so they may be able to bounce from job to job without problem. They have to be made to be successful by any means necessary; nothing can keep them from succeeding in the economy. All of these do not seem like big deals, but the income they can provide is necessary for the villagers to sustain themselves. There is very little income in the village; very few jobs come directly from Tar, and the residents recognize that. They do not push their kids to go into politics, or charity work and they even steer clear of religious work in many instances. They push them to make money; because cash rules everything around them. The money can persuade the police to look after them, it can open up shops for them, provide a better place to live, and help sustain the mosque. All other villagers look upon those who have monetary success in their families with envy; they are what everyone aspires to be. These "successful" people become the heads of the households, and very influential voices in the village; what they say probably goes. The focus on money has even gone into the education of children. Those lucky enough to afford a good education are taught English as a requirement. Many villager kids in Tar cannot afford this English education, but instead elect people in their families who speak English to teach their kids. English is the language of money, it is the language of success; if someone speaks English they are seen as being more successful, or having the potential to be more successful by the villagers and other Pakistanis. To sum all of this up it is simple; no need to focus on the politics because that's all irrelevant compared to money. Social aspects of life often gain traction from money, and the family is heavily segmented based on money. Those who make more are often seen as higher status, and have more sway in the family battle field. They hold power over other members in their family all related back to their income and success. In short, money makes all of these things work more to their favor, so why not focus more on being homo economicus?

Homo politicus plays an interesting role in Pakistani society, not as much in Coney Island, but very much so in villages like Tar. Historically Pakistan has had a very corrupt government. On the local levels this corruption runs wild. These governments are often very money driven and do not care for the needs of the individual, as long as the industry that sustains the area is making a substantial profit. This has led to the brick industries exploiting workers and locking them into life binding contracts that offer very little in compensation. Government work can be very lucrative, when I asked my grandmother what kind of job would be best for someone to have in Pakistan she said, ""government official". I asked why, to which she responded that they make a lot of money. Not from government but from every other thing and person that need their help. Pakistan has an interesting focus on politics, those who choose to be homo politicus are either going to be very corrupt, or run for the people like the Bhutto family. The Bhutto supporters have historically lost in favor of the corrupt, and have been murdered for their involvement. Those individuals who focus on being homo politicus have a lot to lose which is why that is a road very sparingly traveled. In addition to this people recognize that those in politics chase

money. So why not skip that process all together and go straight to chasing money? If they can control what the political figures are after, then they can manipulate them to their needs. They can control them, influence them, and make them bend to their favor.

Pakistanis are homo economicus. As the American system of urbanization has become globalized, so have its values and beliefs. No longer is the focus on the government because the government wants the same thing that the people want, and that is money. The innovation and division of labor has created specialized job fields and employment made ready for any individual who seeks it. This opportunity would not be present without the desire to succeed economically. This economic success is valued above everything, even the fundamental aspect of which Pakistan was said to have gain its independence on; religion. No longer do American Pakistanis take Friday off by any means, nor do they wake up early for *fajr*, they are more focused on the pursuit of cash. It will bring their families success, it will bring them happiness, and it will bring them stability. In a country that has been historically poor and struggling to breathe; homo economicus has been the escape. In the midst of all of this one thing shouldn't be forgotten, and that's why they do it. Every sunrise brings the reminder that there is a brighter tomorrow. The government doesn't help so why care, the only thing that helps is opportunity; opportunity that is provided by money. They have not chosen this path of homo economicus out of greed, but instead they chose it out of desperation. The daily goals and aspirations may have shifted but one thing remains consistent; and that's hope, the hope for a better tomorrow, the hope to escape the daily struggle that is life. Pakistanis leave their homes to escape the struggle, but a part of the country is running through their veins. This is the part that pushes them never to stop working, never to stop dreaming, and never to stop pushing for a better tomorrow.

♦ Literature 375

REAPERS

FATIME URUCI

DO ANY OF YOU KNOW what it's like to hold a scythe in your hands, to go through the motions of cutting grass and listen to the swish of the blade as it slices through weed (not weed as in marijuana; I have no anecdotal knowledge of that kind of weed, I swear)? Spending my summers on a farm in a third-world country whilst growing up has its perks, I guess.

When you're holding a scythe, you just feel very in control of your every movement with it. The black men in "Reapers" know of that same feeling; sharpening the blade on a stone and swinging it silently through the air are movements that are "a thing that's done". Cutting with a scythe feels very mechanical when you establish a rhythm for yourself, but it's really not as mechanical as a mower being driven through a field. The mower in this poem is uncaring of the fact that it cuts up a rat, and the narrator of the poem watches the blade continue on its way after the poor rat is hurt and left bleeding.

The Assignment and the Writer: Fatime Uruci wrote her deeply moving discussion board post in Literature 375: Topics in Twentieth Century Literature—American Modernism: Writing/Reading 1922. As the title of the course indicates, we were taking a close look at 1922, a "miracle year" of American modernism. Fatime wrote her post in response to Jean Toomer's "Reapers," a poem he includes in his groundbreaking book, *Cane*. The beauty and insight of Fatime's deeply-felt response can best be understood by reading Toomer's poem, as well.

– **Professor Adam McKible**

At face value, you could totally take this poem to be about industrialization and the impersonality of new technology and the industry surrounding it. However, being that this poem is found in *Cane* and has to do with the black south of the 1920s, there has to be something more to it. I'm sure everyone's interpretation of this poem would be slightly different - as poetry naturally allows that to happen - but the way I see it, it could be a reflection of continued repression in the South (and the North too, of course!). The mower is being driven along by horses. Both of these things are not human. The mower kills the field rat and doesn't bat an eyelash (not like it even can since, again, it's not human). Meanwhile, the black reaper knows his role, objective, and what to expect in the grass cutting business. He's very methodical in his movements. Taking these things in consideration with the framework that the rest of *Cane* gives us, and especially the short story "Blood-Burning Moon", you could infer that when man becomes machine or part of a machine, he can carry out oppressive and harmful acts towards others, losing himself in the process. The aftermath of the confrontation between Bob and Tom in "Blood-Burning Moon" is an example of that, as is the many other lynchings and Klan "conquests" that occurred all throughout the South.

♦ Sociology 308

RECIPROCITY AND RETRIBUTION: EXPLORING LANGUAGE AND VIOLENCE

RYAN HILL

ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to explore the language of violence, specifically as it relates to large-scale killing of human beings in the form of war, terrorism, and genocide. This is in response to Jock Young's (2007) book "The Vertigo of Late Modernity," where he argues that war and terrorism are forms of violence which reflect each other. The purpose of this paper is not merely to agree with Young's observations, but to go a step further by examining the language of massive violence such as war and genocide. The latter of which may be argued to be a final stage in what Martin Shaw terms "degenerate war" (2003:23-6). In this essay, case studies of dichotomizing and othering will be examined, with special focus on the War on Terror. The U.S. legacy of war will be explored in order to challenge our self-standing as a moral authority, and to argue that the language of violence is shaped by powerful, often barbarous, governmental bodies.

The Assignment and the Writer: In Sociology 308, the Sociology of Violence, students are encouraged to adopt a critical lens, in the sociological tradition of C. Wright Mills, when interpreting collective and systematic violence. Mills believed that good sociology begins by connecting one's personal experiences to larger social and historical structures and forces. In this assignment, students were asked to examine criminologist Jock Young's critique of conventional studies on terrorism by researching the development of terrorism in the popular and political imagination. Ryan not only meets the assignment's research requirements but effectively links his personal experience to the larger social context of the War on Terror. His paper is both theoretically grounded and passionately written, a difficult balance to strike in academic writing.

– Professor Sarah Salman

LATE MODERNITY AND THE LATE JOCK YOUNG

Jock Young was a distinguished Professor of Sociology and Criminal Justice in John Jay College and the Graduate Center, CUNY. *The Vertigo of Late Modernity* (2007) is one of his several major works which includes issues surrounding the paradoxes and contradictions of modernity. These terms will be familiar to post-modern or liquid-modernity thinkers, and the concepts are found throughout Young's work (2007). The author of this paper shares the same view; our understanding of "reality" is informed by language, which is a social construct. As such, the totality of our thoughts, ideas, and beliefs are socially constructed. This may more readily be understood by examining the justifications that humans give for horrendous treatment of other humans and the rationale behind mass killings, the subject of chapter eight in *The Vertigo of Late Modernity*, and the focus of this essay.

DISCLOSURE AND RATIONALE

The author of this paper is a veteran of the war in Iraq who was a member of Iraq Veterans against the War (IVAW). In preparation for analyzing Young's arguments, something became very clear: One may read a variety of noted authors and theorists and, while there is great value in that, still not truly grasp the absurdity and horrors of war without listening to those who experienced, and perpetrated, it firsthand. Esteemed war reporters relay to us the conditions on the ground, which may be sanitized by their presence; soldiers relay the instructions given to them when reporters are absent, instructions that the public would find hard to believe and result in things troops would rather forget. I argue that U.S. troops who took part in mass-violence, dehumanization, and destruction (and are now repentant) are a highly reliable source for those interested in grasping the human potential for savagery and/or the State's role in conditioning us for and justifying/ framing mass killing. My view is that disillusioned soldiers are the best choice for those interested in learning the harsh realities of war and its mirror image, terror. My hope is that you will be as generous as I have been in conceptualizing War on Terror veterans as true experts in this field.

9/11 AND IRAQ AS AN INTRODUCTION TO CONSTRUCTED, BINARY LANGUAGE

*What has been is what will be,
And what has been done is what will be done,
And there is nothing new under the sun.*
-Ecclesiastes 1:9 English Standard Version

In the lead up to the Iraq War (Initially Called Operation Iraqi Liberation), the American public was misinformed concerning the dangers of yellowcake, aluminum tubes, Saddam's role in 9/11, and weapons of mass destruction. Such dangers turned out to be make-believe, but Americans were in state of shock. Fears of another terrorist attack, combined with non-stop images of Muslims praying in mosques whenever the subject of terrorism was being discussed, legitimated the

invasion in the public's mind. Author Eric Louw analogizes these events to Plato's cave allegory in *The Media and Political Process* (2005:2). If there are similarities in the socially constructed words *barbarian* (terrorist) or *freedom fighter* (soldier), then there are certainly parallels between producers of terrorist propaganda videos and producers of pro-war news segments in the U.S.

In *The Vertigo of Late Modernity* (2007) Young points to non-objective, suspicious definitions applied to enemy forces by the West (150). Many samples of binary language are given in the context of justifying war. Examples include the offensive, wanton, and provocative behavior of the terrorist/other as compared to the defensive, focused, and responsive military actions of the West (Young 2007:148). In addition to these terms being used by both sides to describe one another, the back and forth has become predictable, circling around and repeating for many generations. Key ideas in the chapter include the challenging concept of seeing the world through the eyes of the enemy, wherein the West is a smug, monstrous killing machine that invades countries without provocation (Young 2007:171), and that the more-powerful state agent has the advantage of defining the conflict and opponent in the terms that are most beneficial. These are the terms with connotations of victimization or aggression, being civilized or barbaric, and having no other choice but to respond in kind.

Quickly resorting to violence is made more likely by the fact that there are many social injustices in the U.S. A natural response to an attack is to raise feelings of national pride through both valorizing oneself while demonizing some foreign "other" (Young 2007:155). We will see, however, that these heightened views of self, particularly as they pertain to the U.S. perception of our military actions as being justified, targeted, and following the rule of law, as largely imaginary. Young uses the "degradation in the corridors" (2007:160) of Abu Ghraib as a case study to expose this error in Western logic. The atrocities of the so-called "War on Terror", however, are by no means limited to the few news stories that made their way to Western news outlets. This revelation, along with disregard for the rules of war at a systemic level, and other insights that confirm what authors like Jock Young say about mass killing and othering, are confirmed by troops who have opened up about their experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan. Considering the perspective of those most intimately acquainted with U.S. combat training and operations, along with a brief history of Western racism, genocide, and issues in our criminal justice system, will yield three results. First, the inaccuracy of socially-constructed words surrounding State-sponsored violence will be elucidated. Secondly, the sense of moral superiority held by Western powers, which is used to justify giving meaning to such words, will be eroded, and finally, the concept of anti-terrorism having the same effect on civilian populations as terrorism will be revealed.

THE FAÇADE OF GENEVA CONVENTIONS TRAINING AND ROE

In the experience of this writer, the Geneva Conventions and rules of war are taught during basic training in a way that they are not conducive to learning,

internalized or retained. Recruits attend lectures about the Geneva Conventions, but only after days of sleep deprivation and the physically exhausting initiation associated with the first weeks of basic training. Indeed, the only way for many to stay awake during these lectures is to be placed in the up position of the pushup. This may be intentional, a way to report that the training is given while not jeopardizing the true purpose of basic training: to turn young people into obedient, efficient killing machines. Veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan report a similar situation regarding the rules of engagement (ROE), where instructions vary based on the presence or absence of reporters. These trends suggest that the behavior that is encouraged for U.S. forces in times of war are much different than the image portrayed to the outside world, both in terms of training materials presented to brand-new recruits, and instructions given during deployments. This is the first subject to be addressed in *Winter Soldier Iraq and Afghanistan: Eyewitness Accounts of the Occupations* (2008).

WINTER SOLDIER AND ROE

These dissidents are the most dangerous. They give us an alternative language, one that refuses to define the other as 'barbarian' or 'evil'..." Christopher Hedges (2002:15).

The Winter Soldier book represents a cross section of some 200 veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. The text is taken directly from hearings held at the National Labor College, in Silver Springs, Maryland between March 13th and 16th, 2008. Veterans who spoke at the hearing were stringently vetted before giving testimony (IVAW 2008:11). Many spoke about the killing of innocent civilians, torture, withholding medical aid, looting, taking trophy photos of the dead, and falsifying reports to make killed civilians appear as insurgents (IVAW 2008:7). They describe mass killing and the progressive loosening of ROE as a result of official policy. Author Chris Hedges has reported from over fifty war-torn countries and has won a Pulitzer Prize for reporting on terrorism. He states that "War exposes the capacity for evil that lurks within all of us" (2002 3). This is something that makes war difficult to discuss, and a reason for the speakers at Winter Soldier to be praised.

Sergeant Jason Lemieux of the United States Marine Corps. faced three separate deployments between January 2003 and March 2006. He states at the hearings that ROE were "gradually reduced to nonexistence" (IVAW 2008: 17). Instructions from company commanders became increasingly loose, from "kill those who need to be killed," to informing troops that those with red headscarves or black *dishdashas* were displaying hostile intent, and thus needed to be killed, to "everyone" on the street is an enemy combatant, and should be shot (2008:18). This is in keeping with Shaw's descriptions of degenerate war, where "the definition of the enemy is extended to civilians," and "killing is increasingly indiscriminate" (Shaw 2003:23-6). Sergeant Lemieux attributes his fellow Marines' ability to randomly shoot civilians to the combination of multiple deployments, resulting in layers of PTSD, and the rank-and-file enlisted troops simply following the example of commanding officers (2003:19). Sergeant Lemieux is one of many who testified about relaxed ROE and

subsequent bloodshed. Both war and terror could be described as “disproportionate violence against innocents” (Hedges 2002:8). Taking an outside view, as one who has witnessed destruction all over the world like Chris Hedges, may aid in recognizing that socially constructed terminology of violence, such as “freedom fighter” and “terrorist”, or “serial killer” and “sniper” are meaningless binaries which offer little explanation of their violence.

Another testifier, Corporal Jason Washburn, who also faced three deployments within the Marine Corps., recalls “...we were allowed to shoot whatever we wanted.” And “...there was really no rule governing the amount of force we were allowed to use...” (IVAW 2008:20). He tells a story that highlights our lack of understanding of other cultures and reveals the worst imaginable consequences of having a language barrier.

I remember one women walking by. She was carrying a huge bag, and she looked like she was heading toward us, so we lit her up with the Mark 19, which is an automatic grenade launcher, and when the dust settled, we realized that the bag was full of groceries. She had been trying to bring us food and we blew her to pieces (IVAW 2008:20).

As the four-day Winter Soldier event carried on, stories like these continued. Everyone agreed that ROE existed for the sake of the press and saving face. Multiple people spoke of what Young would call “anti-terrorism terrorism,” as in the dropping of 500lb bombs on civilian complexes, indiscriminate AC-130 Specter gunship fire, and rounding up hundreds of random civilians at a time for interrogation.

PRISON CONDITIONS NEAR AND FAR AND THE LANGUAGE OF WAR

The ‘war on terror’ is not altogether a war, and is not really being waged on terrorism. Torture, which it legitimizes, is a gangrene on democracy. (Todorov 2010:11)

Sergeant Andrew Duffy served as a medic at Abu Ghraib during his deployment from October 2005 through October 2006. During his service, the sign outside Abu Ghraib read “Winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people one detainee at a time” (IVAW 2008:85). Duffy gives a short testimony as to how hearts and minds were won. Of new captures he says, “They often came in by the truckloads because we would arrest any military-aged male in the vicinity of an incident” (IVAW 2008:85-86). Sergeant Duffy requested to transport a new arrival who, upon evaluation, had been denied desperately-needed insulin for an estimated five days. The man later died after being pepper sprayed and left in the sun; guards had mistaken diabetic shock for insubordination. Duffy testified concerning a cover-up in which superiors who consistently denied transportation and treatment were cleared of wrongdoing. In one of many stories that reveals the racialized perspective of

American forces, Duffy also tells of a blindfolded and handcuffed man who is thrown from the back of a truck face-down. The Sergeant who threw him said “You can’t spell abuse without Abu” (IVAW 2008:88). Stories like these confirm the arguments in David Moshman’s (2007) article *Us and Them: Identity and Genocide*. These include the concepts of socially-constructed roles of moral superiority for the aggressor and labels of inferiority being used for the victim. Contrary to popular belief, examples of prisoner abuse are not relegated to Abu Ghraib.

Just as the enemy is dichotomized and dehumanized as something grossly different and abhorrent, soldiers fighting for state interests are beatified and idealized for their heroic actions. Such mirroring techniques perpetuates dehumanization. An example of this, and further evidence of the language of war being at odds with the realities of war, can be seen in the following case. Specialist Michael Totten was deployed to Karbala, Iraq from April 2003 to April 2004. During this time, he served as a driver for a Major and a Lieutenant Colonel. One experience he shared includes taking trophy photos on ancient rubble in Babylon, an act that “displays our insensitivity to the people of Iraq” (IVAW 2008:63). He also describes beating handcuffed prisoners who were accused of ambushing his patrol the previous day, one in which a Corporal and his Lt. Col. died. He describes various people taking turns striking the accused and smashing their heads against the concrete wall. Totten, along with the rest of the Winter Soldier testifiers, state that this was a normal, everyday occurrence and happened in the presence of Non Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and higher leadership. His citation for a Bronze Star for Valor, which he tore in half while addressing General “cheerleader for the occupation” Petraeus (IVAW 2008:66), who awarded it to him, is indicative of military language that bends reality to fit the needs of the occupying state:

Totten’s team engaged enemy forces without regard for their personal safety, thereby removing the threat to women and children throughout the community...his unit restored order and control back to the region, while saving countless lives. His courage, bravery, and selfless service under hostile conditions reflects great credit on him, the 101st Airborne Division, and the United States Army (IVAW 2008:66).

This is language that soldiers like Specialist Totten, who witnessed and participated in the terrorist-like barbarism of illegal occupations cannot tolerate.

Winter Soldier testifiers routinely apologized for their role in the occupation. Based on their testimony, incidences of torture and prisoner abuse, such as those at Abu Ghraib, are anything but isolated events. Contrary to official reporting, veterans repeatedly state that this behavior was normal and condoned. Jon Turner, a Lance Corporal in the Marine Corps., was one of the 200 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans to testify at the event. Like Totten’s gesture, he theatrically removed a wide variety of medals, including a Purple Heart, as he renounced his service to the Marines. Turner mentions a few of his confirmed kills, along with the practice of taking trophy photos of the dead, and the use of “drop weapons” (IVAW 2008:24). Drop weapons take the form of items such as shovels or AK-47s with the firing pin removed, rendering them

useless, to place upon dead people to create the illusion of self-defense against an armed combatant. This illusion is beneficial in grasping the construction of labels that states apply to those they kill, such as *enemy combatant* or *insurgent*. Turner states that “Everyone sitting up here has these stories, and there’s been over a million troops that have gone in and out of Iraq, so the possibilities are endless” (IVAW 2008:27). The treatment of prisoners in Iraq, where U.S. troops have been conditioned to dehumanize and kill, should come as no surprise to those familiar with prison conditions in the U.S.

Recent reporting in the Miami Herald exposes that record numbers of inmate deaths are happening in Florida. Some correctional officers were found to be in the KKK and allegedly plotted murders on “pick a n---r Friday.” The Dept. of Justice is conducting hundreds of investigations in regard to 320 inmate deaths (Brown 2014). Examples of allegations against correctional staff include the death of Darren Rainey, a 50-year-old mentally ill inmate at Dade Correctional Institution who was confined to a 180-degree shower for two hours, and Bernadette Gregory, who relies on a wheelchair and was handcuffed, yet inexplicably found hanged. Another Florida inmate, Randall Jordan-Aparo, was killed through his cell being repeatedly gassed; his lifeless body was found with his mouth at the crack of the door, presumably gasping for air. This final example is reminiscent of the Nazi’s treatment of European Jews; the U.S. is, of course, not the only state power that has treated people cruelly based on socially constructed factors such as race or religion. The progression from dichotomization to dehumanization, and destruction (Moshman 2007) is not limited to the war on terror. In the build up to the attempted extermination of European Jewry, nice-sounding names were given to laws that were actually sinister. The dismissal of all Jews working in civil service positions was known as the “Law for the Restoration of Professional Civil Service Workers.” Other anti-Semitic laws included the “Enabling Act” and the “Law against the Crowding of Schools” which suspended civil rights and barred Jews from the public education system, respectively. These terms are more nuanced than previously-mentioned binaries and continue in contemporary America with such legislation as the “Bathroom Laws” of North Carolina.

Laws like these serve to legitimize dichotomization and bigotry and reinforce the notion that America may not have the moral authority to spread democracy (drop bombs, invade countries) in other parts of the world, actions that are very hard to tell apart from terrorism. America’s overcrowded and dangerous prisons, whose barbarism was recently exported during the war on terror, is a modern expression of our original sin, the African slave trade. The dehumanization and destruction of Iraq and Afghanistan should come as no surprise when considering America’s other great flaws, including but not limited to the genocide of Native peoples and utilizing technology for incomprehensible death in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is important to be on guard and familiar with binary code words in the early stages of war that may degenerate into genocide. Contemporary accounts of war call into question any state’s rationale to dichotomize and destroy the demonized “other” and reveal the underlying absurdity and hypocrisy surrounding the language of war.

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♦ Interdisciplinary Studies Program 334

JUBILEE

JASMINE GARCIA

I was 4 the first time my father called me a puta.
I was daydreaming about a boy and I wrote his name with a heart around it and he
saw it. He gave me until the count of three to get rid of it.
“Tres – a ti te voy a romper la cara
Dos – Tan Chiquita y tan puta.
Uno – Arrodiate cabrona!”
I ripped his name off the paper.
“Mas te vale.”
I remember looking to my mother for help but she ignored the situation altogether.
She was good for that. Ignoring me while I got my ass beat.
“Don’t hit her in the face.” Was all she would say.

The Assignment and the Writer: In ISP 334 *Sex, Gender, and Justice: Seeing Rape* students engage in a semester-long study of rape and representations of rape in film and theater and by reading plays, poems, memoirs, scholarly work in social science and law. As a final project, students write their own plays that incorporate rape. Jasmine's work is especially powerful because her first-person dramatic monologue not only describes abuse but also inhabits a poetic voice with power and beauty. It will break your heart as it simultaneously invigorates your spirit.

– Professors Barbara Cassidy and Shonna Trinch

I was the product of a 3rd date fuck.
“I wanted your mother to have an abortion.”
He told me the first time I tried to kill myself.
His version of, “you should live because I couldn’t kill you.”
I was my father’s greatest love and greatest disappointment.
His favorite thing to pick apart and criticize.
My mother, jealous of his love for me would add to the lesson my father called,
“beating the bullshit out of you.”
“Tu sabes lo que hico esta cabrona?” She would start and begin to exaggerate
whatever childish thing I did for the day.
Smack.
No questions.
No explanation.
I couldn’t speak up for myself. I couldn’t show emotion. Just gratitude for all I had.

My father was an “at least” man and my mother was his enabler.
“At least I don’t drink.”
“At least I don’t gamble the money away.”
“At least I take care of the house.” He told my mother after she discovered him
cheating for the 2nd time.
“At least I didn’t get her pregnant.”
Reminders that it could always be worse, so we should be grateful.

One day, I complained to my mother about him.
“He never says anything nice to me. He just says I’m dirty and fat.”
“If you’re fat, you’re ugly.” He’d say. “So here, drink this.”
Unsweetened grapefruit juice.
It was the beginning of Summer and I was excited to go to the park.
My father saw my 8-year-old body jiggle and decided it was disgusting.
I faked a sip and handed him back the bottle.
Rage flared up in his eyes as he shoved the bottle back into my mouth so hard, he
busted my lip.
I was now drinking grapefruit juice and my own blood.
“At least I care about how you look.”
“Dejate de mierda!” My mother responded. “You’re so ungrateful. Does he abuse
you? Have you ever gone hungry? Do you have clothes? So fucking ungrateful.”
I was never safe, even on the good days. When the night was calm and he was in a
decent enough mood, he’d still lean in and say, “Que dicen los mexicanos?
Chingona? That’s you. Always something.”

So, as soon as I could, I was OUT!
I was 20 years old and you couldn’t tell me shit.
I met a guy who was funny and fucked me good most nights and had his own place.
He was nothing like my father which was refreshing and I was nothing like my
mother which was a relief because that shit passes on.

Except, he wouldn't touch me in public.

"It's a privacy thing. At least you know I love you."

Ok.

Then, he wouldn't hang out with me. We didn't go out, we didn't hang out with friends or even go out to dinner.

"Are you hiding me?"

"How Ima hide a whole damn person? At least people know about you."

I guess.

One day, I got enough courage to say, "I need more love and affection"

"You're asking me to be someone I'm not. You're acting like I'm an asshole. At least I don't beat you!"

A little bit of love was better than nothing I suppose.

It's just who he is.

If he didn't love me, he wouldn't always beg for me to come back when I leave.

"At least I'm willing to help you." He said when he wouldn't let me go to therapy.

"At least one of us isn't crazy." When I found out I was pregnant.

"At least I claimed him." He said when he wouldn't stay in the hospital after he was born.

"At least he knows who I am." He said when he demanded less time with our son.

But at least he calls me baby

At least he comes home to me

At least he says he loves me

At least he holds me at night

At least he's gentle so it doesn't wake me up

It's not rape if he's gentle

It's not rape if he loves me

He doesn't beat me

He holds me sometimes

He'll come back because she's not enough

Why else would he always come to me?

When did we become women so comfortable with the bare minimum?

Starving for love so we accept the scraps they give us.

Begging for attention.

Begging for love from a boy who doesn't love women in the first place.

You like how I make your dick feel, babe, but you don't love me.

Do you know what love is?

Do you know what it looks like?

Doesn't matter now, it's no longer my problem.

That empty feeling you have, that piece you left behind when you nearly killed me is still dancing around my bedpost.

It's been over a year and the fucker is still trying to find his way back to the honey pot he called home.

"You have no place here," I tell it. "Go back to the East side with that bullshit."

But it stays.
That piece of you always stays.

I finally learned that respect was better than attention.
I no longer stood under the weight of your "love".
I had a voice and opinions and I learned that I am worth so much more than the
bullshit you were willing to give me.
"You're a cunt. Always have been."
I'll be that.
I have crashed and burned and come up as the monster you always claimed I was.
The whore you always accused me of being.
I am not your dirty secret.
I am not the crevice you find solace in when you're cold and the world was hard on
you.
You can no longer bury yourself in me.
I am not your fetish.
I'm not the big girl you fuck just to see what it's like.
I'm not the reason you made nothing of yourself but I will be your greatest regret.
Hell for you will be realizing that I was always your paradise.
I will creep into your ears as you sleep and sit quietly behind your eyes.
I will play theater director with your thoughts and replay beautiful memories you'd
rather forget.
I'll replay the last time we fucked.
It was so good, you cried and held onto my pussy to keep it close.
You'll wake up at 3 am in a cold sweat reaching.
For me?
For her as a default.

Put a.
I'll be that.
Cabrona
Chingona
Cunt
Fuck it, I'll be all of it if it makes me free.
¡Que viva las putas!
¡Que viva las chingonas y cabronas!
Big ups to the girls who were told they were too loud
Too bold
Too loving
Too Black
Too nappy
Too much
Too intense
Too sensitive
Too emotional
Too angry

Too hard
Too excited
Too honest
Or just too much of what made them uncomfortable.
You were just being yourself in a world full of people that were taught to change
who they were.
People who became dream killers.
People who secretly envied your exuberance.
We are Queens to those willing to see and accept our light, fuck the others that
don't.
Let them not see our light or magic, we still possess it.
We still rise every day from the chaos filled pillows.
Despair and tears leaving stains from the night before.
We kick ass and we raise hell.

Fuck my father for making me think at least was enough.
Fuck the elders for not loving my mother better.
Fuck my ex for seeing my light and dimming it every chance he got.
Fuck the witch hunters who fear us.
Real men don't fear witches, they worship us.

I am light.
I am fire.
I am the universe.
I am the sunlight that illuminates all your mistakes and insecurities.
I am my grandmother.
Bold and brave and took shit from no man.

I am not at least.
I am more.
I am all.
I am love and happiness.
I am the feeling you get right before you bust in her but think of me.
My time is too precious to be wasted and my pussy is too bomb to be fucked and left
out to dry.
There is a fucking jubilee between my thighs that is dripping pearls and diamonds
and smells of coconut and honey and you, my dear, are not invited.

♦ English 316

SOCIAL MEDIA, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND THE CONTROVERSIAL PRACTICE OF “CALLING OUT”

FATIME URUCI

STILL IN THE MIDST OF DEVELOPING, a highly complicated discourse is emerging around what has come to be known as “call-out culture.” A quick Google search of the term will lead you to a barrage of online articles and blog posts written in the last five years that aim to make sense of the term and the phenomenon behind it. A consolidated definition of the term is as follows: “call-out culture” refers to the act of “publicly naming instances or patterns of oppressive behavior and language use” (Ahmad); this practice is done in order to hold individuals and groups accountable for what they say or do and is something that is particularly prevalent with the rise of social media. The concept of “calling others out” for transgressions and holding them accountable is nothing new; it finds its roots in longtime acts of protestation and strategic organization against ideas, individuals, or groups that cause harm to other ideas, individuals, or groups. In the United States, this practice dates back to the American Revolutionary period and snakes its way up into modernity through the Civil War, civil rights and suffragette movements, other wars –WWII, the Vietnam War, the Cold War – Japanese Internment, the Red Scare, and most notably today, the Black Lives Matter movement and #NotMyPresident protests. It is interesting how in

The Assignment and the Writer: Written for English 316, Advanced Writing and Response: Theory and Practice, Uruci’s paper examines the controversial practice of “calling out” on social media individuals who voice prejudicial or oppressive views, in an attempt to hold them accountable for their transgressions. Uruci posits that while “call outs” aim to “initiate a form of restorative justice,” to change ways of thinking about social issues, they have become increasingly “retributive,” “promoting oppression and alienation.” Building on her nuanced examples, Uruci deftly concludes her argument by pointing out that banishing people from society for perpetuating harmful views is not conducive “to transforming the ideals” of societies at large.”

– Professor Livia Katz

discussing the roots of justice-based activism and mobilization, war is an immediate instance that comes to mind of the extent to which humans will go to defend what they perceive to be is right; with regards to “call-out culture,” often times it is the “social justice warriors” – a term that at its conception seemed complimentary, but now carries a negative connotation and is a “blanket insult” used to silence anyone who does not agree with your opinions – who wage all-out social media wars against individuals or groups that they deem to be problematic, based on said individual’s or groups’ words or actions (Sarkar). All “call outs” seek to do is to initiate a form of restorative justice, as opposed to retributive justice, through the medium of the web; however, instead of being restorative and initiating transformative dialogues to change ways of thinking about social justice issues, “calling out” repeatedly manifests in retributive ways. This is the issue with “call-out culture”: as practiced, it fosters an “us versus them” mentality, promoting oppression and alienation rather than open dialogue and positive engagement, as was originally intended.

Champions of “calling out” cite the “good” that it has the potential to do as the focal reason for allowing its perpetuation in the online sphere, despite the toxicity it often breeds. What is meant by “good” is its ability to encourage the education of offenders on why what they have said or done is harmful or offensive. Lucy Uprichard, journalist with the *Huffington Post*, writes, “Call-out culture might seem harsh, especially to those who have fallen foul of it, but it’s a necessary part of creating the best possible spaces we can. The internet is forever and with that comes accountability.” Giselle Au-Nhien Nguyen, writer with Australia-based web-news site *Daily Life*, gives a personal anecdote about the positive effects of “calling out”: she tells the story of a Facebook friend who reached out to her after many years of no correspondence to thank Nguyen for “calling him out” about a rape joke he made on the site years ago. “It was a bitter pill at the time,” he is quoted as having said, “but I really needed to take it” (Nguyen). He credits Nguyen with having transformed his way of thinking about rape and rape culture, much like Nguyen herself credits feminists she argued with during her university days with transforming her own thoughts about racism, sexism, and homophobia through “calling her out.” Personal anecdotes of transformation, like Nguyen’s, are typically the narratives proponents of “call-out culture” cite when defending their stance on it. However, these are not the only narratives that exist with regards to the phenomenon; some are much darker. To that point, Uprichard argues that while, yes, individuals who are being “called out” for their problematic behavior often experience disproportionate amounts of anger towards them as individuals, we cannot see these situations and reactions as being isolated from the world. “Mistakes may be made on an individual level, but they do not happen on a historically clean slate,” she writes; “When somebody is racist or sexist or transphobic or anything else - even just once - that is done in the larger context of a racist, sexist and transphobic culture” (Uprichard). The argument here is that by addressing problematic actions or statements by individuals in public spaces such as social media, we serve to open dialogues that foster inclusivity and promote education on a wide variety of social issues and opinions. This form of civic

engagement is perceived to be the greatest benefit of “call-out culture” and the paramount reason for its continuance.

Uprichard, Nguyen, and other supporters who agree with this particular opinion on the necessity of “call-out culture” raise highly valid, sensible, and legitimate points. Why should we continue to allow oppressive ideologies – whether they be racist, xenophobic, bigoted, ableist, classist, anti-Semitic, sexist, or religious imperialistic – to grow? The answer is that we should not; however, the way that we are going about addressing these problematic ideals is clearly problematic in and of itself, and we cannot ignore the harm “call outs” cause in our justifying of the practice, choosing to overlook said harm in favor of the “good” that they have the potential to do. “Call-out culture” is, more often than not, hostile, and there are a myriad of examples of individuals whose entire lives are thrown out of order as a result of being “called out” on social media such as Twitter, Facebook, or Tumblr for behavior they have showcased. In 2013, technologist Adria Richards posted pictures to Twitter of two men whom she observed making lewd jokes at a tech conference; she was “barraged by fusillade after fusillade of vicious online harassment that ultimately drove her from her home” (Cross). Some of the forms of harassment she faced included credible death threats, photo-shopped grotesque images and pornography, attacks against her employer and her startup’s customers, constant web surveillance, and losing her job (Cross). Years later, she still faces this kind of harassment from individuals unable to relent on their attacks against her. Justine Sacco, who, about to embark on a trip to South Africa tweeted a racist joke about AIDS, experienced a similar kind of backlash (Testa). Sacco became a memorable hashtag and a punchline, #HasJustineLandedYet, and her tweet spread like wildfire, her picture and her name now becoming the identifiable markers of a racist individual (Testa). Sacco’s job and stability were also pulled out from right under her feet. Famed Nobel laureate, Tim Hunt, and his wife, immunologist Mary Collins, were similarly forced into an upheaval of their lives after his off-the-cuff remarks about women scientists during a visit to Korea were publicly ridiculed (McKie). Both were made to resign from their positions at the University College London, Hunt having also been removed from the European Research Council’s (ERC) science committee in lieu of the situation. “I am finished,” he is quoted as having said, “I have been hung to dry by academic institutes who have not even bothered to ask me for my side of affairs” (McKie). One student of his, scientist Dame Athene Donald, described the situation as being sad: “During the time I worked with him, he was always immensely supportive of the ERC’s work around gender equality... he has worked tirelessly in support of young scientists of both genders” (McKie). The experiences of Richards, Sacco, and Hunt are true testaments to the negativity that “call-out culture” at present breeds and, perhaps, thrives in. They are also examples of the extent to which people will go to ostracize from society those who make mistakes, much like we do to incarcerated individuals.

Everyone makes mistakes and instances such as these are not rare by any means. They have facilitated the growth of academic scholarship in relation to social media and its effect on the ways in which people interact with one another. Punitive measures taken against individuals who are “called out” for perpetuating harmful speech or ideologies through their actions have the effect of completely banishing those individuals and casting them out from society, painting them as “others.” This

is not conducive by any means with regards to transforming the ideals of societies at-large, societies that both the social media vigilante and the ostracized individual belong to. Such behavior may have even contributed or given rise to the growing hostility towards minorities and disenfranchised peoples in the American Mid-West, whose citizens rallied behind president-elect Donald Trump's clearly problematic campaign rhetoric because it justified and encouraged that echo-chamber of thought, one that vilified politically correct language and the liberal left's tendency to make use of "call-out culture" to demean said citizens for their problematic views on social justice issues. Nguyen writes that it is essential to "remember that 'aggression' is often a by-product of the repetitive force of oppression" and that "call-outs" "allow the oppressed to protect themselves from everyday language, actions and microaggressions that threaten their safety"; however, Maisha Z. Johnson, writer for *Everyday Feminism*, argues that while "calling out" stands up for people who are harmed, "if it includes shaming, isolating, and punishing the people responsible for causing harm, it also just repeats the same tactics of the systems of oppression we're trying to move away from." Let's make this clear: "call-out culture" is the problem; social justice is not. Yes, "no oppressed group owes the privileged an education," as Nguyen states, but, if this is the mentality that all individuals, either oppressed or privileged, choose to take, then who will be left to work towards reducing and hopefully eradicating the oppression that exists in the world for future generations? As Ngoc Loan Tran writes for *Black Girl Dangerous*, it may be possible to have multiple tools, strategies, and methods exist simultaneously that will cultivate the growth of restorative ways of dealing with problematic behavior as opposed to the tried-and-true retributive methods: "It's about being strategic, weighing the stakes and figuring out what we're trying to build and how we are going to do it together." Asam Ahmed, writer for *Briarpatch Magazine*, shares similar sentiments: "reminding ourselves of what a call-out is meant to accomplish will go a long way toward creating the kinds of substantial, material changes in people's behavior – and in community dynamics – that we envision and need." "Calling out" should not be a negative act, even though it is practiced in negative ways, and the culture of "calling out" needs to transition from being a practice that calls others to action, while at the same time fosters inaction, to becoming a real instrument for the change that it associates itself with.

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♦ Literature 305

FAMILY, LAW, AND POLITICS IN *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE* AND *CYMBELINE*

 ANNA SHAKOVA

IN BOTH *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE* AND *CYMBELINE*, Shakespeare intertwined his themes of family life and legal matters. While for *Cymbeline*, the fate of an entire country is at stake, as well as an impending war, the legal and familial matters dramatized in *The Merchant of Venice* are on a relatively smaller scale. That being said, the outcome of Shylock's trial decision could have ramifications that disrupt international trade in Venice. Both of these plays were anchored in historical contexts: *Cymbeline* is based on the rather sparse history of the British king Cymbeline, and *The Merchant of Venice* tackled the contemporary issues of the treatment of Jews within Christian cities and their interactions with Christian merchants. But the legal entanglements so central to the historical narrative are not presented without a parallel plot involving more personal matters. Within these plays, Shakespeare comments on the politics of noble or wealthy households by focusing especially on the relationships of fathers and daughters, and he alerts the audience about how these household matters can easily filter into the legal and public world.

The Assignment and the Writer: To fulfill the research requirement of LIT 305 (Foundations of Literature and the Law), a core course in the English major, students were asked to compare a work we read in class with another of their choosing. Anna Shakova's paper is a penetrating analysis of the political and legal implications of the family dynamics of daughters of powerful men. Arguing that the political, legal, and familial threads all come to a crisis around marital choice, Ms. Shakova shows how the marriages of three headstrong women in *Cymbeline* and *The Merchant of Venice* were shaped by father-daughter relations and how, in turn, the married daughters shaped the political destinies of Britain, Rome, and Venice by affecting male legal maneuvers.

– Professor Toy-Fung Tung

In *Cymbeline*, family matters are crucial to the rest of the country, simply because the central family of the play happen to be the rulers of Britain. When the play opens, Cymbeline is estranged from his daughter, Imogen, because she has married a commoner, Posthumus, and thwarted the Queen's plot to get her married to Cloten, the Queen's son and Cymbeline's stepson. During this crisis, the Queen and Cloten manipulate a political moment that forces the country into war. Caius Lucius comes on behalf of Augustus Caesar to ask Cymbeline to pay his tribute. Cloten intervenes before Cymbeline can say anything, claiming that "Britain's a world /By itself, and we will nothing pay /For wearing our own noses" (3.1.14-16). He argues that since they are a self-sufficient state, they don't need to pay someone else in order to keep governing themselves. At this point, the Queen decides to add that Julius Caesar's great boast that he "came, and saw, and overcame" is not quite the truth of what happened all those years ago (3.1.27). She mentions that Caesar's victory did not come so easily, and "he was carried /From off our coast, twice beaten" as a result of the Roman ships' inability to compensate for the "surges" that ended in their "[cracking] . . . easily 'gainst [the] rocks" (3.1.28-33). Even though this information comes from the Queen, who has already established herself as a liar, it appears that she credibly and "directly challenges Lucius' version of history" (Clinton 302). The information that the Queen provides in this moment "corresponds on several points to Caesar's own memory of his efforts to subdue Britain" (Clinton 303). This moment is not just a fiction that Shakespeare has the Queen present as a further manipulation of Cymbeline, but an alternative version of history. The winners always write the historical record, but Shakespeare had access to Holinshed's version, which "goes further than Caesar in emphasizing the Roman difficulties with subduing Britain" (Clinton 303). Clinton notes that it is possible that Shakespeare wanted to present another idea about what happened, from Britain's nationalist perspective. Thus, he decided to introduce it via the character of the Queen. Because she is an evil, manipulative liar, one could easily dismiss her words as more of the same, but, in this case, she might be presenting a different version of history—a version that would need to be proved true in battle. Of course, Cymbeline is convinced by her words and by Cloten's boasting about the military might of Britain, and he decides that he would rather go to war and prove his strength than pay the tribute.

Likewise, in *The Merchant of Venice*, family matters prompt Shylock to pursue legal action against Antonio once he hears that Antonio's "argosy cast away coming from Tripolis," and as a result, Antonio has no way to pay back the debt he incurred for the sake of Bassanio (3.1.100). When Shylock first makes the loan to Antonio and secures it with a pound of Antonio's flesh, he says he does this for "merry sport" and "friendship" (1.3.156 & 180). At that point, Shylock seems to have no intention of collecting such a bond, but lends this way because Antonio, as a Christian, can neither borrow nor lend for profit. What changes Shylock's mind? One possibility is that Shylock blames the Christians for ruining his relationship with his daughter, Jessica.

Shylock is never portrayed as a particularly doting father, and he does not pay much attention to Jessica's emotional state. Consequently, he did not realize that his preoccupation with his job might be detrimental to his relationship with his daughter. Remember, that they are living in Venice, where there is no Jewish community. So,

when Shylock tells Jessica to be wary of the Christian masque going on outside, she outright ignores him. His “opposition to revelry, music, and romance have made Jessica all the more determined to enjoy them,” and she rebels against her father by getting involved with exactly all of these (Hamilton 46). Jessica dislikes the somber life that her father forces on her; she is young and wants to enjoy herself. As part of this rebellion, Jessica falls in love with a Christian, Lorenzo. She decides to run away and elope with Lorenzo, while stealing some of her father’s money in the process. Lorenzo’s friend and fellow nobleman of Venice, Bassanio, does not just approve of her decision, but gives her an opening to make her escape by inviting her father to dinner. Once Shylock realizes that his daughter has run away with his money to marry a Christian, he is understandably angered.

Two of Antonio’s friends make fun of Shylock’s grief, and claim that Jessica couldn’t possibly be his daughter since “[there] is more difference between . . . [their] bloods than there is between red wine and Rhenish” (3.1.38-41). They take on the “role of tormenting the old man when he is down” to show just how little the Christians in Venice care about him as a human being (Hamilton 47-48). No one cares that Jessica betrayed her father’s trust, because he is just an alien in their community. Actually, they find her someone to admire for her bravery to run away and convert. At this point, Shylock is also informed by Tubal, a fellow Jewish banker, that Jessica has been decadently enjoying her honeymoon with her husband with the diamond worth “two thousand ducats . . . and other precious, precious jewels” that she stole from her father (3.1.86-87). She also pawned her mother’s engagement present to Shylock for a monkey (3.1.118). This moment is particularly painful for Shylock, and his comment about not “[giving] it for a wilderness of monkeys” alerts the audience to the depth of the betrayal he feels (3.1.121-122). Shylock truly loved Leah, but Jessica easily throws his memento of this love away. The money she spends without reserve, and the money that Shylock is spending trying to find her, as well as the simple fact of her betrayal, all push Shylock to seek his revenge elsewhere. He sees Jessica’s betrayal as a national, not just familial event and says, “The curse never fell upon our nation till now, I never felt it till now” (3.1.85-86). If Shylock cannot find his daughter, then he will be satisfied “with the heart of [Antonio] if he forfeit,” for with Antonio out of the way, he will be free to lend out money in Venice as he wants without interference (3.1.126).

When news of Shylock’s decision reaches Bassanio, he goes to attend the trial to seek mercy from Shylock if he can, and if he cannot, then he wants to be there for his friend when he dies. Since this news came shortly after Bassanio won Portia’s hand in the casket contest, she decides to get involved in secret. Portia sends Bassanio away to be with Antonio at his trial, since she knows that “a marriage founded on the suffering of his ‘dearest friend’ would be doomed to fail,” and then she proceeds to cross dress as Balthazar and play Antonio’s lawyer (Hamilton 131). While living as the mistress of her own house, Portia has proven again and again to be capable of being in charge and staying “tactful and politic,” and she continues to show evidence of her cleverness (Hamilton 129). Not only does Portia then find a technicality in the bond that means Shylock can only take his “pound of flesh” as long as he does so without a “jot of blood,” but she also brings another up another law against him (4.1.319-320). This law states that “[if] it be proved against an alien /That by direct or

indirect attempts /He seek the life of any citizen,” then his material possessions will be confiscated, and he will be subject to execution at the Duke’s discretion (4.1.364-366). Even though Jews resided in and were an important part of the economy in many cities across the European continent, they “found little sanctuary anywhere in Europe,” since religious differences prevented the Christian and Catholic populations from accepting them (Kitch 134). Even though Shylock was a permanent resident in Venice, with a home and an established business, he was still an outsider and not a citizen. Jews, furthermore, were generally prohibited from bringing their families to the European cities where they worked (Kitch 136). But not only did Portia and the Christians invoke this law against Shylock, Antonio grants Shylock the use of the property Shylock forfeited to him, provided that he convert to Christianity. As a result, Shylock was completely deprived of his entire identity as a Jewish banker, for as a Christian, he would no longer be able to practice usury.

Even though the legal matters of *Cymbeline* and *The Merchant of Venice* are not very near each other in scale—one deals with the declaration of war, and another with a lawsuit over a bond—they are still both extremely important to the futures of both Britain and Venice, respectively. For *Cymbeline*, the outcome of the battle against Rome could prove to be problematic. *Cymbeline* involved not only the governments of Britain and Rome in this argument over tribute, but the people. They are the ones who have to fight. Since Shakespeare had to adhere to the real *Cymbeline*’s decision to continue paying the tribute, after he won the battle, he became “far more magnanimous than . . . depicted in the chronicles” and decided to continue peaceful relations with Rome and pay the tribute (Clinton 310). On the other hand, Shylock’s court case is important for Venice, because the economy of Venice “depends in many ways on Jewish commerce” (Kitch 149). If the Duke claimed the bond to be void simply because it put a Christian in danger, then the other Jews living in Venice would no longer be as likely to stay, since they would have evidence that the Venetian government is biased against them. Also, international commerce would be threatened, because no one could rely on Venice to enforce contracts. This would risk “the lifeblood of the Venetian republic,” and the Duke would be irresponsible in making such a decision to save the life of one man (Kitch 149). The political and social crises of both plays were prompted by family matters. For *Cymbeline*, the decision to go to war was instigated by his wife and stepson, while Shylock went to court against Antonio because of his daughter’s rebellion. Portia’s decision to cross dress and get involved in the court case came from Bassanio’s loyalty to his friend and her desire to prevent Antonio’s death from being a future problem in their marriage.

Both plays have private events that take place in the public eye. The problems of royal families are particularly difficult to keep out of public knowledge. In *Cymbeline*, the very first scene consists of two gentlemen discussing the current affairs of the royal family, namely the unsanctioned marriage of Imogen to Posthumus. Though Imogen was supposed to marry her stepbrother, Cloten, she had instead fallen in love with the orphan that her father raised: Posthumus. Posthumus grew up in *Cymbeline*’s court after the rest of his family died because of their military service to the crown. His father was “Sicilius, who did join his honor /Against the Romans with Cassibelan” (1.1.34-35). Not only did the people of Britain know that

Imogen defied her father by marrying Posthumus, but they approved of her decision. The big decision of Cymbeline to go to war with the Romans was most certainly public information, because he had to gather together an army to fight against the invading forces. In the very beginning of the play, the information of the disappearance of Imogen's brothers was also public knowledge. The same gentlemen who discussed Imogen's marriage also brought up the information about her brothers, that they were "from their nursery . . . stol'n, and to this hour no guess in knowledge /Which way they went" (1.1.67-69). And their reappearance in the court is certainly an important, historic moment for the citizens of Shakespeare's version of Cymbeline's Britain. Similarly, Portia's predicament with the game of caskets is also public knowledge. Otherwise, how would the Prince of Morocco, the Prince of Arragon, and Bassanio know how to go to her and attempt this game? Bassanio tells Antonio of his intentions to try this contest for "[i]n Belmont is a lady richly left," and the ambiguity of his statement is important (1.1.168). He uses the name of her estate to identify her, and this is enough to establish her as a noblewoman and a woman of means. Later on, the trial is a matter of public knowledge, too. Shylock holds the fact that the economy of Venice "depends in many ways on Jewish commerce" over the Duke, so he cannot simply absolve Antonio of responsibility (Kitch 149). If the Duke appeared to be biased in a way that was harmful to the ability of Jews in Venice to conduct business, then they would take that business elsewhere, and the Duke knew that. He was put in a precarious position as a result. In both plays, the lives of nobles are very much on display for the rest of the citizens to see. Even though the private matters of *Cymbeline* and *The Merchant of Venice* are different in scale, the public repercussions of family decisions are not.

The public resolution of the family problems in the lives of nobles is not the only important aspects of the plays. The father-daughter relationships are extremely important to the plots of both. In *The Merchant of Venice*, the relationship between Shylock and Jessica and her betrayal bring about an important episode in the play: Antonio's trial. Their family relationship is anything but pleasant. She wishes to have fun and enjoy herself, but her father finds "revelry, music, and romance" abhorrent, and Jessica is not allowed to live her life according to her wishes. (Hamilton 46). Instead, Jessica is "caretaker of his possessions, acquiescer in his prejudices," and she just nods along to all he says, only to run away with his money and marry a Christian (Hamilton 46). In the play, Shylock does obviously trust her, and leaves his household and keys in her control for his evening out, even deciding to "[confide in her] . . . his motive for attending the supper," which makes her betrayal all the more heartbreaking for him (Hamilton 45). But in that scene where he was interacting with her, there was no evidence of a happy relationship. She is just there as a means of carrying out his wishes, and all he does is warn her against the moral evils of the Christians that they live among. When she says her final goodbyes to her home, she hopes not to be caught, so that she "[has] a father, [he] a daughter lost" (2.5.58).

While Jessica does not feel anything, Shylock is shocked by her running away. For him, her decision to steal his money to finance her decadence is even worse. Jessica's decisions in the play had an important impact on the plot. Her betrayal pushes her father into a legal battle that he ultimately loses. In the end, it is difficult to say if she will benefit from her decision to run away and convert for the sake of love.

Towards the end, when she and Lorenzo “begin a contest in verse on lovers who also enjoyed such an idyllic night,” their instinct is to reference stories of failed relationships (Hamilton 52). Even though she takes part in this conversation as a fun way of passing time, “the tenor of the allusions is ominous” and alerts the audience to the idea that maybe their love is not as perfect as she first thought it to be (Hamilton 52). Lorenzo loves her, and he brings her into the circle of Venetian nobility, but there is a strain on their relationship from outside forces. Nobody really speaks to her except for Lorenzo and the servant Lancelet, who used to be in her father’s service. Despite her conversion, Lorenzo’s friends do not readily embrace her; she is still just a Jew.

On the other hand, Portia seems to have had a good relationship with her father, and even flourished under his care, unlike Jessica. While he forces her to be the prize in a contest for her hand in marriage, in a way he is trying to protect her and the money she inherited after his death from “the [suspect] motives of any suitor” (Hamilton 127). Portia harbors no real ill will towards her father—she mostly complains about the inadequacy of her suitors—even if she dislikes the stipulation of his will. And though she “is frustrated by her situation,” she still ends up the victor of this game (Hamilton 127). The Prince of Morocco and the Prince of Arragon, both of whom she finds fault with, fall for the trick and choose the gold and silver caskets, respectively. Even though she wanted to tell Bassanio that the lead casket contained her picture, she was still loyal to her father. Although he was dead, she decided against telling, because then she would be “forsover. /So [she] will never be” (3.2.11-12). Yet there seems to be another reason: “she believes in the efficacy of the test” and agrees with the idea of marrying someone who deserves her (Hamilton 129). Still, she does give Bassanio some helpful hints that he is her preferred suitor, even with all of his debts. She wants someone who will make her happy and is “handsome, gallant . . . charming;” and money is not an issue at all, since she has so much of it (Hamilton 128). The relationship that Shakespeare hints at between Portia and her father is supportive and helps her in the long run. Unlike Jessica, Portia concedes to her father’s will and benefits by her relationship with him. She is smart and has no problem using her cultivated talents of being “politic” to give herself an advantage over the men in her life, in both the game for her hand and in the court case (Hamilton 130). Also, it is thanks to Portia that the trial was resolved in Antonio’s favor. Without her, the men were at a loss for getting Antonio out of his legal obligation. Jessica’s rebellion, on the other hand, lands her into a life that she might not have wanted.

Similarly, Imogen’s role in *Cymbeline* prompts both a problem for the plot, and a solution. When we are first introduced to Imogen, she is under house arrest for resisting her father’s and stepmother’s plan to marry her to her stepbrother, Cloten. Instead of choosing “a marriage that is morally and personally repulsive but prescribed by duty,” Imogen opts for a marriage based on love to Posthumus (Lander 173). Posthumus is not of royal blood, but the people of the land approve of him as royal in character (1.1.49-52). Cloten is far from a good match: he is characterized as a coward, gambler, and braggart, and only really wants to marry her “to have gold enough” to feed his gambling habits (2.3.8-9). On the other hand, Posthumus is honorable and loving, and the people of Britain support her decision, because “her own price /Proclaims how she esteemed him; and his virtue /By her election may be truly read” (1.1.57-59). The question of Imogen’s chastity and how it is intertwined with

nationalism is of paramount importance to the play. Traditionally, in order to be considered chaste by the confines of the early modern period, Imogen would have had to be a loyal daughter and marry Cloten as was required of her. But her decision was ultimately better for the whole of Britain in her role as a princess, not as a daughter. As a result of her decision, her relationship with her father is strained. Though they love each other, he genuinely believes that her marrying Cloten would be best for the kingdom. She was raised in an environment that coddled her and never challenged her. Imogen was given everything she wanted, so the moment that she was forced into something unpleasant, she did what she wanted, anyway.

The question of Imogen's chastity is repeatedly addressed throughout the play. Iachimo convinces Posthumus that Imogen is not chaste, by presenting him with three falsified pieces of evidence. But even in the scene where Iachimo is gathering this evidence, Shakespeare questions the representation of Imogen's chastity. Even in her bedroom, which is decorated to mimic the style of the popular "bedroom decorations" that would "[boast] themes that 'morally instructed their occupants'" (Peggy Munoz Simonds as quoted by Barret 450), Shakespeare included a "tapestry of silk and silver, the story /Proud Cleopatra when she met her Roman" (2.4.86-87). This moment in *Antony and Cleopatra* is one of seduction. The tapestry directly contrasts with the "chimney-piece [of] /Chaste Dian bathing," which references the story of Actaeon happening upon her and watching her bathe (2.4.101-102). Barret argues that this chimney-piece could actually be interpreted as seductive, as well. And it is through this particular image of Diana that Iachimo confuses the truth of the "actual chaste Imogen and the unchaste Imogen that [he] fabricates" (Barret 451). Though the audience knows the truth of what happened in the bedroom that night, Imogen's reputation is sullied in the eyes of her husband, because she has been seen by the lustful eyes of Iachimo, acting like Actaeon.

As a result of Iachimo's lie, Posthumus directs Pisanio to kill Imogen, but Pisanio believes in her more than her husband does, and instead helps her. After this, Imogen goes on a quest to win Posthumus back, and also to discover her true self. Her quest is a driving force of the plot. In the process, she vindicates her chastity and preserves the integrity of the nation. Imogen's experiences with Pisanio and then her brothers lead her to become "wise, thoughtful, and self-aware" (Lander 177). At the end, Imogen's decision to ask Iachimo "[of] whom he had this ring" spurs the different subplots of the play to unravel themselves (5.5.165). As the play closes, Posthumus' decision to forgive Iachimo inspired Cymbeline to befriend the Romans once again and pay the tribute. Imogen's rebellion "effects the moral cleansing of the court," and her decisions help pull the play to a happy conclusion (Lander 174). Once everything is revealed, Imogen is able to reconcile with her father, and he accepts her marriage to Posthumus. In a way, Imogen's story is a combination of Jessica's and Portia's. Imogen had to rebel in order to marry the person whom she truly wanted to marry, but her story is a romance and not a tragedy because she is able to reconcile with her father. He directly, unlike Portia's father and Jessica's father, approves of her husband, and the story is able to have a happy ending. In the case of Jessica, the little the audience sees of her marriage does not bode well, but for Imogen, everything seems to end on a high note, as for Portia. In Shakespeare's plays, the relationship of the daughter with her father, and, by extension, with the community, is extremely

important to a happy conclusion, for a happy marriage betokens a happy kingdom (Hamilton 8), while an uncertain marriage signals more strife. An important aspect of family life is its image reflected in the public sphere. That image must be maintained in order for their societies to function. While the legal entanglements resulting from family conflicts in both plays threatened the viability of Venice as a capital of trade, and of Britain as an heir of Rome, the happy reconciliation of the daughters' desires with their fathers' wills, in the cases of Portia and Imogen, restored the polity to wholeness.

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♦ Literature 372

SAMSON AGONISTES: THE TRAGEDY OF A WORLD WITHOUT GOD

SU TING WANG

JOHN MILTON'S *SAMSON AGONISTES* has long been a work of discussion amongst literary critics and scholars, namely the debate over Milton's intended interpretation of Samson's final act in his poem. Stanley Fish argues that Milton had written *Samson Agonistes* to promote action based on faith and "inadequate information" (431), while Michael Bryson contends that the work promotes atheism and doubt of God's existence (138). Their conclusions are polar opposites, but an examination of their arguments in comparison to one other demonstrates that Fish's points advance Bryson's argument despite his conclusions. Rather than an affirmation of God's existence, the poem questions Samson's final act and conveys the sense that God is not present. The failure to realize the absence of God is the tragedy in *Samson Agonistes*.

The Assignment and the Writer: Su Ting Wang wrote her essay for LIT 372: Early Modern Literature, a "Historical Perspectives" course for English majors where they learn to read literature in the context of a distant time period. The assignment asked her to engage with a contemporary critical debate over the interpretation of a literary text. Su chose a difficult poem, John Milton's tragedy *Samson Agonistes*, and an important controversy: Does the text endorse the biblical character's final act of mass slaughter? Her response went beyond the basic expectations of the assignment, eloquently engaging with a number of literary critics and providing her unique answer to the problem of the character's free will and his relationship to a god he feels inspiring him but that we in the audience never see or hear.

– Professor John Staines

Fish's and Bryson's analyses also give a sense of *interpretive multiplicity* within *Samson Agonistes* where Milton seemingly gives several strands of thought within the poem to understanding Samson's final act. At the same time, the poem is like an open forum, both the reader and the characters within the poem, including chorus, are constantly giving their own interpretation of Samson's actions and God's will. Each has their own belief, but at the center of their arguments is the question: who can truly know if they are right if there is no absolute and god-like figure to confirm or affirm their belief? Bryson asserts that Samson, Manoa, and the Chorus within the poem "each assumes, not only that God exists, but that he knows the will of that God, despite the fact that play presents no character in the 'God' role, and ...gives it no voice" (139). This becomes an apparent issue as the poem progresses.

In "The Temptation of Understanding" chapter, Fish explains that most readers want to see a logical progression within *Samson Agonistes* to understand its ending, but this is the kind of temptation readers fall under. Fish asserts that there is no such progression of a "cause-and-effect relationship" between Samson's encounters with Dalila and Harapha and his regeneration that leads to collapse of the theater. He suggests that Milton had deliberately left the questions regarding Samson's regeneration unanswered and undisclosed because "it encourages us to believe that events occurring under the aegis of Providence can be rationally understood" (391).

Contrary to leaving things "unanswered," Fish later asserts that Milton establishes a sense of ambiguity during lines 46 and 47: "Whom have I to complain of but myself? / Who this high gift of strength committed to me" (392). It is "unclear" as to whom the "who" is referring to on line 47, since syntax allows the poet to be flexible with the placement of words. Although it may appear that Samson is referring to God for this line, Fish asserts that the line could be read as "I, Samson, who this gift of strength having been committed to me" (393). This would suggest that Milton had purposely left the "who" ambiguous which should alarm the reader to pay close attention to the lines and open to other possible readings and interpretations.

Yet, Fish questions whether or not Milton has provided his audience with any "perspective" or clear statement as to "what Samson has done" (425). There are multiple ways to read Samson, but whether it is the regenerate way or the "despairing Samson" way of reading, they all lead to Samson pulling down the "temple" (425). With the ambiguity and various valid interpretations, no one can know for sure which way is correct, except God. He describes that from "the human vantage point," much is dependant on what could be perceived (428). But if Fish's statements about the "human vantage point" are accurate, then Manoa's and the Chorus's appraisals of Samson's actions at the end are empty because they, too, are judging based on what they think is the case. They have no way of knowing for sure if they are correct, despite knowing the prophecy professed by the angel before Samson's birth.

Instead of focusing on the original material provided in the Book of Judges, Milton includes Dalila in the poem and shifts the attention away from what is known to what Christians have not considered understanding which is the unknown, or unknowable. Dalila points out how humans are "double-faced" when it comes to judging fame: "Fame if not double-faced, is double-mouthed / And with contrary blast proclaims most deeds; / On both his wings black, th' other white" (971-973). Human

judgments are fickle by nature and superficially moral as a human possess two sets of wings, which suggests that humans can sway whichever way in an argument with no particular preference. Fish asserts that unlike God, who has the "true standard of judgment," humans judge according to whatever they see fit, there "is no true determiner of the value of a deed" (427). But if his statements about the "human vantage point" are accurate, then the Manoa's and Chorus's appraisals of Samson's actions are empty since their human perspective means they have no way of knowing for sure.

It is important to note that although Dalila is supposed to be the counterexample of Samson, her points are crucial to understanding the end of the poem. Like the snake from *Paradise Lost* as Samson perceives her as a "pois'nous bosom snake" (763), she is a temptress. Thus, the reader should be wary of what she says. In Dalila's argument to regain Samson's trust and forgiveness, she explains that the proposal is sincere since she would not gain more from him in comparison to what the Philistines would give her:

Living and dead record, who to save
Her country from a fierce destroyer chose
Above faith of wedlock-hands, my tomb
With odors visited and annual flowers.
.....
The public marks of honor and reward
Conferred upon me for the piety
Which to my country I was judged to have shown. (984-987, 992-

994)

When the lines are read from Dalila, the audience should be put off by her reasoning. Coupled with the initial idea that people are incapable of judging things properly without God's providence, it is easy for people to view someone as a hero, "Living and dead record, who to save / Her country," based simply on the person's act. The issue is that people come to worship the individual as a god and hold celebrations or ceremonies in honor of them. To worship someone other than your God was one thing, but to worship any individual or being as an idol was another. Dalila's last lines would have caused a few to shake their heads when they read it, or at least that was Milton's intention since he was not too fond of the idea of idolatry; especially, when it involves "false prophets" (Forsyth 71).

This point on idolatry may have been self-explanatory, but readers may later find themselves scratching their heads when Manoa proposes to erect "A monument, and plant it round with shade / Of laurel ever green / With all [Samson's] trophies hung" (1734-1736) at the end of the poem. Both Manoa's and the Chorus's last moments in the poem reflect what Dalila had proclaimed in her argument, people judge the individual's actions based on what they see fit without God's providence. Thus, there is a strand of folly presented in their decision to erect the monument because they believe it would be favorable by God. Bryson notes that Milton writes "in *De Doctrina Christiana*, that 'God, as really is, is far beyond man's imagination, let alone his understanding'" (140).

Still, without the voice of God, Samson faithfully carries out what has been prophesized by the angel before his birth. And then parallel to Manoa's and the Chorus's last lines, Fish asserts that line 1745, "All is best," represents a sort of acceptance or more specifically he believes that Milton conveys to the reader that all is well because all was intended by God (430). If we are to accept Fish's interpretation, it would be to be satisfied with the idea that it is fine if "we cannot infer [God's] benevolence or validate his justice from the known facts" (430). However, Fish takes Dalila's argument for granted and fails to consider the irony behind the "All is best" line seriously (430). Furthermore, if Milton wanted his readers to accept the angel's prophecy, the theater's collapse at the end of the poem should have been followed the Book of Judges' narration. Yet, Milton suggests otherwise and changes the location of the collapse into a theater. To make things more suspicious, he writes that "what Samson had done to the Philistines, and by accident to himself" in the beginning of the poem (329). If Milton had followed the Book of Judges' telling of the story and Samson would have seemed more like a martyr. This would have satisfied Fish's argument that "All is best."

The irony that some readers feel is warranted precisely because the ambiguity and conflicting points within the poem raise questions about Milton's intended interpretation of Samson. The experience of that tinge of dissatisfaction for the end should spur the reader into re-reading *Samson Agonistes* to find the interpretation that would resolve the poem's issues. While there may be never a definitive interpretation, if truly no human understands the intentions of Samson due to their inability to know, except God as Fish suggests, then the absence of God's presence in the poem is the tragedy.

Contrary to Fish's assertion that God is ever present: "God is always with us and that in moments of crisis we are ...alone," the only sense of God we get is from what the characters think is God's will. Bryson argues that Milton's late poem is a "negation" of God's existence (158). I agree that God is not present within *Samson Agonistes*, but I cannot affirm that Milton had wanted to give the impression that there is no God in real life, "non-existent in relation to humanity" (139). However, Milton certainly does create instances that give the reader the impression that Samson is without God's guidance and essentially is a man that has fallen from his position as God's chosen one.

Following the suit of tragedies where the climaxes unfold towards the end of the play as a result of the hidden truth, the climax in *Samson Agonistes*, signaled by Samson's claim of "rousing motions" (1382), is the result of failing to recognize the lack of guidance from God. Samson is blind from the very beginning of the poem, but in some ways he may have been blind all along since he was incapable of discerning the follies of Dalila's ploys. He was bestowed power, but he lacked God's providence to make the right choices, which ultimately cripples him.

Samson bemoans the lost of light which acts as God's proxy: "Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct, / And all her various objects of delight / Annulled" (70-71). It is the object that enables sight and allows human beings to witness all of God's other creations. Without it, the sense to experience the rest of world is lost. Light is what allows human beings to witness God's power and perceive his presence in the world. Having become blind, he becomes "inferior to the vilest"

because he cannot participate in the event of perceiving God, while the lowest of the low are free to behold the work of a great being. But it is important to distinguish light from God. It is only perceived as a reminder of God's presence by Samson. With his sight gone, his judgment worsens.

From losing his connection to God and being barred from God's providence, Samson can only confide in his Father and the chorus for support and comfort, who are no better at perceiving God's will than he could when he still had his sight. Furthermore, Manoa and the Chorus are mirrors to Samson in that they reflect his beliefs and say whatever he wishes to hear the most. Samson is shown to be extremely receptive of their points and listens to them intently not for advice, but to boost his ego. The chorus almost mimics Samson's sentiments and replicates his contempt towards Dalila when they describe her approaching:

Female of sex it seems,
That so bedecked, ornate, and gay,
Comes this way sailing
Like a stately ship
...And amber scent of odorous perfume
Her harbinger, a damsel train behind;
Some rich Philistine matron she may seem,
And now at nearer view, no other certain
Than Dalila thy wife. (711-714, 720-724)

The chorus distinctively notes her sex and beauty, but notes how her charms are there to capture interest and for show than to have any practical value as a true ship. It is no secret that Samson was infatuated with Dalila's beauty, so much that he married her despite the fact that she was not an Israelite. Although Samson cannot see Dalila at the moment, he can because of the Chorus's description. The Chorus reiterates what Samson thinks of her, but at the same time Samson is relying on the Chorus to see. So, it is unclear whether or not the Chorus is just narrating what Samson wants to hear or what they truly see, but both scenarios are problematic. Samson is a mere mortal and with his sight disabled, his judgment is impaired. If the Chorus really is repeating what Samson is thinking, then Samson's flawed ideas are being supported. However, if the Chorus is merely giving Samson an account of what they perceive, then Samson is receiving an account from the "human vantage point," which is untrustworthy because human judgments are "double-faced."

Continuing with this thread, Bryson compares Samson to Milton's Satan from *Paradise Lost*. Both are "two-faced" in the sense that they say they'll do one thing on the surface when they are really planning to do something else. For example, Satan leads the devils into thinking that there is democracy in hell, when he is really ticking them into agreeing with his plan. Like wise, Samson claims "to fight for freedom while, in reality, seeking to 'oppress [...] oppressors'" (*Samson Agonistes* 232-3, quoted by Bryson 150).

Samson is reclusive to a group that simply repeats the same flawed ideas and rejects all other ideas. When Dalila tries to earn his forgiveness, she also shows how foolish it is for him to argue against her: "I see thou art implacable, more deaf / To

prayers, than winds and seas" (960-961). Not only is Samson blind, but he is selectively deaf to Dalila's and Harapha's arguments. Samson proclaims that he has gained wisdom from falling for Dalila's charms and losing his powers:

No, no, of my condition take no care;
 It fits not; though and I long since are twain;
 Nor think me so un wary or accursed
 To bring my feet again into the snare
 Where one I have been caught; I know thy trains

 Thy enchanted cup, and warbling charms
 No more on me have power, their force is nulled,
 So much of adder's wisdom I have learned
 To fence my ear against thy sorceries. (928-932, 934-936)

However, Samson does not understand or perceive the extent of what he has lost. He thinks he has only lost his powers and sight, but he does not know how impair his judgment is. He believes that by ignoring Dalila's advances, he would be spared of folly, when actuality he has rejected a sort of wisdom. Dalila's points may be false arguments, but had Samson taken the moment to hear her argument, he would have known what to avoid doing and could have sent a messenger to Father to warn him against idolatry. He may not have understood the issue with idolatry, but he would have made sure he was not going to be praised the way Dalila was delighted for.

Samson becomes the figure that Milton does not want his readers to become. Samson continually asserts that he knows God's will, while the Chorus keeps supporting his statement. There is a passage that the Chorus has for Samson to affirm his faith in God by depicting the atheist:

Just are the ways of God,
 And justifiable to men,
 Unless there be who think not God at all;
 If any be, they obscure,
 For of such doctrine never was there school
 But the heart of the fool,
 And no man therein doctor but himself.
 Yet more there be who doubt his ways not just,
 As to his own edicts, found contradicting,
 Then give the rein to wand'ring thought,
 Regardless of his glory's dimuntion;
 Till by their own perplexities involved
 They ravel more, still less resolved,
 But never find self-satisfying solution.
 As if they would confine th' interminable,
 And tie him to his own prescript,
 Who made our laws to bind us, not himself (293-309).

Those who sympathize with Fish's interpretation would see this as the golden nugget to point that Milton had intended for his readers to remain faithful to God despite their doubt, but this belief ignores the turn on line 307, which begins to depict an individual that ignores the "laws that bind us." The atheist depicted in the passage begins to sound like the description of Samson and more so as it continues. Samson abided by no laws. There was almost no need to since he was so powerful and went "Against his vow of strictest purity, / To seek marriage that fallacious bride" (319-320). With the poem starting with the fall of Samson and the notion of tragedy, the poem essentially started in the terms of negation with God nowhere to be found. The passage here can also be read in its negation with Samson as the figure of discussion. Rather than the atheist, Samson is the one that readers should be advised to question.

The lines that follow after "Till by their own perplexities involved" sound as though they are denouncing those who find the ending dissatisfying, but that means that Milton is acknowledging this factor. Had the passage ended without the mentioning of Samson's faults, we could have interpreted the passage as condemnation of atheists. However, the Chorus's argument becomes warped when Samson is discussed and the first half of passage comes to assert its statements upon him. He never gets the chance to defend himself against the allegations as Manoa walks in. Yet, seeing how the Chorus is somehow connected to Samson's psyche, he may have acknowledged that he was lost and did not know what God had intended for him to do.

We never determine where the "rousing motions" come from and the moment is nearly as bizarre as the Chorus's passage on the atheist, but this is a poem set in a world without God. Milton constructs this poem in a way that allows the reader to interpret passages in multiple ways, but leaves subtle cues for the reader to examine. However, the absence of God leads to an atrocity that no one could prevent. The collapse of the theater is not glorified or glorifying as Manoa describes the horror of the sound of the final act: "Mercy of Heav'n what hideous noise was that" (1509). Despite his initial reaction, without a moral compass of God, he comes to raise Samson to the status of a God.

Milton does not condone Samson's actions at the end. Even if it may seem as though there is no God or moral compass, Milton writes *Samson Agonistes* to deter readers from ending up like Samson. There are many things that are unknowable to humans, but Milton still writes this poem to show what Christians should not succumb to.

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♦ English 313

QUIET

AMY CARBONARO

THE WALL WAS CLICKING AGAIN. Well, something in the wall, I guess. I had just been tuning it out from the time it started a few months or however long ago. The small cube of wall that jutted out to separate my room from my apartment's small kitchen had some sort of something inside it, I had no idea what it was, tapping away for every hour of every single day. An erratic, patternless, rhythmless tapping. And it was loud, all right, especially in a spacious apartment with so little furniture. It had been starting to get to me, though, and I think it started when I was standing at the window looking across the East River at his building. It was really, directly, straight across. *I should send a boat for you*, he had told me once. If the window had been able to open more than just a crack I could reach out from this twenty-third floor and grab his penthouse apartment.

The Assignment and the Writer: Of a fiction-writer's resources – setting, plot, character, theme, voice – probably voice is the hardest to develop and control. Voice is the sum of word-choices and patterns that mark a narrator's (or an author's) take on the world. Are you Dickens? Are you Flannery O'Connor? Or are you you? New writers often have to incarnate many times on the way to real voice, but not Amy Carbonaro. Hers is the voice of a writer careful to step around cliché and commonplace language, clear on how casual events achieve meaning – the fly “flirted with the pale soft skin,” “the stoicism slipped off like cheap foundation” – each image enlarging the strange endearing smugness of the narrator (of an earlier story). In *Quiet*, her first story for ENG 313, the Advanced Fiction Workshop, Amy builds on a Poe-like tapping in the wall to reveal a character slipping between the memory of love and the hassle of New York living. She is a writer to read and to watch.

– Professor Jeffrey Heiman

Even though we spent most of our time apart, I didn't always stand there because I missed him. Sometimes I just felt like I needed to get out of Manhattan for a while. But a lot of times I would just be standing at that window looking over to where I really wanted to be but I couldn't move. I couldn't even move my hand from the glass sometimes. Even when I got up the momentum all I could do was slide my back down against the wall and just sit there while it clicked above me. I could feel the vibrations of it drumming at my spine.

It wasn't completely unyielding, though. I'd noticed that when I'd been at the window one night. It was clicking away, the only sound besides the whoosh of the FDR below, and some voices from one of the balconies, I think. Anyway, I'd just begun to imagine the smell of his fresh white sheets, and his cotton white t-shirts he would give me to sleep in, and his skin, pale and smooth and cool to the touch. But my images were flickering with every goddamn click of that wall. The pressure of the tapping was so lifelike, so present, so human. So loud! I held my gaze still; I wasn't ready to leave him. I could've sworn the clicking stopped when I turned and pulled the shade. Just for a moment or two.

The clicking started not long after he and I started to see each other. Back then, during the first week or so that it had begun, I had been meaning to tell the front desk about the clicking. We'd been sitting on my floor quietly playing cards. The tapping in the wall punctuated every soft flip of each card. It was quickening in tempo as we played, though.

He must've thought it was maddening too, because he put down the deck in the middle of dealing a new hand, looked up and over.

"What the hell is that sound?"

"Right?" I wasn't imagining things. "I have no clue. It's been driving me nuts."

He looked off and was gone for a few staccato clicks, like he shut off all his senses just to listen. "Maybe it's the heat coming through the pipes."

"You think so?" I didn't. It could've been, I supposed.

"It sounds like someone wants to come in." He was joking, I knew that, but he got up from the floor and stepped over to the wall.

He leaned his ear against it with great concentration and waited, puzzled. He reached down and flipped the light switch on and off, the clicking of it harmonizing with the knocking from inside. It had nothing to do with the electricity, though, it seemed. I watched him disappear and reappear.

He pressed both hands flat against the wall. He had beautiful hands and fingers, like a watchmaker. He lifted one and knocked with his knuckles. The clicking stopped for a moment then. It scared me a little, to be honest. I didn't say that though. The clicking picked up again.

"It likes you," I said instead. But I wanted him to come away from the wall. I looked down at the sleeves of my hoodie. I decided I wasn't going to tell the front desk about it anymore.

My roommate had never said anything about the clicking, which was curious because of how loud it was progressively getting and how long it had been going on for. Plus, she talked all the time, sometimes on the phone but mostly to herself. When I'd told them, my friends thought she was crazy for it—mulling about the apartment

chatting to herself or rehearsing her studies in self conversation. I found it sort of endearing or even comforting. The place couldn't be haunted if she was there, and I couldn't forget she was with all that noise.

She and I didn't cross paths all that often, believe it or not. I'd go out for long nights or sometimes days and I'd look for myself all over the city and come up empty. Of course, I was looking in the wrong places. And I think I knew that. I wouldn't feel shortchanged when I came back to my apartment after that long time and sit on my bed in my boxers and hear the tap, tap, tapping inside the wall. I suppose I just came to expect it, but somehow it still gave me fresh irritation. Not one moment of silence in my own home! After all that time away, I came back, and still, with the clicking! I wished whatever was in there would just thump its way out and break through out of the walls and be done with it. Ah! Then I would think I heard my name amongst my roommate's chatter and I'd call into her, *hmm?* Upon getting no response, I'd step into her room, windows flung wide open, no one was home. I could hear the clicking even from inside her room. If she wasn't mad before she lived here, maybe that's what drove her to it.

On lucky nights, my roommate would be out and I would get to sit on the balcony outside her room. I don't know why she even wanted the balcony. She didn't have any chairs on it and I'd never seen her out there. I'd sit on the railing, and I'd talk onto the Long Island City skyline over the wind and whoosh of the FDR below. Even with the noise it still seemed very quiet.

From there I could see storms as they rolled into Manhattan from across the river. I could see the rain shattering the river's surface and everything in Queens was misted rich blue. The storms looked still, somehow, but I knew from my perch on the balcony that they weren't. Through the strong indigo winds I would still sit swaying on the railing, crying, watching, saying, "I miss you too, my love."

The most still and quiet place I knew was his apartment. The last time I had gone there, we'd sat at his window facing toward Manhattan, toward my apartment, from the other side of the river. It was calm and silent. His apartment walls were white and smooth like mine, but were soundlessly full of life—our shadows, hanging Polaroids, light from the warm lamp in the corner. We smoked Chinese cigarettes slowly side by side through the open window. The monotony of his voice while he told stories was soothing. I gave him my scarf to wear and had my feet up on the radiator.

I drew in from my cigarette as I watched him. The sound must've broken his daydream. I could see the city's reflection glittering in his glasses, but then he looked to me and there was nothing there. He reached over and thumbed my lower lip, letting out whorls of milky blue smoke, then turned back to Manhattan.

He told me he liked to sit staring at the window and count how many times the lights on the tops of the buildings blinked within one minute.

"That's probably boring to you," he said. It wasn't, though. He blew smoked toward my building. "Can you see me from there?"

"No," I said, but I didn't look. "Of course not."

I don't remember why, but over one of the last few drinks of whiskey I had started to cry, or maybe he had made me. Sometimes I felt that same way when I was alone here on my side of the river looking out his penthouse from my roommate's

balcony. And sometimes I cry. Sometimes I just want to, but other times I would cry and cry. I knew I wasn't doing the right things for myself. But I knew I was just going to do them anyway.

Sometime after that he decided he didn't want to see me anymore and he disappeared from my life. I still looked to him across the river at first. It was odd; it didn't feel like he'd left me. He'd done it so swiftly and gracefully and left no traces behind. It felt groundless. So one day instead of standing by the window with the clicking or sitting on the railing, I went down to the river's dock. The ground was cold and solid and real but that was it. I didn't see anything across the river. Everything still felt suspended in mid-air. I could see myself standing there, eyes up, looking to an empty city. I tried to count how many times the lights blinked within a minute but I couldn't. It was much too loud to stand there, with the river churning in front of me and the FDR behind me. No, it wasn't the same at all. There was nothing left of him there.

He began to give me nightmares. I dreamt of gigantic, horrible sea creatures, rushing through the ocean while I watched from the dock and in the same night I dreamt of him, my love, in a long wool coat. At all hours of every night and morning I'd wake up in this apartment and something just wouldn't feel right. Like I wasn't supposed to be there. Through the peek in the shades I could see the sky humming red over Long Island City. To the other side, I could see ghosts near the front closet, thin and spindly like wire hangers. Oh, and I'm sure they were in the kitchen too. I didn't hear my roommate at all, not talking, not stirring. The wall was clicking, though. *For fuck's sake!* I would think. And sometimes it wouldn't just tap, it'd thump. I would toss and turn in bed and grasp desperately at the blankets and it would be like it was him rattling the wall so near to me. If only, if only, I could just reach out and grab him!

I can't be sure when, but some time after he'd left, the wall stopped clicking. Not even just for a few hours, either. Days went by. Days! Weeks! Silence! I thought it had come back once, but it was rain rapping against the wall from the outside where Long Island City was gone behind white fog.

I had been trying not to stand at the window anymore, even though I wanted to. Instead I'd sat there with my back to the glass, arm stuck out in the freezing wind, smoking. But once I shut the window, oh it was so quiet! No intrusive presence thumping in the wall. I never imagined that it would stop. It was sort of like a piece of furniture or some of the floorboards had been removed while I was out, but after weeks I realized it was more like someone who had lived here had moved out.

I lowered myself from the windowsill and almost tiptoed toward that kitchen wall. I laid my hand flat against the paint, like I was checking for a pulse. I knocked on it with my knuckles, then with the side of my fist. Nothing. I tried harder this time. Bang, bang, bang. Ringing silence. I pressed my ear against it and stood there for a moment. Nothing at all. The apartment stayed quiet. Like standing water with a perfectly smooth surface. I stepped backward, palmed the granite of the kitchen counter; the floor seemed to curve beneath me. I called his name once. It was almost as if I couldn't hear myself. As soon as the name left my mouth it vanished like I hadn't spoken at all.

My heart plunged into a cold and quickened pace, like a hand had reached into my chest and began pumping it faster. I lifted my knocking fist again. I swung once, but that only opened me up completely. I swung and swung and swung again and again and again. That horrible, cracking, tearing sound. The plaster coated and choked my lungs and throat and the sheetrock sliced up the backs of my hands and my wrists and my arms. At some point the tears finally fell out of my eyes and I could see the gaping hole shredded in front of me. There was nothing in the wall but an old heating pipe.

♦ International Criminal Justice 401

BIG OIL'S VIOLATION OF U.S. INDIGENOUS WATER RIGHTS

HEATHER GORDON

ABSTRACT

In light of the recent protests by the indigenous community against the oil and gas industry that are raging throughout the United States and elsewhere, it is necessary to look at precisely what rights are being violated and what problems need to be addressed. This essay will provide an analysis of the oil and gas industry's violations of indigenous rights and the human right to water. First, a summary of the trends and magnitude of this problem will be provided, followed by a breakdown of the different problems contributing to this phenomenon. The essay then provides two theories that can be used to understand this problem. I will conclude with an analysis of what all this information means and how the research provided in this paper can provide a base from which to jump when analyzing the current state of indigenous water rights.

Key Terms: Native Americans, indigenous, Indians, big oil, petroleum, oil spills, oil & gas industry, fossil fuels, human rights, water rights, water justice, environmental justice

The Assignment and the Writer: In the capstone course in International Criminal Justice (ICJ401), students write a mini-thesis on the topic of their choice. As this is a long document (7,000-8,500 words), we work the entire semester on tackling this rather challenging task. Heather Gordon chose to write about a very current topic that consumes her interest: indigenous rights to water. She produced a thoroughly researched, professionally written paper that shows graduate-level insight. What I most admire about Heather's work is her willingness both to confess what side she is on in these environmental debates and produce an honest, balanced paper that examines the evidence in depth.

– Professor Rosemary Barberet

INTRODUCTION

The global demand for fossil fuels is expected to increase an estimated 48% by 2040 (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2016), excluding the possible future implementation of policies and more sustainable sources of energy. For perspective, in 2015, the world consumed an average of 94.093 million barrels (or approximately 395,190,600 gallons) of liquid fossil fuel per day, which equates to 144,244,569,000 gallons consumed in 2015 (United States Energy Information Administration, 2016). This dependence upon fossil fuels has contributed to the continuously increasing rate of the global movement of goods and services and its beneficial consequences. However, we often ignore the oil and gas industry's shadow and those who are left in it, particularly the indigenous communities most severely affected. In addition to the displacement of indigenous communities for the development of extraction sites and transit routes, the pollution of air and soil, and the loss of biodiversity, perhaps the worst impact of resource extraction activities has been the effects on water sources for indigenous communities and their access to water for drinking, agriculture, sanitation, and cultural purposes. Not only do these resource extraction activities violate the human right to water, making this an international crime, but they also traverse borders between sovereign tribal lands within the United States and between the United States and other countries, making this a transnational crime as well.

Throughout 2016, tensions between American Indigenous communities and corporate entities have continued to increase. With the 'indigenous rising' movements resulting in the anti-Dakota Access Pipeline (NoDAPL) protests raging in North Dakota, as well as similar protests throughout the United States that this movement has sparked, the upcoming years may be a turning point in the respect for indigenous rights and the adoption of more sustainable energy sources including solar power, wind turbines, and increasingly innovative forms of energy production. I chose this topic because the human rights violations against indigenous peoples in the pursuit of economic progress have continued for far too long and have harmed far too many communities. Due to increasing climate change events and our need to find more sustainable means of living, there is an urgent need to research and address all violations of human rights in the United States, particularly in regards to our environment and the rights of indigenous peoples that are established by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), among others. In order to address these issues, more research must be conducted and these phenomena must be understood to adequately implement effective policies for change, including education and legislation in regards to indigenous populations, corporate profiteering activities, and human rights, namely, the human right to water.

This essay will address best estimates of the trends and magnitude of this issue, provide a brief summary of the history of the fossil fuel boom, and address the specific problems resulting from extraction activities on and near indigenous lands and reservations in the United States. I will then discuss the theoretical issues with regards to implementing legislation and enforcement of indigenous and human rights

as well as some measures that have taken place in the international arena to address the often tense relations between corporations, governments, and indigenous peoples. I will discuss my analysis of the situation and possible techniques that can be utilized to ensure that human rights are not violated in the pursuit of economic progress. Finally, I will provide a possible outlook pertaining to the upcoming years, particularly in regards to the recent political events that have taken place in the United States and how they may affect environmental and indigenous policies.

METHODS

This paper draws its information from a wide variety of sources, including local media articles, primarily from alternative news sources, peer-reviewed articles on related topics, government reports, and reports from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The search terms I used include several variations of words to describe the indigenous peoples of North America, including 'Native American', 'First Nations', 'indigenous', and 'Indian', but I excluded the use of 'aboriginal' due to its common association with the indigenous peoples of Australia. I also searched for several variations of words used in reference to oil and gas, including 'big oil', 'fossil fuels', 'petroleum', 'hydraulic fracturing' / 'fracking', 'resources', and 'extraction'. Since all of these searches resulted in several sources, most of which were irrelevant to the discussion at hand, I downsized to articles that included 'human rights' and 'water rights'. I also specifically chose sources that are relatively current, dating back no more than ten years, with a few exceptions. However, none of the sources to be discussed address the specific paradigm of North American indigenous rights, the human right to water, and the oil and gas industry.

There are significant limitations to the sources available. In addition to the lack of research addressing the violation of the human right to water in indigenous communities, the availability of oil spill and leak statistics is very limited and only accessible to specific government agencies. When there are spills, the amounts are often unreported or underreported, and the ecological and environmental effects, if addressed, are often understated. There are several other issues, which will be discussed in the next section, that result from a lack of transparency by both the oil corporations and the governments who authorize the activities. An additional limitation worth mentioning is my personal bias. This is a topic for which I have great passion, so maintaining neutrality in my analysis of the violations of indigenous water rights by profiteering corporations is difficult.

TRENDS & MAGNITUDE

Attempting to establish an accurate figure regarding how much petroleum-based substances have spilled from faulty pipelines in the United States, and specifically how much has spilled into primary water sources on or near indigenous lands, is essentially impossible given the current reporting requirements and the lack of transparency in the industry. There is no public, comprehensive database listing the true extent of oil spill and petroleum-based pollution problems in the United States, and the relatively few and far-between statistics that have been provided on large-scale spills (e.g., Exxon Valdez in the Arctic in 1989 or the Deepwater Horizon

spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010) are often understated. According to Jernelöv (2010), the increasing age and lack of maintenance of many oil pipelines are continuously increasing, which has led to many sites being subject to continuous oil pollution. Additionally, when there are spills and leaks, the territory in which these incidents occur and the waterways polluted as a result of the incident are rarely specified; therefore, there is no public data, except in local media and occasionally alternative news sources, concerning whether or not any of these pipeline spills have taken place on indigenous lands or have affected the primary sources of water for indigenous populations.

There are, however, some figures reporting the costs associated with spills, as provided by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA). According to PHMSA Significant Incident 20 Year Trend dataset, there have been 470 incidents resulting in 16 fatalities, 75 injuries, and a total cost of \$231,253,294 in the United States since the beginning of 2016 (PHMSA, 2016). This figure does not specify whether or not it includes some of the more recent incidents that have taken place within the last few months, including the October 31, 2016 pipeline explosion in Alabama, which resulted in one fatality and five additional injuries (Kumar, 2016); the 55,000 gallons of fuel leaked in Lycoming County, Pennsylvania in September 2016 by a pipeline owned by Sunoco, an owner of the Dakota Access Pipeline (Webb, 2016); or the early-December 2016 event in North Dakota, less than 150 miles away from the Standing Rock Camp (temporary home to the NoDAPL protestors), in which 176,000 gallons of crude oil polluted a nearby creek (Narayan, 2016). An 'incident' that must be reported to the PHMSA involves a release of product (petroleum-based or other type of hazardous substance) that results in fatality or injury requiring in-hospitalization, and/or at least \$50,000 in damages (excluding the cost of product lost), and/or the estimated loss of product in excess of three million cubic feet (49 CFR §191.3). Therefore, by these requirements, most of the pipeline leaks and spills in the United States are not required to be reported, thereby significantly decreasing leak and spill estimates. Additionally, these estimates only provide for the *costs* of the spills, not the *amount* spilled. The PHMSA does provide the ability to access these incidents on a per-state basis, but it does not specify whether the incident occurred on indigenous lands or reservations, nor does it specify the proximity of oil spills and leaks to water sources.

Finding statistics regarding water pollution on and near indigenous communities is just as difficult, aside from articles pertaining to, for example, the uranium and arsenic pollution caused by mining activities in the San Juan River, a primary water source for the indigenous Navajo nation in the Southwestern United States (Risin, 2016). Another example of severely polluted water by mining and petroleum extraction activities is the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, in which wastewater (the water leftover after the hydraulic fracturing procedure is completed) is dumped directly onto the land, not injected beneath the ground, as is the general procedure (Shogren, 2012). The dumping of wastewater is the result of a legal loophole that allows it to be dumped on water-scarce lands to be used for agricultural purposes, as opposed to injected far underground. In 2014, there was a massive fracking wastewater spill, which leaked approximately one million gallons of wastewater into Bear Den Bay, the primary water source for the Fort Berthold Indian

Reservation in western North Dakota (Dakota Resource Council, 2014). It is important to note that this wastewater or produced water is highly toxic; it contains known carcinogens such as arsenic, benzene, chromium-6, and lead, and it can be radioactive (Stoiber & Walker, 2015). According to Indian Health Services, the access to safe drinking water for Native American and Alaska Natives has improved, decreasing from approximately 12% in 2007 down to 7.5% in 2013. As with the statistics for oil, the problem is not that leaks and spills do not happen frequently or that the likelihood of a polluted water source is unlikely; the problem is that there is no publicly-available comprehensive database recording the frequency of this phenomenon or the locations being affected, indigenous or otherwise.

THE PROBLEM

HISTORY

In order to adequately understand the depth and severity of the problem with the effects of corporations' activities on indigenous water sources today, it is important to understand the historical and cultural events that have promulgated the belief that marginalized communities, namely indigenous communities, are second-class citizens and are therefore less deserving of the human right to adequate and clean resources. Today's problems with fossil fuel pollution in indigenous water sources are the consequence of centuries of the minimization and marginalization of America's first citizens. With the colonization of the Americas by European refugees and their American-born descendants came a massive Native American genocide (Trafzer & Lorimer, 2014), or ethnic cleansing (Anderson, 2016). The different opinions between whether the treatment of indigenous Americans during colonization constitutes genocide or ethnic cleansing is a debate for a different time, but scholars of both beliefs can agree that the killing of thousands of indigenous people was inhumane and that the resulting institutionalization of racism since that time has persisted.

Shortly after the oil boom began in the late 1850's (American Oil & Gas Historical Society, 2016), the U.S. government had stopped entering into treaties with indigenous tribes and instead began to codify truces through Congressional Acts, Executive Orders, and Executive Agreements (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2016). Although I was not able to find documentation of the total acreage of indigenous reservation land or indigenous allotted land at the beginning of the oil boom, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (a sector of the U.S. Department of the Interior) states that approximately 56.2 million acres are currently held in trust spread among approximately 362 different locales, and that there are 10,059,290.74 million acres of individually owned lands. These figures are significantly less than were initially allotted due to the lands becoming subject to local and state taxation, which was and still is often too costly for residents to pay (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2016).

Poverty is a pervasive facet of life in indigenous reservations, and has been for centuries. Approximately 28% of U.S. indigenous people lived below the poverty line in 2014, more than double the national average and the highest rate among any race group, despite the fact that they only constitute 2% of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Indigenous lands being subject to state and federal taxes,

coupled with the suffering from significantly high rates of poverty has led to secession of lands to large corporations. The ceded land has since been used in the name of economic and industry progress, primarily in regards to resource extraction, including oil and coal mining activities, and other forms of economic development.

CORRUPTION

Running parallel with the history of marginalization of the indigenous community is the prevalence of corruption. According to the World Bank, corruption is defined as “the abuse of public office for private gain” (World Bank, 2015). Utilizing this definition, one can surmise that the actions conducted by law enforcement authorities against indigenous peoples to support the oil industry qualify as corruption. As a specific example, *Unicorn Riot*, a non-profit independent news source, through a public records request from the North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, obtained a private email from Tyler Falk, a probation officer with the Stutsman County Sheriff’s Department in Jamestown, North Dakota, stating that “I’ll ultimately be paid by the oil people dealing with the protests” (Unicorn Riot Staff, 2016). The email proceeds to state that “when all of that [the protests] is finally over, the oil company is going to want all the paperwork for reimbursement” (Unicorn Riot Staff, 2016), referring to receipts for costs expended and timesheets of the officers involved in the NoDAPL protests and the ‘oil company’ as either the owner, Energy Transfer Partners, or its subsidiary, Dakota Access, LLC. Despite the fact that this email was contested by the department as being “wishful thinking,” *CBS This Morning News* reported that the CEO of Energy Transfer Partners, Kelsey Warren, would “like to reimburse the state of North Dakota and Morton County for the millions spent so far on protest security, but that authorities have not yet accepted his offer” (CBS This Morning News, 2016).

Beyond just the local law enforcement being reimbursed by the oil companies for defending corporate objectives, there is also the matter of United States politicians and legislators investing funds in the development of this industry. Investment in the industry, itself, is not a crime. However, it does become a crime when one utilizes his or her office within the government to 1) ensure that these activities can proceed, despite the effect its operations can have on the local populations, and 2) to reap the profits associated with the activities. One example that is worth noting is President-elect Donald Trump’s investment of between \$500,000 and \$1 million in Energy Transfer Partners, the primary owner of the Dakota Access Pipeline (Milman, 2016). Although the Obama Administration has announced that it will not grant the easement needed for the construction of the final portion of the Dakota Access Pipeline to proceed (Richardson, 2016), there is still the possibility that it can go forward in the future, especially given Mr. Trump’s involvement within the oil and gas industry. Since the beginning of his campaign, he has mentioned also utilizing his position as U.S. President to re-open the Keystone XL pipeline, which traverses the same territory as the Dakota Access Pipeline (Kaufman, 2016). While there are several obstacles that he will have to jump through to do so, it is well-known that he is an advocate of the oil and gas industry. In the event that he does succeed in re-introducing these projects and allowing them to go forward, that will put a percentage of the profits back into his

grasp, effectively cementing the applicability of the World Bank's definition of corruption.

Another approach to defining corruption that is worth mentioning is one posited by Anthony Yue and Luc Peters (2015), which states that 1) corruption is a mimicry or forgery of an original, therefore causing difficulty in distinguishing at what point legitimate actions become illegitimate, or 2) corruption is not necessarily the *act* itself, but the *willingness* to use one's position for personal gain. It is this definition that seems to be more appropriate in analyzing the corruption taking place in the violations of indigenous water rights. According to the first definition, corruption is not a phenomenon separate from the legitimacy of the original act; instead, it is the interweaving shadow of legitimacy. Taking this into account, it can be adequately applied to the use of governmental resources to protect the capitalist ventures of the oil and gas industry. Applying this definition to the scenarios posited above, it can be reiterated that it is not so much the investment within the oil industry by politicians and legislators that is corrupt, but it is, instead, the other factors that go along with such investments, including the debate against, for example, limiting carbon emissions allowed by certain industries, or the prevalence of fracking and extraction sites, or implementing greater regulations to ensure that rights are not violated in the process.

The second definition, corruption as being corruptible, can also be applied to the violations of indigenous water rights. The willingness by both oil corporations and the U.S. state and federal governments to seek out and utilize legal loopholes to the advantage of obtaining profits from oil extraction activities on or near indigenous lands is, according to the second definition, corruption.

VIOLATIONS OF INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

The history of marginalization of indigenous populations combined with the corruption among oil companies and the U.S. government results in the violations of indigenous rights as set forth in nearly all international law mechanisms. To name a few, the human right to water is explicitly listed or alluded to in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 161, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII). This list is not comprehensive, but international law emphasises that access to clean water for drinking, sanitation, agriculture, and cultural purposes is a basic human right, and therefore is legally required to be guaranteed to all peoples, regardless of their race, culture, religion, or governmental association. Although the indigenous nations are sovereign from the United States, they are still a part of the United States; therefore, the United States is required to ensure that this right is protected for its indigenous communities. The United States government is responsible for ensuring that pipelines

or extraction sites are not located close enough to cause problems for the water supply or population; when pipelines leak, or extraction sites are located close enough to indigenous reservations to pollute the water supply, then the United States is responsible for this violation of the human right to water.

In addition to a lack of access to clean water on several indigenous reservations due to corporate resource extraction activities is the frequent violation of the indigenous right to free, prior, and informed consent, which is established in the UNDRIP, ICCPR, ICESCR, UNPFII, and CERD (OHCHR, 2013), and the International Labor Organization's Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (ILO Convention 169). In order for a project that has any effect on indigenous lands or peoples to proceed at the hand of the government or a corporate enterprise, consent must be obtained by indigenous leaders through an extensive consultation process. This consent must be obtained before any project begins, it must be freely given, and it must be fully informed. This right is particularly important because all indigenous reservations are sovereign and independent nations with their own laws, their own law enforcement practices, populations, and governments. Pursuing projects on tribal lands without this consent is essentially the same as doing so through an internationally recognized sovereign state, such as Canada or Mexico.

POLLUTION

An analysis of the violations of indigenous water rights by resource extraction corporations would not be complete without mention of the pollution resulting from such activities. As mentioned earlier in this paper, pollution of water sources resulting from oil spills and leaks is essentially inevitable, it is just a matter of *when* and *where*. Pipelines and extraction sites age and their upkeep may not always be a priority, which leads to pipelines bursting or leaking barrels of crude oil, liquid natural gas, hazardous materials, and fracking wastewater into the land and nearby water sources. Additionally, it is not just the leaks and spills that cause pollution -- it is also the chemicals used in clean-up processes. For example, the primary choice for dispersants to clean up oil spills is Corexit, which was used extensively in the Deepwater Horizon spill in the Gulf of Mexico (Katzman, 2015). According to a study published by Rico-Martinez, Snell & Shearer (2013), Corexit mixed with the spilled oil was fifty-two times more toxic to the marine rotifer *Brachionus plicatilis* than oil was alone. Although this study was conducted only in regards to the rotifer, one of the ingredients in all formulas of Corexit is 2-butoxyethanol, which has long been known by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to be toxic and has negative effects on lungs, kidneys, and livers (CDC, 2011). The CDC acknowledged that the compound's effects on humans seem to be minimal in comparison to other animals, but this chemical has assisted the loss of biodiversity and agriculturally fertile land, which is essential for a healthy, productive ecosystem that promotes a healthy water supply.

THEORIES

There are several different theories that could be utilized to explain the violations of indigenous water rights by large oil corporations. However, I will discuss two highly intertwining theories: critical race theory and water justice theory.

The role of racism in environmental justice has been addressed for years, and for good reason. Environmental justice, and its sub-genre of water justice, when applied to marginalized communities, have consistently provided that environmental disasters are inequitably distributed between poor communities of color and predominantly Caucasian, affluent communities. Therefore, I will first discuss critical race theory in regards to the role that one's race plays in terms of laws and policies. I will then discuss water justice theory and its relation to racism's role in the attainment of equitably distributed water justice.

CRITICAL RACE THEORY

The first theoretical explanation of big oil's violations of indigenous water rights that I will discuss is Critical Race Theory (CRT). CRT can be explained as looking at a specific phenomenon or policy through a racial lens; simply put, does this policy affect people of color differently than it does Caucasians? Essentially, social events, including clean water distribution, should be viewed in relation to the community's ethnicity or race. On one end of this theory, some may argue that all the United States' institutions, including government welfare, housing, incarceration practices, etc., can be attributed solely to the racial divide and ingrained racism in the country (DuVernay & Barish, 2016). It is this institutionalized or systematized racism that has promulgated the continued subjugation and oppression of non-Caucasian individuals.

According to Parker & Lynn (2002), racism is "an endemic part of American life, deeply ingrained through historical consciousness and ideological choices about race, which in turn has directly shaped the US legal system, and the ways people think about the law, racial categories and privilege." It is because of this ingrained belief system that policies negatively impacting or targeted at communities of color exist in the first place, and also why no currently possible policies targeted at ensuring racial equality will be truly or immediately effective. This system of beliefs is instilled in children since infancy, and although individuals possess free will to make choices regarding how to act and view the world, policies are incapable of curbing cultural beliefs. Assuming an individual does not adopt more accepting beliefs than those of their childhood and gains a position in which they have power in hiring practices, government practices, or the like, then those choices are going to result in racially-based policies that perpetuate racist culture.

According to CRT, the allowance of oil extraction activities on or near indigenous lands, and the lack of accountability for the pollution of indigenous waters, is the result of centuries of racism against the indigenous populace. As previously mentioned, the colonization of the Americas resulted in a massive killing, either genocide or ethnic cleansing, of America's indigenous peoples. The Trail of Tears resulted in a mass displacement of indigenous tribes, several of whom did not survive, and California's Gold Rush era ushered in the targeted killings of indigenous adults and the kidnapping and forced assimilation of children. Despite the more than 150 years that have passed since that time, those pervasive beliefs that the indigenous peoples are less civilized and therefore less deserving of the privileges afforded to whites have not subsided. The high rates of poverty, health deficiencies, inadequate education, and rampant police violence against indigenous peoples, according to CRT,

could all be explained as being a result of the continued racism against the indigenous that have been carried through the generations. This racism also explains why, especially in the oil-rich Dakotas, extraction sites and transportation lines for the extracted resources and fracking wastewater are diverted away from wealthy, Caucasian neighborhoods and are relocated near indigenous lands.

WATER JUSTICE THEORY

As mentioned above, critical race theory can also be applied to environmental justice and water justice. The Water Justice Theory (WJT) is a subset of environmental justice theory that focuses on the access, or lack thereof, to clean, adequate water. WJT attempts to explain that justice is achieved when easy access to adequate amounts of water for sanitation, drinking, agricultural, and cultural purposes is ensured. Simply put, “environmental ills such as pollution have been inequitably distributed with those already economically marginalized experiencing further disadvantage through contamination of their environments” (Dobson, 1998; Stephens et al., 2001). This acknowledgement is similar to that posited by CRT, in which environmental ills, in this situation polluted water from resource extraction activities, are directed away from affluent, Caucasian communities and redirected towards often impoverished indigenous communities. Even in the event that the oil corporations are not intentionally redirecting their activities towards indigenous peoples, there still exists a disregard for the well-being of these communities.

Water injustice can easily be applied to indigenous reservations in the United States, such as the examples provided earlier in this paper. Water justice can also be applied to other non-indigenous marginalized communities including, for example, Flint, Michigan residents and the lead-laden water to which they are subject. This diversion of clean water to wealthy communities and the redirection of dirty and polluted water to marginalized communities, namely indigenous communities, is considered water injustice.

PREVENTION PRACTICES

Taking these theories into consideration, it would be easy to say that we need to get rid of the oil and gas industry, end racism, and stop diverting all polluted resources to marginalized communities. On the radical end of the spectrum, one could say that the most important way to end these violations of indigenous water rights would be to prohibit resource extraction activities altogether, and instead adopt only innovative, sustainable sources of energy. However, this is highly unlikely, as several facets of American society would need to change, including consumerist culture, our eating and travel habits, and our collective perception of climate change and indigenous populations, to name a few. In 1991, in recognition of the persistent environmental injustices experienced by indigenous peoples, delegates to the First National People of Color held an Environmental Leadership Summit, in which they drafted and adopted seventeen principles of environmental justice. Starting with education (principle 16) and gradually implementing legislation and policies utilizing all seventeen principles as a basis would allow for greater respect of indigenous water rights. Additionally, adopting certain global best practices, including those pertaining

to indigenous rights, the human right to water, and alternative sources for fuel, would be beneficial.

EDUCATION

Educating youth is perhaps the only way to really create lasting change. As has been discussed earlier in this paper, individuals often maintain beliefs they grew up with. It is at the young ages that belief systems are most likely to be adopted and result in one's choices later in life. There are a few areas in which better education would result in the increasing respect for indigenous water rights, including education about racism against indigenous peoples, education about the environment, and education about human rights.

If we take critical race theory as the leading explanation for the violations of indigenous water rights, then one way to prevent the violations of indigenous water rights would be to improve education about Native Americans and their tribal sovereignty, and the fact that indigenous tribes still exist. History in the United States has continuously reinforced the idea that Native Americans are not like the colonizers: they look different, they have different belief systems, and their culture does not coincide with traditional European beliefs. Additionally, when young children learn about Thanksgiving and the Native Americans, they are taught about the holiday as though Native Americans are an extinct race of people in some fairytale land that either taught the Puritans how to survive the New World, or that they were heathens who slaughtered the cowboys and eventually lost the war in the Wild West; neither of which is accurate and has led to the belief that Native Americans no longer exist, or are still different and must be assimilated into America's mainstream culture. In reality, and as should go without saying, this is not the case. Indigenous tribes all over the United States, whether they live on reservations or not, are still alive and still practice their cultural heritage. Teaching children that there are different cultures remaining in the United States, especially indigenous cultures, is essential to the demarginalization and acceptance of the various cultural ways of our peers, and ultimately the primary defense for indigenous rights to clean and easily accessible water. Ideally, children who are raised to realize that there are different cultures and that everyone is deserving of human rights can apply those beliefs in their future profession and ensure that indigenous rights, water rights, and environmental rights are protected both from the government and from corporate interests.

Not only must we teach our society about the continued presence of Native American cultures, but children must also be taught about the environment and what we as individuals can do to prevent the pollution of water systems for all nations and populations in the United States and globally. Coinciding with the teachings of environmental pollution should be education pertaining to more sustainable means of energy consumption: methods that use the Earth's renewable resources, including solar power, hydropower, and wind power. Promoting the education of these types of science at a young age will ideally contribute to the future generations' innovative knowledge and the development of more sustainable, environmentally friendly practices.

LEGISLATION

In addition to starting at the base level of implementing positive changes, i.e., educating our youth, legislative measures can be taken to move our society away from unsustainable practices that negatively impact marginalized communities. There are several methods of doing this, but the first I will mention is to refine the limitations of eminent domain. According to the United States Department of Justice, “[e]minent domain has been utilized traditionally to facilitate transportation, supply water, construct public buildings, and aid in defense readiness” (USDOJ, 2015). However, eminent domain has been repeatedly invoked by corporations in the oil and gas industry to utilize public and privately-owned lands for their enterprises. The main argument for this is that if the United States can use its own oil reserves, such as those found in the Dakotas and Southwest United States, it will limit our dependence on foreign nations for energy consumption. Although the United States government does not directly benefit from this use of lands, it could be argued that these activities have increased the United States’ independence. Despite this, however, in 2015, more than 1,541,802,000 barrels of petroleum-based products (crude oil, natural gas plant liquids, liquefied refinery gases, and finished petroleum products) were not consumed by United States inhabitants -- they were exported internationally (PHMSA, 2015). The resulting profits have mostly benefited the oil corporations and its shareholders, not the United States government or non-invested inhabitants. Therefore, limiting the use of eminent domain to *publicly* beneficial projects and preventing its use by capitalist enterprises may result in fewer violations of indigenous rights to land and water rights.

Legislation must also be revised in regards to communications between sovereign tribal nations, the federal or state government, and the involved corporation, namely in relation to free, prior, and informed consent. Although consultation with and consent from sovereign tribal nations before any activities are started is legally required by United States federal laws and case laws, as is discussed at length by Robert Miller (2015), by the World Bank’s Operational Directive 4.10, and by international organizations, namely the United Nations and the International Labor Organization Convention No. 169, there are legal loopholes that allow big oil corporations to proceed without meeting this requirement. As an example, during the initial phases of planning of the Dakota Access Pipeline, drafts of the plans developed by Sunoco and Energy Transfer Partners (ETP) were brought to the attention of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe *before* consulting with the tribe. According to legal standards, this action was a violation of free, prior, informed consent, because the drafting took place before there were any consultations with the tribe. Therefore, to prevent further violations of this requirement, legislative action should be taken to close these legal loopholes and ensure that indigenous nations provide free, prior, and informed consent before any corporate extraction activities can take place and that their inherent right to water is not violated in the process.

GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES

Perhaps the best immediate actions that can be implemented to improve indigenous water rights involve looking at best practices around the globe. Looking at how different countries treat the earth, indigenous peoples, and energy resources

would be beneficial in setting a new precedent. Over the last couple of years, countries have begun recognizing the earth as a being worth protecting. For example, Ecuador's 2008 Constitution incorporated laws granting the inalienable rights of nature to "exist, persist, maintain and regenerate its vital cycles, structure, functions and its processes in evolution" (Constitución Política de la República del Ecuador, Arts. 395-415). In Bolivia in 2012, the *Ley de Derechos de La Madre Tierra* (Law of Mother Earth) was passed, which established that Mother Earth has the right to life, diversity of life, water, clean air, equilibrium, restoration, and pollution-free living (*Ley de Derechos de La Madre Tierra*, Art. 7). The passing of this law essentially recognized that both individuals and states have the obligation to keep these rights in mind when proceeding with projects and other laws. A similar event took place in New Zealand, in which the *Te Urewera Act* was passed to grant legal personhood to the *Te Urewera National Park* and *Whanganui River* and its tributaries (*Te Urewera Act*, 2014). Although adopting such measures may make other matters difficult, specifically in relation to economic development, doing so would lead the way for more innovative technology to be utilized that allows for the world to maintain its economic and technological progress while refraining from inducing further damage.

In the last few decades, the international community has begun differentiating indigenous rights from human rights. Up until that point, indigenous peoples were seen as separate groups that needed to be assimilated and integrated into the larger society, thereby shedding their cultural values. Recently, however, that has begun to change. In 2005/2007, the United Nations established the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*, which specifically outlines the rights of indigenous peoples to their traditional lands, their cultures and languages, assurance of access to clean resources, and fully informed communications and cooperation with state governments in activities that will impact them and their members. The United States could easily adopt mechanisms to follow these international protocols, and doing so would begin to heal the expansive divide and absence of trust from the indigenous populations.

The United States would also do well to look at Slovenia, who recently adopted an amendment to their constitution officially including drinkable water as a fundamental constitutional right (*Agence France-Presse*, 2016). The amendment only specifies drinkable water, but water that is safe enough to drink is also safe enough to utilize for cultural purposes, agriculture, and sanitation. The situation with clean water throughout the United States, particularly on indigenous reservations and in poor communities of color, is in dire need of a transformation. Adopting a similar amendment ensuring water as a constitutional right would allow violations of water rights to be acknowledged and the offenders held accountable, regardless of their political or economic status.

We should also look to countries who have made it their goal to adopt sustainable means of energy production and consumption. For example, Sweden has been consistently ranked as the world's most sustainable country (*Wilde*, 2016) due to sustainable living practices among its citizens, its recent intent to become the world's first fossil-fuel-free country, its carbon tax, its use of renewable energy, and its use of human-heated buildings. Granted, Sweden is geographically small and

sparsely-populated in comparison to the United States, but the gradual implementation of similar measures have the potential to pay off tremendously in the long-run.

DISCUSSION

Through my analysis of this phenomenon, it is apparent that there are several issues that must be addressed in the extensive violations of indigenous water rights by oil corporations. Indigenous communities are at the receiving end of much of the damage from oil extraction activities, and the water pollution resulting from such activities is unacceptable and highly illegal. I contend that the United States, and other countries as well, would do well to begin respecting the rights of its citizens, indigenous or not, in the pursuit of economic development, not only for the sole purpose of respecting human rights, but to push forward in sustainable practices to ensure long-term survival. This is not to say, however, that the oil and gas industries are evil monsters. Oil and the fossil fuel industry have led to the development of innovative technological advancements that have allowed us to travel internationally and experience other cultures, and to live away from our loved ones without permanently saying goodbye, to name a few. Petroleum is the reason why we have medical-grade plastics that save lives, why we have bottled drinking water to provide to those whose water supplies have been tarnished, and why we can enjoy the products of other cultures from our own homes.

However, the extensive abuse resulting from the oil industry is severely out of hand. Oil corporations are abusing the use of eminent domain for their own profit-driven motives and without regard to the communities being harmed in the process. Since the oil boom, indigenous populations have been displaced on a massive scale in the name of economic development. Those who have remained on indigenous lands are left with the negative consequences, including health problems, unsafe living conditions, extreme poverty that far surpasses the national average, the lack of agriculturally-fertile land, and, ultimately, the lack of access to non-polluted water sources.

Our global society does not yet possess the necessary technological advances to ensure that extraction activities and transit pipelines remain safe. As previously discussed, all pipelines, at some point, will leak or burst. There is no technology out there yet that can prevent this from happening. In order to truly prevent pipelines from bursting, we would need to use a non-corroding, highly flexible material that would be able to move with the constant shifting of the earth's geography and would never require maintenance. To prevent extraction sites from polluting the land, then we would need to utilize non-toxic chemicals during the extraction process, as opposed to the highly-toxic, carcinogenic substances currently in use. Unfortunately, at this point in time, that is impossible. We also do not possess the technological advances to ensure that no one will be affected by the pollution resulting from resource extraction and transportation. We are losing the earth's biodiverse ecosystem that allows all beings, humans included, to exist. Marine life, birds, and other creatures are dying off in droves from the extensive pollution the world is currently facing.

Not only does the problem lie with the lack of technological advances to allow us to safely extract and utilize fossil fuels, but the problem specifically relating to indigenous populations has to do with informed consent. One could easily argue 1)

that *full consent* may not always be obtained for capitalistic enterprises, 2) that consent may not always be given *freely* due to economic hardships and high levels of poverty, and 3) that even in events when consent is obtained, it may not be *fully informed*. In order for the consent to meet the 'fully informed' criteria, tribal leaders must be made completely aware of all possible consequences of extraction activities and all relevant laws and rulings. This would involve providing knowledge of the frequency of spills and leaks of extracted resources and fracking wastewater, as well as any pending or previously decided legal matters relating to the situation at hand, and would also require full transparency by the corporation in question, including what percentage of the profits will go to shareholders, what percentage of the extracted resources would be utilized for the benefit of the United States and indigenous nations, and what percentage would be sold internationally.

In addition to the requirement that consent be given after being fully informed of the matter, it must also be freely given. Considering the high rate of poverty among indigenous peoples in the United States, I have to wonder whether it is even possible for consent to be given freely for these types of enterprises. In order for consent to be given freely by the indigenous peoples for these purposes, there could not be any factors to force the consent. From my research, it seems that high levels of poverty are often a driving force for allowing resource extraction activities to be allowed on any specific land, regardless of whether or not it belongs to an indigenous population or an individual landowner. Tribal nations may be assured by the oil corporations that they will receive a percentage of the profits or may receive large compensation in exchange for the land - but does that necessarily mean that consent is freely given if the nation is in a state of poverty? If there are few options for allowing one's community or children to survive other than turning over traditional lands for compensation, then can the consent be deemed as true consent?

In establishing that fully informed, freely given consent prior to the onset of any undertaking is required, yet often not obtained, it must also be considered who should be held accountable for violating that right and the subsequent violation of indigenous water rights. Should corporations be held liable for the violation of indigenous right to water, or does this accountability lie with the government allowing these violations to occur? The International Criminal Court (ICC) is not currently organized to try non-political entities; instead, its current purpose is to try individuals and states that are responsible for grave violations of human rights that often result from conflicts. That being the case, there is the slight possibility that the United States could be tried for the violations of indigenous water rights, such as those previously discussed. However, the prevalence of human-rights-violating-conflicts throughout the globe makes American indigenous water rights of less concern to the ICC. Lately, however, there has been an increase in international attention about the violations of human rights by corporations; for example, a people's tribunal was recently held in The Hague, Netherlands to determine whether the pesticide giant Monsanto should be held accountable in the ICC for its violations of human rights to health and for knowingly committing the crime of ecocide. If the tribunal judges return later in 2017 with a decision to pursue a criminal trial in the ICC against Monsanto, then that decision can set a precedent to be applied to other corporations, including the petroleum giants ExxonMobile and Chevron.

CONCLUSION & FUTURE OUTLOOK

In this paper, I have provided a summary of the current situation regarding the violations of indigenous water rights by corporations in the oil and gas industry. An illustration of the trends and magnitude of the problem was provided, which highlighted the dire lack of statistics regarding locations and amounts of petroleum-based products spilled and leaked, as well as the lack of statistics provided about the accessibility of adequate, clean water supplies for indigenous communities. The lack of statistics and information about these issues are the result of a lack of transparency by the U.S. government and the oil and gas industry, as well as the inadequacy of reporting requirements when there are spills and leaks of petroleum and hazardous materials. The publicly-accessible reports focus on the financial aspect of such incidents as opposed to the real effects on populations and the ecosystem. I then addressed critical race theory and water justice theory in regards to this phenomenon. I have ended with a discussion of the lack of technology to ensure that indigenous water rights are not violated, the problem with free, prior, and informed consent, and the matter of accountability for the violations of these rights.

There is much to be seen in the coming years in regards to indigenous rights, the human right to water, and the accountability for violations of such rights. For the time being, it seems that international attention is being drawn towards indigenous rights in the United States and elsewhere in the fight against corporate oil extraction activities. Indigenous communities throughout the Americas, including tribal nations from Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico, as well as indigenous communities throughout Europe, Asia, and Australia are joining forces and voicing their support for each other in unprecedented ways. From this 'indigenous rising' movement has come international attention from non-indigenous peoples and international organizations as well. The world is becoming increasingly aware of the struggle that indigenous people have survived for centuries.

However, recent political events have the potential to make activism against the oil and gas industry much more difficult. The President-elect of the United States has voiced his non-belief in human-fostered climate change on multiple occasions, is a supporter and investor in the oil and gas industry, and is making a series of interesting choices for his transition team that make the future of indigenous water rights and environmental rights seem bleak. It is yet to be seen whether his personal opinions on this situation will proceed given the current state of international affairs. Despite this negative prediction, however, there is also the possibility that this grassroots movement among the world's indigenous populations continues to gain ground and established the rights unique to the indigenous community.

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♦ Literature 405

THE SACRED EXCEPTION: THE DUAL STATES OF EXCEPTION IN HERTA MÜLLER'S *THE LAND OF GREEN PLUMS*

JULIAN THOMAS

HERTA MÜLLER'S DEPICTION OF THE STATE OF EXCEPTION is not limited to the government in her novel *The Land of Green Plums*. She presents the state of exception as something that can be created by the individual, as well as the governmental powers. Müller's governmental state of exception is both experienced and enacted by her character Tereza, as well as the unnamed narrator and her friends. Giorgio Agamben defines the state of exception as something that can only exist for the sovereign powers at hand. Müller challenges this by shifting the sovereign power from one that rules over all, to one that rules also over each individual self. The ways that totalitarianism is able to achieve and maintain influence over the life of the denizens in Müller's novel are not fictitious. Müller's novel is a fictitious retelling of her real

The Assignment and the Writer: To fulfill the research requirement of LIT 405 (Senior Seminar in Literature and the Law), the capstone course for the literature and law track of the English major, Julian Thomas interprets Herta Müller's *The Land of Green Plums*, her novel about four university students and friends under Ceaușescu's reign of terror, who belonged to Romania's Banat-Swabian minority. In analyzing Müller's depiction of totalitarian power through the double lens of the political theories of Giorgio Agamben and Michel Foucault, Mr. Thomas not only demonstrates a deft mastery of these two thinkers but also offers an original reading of Müller's novel. First, he argues that individuals can be put into states of exception through mechanisms of surveillance, which reduce them to less than human, but then he shows how the unswerving loyalty of the four friends created their own exception to the state's exception.

– Professor Toy-Fung Tung

experiences under the regime of Ceausescu in Romania during the post-World War Two reformation. This was a period following the migration of the German people from Hitler's demolished Third Reich to Ceausescu's Communist state. Müller is able to recreate all of the aspects of a totalitarian state by not only expressing the duality that can be found in Agamben's state of exception, but also by unveiling the fluid body politic of individuals and their relations, whose life and death are used to manifest power.

THE DECLARATION OF EXCEPTION

The state of exception is created by a sovereign power within the government that is able to step outside of its own legal boundaries. The boundaries that are established within the government itself are violated, as the sovereign power that legitimizes government has been stripped from the individuals that make up the body politic. Most dictatorial governments in the mid-twentieth century have operated in this mode. Agamben, a prominent Italian philosopher, provides a deep exploration of the warping of governmental functions under the state of exception. In his book *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Agamben discusses the concept of biopolitics in a state in which life is stripped of its internal value and becomes a commodity for the sovereign power. Müller presents Ceausescu's regime as one that exemplifies what Agamben refers to as the "paradox of sovereignty," which is when "[t]he sovereign is, at the same time, outside and inside the juridical order" (Agamben, 12). This is to say that the controlling governing power is actually outside of the law, despite the implicit declaration that everything is under the scope of the law. This presents a type of power that is capable of eluding its own law. This is the power that Müller weaves into her novel. In the state of exception, life is not given any significance other than to become what the state demands of that life. Müller focuses on one authoritative power, but it works in two different ways to create the state of exception for Tereza and the unnamed narrator, because the former is an "accomplice," while the narrator and her friends try to resist, or at least, to survive.

THE NORMATIVE FORCES

Müller's take on the totalitarian state shows striking similarities with Michel Foucault's model of panoptic societies. Foucault explains the panopticon, a concept originally developed by utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham, as a power structure, in which the objective is to have all participants within the structure police and monitor themselves. The participants conform to expectations, because they are made to believe that they are under the surveillance of an ever-present, but unseen dominant power. Foucault explains the operations of the panoptic structure as follows: "This Panopticon, subtly arraigned so that an observer may observe, at a glance, so many different individuals, also enables everyone to come and observe any of the observers" (Foucault, 207). The threat and power of observation in this frame is present, not in a centralized power that resides in any special individuals, but is theoretically spread among all the social participants. The results of acting in accordance with totalitarian power are seen in the actions of the majority. In Müller's Romania, depicted in *Green Plums*, we see the working of a panoptic society when the narrator and her dorm mates

attend a university rally to condemn Lola, a so-called traitor to the regime, who is found hanging in the narrator's dorm room closet. "In the cube that evening someone said: Everybody felt like crying, but couldn't, so they applauded too long. No one dared to be the first to stop. Everybody looked at each other's hands while they were clapping. A few people stopped for a moment, then were so frightened they started clapping all over again" (Müller, 25). The shift from wanting to show sadness for Lola's death to the overwhelming display of patriotism for Ceausescu's regime expresses the power of "Panopticism."

In order not to be seen as someone who is defiant against the regime, everybody begins to clap. But the clapping is then used as a means to exert surveillance against and over other members, who each could just as easily suffer the fate of Lola. The watching of other hands' clapping and the urge to resume clapping after stopping verify the principle of panoptic power. The aim is not to be singled out and vilified, but not by the government, by the other people that are themselves clapping. Müller's choice not to name the "someone" who voices the unified thought to cry for Lola further shows how the Panopticon's "physics" . . . of power" (Foucault, 215) is able to act on its own, without specific human direction. The destruction of individual identity for the sake of mass unification is a concept that Müller uses to enhance the panoptic structure. There is no individual that is not watching the hands of the others. Foucault finds the most important aspect of the panoptic structure in its ability to function without a dominant present power. He states:

Hence the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that this surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary (Foucault, 201).

The illusion of universal surveillance is an integral factor to maintaining power in Ceausescu's regime. The totalitarian state is able to remain an authoritative power, because all the members of the state are considered to be "automatic" and always-present enforcers against anything non-normative to that state. In the article: "Banat-Swabian, Romanian, and German: Conflicting Identities in Herta Müller's *Herztier* [Green Plums]" Valentina Glajar researches the changing role of identity in Müller's novel, as well as in the lives of actual Germans during the migration period after World War II. She refers to the members of Ceausescu's panoptic society as "passive collaborators" (532). And she attributes the power of the panoptic order to fear: "Each individual lived with a share of this collective fear; people were not able to connect with others or to take any action, since fear and doubt were two sides of the same coin. Fear not only prevented people from speaking up but also transformed them into a herd of passive collaborators" (532). Within this herd, the community of Romania is not allowed any sense of individuality. The fear of not fitting in with the abnormal normative put in place by Ceausescu keeps the entire system in check.

Notions of hope and reason are referred to as lunacy within a country that bows to Ceausescu's desires. The narrator describes two of lunatics of the city as a

man in a black bow tie, who waits for his wife to return from the prison while “holding the same withering bouquet” (Müller, 38) and a wandering philosopher, who rants “to wood and iron about Kant and the universe of ravenous sheep” (40). The endless waiting for a past that died long ago is evident in the man with the black tie. The philosophical man, who speaks to wood and iron, speaks to commodities that are given more value than the people around him. His subject matter is important, and ironically he is labeled a lunatic for speaking about Kant, a prominent German philosopher, who writes about the importance of self-governing individual morality. In a reality where a hungry herd is led by a desire to consume and assimilate, the philosopher's words have no effect. The philosopher is labeled crazy, not because he is not normal, but because both he and the man with the black bow tie have given up their fear of the panoptic machine to pursue a real meaning that goes beyond the will of the regime. What we think of as normal is considered lunacy in the totalitarian state, or an exception to the state of exception.

MÜLLER'S COMPETING STATES OF EXCEPTION

The most direct example of Agamben's state of exception can be found in the character Tereza. In the initial moments of her entry into the novel, she is portrayed as a person of exemption from within the totalitarian state. Tereza's privileged status, due to her powerful father's contributions to the state, is expressed through non-normative means—meaning that she represented what was non-normative within Ceausescu's normative totalitarian state, but is normal to us. The workers at the factory hold Tereza in contempt: “She had dresses from Germany and from France. Sweaters from England and jeans from America The women who worked in the offices didn't like Tereza. You could tell what they were thinking when they saw Tereza. They were thinking: All those things that Tereza has are worth fleeing for. They became envious and bitter” (Müller, 108). Tereza's ability to wear lavish clothes and jewelry is a visible embodiment of the state of exception in a state of exception. The clothing that Tereza wears is not the clothing that the normal people wore or could even buy. To members of Ceausescu's societal norm, she is considered different and resented for it. But while she is considered different from the people around her, she is still a member (willing or not) of the same community as the other factory women. All of these other women would be willing to flee the regime to get the things that Tereza has. During the regime of Ceausescu the living conditions were diminished greatly as Glajar explains: “Food dependency was Ceausescu's strategy to keep the people's minds busy: worried about basic survival they had no opportunity to think about overturning Ceausescu's regime. Culture became a secondary matter” (Glajar, 531). The removal of human aspects of life such as culture thwarts individual desires. The women desired the trappings of culture. They wanted to be free from living in Agamben's state of “bare life” or marginal survival. Ceausescu was able to reduce people to a state where they had to focus on just maintaining their “bare life.” The women that Tereza works with longed to have a “sacred life,” as Agamben describes the life that has value and is part of culture.

Under Ceausescu, people had a “life that may be killed, but not sacrificed” (Agamben, 53). Tereza is able to exist within the true normative state because her father is a prominent member of the Party. Thus, she is an exception to Ceausescu's

non-normative regime. Tereza's state of exception is evident when she states her reason for choosing not to join Ceausescu's Communist Party: "I'm allowed to refuse, because my father was an official in the factory here. He cast every monument in the city." The narrator comments: "I saw a barren province in Tereza's face Into that place where, in me, there was emptiness, Tereza would never venture within herself" (Müller, 107). Tereza's claim to exist outside of the sovereign state is founded on her father's life work for the State. In this sense, Tereza is capable of existing outside of the law, but cannot act freely within its confines. She later fulfills her obligation to the State by betraying and spying on the narrator. The void that the narrator sees in Tereza, the void that she will never explore, is Müller's remark on Tereza's state of exception, as she is able to flaunt her invulnerable status, unaware of her own lack of autonomy. The narrator in herself has emptiness, too, but that is because she herself has not fully assimilated to Ceausescu's party. She is always acutely aware of how she stands in the position of a foreigner under the rule of illegal law.

Tereza explains the reason why she is able to acquire such lavish items as the result of her father's influence: "My father doesn't need to go shopping, he makes the rounds of his monuments and carries a shopping bag around town with him for no reason. I [narrator] asked: Does he have a dog," since dogs were heavily associated with interrogation in the novel (Müller, 109). Tereza is considered to be a part of Ceausescu's state of exception because of her father's contribution to the dominating power. His power is extended so much that not only does the government permit his actions, but also the people of the city go so far as to provide free food for him, as if his existence were akin to sovereign power. Note the scarcity of food resources mentioned by Glajar as method of control. The act of giving up something of highest value presents a significance that goes beyond material possession. In the exchange of food, the denizens are acknowledging the governmental state of exception. The narrator's sly comment about Tereza's having a dog is another way that Müller depicts the dehumanization of enforcers, who use dogs to terrorize others.

Biopolitics removes the emotive functions of life and reduces the life of the individual to bare survival. Agamben explains this concept: "The production of bare life is the original activity of sovereignty. The sacredness of life, which is invoked today as an absolutely fundamental right in opposition to sovereign power" is proof of the sovereign's power to reduce civil life to "bare life" (Agamben, 83). The use of power as biopower is fundamental to Ceausescu's regime. Respect for life is of little worth in Müller's novel, as evidenced by: Tereza's refusal to cut out her tumor; her doctor-boyfriend's refusal to examine her; the tortious interrogations of Captain Pjele; and Kurt's discovery of literal blood drinkers at his job and his subsequent conversion to them. Ceausescu's influence on the politics and culture of Romania creates an environment in which life can be of no worth other than to continue a cycle where: "political life now fully enters into the structure of the state and even becomes the earthly foundation of the state's legitimacy and sovereignty" (Agamben, 81). Life becomes a mode of currency that can be exchanged for participation in the power that renders life meaningless, through the denial of individuality and identity.

Müller associates Romania's 'normative' with an authoritarian power that created a panoptic society and a state of exception, which destroyed normal life for the narrator and her friends, Kurt, Edgar, and Georg. The narrator is a character who

exists within the 'normative' realm of totalitarian control. However, the four friends are able to unleash themselves from being subjected to the state by reversing the totalitarian 'normative' and creating a subversive civil body through their loyalty and friendship. The narrator creates a code for her and her friends to communicate covertly through letters. The code is as follows: "The words nail clipper in a sentence will mean interrogation, . . . Shoes will mean a search, a sentence about a cold will mean you're being followed" (Müller, 81). This code is based on normative words that are used in everyday conversation, but in Ceausescu's regime, they have acquired non-normative and exceptional significance. The mundane aspect of the comma in a letter, which sets off the greeting is something that is normal in normal society, but in the state of exception and for the friends, a comma is a warning that one's life is in danger.

Müller emphasizes the state of exception for the group through the ethnic status that they all share as German immigrants in a foreign land. The status of having two identities put them in a double state of exception. As Banat-Swabians, they had a strict devotion to sustain their culture and customs. This is something that cannot be easily preserved in a foreign totalitarian state, where the denizens are under a constant sense of surveillance, and sacred individuality is suppressed through the dire necessity of life's preservation. Glajar notes the goals of the Banat-Swabian people: "Their highest aim was to preserve their German identity with respect to language, tradition, and culture. Though they considered Germany the source of their identity, they never thought of going back to live there" (Glajar, 523). With the preservation of their cultural identity being something of a cherished mission, the Banat-Swabian people naturally opposed Ceausescu's measures to strip the people of their cultural identity. Müller shows the state of exception in this double respect. She then affirms it through the narrator's desire not to leave the country against her mother's wishes. Captain Pjele says, "Your mother wants to emigrate . . . She may want to, but I don't" (Müller, 187). The competing desires of wanting to stay in a country where otherness is not accepted and wanting to retain one's Germanic cultural origin, creates a double exception for the narrator and her three German friends. In preserving their German identity and language they had a powerful tool to create a state of exception within Ceausescu's state of exception. The narrator and her friends exercise this whenever they read the German books hidden in the summerhouse.

THE DOUBLE TRIUMPH OF EXCEPTION

Ultimately, the state of exception or pseudo-normalcy that the narrator and her friends created could not co-exist with the sovereign state of exception. This is because if another exception is able to exist outside of the dominant, it threatens the sovereign's claim to power. The state of exception for the narrator and her friends is founded in the notion that they are not really members of the Party or Romanian culture. Despite living in and under Romanian law, the narrator, Kurt, Georg, and Edgar are not natives to the land. Throughout the novel they are persecuted by Capitan Pjele, but also by the members of the political herd. Kurt's decision to become a blood drinker, like the other members of the slaughterhouse where he works, marks his conversion to their brutality. The important aspect about Ceausescu's totalitarian state is that within its state of exception, its goal is to continue to shape and control the lives of the people. The narrator's state of exception naturally resists this, as she is a German

in Romania. The group of friends oppose their foreign nature to the state, but their exception does not reach beyond their small group. Tereza is the one exception. She is a member of the State, but also one of the narrator's group of German-Romanians when they all become friends. They meet on the common ground of being Romanian citizens. Glajar argues the inseparability of both identities: "German-Romanians cannot shed their Romanian past like an old, no longer desirable attachment, since it was, for better or worse, part of their lives, history, and identity" (Glajar, 537).

Both Tereza and the narrator embody the state of exception in that they present an intriguing duality that leaves both characters at a loss to fully separate from the totalitarian state. Tereza's refusal to treat her tumor is an independent act of her own and an acceptance of her life as a reduction to "bare life," since it is the cause of her death. The narrator becomes aware of this in the letter from Kurt stating that she returned all of their German literature from the summerhouse (240). Tereza uses her state of exception to elude the power of the state, but not ultimately for the benefit of her friends and the narrator, or even herself. Agamben sees exception as: "An element in law that transcends positive law in the form of its suspension" (Agamben, 13). Tereza transcends the State because in her existence she has perks because of her father. Her choice in holding the books of her friends is indicative of her exceptional status, yet she is not truly exempt. In the end, she becomes an "accomplice" to Captain Pjele. Tereza tells the narrator that she was sent by Captain Pjele to spy on her after the narrator gets to Germany. Müller here shows the damaging effects of the biopolitics of the state of exception in action. It can betray itself, as Tereza's double betrayal shows, for Tereza dies after returning to Romania, but the narrator, through her betrayal of the State and loyalty to her friends, lives.

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♦ History 425

DEPOSING ALLENDE: THE ROLE OF THE INVISIBLE MAJORITY

VICTOR NILO III

ABSTRACT

The Chilean military coup, which occurred on September 11, 1973, was a significant event in the history of the Cold War. Historians have often attributed the military coup to the United States' government and private sector. However, this paper argues that the most significant factors that led to the military coup were internal, an internal reaction to Allende's economic and social policies enacted through his political party made up of Chile's far left. In short, the military coup was a reaction by the Chileans to political opposition, economic mismanagement, and military dissatisfaction with their commander-in-chief, who was Allende. As a result of these three factors, the Chilean military and police forces came together and collectively carried out the military coup that liberated their country of Allende as president. This paper examines the factors mentioned above and how they contributed to the ouster of the first democratically elected Marxist president in the Americas. As a result, this thesis challenges the prior notions of the military coup and presents evidence that emphasizes on frequently overlooked internal factors within Chile that caused the military to act against Allende.

The Assignment and the Writer: The senior seminar, undertaken by all Global History majors, requires students to synthesize the research, historiographic and writing skills they have acquired in the major. Students choose a topic they wish to investigate in detail, and then work with the professor, as well as other faculty with expertise in the specific area of interest, to identify and research both primary and secondary sources, and develop and prove an original argument based upon that research. This excellent paper by Victor Nilo explains the historical significance of a critical event, locates a primary source archive, and analyzes the evidence in order to answer an independent research question. This is strong scholarship by a confident writer.

– Professor Sara McDougall

INTRODUCTION

The infamous “Cold War,” which took place between 1947 and 1991, has as its main protagonists, of course, the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). This paper focuses on one of the countries that played a minor role in this large conflict, but a role that was nevertheless important. The Cold War in Latin America was anything but cold. The Cuban Missile Crisis (1962) is an example of how near the world stood to an atomic power confrontation between the United States, Cuba and the USSR. Moreover, the constant threat that nuclear weapons added to the Cold War makes the political and military tensions within the world during this time period all the more attractive.

Chile during the 1960s enjoyed a beneficial relationship with the United States and was a relatively stable, developing country. During the presidency of Eduardo Frei, Chile had begun to “improve income distribution and access to education,” making Frei a popular politician in Chile and “[a]fter the two governments that followed [Frei’s], Chileans would look back with nostalgia.”¹ The government that immediately followed Frei was led by Salvador Allende and a coalition of various Chilean leftist parties. As this paper later discusses, Allende’s presidency enacted policies that crippled the Chilean economy. As a result, the Chilean military and police forces came together and overthrew Allende, with the support of the Chilean government and people.

The overthrow of Salvador Allende sent shockwaves throughout the world. Subsequently, the Chilean military coup of 1973 gave notice to the world that the Cold War was now beginning to heat up in South America—and the United States was deeply attentive to what was materializing in their “backyard.” Furthermore, this paper will shed light on how the Chilean people at large, and also political and military groups, reacted towards their government once it elected a president in the Marxist Allende, allied with the USSR and Cuba instead of Chile’s original partner—the United States. Consequently, Allende’s Chile attempted to deviate from the United States’ leadership—even challenging it outright—which ultimately worked towards the detriment of the Chilean Marxist government.

As the title implies, the focus of this paper is on Allende’s overthrow and the factors that contributed to the Chilean Armed Forces’ collective efforts to depose the Marxist president. The overthrow of Allende was in response to various reasons but chiefly stands the notion that Allende was a Marxist president in the Americas during a time of hostility between those who identified with Marxism-Leninism and those who advocated for capitalism and democracy. Although Allende believed in a different brand of Marxism—one that would be Socialist but also democratic, “the Chilean road” to Socialism suffered misfortune by their own doing.

Much of what has been written on the Chilean military coup of 1973 has been dominated by the allegedly predominant role of foreign-owned companies and the United States. Moreover, historians who have written on the military overthrow are also influenced by the brutality of Pinochet’s dictatorship that began *after* the coup and have not focus on the conditions in Chile *before* the coup. In order to properly

understand the military coup and its causes, historians must examine Chile politically, economically, and historically prior to Allende's ouster.

Too often scholars claim that the United States was not only complicit in the Chilean military coup but ordered it outright. However, the driving forces behind the Chilean military coup d'état, which ousted Allende, were not the United States' corporate or national security interests. Rather, the coup reflected internal responses to the fractured nature of Chilean politics, Allende's economic policies, and the Chilean Armed Forces opposition to the Marxist president. The combination of these three factors, among others, ultimately led to Allende's overthrow on September 11, 1973.

Historians who have written on the military coup often fall into two competing camps. Just as with many other aspects of studies in the humanities, the constant battle between rightists and leftists occurs. The historical discourse on the military coup is no exception. It is incorrect to assume, as found in leftist scholarship that the Nixon administration was the defining factor behind the Allende ouster since no United States soldiers were present to carry out orders from Washington. Instead, the overwhelming evidence of the military coup can be found in analysis of the economic reality of Chile in between 1970 and 1973; realities that this paper will discuss in more depth in what follows.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many authors who have written on Allende's overthrow have made foreign investments the center of their arguments, investigative journalist and political writer Seymour M. Hersh makes a similar claim in his prize-winning book on Henry Kissinger called *The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House*. Hersh argues that Chile's economic system and market had become considered a victory in the eyes of the CIA since "[t]he agency had managed to penetrate all elements of Chilean government, politics and society" and wanted Chile to "[remain] a progressive democratic nation" that "encouraged American multinational corporations to do business within its borders."ⁱⁱ Prior to Allende, Chile had been a friendly nation to the interests of the United States since it was open to foreign capital, and in exchange received various amounts of assistance throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Thus, United States corporations in Chile were beneficial because it combated Communism by allowing foreign capital to stimulate the Chilean economy and provide infrastructure.

Foreign investments in Chile had existed for decades and this was beginning to create divisions within Chile—even before Allende came to power. Chilean politicians who were friendly towards foreign companies often received generous campaign contributions in return. However, Chile as a whole was not entirely satisfied with foreign capital within its borders. Hersh argues that United States corporations in Chile became "a source of constant debate" within Chile the late 1960s—"pitting the Chilean right, with its support for...American profit taking" against "the left, which organized...labor strikes and public demonstrations against the Foreign-owned companies."ⁱⁱⁱ It was the tensions between these groups that ultimately granted Allende enough votes to become president. Allende's campaign promised that

foreign owned companies would be nationalized in order to raise the working class out of poverty and make sure that the raw materials of Chile is used to benefit the people and not corporations.

Hersh argues that the White House's opposition to Allende was not primarily a national security issue, but rather a procedure to protect belongings of wealthy businessmen—who generously contributed to Nixon's campaign. Moreover, Hersh writes that "Nixon was primarily protecting the interests of his corporate benefactors," by opposing Allende and charged Kissinger with the operation of executing the strategy.^{iv} On the other hand, Kissinger's "issue was more complicated," and was "linked not only to his need to please the President and dominate the bureaucracy," along with "his worldview and his belief that no action to stop the spread of communism was immoral."^v As I have demonstrated, Hersh considers the White House's policy towards Allende to have been motivated by different principles, but fostered a similar goal; which was to undermine the Marxist president.

Hersh is not alone with his skepticism as to the actual threat Chile posed to the United States with a Marxist leader that had ties to Cuba, Soviet Union, and the Eastern Bloc. However, in the context of the Atomic Age, the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962), and fear of a Soviet submarine base in Cuba (Cienfuegos), hindsight might lend to the argument that the United States perhaps over-reacted. However compelling Hersh's argument invalidates the national security threat that Chile may or may have not had on the United States during that time, Nixon's administration nonetheless, perceived Chile as a legitimate threat and their policies towards Allende was a manifestation of that exposure.

Before the general public was aware that the White House was actively planning and performing covert operations in Chile, Nixon's administration enjoyed the luxury of operating in Chile clandestinely. However, this all changed once classified documents were leaked by a syndicated columnist. The man credited with making the connection between Nixon and Chile was Jack Anderson, who was one of politicians' most feared and hated newspaper columnists of the twentieth century. Anderson became well-known for publishing material that no other journalist of his time dared to speak about, let alone publish. As Mark Feldstein writes in his book, *Poisoning the Press*, Anderson obtained and published documents that introduced the United States government as a collaborator in a plot to thwart Allende. Of special interest for this paper, Anderson uncovered documents and memos that allegedly coupled the CIA and IT&T as bedfellows in the coup d'état in Chile.

Feldstein argues that Nixon's primary focus in Chile was to thwart Allende based on anti-communism.^{vi} Nixon highly despised communism and wanted to eliminate it from the world permanently. The concept of a Domino Theory—which meant that one country's fall to communism would lead to more—was applied in both Southeast Asia and also in Latin America. Early on in the war, the United States' was able to hold off communism from consuming the entire Korean peninsula, but then lost Cuba as the island supported the socialist government of Fidel Castro. Thus, Kissinger stated to Nixon that a Marxist Chile would be to Nixon's administration what Cuba was to Kennedy's—a failure.^{vii}

On the other hand, Feldstein argues that IT&T was less interested in Chilean politics than it was in the economic well-being of assets in Chile—which was up to

\$200 million.^{viii} “Together, the Nixon administration and IT&T shared similar goals and discussed them in unvarnished terms” writes Feldstein.^{ix} The terms were clear: IT&T worked on the “economic collapse” while the White House used its people to control the political aspect of bringing down Allende. Feldstein concludes that proof of the “Nixon White House in trying to destabilize Allende’s government was undeniable” and the leaked documents, that are now called “The Anderson Papers,” are solid evidence of Nixon’s involvement in Chile.^x

Although it makes for a compelling story, the premise of Feldstein’s argument is deeply flawed. The mere existence of documents suggesting the United States government had contacts with a company like IT&T, is not at all confirmation of a smoking gun that proves the United States private sector had a meaningful responsibility for the military coup. Rather, the documents show that IT&T was concerned with Allende’s Marxist policies and wanted to ensure that the United States was aware of what was occurring in Chile. As a result, the notion that IT&T is a perpetrator is flawed, because initiating communication with the White House on what was occurring in Chile—and offering resources—is not enough evidence to convict a corporation.

At any rate, the Anderson Papers was the first piece of evidence that connected Nixon’s administration into Chile’s internal political affairs. However, the Anderson Papers would soon be followed by CIA memos which were superior in content. Most of the significant CIA memorandums have been made available by the National Security Archive, located at George Washington University in Washington D.C. Peter Kornbluh, who is an author, archivist, and human right activist, has written extensively on the Chilean military coup. Moreover, Kornbluh is a leading scholar in the history of Chile from the 1960s to 1990, focusing on the dictatorship of Pinochet and human rights violations during his dictatorship. Kornbluh’s position on Chile’s military coup is that of a leftist and sympathetic to Allende—which appears to be because of his strong resentment towards Pinochet’s regime.

Kornbluh writes in his book, *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability* that Henry Kissinger lied when he wrote in his memoir that he “identified Chilean millionaire...Agustin Edwards as the catalyst” to “Richard Nixon’s September 15 orders for a coup.”^{xi} Kornbluh quotes a portion of Kissinger’s memoir of a meeting between Agustin Edwards and Nixon that occurred on September 14, 1970. In this meeting, Edwards warned Washington about the threat that Allende posed to Chile’s economy and specifically the United States’ interest. The following day, on September 15, Kornbluh writes that “Edwards met with Kissinger and Attorney General Mitchell for breakfast,” where Edwards then warned Mitchell of Allende’s threat and subsequently met with CIA director, Richard Helms, and relayed the same message.^{xii}

Declassified documents, Kornbluh argues, seem to be inconsistent with Kissinger’s account of the coup’s genesis. The documents that Kornbluh uses to make his argument demonstrate that a plan to use a military coup to oust Allende long preceded Edward’s visit to Washington. As Kornbluh writes, “a full month before the election, Assistant Secretary of State John Crimmins sent Ambassador Edward Korry a secret ‘eyes only’ cable regarding contingency options in the event of Allende’s election.”^{xiii} According to Kornbluh, the document “provided a remarkably detailed

analysis of the various election scenarios, U.S. options, and expectations.”^{xiv} The options mostly included various strategies for the Chilean Armed and Police Forces working together to overthrow or prevent the inauguration of Allende should he win the election.

As a result, Kornbluh contributes to what has been written on the Chilean military coup by demonstrating to what extent the Nixon administration went to try and block Allende from becoming president before these corporations had met with the president and his staff. Further, by using declassified documents, Kornbluh's work makes a case that the coup was a result of something other than the influence of U.S. corporations—and argues against Kissinger's narrative.

Similar to the arguments made by Feldstein, Kornbluh also relies too heavily on documents that establish communication between the United States government and the private sector to prove that the United States was behind the military coup. However, Kornbluh's argument is insufficient to confirm his claim. Moreover, the military intervention that the United States advocated for was to *prevent* Allende's nomination—which did not occur—working against the typical leftist notion that the United States has always gotten what it wants. Thus, the documents that exist demonstrate that the United States was not ultimately in-charge of the political scene in Chile, but it was the existing Chilean politicians who made the final decisions—such as granting Allende the presidency.

The CIA memorandums reveal Henry Kissinger as a central figure conducting U.S. foreign policy in Chile; a role relevant to his position as National Security Advisor in Nixon's administration. Nixon gave Kissinger the task of making sure that conditions in Chile remained such that benefited the interests of the United States' national security and commerce. In other words, Kissinger needed to make sure Chile did not become a Socialist state. That said, Kissinger was unable to prevent Allende's election but soon after worked diligently to make sure that Allende's influence would not extend to neighboring nations in the region. Some argue, however, that Kissinger's tenure as National Security Advisor was dominated by the Vietnam War, and therefore that Chile did not get the proper amount of attention it needed to properly thwart Allende. Which means essentially that Kissinger did not dedicate enough time and effort into Latin America. Indeed, Kissinger mentions repeatedly in his memoir that Southeast Asia was the most important issue of this time and that Latin America was not his area of expertise.^{xv}

While Kissinger claims to have expertise in areas other than Latin America, many have criticized the policy enacted in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam conflict. Christopher Hitchens is one who was known as Henry Kissinger's fiercest critic and a prominent leftist who vehemently opposed the Vietnam War. Moreover, Hitchens, who was a world renowned journalist, author, and advocate of human rights, made powerful statements against the former National Security Advisor. In the book *The Trial of Henry Kissinger*, Hitchens argues that Kissinger is guilty of “[t]he personal suborning and planning of murder, of a senior constitutional officer in a democratic nation—Chile—with which the United States was not at war.”^{xvi} In other words, Hitchens was opposed to the intervention that the United States had in Chile.

Hitchens argues that it was not just Kissinger who wanted to overthrow Allende, but also President Nixon, who was sympathetic to corporations operating in

Chile. Hitchens writes that “the very name of Allende was anathema to the extreme Right in Chile,” and of course to “certain powerful corporations” including ITT and Pepsi Cola.^{xvii} Hitchens makes the connection between Nixon and Donald Kendall, who was the president of Pepsi Cola and “who had given [Nixon] his first corporate account” early in Nixon’s legal career.^{xviii} Hitchens argument is that businessmen in high positions were able to convince Nixon to order the overthrow of Allende to ensure that their corporations would not suffer the same fate as other companies had in socialist countries that practiced expropriation.

Hitchens claims that Allende’s overthrow occurred because giant corporations in Chile feared expropriations and loss of assets. The argument Hitchens makes draws upon documentary evidence—which has been researched a great deal—depicting distress harbored by corporations in Chile, but lack any solid substance that show that these companies ordered, or even had a significant role, in Allende’s overthrow. It is undeniable that corporations feared an Allende presidency—since Popular Unity campaign speeches insisted on expropriation of companies and abolishing the nation of foreign investments—but as previously mentioned lack clear evidence to have orchestrated the coup.

In sum, while the connection between the private sector and Nixon is compelling, it lacks clear evidence that it played a major factor to Allende’s ouster. It seems that Hitchens is more interested in convicting Kissinger of wrongdoing rather than understanding what truly occurred in Chile. Consequently, Hitchens can only prove, despite his claims, Kissinger’s *interest* in a coup, and interprets the documents as *execution* of the coup. Therefore, Kissinger is not any guiltier for expressing the desire for a coup than someone who expresses the desire to bring bodily harm to someone without carrying out; he wanted it to happen but did not make it happen and these are two rather different things.

Ultimately, Hitchens' analysis falls short in that it ignored the role of the most important actors in this story: the Armed Forces and the Chilean people themselves. These two essential ingredients to the military coup, which this paper will dedicate considerable amount of attention to, have too often been neglected by many who have written about this historic event. In addition, the documents that Hitchens uses to make his argument are the same ones that are used repeatedly. Although the documents are important in their own right, the most important factor in understanding the military coup in all its complexity is examining the deep divide that existed between Chile’s left, the more conservative politicians, the military officers, and the country as a whole.

Academics who have published works on the overthrow of Allende closer to the present have the advantage of time and prior scholarship to offer better informed narratives. Unlike the authors I mentioned above, historians who have published works recently have begun to shift towards analysis of what was actually occurring in Chile leading up to the military coup. I will conclude this overview of prior scholarship on this subject with excerpts from books that have begun to pivot from the external factors that contributed to the military overthrow to an examination of the internal factors within Chile.

In the book *Overthrow: America’s Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*, Stephen Kinzer informs readers with the disorder within Chile pertaining to

the economic hardships that Chileans were experiencing by 1973. Kinzer writes that “Allende’s divisive policies...[had] throw[n] Chile into a grave crisis” and “[s]treet disturbances became so regular that Allende was forced to replace his police chief and his interior minister,” in response to the demonstrations.^{xix} Moreover, Chile’s middle class including “[s]hopkeepers and truckers staged crippling strikes” resulting in scarcity of food and “[s]everal cities were put under temporary states of emergency.”^{xx} In short, Chile was beginning to collapse into widespread chaos under Allende and Popular Unity’s policies, which middle class businesses suffered most. The strikes that were regularly occurring in Chile were a response to Allende’s unpopularity among the Chilean masses.

Similarly to Kinzer, historian Tanya Harmer argues that the combination of a variety of largely internal factors came together to result in Allende’s overthrow. Harmer put it best in her book, *Allende’s Chile and the inter-American Cold War* when she writes that it was “the Chilean military—not Washington—that ultimately decided to act” against Allende and “the Chilean left...ultimately [was] unable to defend” the Chilean way of socialism that Allende championed.^{xxi} Thus, as Harmer observes, that the Chilean Armed Forces was able to depose Allende, despite the assistance it was receiving from Cuba and the coalition of Chile’s left. It is for that reason that many historians have wrongly attributed—and given the United States too much credit—for the military coup, despite its pure Chilean elements i.e. military and police force.

Overall, the prior scholarship that attempts to explain the facilitating factors leading to Allende’s overthrow has often fallen short of compelling. Specifically, historians have used sources that fails to capture completely the depth surrounding the regime change that occurred in Chile. Moreover, the sources used for majority of the narratives often capture the United States’ position on the event and ignore the stance of Chileans. Therefore, the writer of this paper does justice to the Chilean sources and focuses exclusively on internal factors to arrive at a conclusion distinct from the established accounts of the Chilean military coup in what follows.

ARGUMENT

Historians and scholars who have taken up the task of writing about the military overthrow of Salvador Allende have focused heavily--indeed, as I will argue, too heavily--upon document made available by the Central Intelligence Agency, which depict the United States’ connection to the overthrow as playing an extremely important role. Once the declassified documents were released to the general public, many scholars jumped on the opportunity to attribute to the Nixon administration responsibility for the military coup. However, in order to arrive at a clearer understanding of Allende’s overthrow, which occurred on September 11th 1973, a thorough examination of the Chilean political, popular and military opposition towards Allende is imperative. To that end, this paper aims to pivot from the established scholarship on Allende’s overthrow and examine factors that will give readers a more accurate account of events based upon a broader examination that focuses in particular on the Chileans themselves.

This thesis identifies and analyses three different arenas of opposition to Allende that capture the Chilean opposition to Allende's presidency. First, to illustrate the political opposition of Allende, attention is given to sources produced by the Chilean Supreme Court, the Chilean Chamber of Deputies, and President of the Senate, Eduardo Frei. Next, this paper will consider the opposition within Chile by the general population against Allende's regime manifested by their demonstrations and protests. Lastly, an examination and explanation of the factors leading to the Armed Forces' dissatisfaction of the Marxist president will further clarify the various causes that led to the military coup. In sum, the military coup was not an incident that occurred due to United States' hostility towards Allende, but rather a combination of the three factors mentioned above.

ALLENDE'S POLITICAL OPPOSITION

Careful analysis of the denunciation of Allende's regime by the Chilean legislative and judicial branch is a fundamental prerequisite for arriving at a clearer understanding of the military coup. Beginning with internal politics within Chile allows readers to acknowledge that the Chilean Congress facilitated the military coup by permitting the Armed Forces to prioritize enforcing the Chilean Constitution above protecting the president. Therefore, in order to accept the notion that Congress facilitated the military coup, it is important to investigate the Resolutions passed by the Supreme Court and Chamber of Deputies on May 26th and August 22nd 1973, respectively. These Resolutions explicitly articulate their disapproval and condemnation of Allende's government based on unconstitutional maneuvers that characterized the Socialist coalition. Finally, these Resolutions provide the proper context for understanding the motivating factors behind the Armed Forces' inclinations for undertaking the military coup in the interests of the nation.

Beginning with the fifth article of the Resolution passed by the Chamber of Deputies, members of the lower house declared that Allende "from the beginning, has sought to assume absolute power with the obvious purpose of subjecting all citizens to the strictest political and economic control by the state," which goes against the representative democracy that Chile's Constitution guarantees its citizens.^{xxii} Next, the fifth article continues by claiming that Allende's "goal of establishing a totalitarian system," which would fundamentally deprive Chileans of civil liberties.^{xxiii} As the articles reveal, Chilean congress had described Allende's intentions as endeavoring to strengthen control on the Chilean economy in order to create a Cuba-like nation in South America, just as many had feared.

Next, the Resolution accused Allende's government as having habitually acted in violation of the Chilean Constitution, expressing the fear that the abusive behavior would continue if the government failed to condemn the transgressions. Article six states Allende had made "violations a permanent system of conduct" and that Popular Unity "systematically ignores and breaches the proper role of the other branches of government" which then "destroyed essential elements of institutional legitimacy and the Rule of Law."^{xxiv} As the text demonstrates, Allende had not only been acting outside the limits of his constitutional capacity, but also damaging the Rule of Law, which the authors of the text desired to preserve.

Later, article seven of the Resolution states that Allende and his executive branch had assaulted the legislative and judicial branches of the Chilean Congress. First, by utilizing “legal loopholes,” Allende adopted “various measures of great importance” that were “unquestionably matters of legislation through special decrees enacted in an abuse of power.”^{xxxv} The article accuses Allende of taking on the role reserved for the legislative branch to pass laws that perhaps would not have otherwise been signed into law. Also, Allende has protected “Ministers of State who violate the Constitution or laws of the land,” from being prosecuted by the proper courts. As for violations against the judicial branch, the article states that Allende has undermined its authority, pardoned affiliated delinquents, and ignored judicial resolutions and sentences.^{xxxvi} In short, the Chambers of Deputies use this resolution to explain how Allende has continually assaulted and undermined the other branches of government with impunity.

Article ten of the Resolution specifically addresses the tyrannical nature of Allende’s regime. First, the article informs readers that Allende “has grievously attacked freedom of speech” by “applying all manner[s] of economic pressure against those media organizations that are not unconditional supporters of the government” and “illegally closing newspapers and radio networks” and “unconstitutionally jailing opposition journalists.”^{xxxvii} Moreover, although Chile has historically been a Catholic nation, Allende went against this tradition and tried to implement an educational system that was based on Marxist principles. Lastly, this article mentions that Allende had permitted “more than 1,500 illegal ‘takings’ of farms, and... hundreds of industrial and commercial establishments.”^{xxxviii} Thus, the Chamber of Deputies documented and tried to resolve the unconstitutional conduct of Allende’s government.

Lastly, the Resolution arguably gives the Armed Forces the legal justification for a military coup in the event that Allende continued to act unconstitutionally. The fourteenth article of the Resolution claims that “the Armed and Police Forces are and must be, by their very nature, a guarantee for all Chileans and not just for... a political coalition.”^{xxxix} Therefore, the Resolution offers the Armed Forces an opportunity to intervene in Chilean politics on the behalf of the Chilean people. The lower house therefore provided the Armed Forces with the legal perimeters for a military intervention grounded on redeeming the nation from President Allende.

FREI LETTER

Eduardo Frei was the Chilean president from 1964 to 1970, a member of the Christian Democratic Party, and considered a center-left, liberal politician. Frei had a friendly relationship with President Kennedy, which was manifested with the considerable amount of aid given to Frei’s Chile during the 1960s. In fact, beginning with John F. Kennedy from 1960 into Richard Nixon’s first year in office, Chile received the largest amount of aid in Latin America, which amounted to 1.2 billion including grants and loans.^{xxx} Frei’s presidency was in fact largely possible due to the assistance of the United States government. Evidence exists which proves that the Kennedy administration spent up to 2.6 million supporting Frei’s campaign and \$3 million sabotaging Allende’s through propaganda, which was aimed to benefit Frei’s

campaign.^{xxx} In short, Chile and the United States were on good terms during Frei's tenure as Chilean president.

Frei's justification of the military coup is analyzed and admitted as a significant primary source to this thesis because his viewpoint is that of a man of sound ethics and character. In 1970, under Nixon's administration, the United States attempted to keep Frei in office at any cost, despite Chilean law that prohibited a president from serve two consecutive terms. Nonetheless, the United States attempted to bypass the law, but Frei was unimpressed and demanded that the Constitution of Chile be respected. Since Frei choose the honorable option of abiding by Chilean law and not caving to the CIA's demand, this made him unpopular with the United States, particularly Nixon—who already did not like Frei because he was a “Kennedy guy.”^{xxxii}

During Frei's short time as President of the Senate in 1973, he wrote a letter of great historical importance to Mariano Rumor—who was the 39th Italian Prime Minister, and member of the global Christian Democratic political party—denouncing the presidency of Salvador Allende for numerous reasons including the frail state of the economy, disregard of Chilean law, and accusing Allende of attempting to establish a Marxist totalitarian government. This letter indicates that the overthrow of Allende was a response by Chilean citizens to rid their country of a Marxist president who was creating negative effects to the Chilean economy, which in 1970 was robust and one of the strongest in Latin America.

The existence of this letter helps readers of this historic event arrive at a better understanding of the conditions in Chile before the military coup. Moreover, the content of Frei's letter suggests that Allende's presidency was beginning to have detrimental effects on Chile and its citizens. Further, the argument can be made that a military coup could not have occurred smoothly had it not been sought after by a majority of Chile. Historically, military coups are difficult to carry out if the party seeking power does not have the support of the people, and the notion that only a small amount of people decided to fight against the armed forces shows that a majority of the Chilean population approved of the military coup. In addition, evidence exists that both, the United States and the military junta were surprised by the lack of opposition to the military coup leaders.^{xxxiii} Lastly, the letter written by Frei explains extensively the reasons that a military coup needed to occur in order to get Chile back into the shape it was before Allende came to power.

POPULAR UNITY: ECONOMIC MISMANAGEMENT

One of the most important factors contributing to the disapproval of Allende's presidency within Chile was the condition of the economy by mid-to-late 1973. Compared to Frei's presidency, Allende's applied Marxist policies had devastated Chile's economy; data suggests that the once flourishing Chile had declined considerably.^{xxxiv} Chile under Allende and Popular Unity incurred debt, accelerated inflation, and large portions of the private sector were nationalized. Thus, the reaction to Chile's economy by their citizens was altogether negative after having suffered under Allende's regime, and this led to a widely disapproval by a vast majority of the country.

Frei writes that Popular Unity had incurred too much debt in its short time in the presidency. Under Frei and the Christian Democrats—who served a full six years—Chile incurred less than \$400 million of debt—after paying all international debts, which in return made Chile's credit good internationally.^{xxxv} However, Popular Unity incurred debt of almost \$1 billion in its first three years—which in large part went to purchasing food because of the failure in agriculture due to massive expropriation of land. In addition, out of that \$1 billion debt, nothing went into investments of infrastructure or development. Further, Popular Unity stopped paying foreign debts, damaging the clean credit that Christian Democrats managed to achieve. Moreover, Popular Unity went through all the monetary reserves, despite claiming that their policies would not incur much debt. Thus, Allende's policies claimed to bring Chile independence from foreign capital and North American companies, but actually made Chile more dependent because of its desperate need in loans and financial life jackets.^{xxxvi}

Frei also mentions the amount of inflation—the increase in prices of goods and services—in Chile by 1973. Therefore, the currency, which in Chile during this time was called *escudos*, bought a smaller amount of goods and services. Having a high level of inflation is bad for an economy because its citizens will need to spend more money to purchase the same amount of goods. If a country is experiencing hyperinflation, which means that the country's currency becomes worthless and citizens begin to use goods to trade instead of currency—this creates a black market to get around using the devalued currency.

In 1973, Frei argues that Chile was beginning to experience a high level of inflation and university institutions made predictions that Chile's inflation was near 600%. In addition, whereas the *escudo* was valued at 20 per dollar in 1970, by August 1973 the escudo reached 2,500 per dollar. In explaining all this, Frei is able to use simple economic indicators to explain to readers the impoverished state of Chile's economy in response to Popular Unity's policies. Moreover, by informing Rumor of the high level of inflation in Chile, readers are able to acknowledge the economic reality in Chile, in addition to the dropping value of the Chilean currency.

During the presidency of Frei, 51% of the copper industry—much belonging to American companies—were legally nationalized with the consent and assistance of the United States. As a center left policy enacted by the Christian Democrats—by popular demand of the Chilean people—acted in a legal and constitutional manner while still retaining good relations with the United States, writes Frei. This was mostly executed because many believed that foreign companies in Chile owned too much capital but invested too little in infrastructure. However, Frei argues that Allende illegally expropriated the remaining 49% at a rapid pace and did not follow international law—which mandates timely compensation.^{xxxvii} Since Allende expropriated American firms illegally, the Nixon administration issued an embargo on Chile, making loans difficult to obtain by Allende's Chile and further damaged Popular Unity's relationship with the United States. These illegal acts of expropriation without compensation were similar to those enacted by Cuba in the early 1960s, adding to the hostility of the inter-American Cold War. In sum, Allende's economic practices had begun to operate on illegal terms and the Chilean people were beginning to feel the repercussions of these actions.

POPULAR UNITY: THE MINORITY

Frei accuses the Popular Unity regime of the first interruption to Chile's democratic tradition in more than 160 years. The causes, argues Frei, consist of Popular Unity having won fraudulently by a plurality of 36% of the popular vote. Similar to others who opposed Allende's election, Frei subscribes to the notion that a majority of the Chilean population (64%) did not elect him. In addition, Frei observes that Allende fell from 50% in municipal elections four months after his election, to 43% in parliamentary elections by 1973. Aside from Allende's declining popularity, Frei argues that it has been proven that Allende's administration falsified thousands of identity cards, making up to 5% of the vote. Further, Frei brings to light that the socialist coalition that made up Popular Unity are minorities in every sector of Chilean society including neighborhood organizations, the workforce, unions, and academia. Therefore, Frei believes it is a disservice to the country that a minority of the Chilean population is in charge of politics and is often opposing the majority of the nation—which to Frei seems unlike a democracy.

Frei continues the letter informing the reader that Allende's Popular Unity has gone against the wishes of the majority of Chileans and cultivated a society based on Marxism-Leninism. Whenever elections were held, Frei argues, the government made it so that a different organization was able to trample the results and sway the decision whichever way Popular Unity pleased, while also threatening those who clearly won the election not to appeal. In addition, Frei writes that a transformation of the educational system was attempted but failed largely because of resistance from all different kinds of organizations including unions, grassroots, and the Catholic and Protestant Churches. The changes that Allende wanted to enact in Chile were highly unpopular, largely because of the existing opposition to Marxist ideology—making those changes unwarranted and unwanted by the Chilean people.

In conclusion, both the judicial and legislative branches were coming together by 1973 to denounce the presidency of Salvador Allende. As demonstrated above, the Supreme Court and lower house argued and passed Resolutions that expressed their fear and distrust of the Marxist president, who had habitually acted unconstitutionally. Moreover, Frei acting as President of the Senate shared the same hostile feelings as his congress colleagues and justified the military coup as an act of the Armed Forces on the behalf of the Chilean government and people. Lastly, with article fourteen of the Resolution giving the Armed and Police Forces the right to intervene in Chilean politics and the denouncing of Allende by the President of the Senate, the military coup was inevitable.

CHILEANS AGAINST ALLENDE

In the same manner that the United States' bestows greater value on the will of the people than the will of the state, Chile too adheres to these similar beliefs which prevailed in the eighteenth century Enlightenment. To illustrate that the military coup was not only expedited due to the fractured nature of Chilean internal politics, but had

popular support of the people, what follows will focus on the role that Chileans citizens had on the military coup. As I will demonstrate, by 1973, all walks of life in Chile came together in a unified force to protest against the economic stagnation that was beginning to materialize in response to Allende's policies. In short, the disapproval of Allende by Chilean masses was visibly noticeable throughout Santiago by 1973.

The economy under Allende by 1972 had begun to show the negative consequences of the Marxist policies enacted throughout the previous year of 1971. An American CIA officer named Jack Devine, who was stationed in Chile during Allende's presidency captures the popular dissatisfaction of Allende in his book *Good Hunting: An American Spymaster's Story*. Devine observes that by 1971, Allende's "economic policies had come back to bite him," as inflation was steadily rising.^{xxxviii} Devine further explains in detail the hardships that Chileans were going through due to the "massive consumer shortages."^{xxxix} These shortages were the product of Allende's policies and their negative effects ultimately contributed to Allende's decisive unpopularity within the Chilean public. Evidence of popular objections to Allende was showcased by demonstrations and protest against his policies by various classes within Chile.

The rising inflation in Chile by 1972 gave birth to a black market for goods to better meet the demands of the people, as mentioned above by Frei. As a result, the active black market contributed to more inflation in a vicious cycle since Chileans ceased to use the Chilean *escudo* and relied on trading goods for other goods, or in some extreme situations, turned to making certain products, such as butter, themselves.^{xl} Another item that was becoming hard to come by in Chile during this period was beef, which Chileans ate regularly before the shortages began. Consequently, all this began to frustrate many Chileans.

Protest and demonstrations against Allende's policies and the Chilean economy were becoming a regular occurrence in Chile by 1972. While stationed in Chile, Devine writes about the protests, which he mentions to have helped finance at first, of women "who would carry pots and pans along with banners protesting the scarcity of basic food supplies and household goods."^{xli} Moreover, Devine observes one protest, which he witnessed, where "women threw chicken feed at soldiers, suggesting they were too timid to oppose the president," which would not accurately describe the Chilean Armed Forces by September 11th. Finally, housewives who protested against Allende during this time were intimately aware of the drawbacks in Chile since their roles in society as housewives were negatively affected without access to basic goods.

Housewives in Chile were not the only women who had a significant role in demonstrations opposing Allende. Aside from the female protesters just mentioned, multi-class right-wing women movements within Chile opposing Allende played a crucial role in the military overthrow. Additional women's movements in Chile emerged following the incident General Prats had with Alejandrina Knox on June 27th 1973 when Knox, who was of middle age, stuck her tongue out at the general, which led him to shoot at the vehicle.^{xlii} This incident emboldened those who wanted General Prats to resign--since he was unwilling to allow or take part in the overthrow of Allende—but for now they had evidence of Prats behaving without restraint, willing

to shoot at a woman for sticking her tongue out at him. Subsequently, on June 29th, Prats interrupted a coup attempt by a Chilean military officer, which made him further antagonistic. As a result, General Prats resigned on August 23rd after “army wives launched a vicious campaign” which included “encircling his house, brandishing white feathers” to symbolize his cowardliness for not backing overthrow of Allende.^{xliii}

The list of those on strike against Allende’s policies grew once truck drivers, who by protesting crippled the Chilean economy, expressed their dissatisfaction with the shape of the economy. As Devine describes the situation in Chile while truckers were protesting Allende, the “truckers’ grievances had been building” as “[s]pare parts to make repairs...were difficult, if not impossible, to get.”^{xliiv} In addition, “truckers felt squeezed and worried” that Allende would also expropriate their assets and belongings.^{xliv} The participation of truckers in the protests is significant to Allende’s unpopularity because these men and women were the backbone of Chile’s consumerism. With their refusal to work, products and goods did not reach their destinations, which in turn obstructed businesses from operating and made food and goods scarcer. Therefore, the trucker federation’s protest against Allende reflects the deep disenchantment harbored by Chilean workers to the new policies enacted by Allende.

The protests in Chile were captured by *Time* when the truckers’ federation took their dissatisfaction to the streets of Santiago. To quote the article: “[h]alf the city seemed out on strike—truckers, taxi owners...and even...doctors, dentists, lawyers, engineers, pharmacists and maritime pilots.”^{xlvi} The article reveals the extent of the internal opposition to Allende, and more importantly, points to a multi-class harmony made up of blue and white collar workers, who were impatient with Allende’s regime. Thus, the people of Chile were becoming one voice against the Marxist president who promised to serve the citizens of Chile, but instead created chaos and havoc within every class of society.

MILITARY AGAINST ALLENDE

The final component of this paper focuses on the role of the Chilean Armed and Police forces in order to get a clearer understanding of the military coup. The Chilean Armed Forces had historically earned the reputation of being a professional, apolitical entity operating in a region where the military was rarely professional and apolitical. However, this all changed when Allende became president and ties to Cuba were reestablished. Furthermore, aside from the destruction of the economy that made Allende lose support within all of the Chilean government, factors such as growing Cuban influence, terrorist group affiliated to Popular Unity, but most importantly a refusal of Marxism within Chile.

The Cuban influence in Chile occurred shortly after Chile reestablished ties with Cuba in 1970 following Allende’s election. After the Organization of American States (OAS) suspended Cuba in the early 1960s, Allende dismissed the suspension, went against member states and reestablished political relations with Cuba by late 1970.^{xlvii} One need not look further than Castro’s month-long stay in Chile in 1971 to comprehend that the Cuban leader was beginning to have influence in the newly

established Marxist government. Moreover, Cuba was sending intelligence officers into Chile to help protect Allende, since the Popular Unity did not entirely trust the Armed Forces. As a result, Allende's relationship with Cuba, and Cuba's relationship with left-wing armed groups under Popular Unity created discontentment within the Armed Forces, and fear among the Chilean public and government. This fear was especially evident once Cuban weapons were making their way into Chile to arm left-wing guerrilla groups. Nonetheless, the influence that Cuba's presence in Chile had on guerilla groups ultimately was recognized as a threat to the Armed Forces, who were beginning to accept the notion that Cuba was preparing the armed groups to establish a Cuban-style dictatorship in Chile. Therefore, the military coup made seen as a military necessity to be carried out before the left-wing dictatorial rule began.

As Frei previously wrote, Allende and his Socialist Party were promoting disobedience within the military. It was known that the Secretary General of the Socialist Party called for sailors and soldiers to no longer have an alliance with the armed forces, but rather the MIR (Revolutionary Left Movement)—which was an extreme left-wing paramilitary group.^{xlviii} The MIR was said to be the military wing of the Popular Unity. In addition to the MIR, Allende was in contact with other left-wing guerilla groups in the South America such as the Tupamaros of Uruguay and the government of Cuba—who at the time was deemed to be involved in terrorist activities. North Korea and other socialist countries outside of the region also had representatives and influence in Chile. These men from communist states were in Chile not on a political capacity, but to run schools that trained and armed guerrillas with weapons being smuggled from nations under Soviet rule.

Finally, the Chilean Armed Forces, although professional, were nor numb or naive to the realities within Chile. It is for this reason that the Chilean Armed Forces broke with their traditional stance of remaining apolitical and decided to act against Allende as soon as the constitutionalist general, Carlos Prats, resigned. Allende mistook Augusto Pinochet as a nonpartisan military officer and paid for that mistake with his life. Soon after the military coup, General Pinochet gives a speech declaring that the military junta acted “solely from the patriotic inspiration of saving the country from the tremendous chaos... by the Marxist government of Salvador Allende.”^{xlix} Air Force general, Gustavo Leigh, made similar remarks claiming to have acted “after three years of supporting the Marxist cancer which brought us to economic, moral and social disaster and which could no longer be tolerated.”¹ Therefore, as the generals of the Army and Air Force clearly articulate, Marxism was considered a “cancer” within Chile and these generals acted as the “doctors” who acted on behalf of the Chilean people and Constitution “for the sacred interests of the homeland.

CONCLUSION

As this paper has demonstrated, the Chilean military coup which ousted Salvador Allende was not a product of the United States' reaction towards a Marxist president who threatened their economic and security interests in South America. Instead, by analyzing the economic and social conditions within Chile before the military coup occurred, the evidence reveals that Allende's overthrow was an internal

reaction, brought on by economic and social policies by the Chilean presidential cabinet, which was made up significantly by Popular Unity and other leftist group. The economic stagnation, political opposition, and military discontentment all under Allende's presidency came together and by 1973 reached a boiling point that resulted in Allende's overthrow and consequent suicide.

Lastly, just as most events in history have proven to be complex and in various ways debatable, Allende's overthrow is not an exception. However, as I have previously stated, historians who have written on the causes of the military coup have not given enough attention to the conditions within Chile during Allende's regime that was causing severe chaos, and instead have devoted significant attention to documents and their relationship to Nixon's cabinet. In short, to arrive at a clearer understanding of the causes that led to the military coup, it is imperative to study the existing evidence closely, and grant those who were closest to the incident a mouthpiece to communicate their familiarity with the factors they experienced before the president of their country was deposed. Therefore, as historians, scholars, and pursuers of facts, it is the altogether shared task to grasp the truth of the situation.

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ENDNOTES

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- ⁱⁱⁱ *Ibid*, 259.
- ^{iv} *Ibid*, 296.
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- ^{vi} Mark Feldstein, *Poisoning the Press: Richard Nixon, Jack Anderson, and the Rise of Washington's Scandal Culture* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010), 269.
- ^{vii} *Ibid*, 269.
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- ^x *Ibid*, 277.
- ^{xi} Peter Kornbluh, *The Pinochet Files: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability* (New York: The New Press, 2003), 6.
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