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Gaining Progress, Compensating Losses

The Role of the Humanities in the Redemption of Modernity

Introduction – The Constant Crisis of the Humanities

What is the crisis of the humanities? Have we, as Benjamin Schmidt suggested recently in his article *The Humanities Are in Crisis* published by *The Atlantic* in August 2018, forgotten to see the real crisis "because we've been crying wolf for so long" (Schmidt)? In the same article, Schmidt predicts that the humanities will certainly survive and suggests that to "admit that the humanities are in crisis doesn't mean conceding that they are being driven extinct. It means instead, that their place is diminishing."

Does this sound like a consolation? The last words from a discipline on its deathbed? The last words of someone not dying but merely forgotten and hidden out of sight? To say that the humanities' place is diminishing (where or what is the end of that diminution?), is to say that their significance for modern society is diminishing. Does that mean, modern society is possibly conceivable without the humanities?

This paper argues for the opposite: the humanities are an essential part of modern society because they emerge in the process of modernization as a response to the rise of the natural sciences. I will try to revive some ideas first developed by the German philosopher Joachim Ritter (1903-1974) in his studies of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Aristotle. Investigating the foundations of modernity, he determined modernity's essential characteristic as a "diremption" ("Entzweiung") between the universal concept of freedom and the always particular history of the individual. This paper will look at what is overlooked or ignored by writers on the crisis in the humanities: their genesis in modern society. If we clarify the emergence of the humanities, their history within European society, we can determine their function and therefore if they are in a state of crisis or not. Thus, we reverse the question: We do not ask what the humanities can do for modern society, but for what reason modernity established the humanities in the first place. If these reasons are still present, the humanities have a future.

At first, we need to reconstruct the beginning of modernity by retracing the rise of the natural sciences, because these provided man with the methods and means to build a new society. This development reached its climax during the Enlightenment. The French Revolution has been the greatest political result of this development as an experiment to realize universal freedom in a particular world; however, this turned into a trial of terror. Nonetheless, this experiment reflects the continuing process of modernity, the development of an industrial society in which the humanities were also established. In this third step, it will be shown that the humanities rise directly from the industrial society and that they function as a compensation for the loss of history, caused by the success of the natural sciences and the concept of absolute, natural freedom promulgated by the French Revolutionists. This role of the humanities as necessary equivalent to the natural sciences is still current today, since the process of modernization is ongoing. If that is true, then the disruption of modern society must be interpreted anew. This split would not impede the solving of the world's problems, as C. P. Snow suggested, but rather be the condition of modernity per se.

The Rise of the Natural Sciences – Experience and Exclusion

The central event in the process of building modern society is the rise of the natural sciences with all its impacts, and which creates the ground for the emergence of the humanities. We must examine now how this has happened.

The idea of academic education unifies two contradicting notions: on the one side, it is imagined as free and not object-bound science, but on the other side that means it will perform a necessary rising above the practical life, above the essential necessities of the present reality (Ritter "Aufgabe" 109). However, both aspects are two sides of one ideal, the ideal of science as established by the Greeks, especially Aristotle who calls it the theoretical science. "That we call him a free man who exists for his own sake, and not for the sake of another, so this alone among the sciences is liberal: for this alone subsists for its own sake" (Aristotle 982 b27).

This theoretical science establishes itself historically after the practical arts; these practical arts are, even for Aristotle, the only existing sciences (Ritter "Aristoteles" 13, 22.). "All other sciences therefore are more necessary, but no one is better than this." (Aristotle 983 a9-10). The theoretical science is essentially useless; therefore, it requires a justification.

The theoretical science helps to memorize what is necessarily forgotten by the practical arts (Ritter "Die Aufgabe" 111). The point is that this relation of theory to practice is a positive, complementary one; the theoretical science actualizes what the practice needs to forget by describing the world from a different perspective; the question of the theoretical science is directed towards Being as Being.

However, modern science does not reside in the Polis anymore; on the contrary, its modernity is founded in its emancipation from the philosophical *theoria*. This emancipation takes place in the modern era, exemplarily incarnated in the work of René Descartes (in his *Discours* from 1637), and meant at first the independence from any metaphysical, theological or historical questions. Typically for this new way of philosophy is the emancipation from its own heritage; Descartes says:

> For conversing with those of another age is more or less the same thing as travelling. It is good to know something of the customs of different peoples in order to be able to judge our own more securely, and to prevent ourselves from thinking that everything not in accordance with our own customs is ridiculous and irrational, as those who have seen nothing of the world are in the habit of doing. On the other hand, when we spend too much time travelling, we end up becoming strangers in our own country; and when we immerse ourselves too deeply in the practices of bygone ages, we usually remain woefully ignorant of the practices of our own time. (8)

Descartes infers from his insight, the uselessness of all past inquiries of knowledge: "I abandoned altogether the study of letters. And having decided to pursue only that knowledge which I might find in myself or in the great book of the world, I spent the rest of my youth travelling, visiting courts" (Descartes 10). The modern scientific subject needs to doubt scientifically, methodically and indeed, this methodical doubt secures the success of the modern sciences; the scientific subject does not want to know the miracle of the appearances but only the appearances, as Kant puts it. The modern sciences rely on a waiver declaration; that is the sense of the Kantian idea of limitation. Science needs to limit itself, limiting its field to the appearances of objects, because only these are objects of possible experience. Immanuel Kant shows that knowledge beyond any possible experience is impossible, hence that metaphysics as science is impossible (Kant A xii). If knowledge is identified with experience and experience defined as scientific experience (experiment), then science provides us with knowledge, independent from any metaphysics (or religion). By conceding every claim to know the things in themselves, science becomes successful and autonomous. Logic, says Kant, is certain only because of its limitation ("Eingeschränktheit"), that reason only encounters itself (Kant B ix). For Kant, the idea that knowledge is active; "that reason apprehends only what it has created…and that reason has to force nature to answer our questions" (Kant B xiii), is the revolution of thought. "This is how natural science was first brought to the secure course of a science after groping about for so many centuries" (Kant B xiv).

This methodical safety net is the difference between the modern sciences and former ways of explaining the world. However, its gain is also a loss, namely the loss of metaphysical and theological questions. Metaphysical questions ("Are we free or causally determined?", "Is the soul immortal?" etc.) cannot even be raised scientifically because science works in (is limited to) the realm of experience, but metaphysics transcends any experience: meta-physics. Kant's *Critique* aimed at science which tried to answer metaphysical questions in the realm of pure reason (his question was: how is metaphysics as science possible?). That means, science has to abstain from any such questions; hence, metaphysics (and theology) are excluded from the realm of "knowledge" (Kant B xvi.). Where are they going now? Are they leaving a void behind? And is there a replacement?

In fact, that is what has happened, at least in the philosophical movement of positivism. Auguste Comte formulated in his law of three stages that human evolution had moved from the theological, to the metaphysical and finally to the positive stage. Comte's philosophy as a philosophy of history proclaims progress, the ruling of reality, therefore the unity of science. However, Comte misinterpreted this unity, or its security, as founded on facts, whereas it relied on its methodological certainty. That is the reason why Comte is constructing a theory of evolution, a philosophy of history. Comte could not destroy metaphysics without compensating for its decay, by an explication of its sense (Habermas 95). The method internalized by the scientific subject, and the knowledge of Comte's laws secure not only seeing, but foreseeing: "Ainsi, le veritable esprit positif consiste surtout *à voir pour prévoir*, à étudier ce qui est afin d'en conclure ce qui sera, d'après le dogme général de l'invariabilité des lois naturelles" (Comte 34).

Scientific progress requires the exclusion of non-scientific questions; it leads to the demarcation problem. Because metaphysical or theological questions cannot be answered rationally, they are suspected of being senseless. Positivism does not deal with metaphysics, positivism silences it; metaphysical sentences are senseless (Habermas 105). The relentless refusal of metaphysics shows why the legitimate practical definition of science excludes even the possibility that the sciences could be taken to be meaningful in addition to their application (Ritter "Die Aufgabe" 115).

The result is, as already mentioned, a loss of question competence; nature is given *by* the natural sciences, history is given *by* historical sciences. The relation between practice and theory in Aristotle is now reversed: theory, not practice, makes the world. But Ritter ("Landschaft" 141-164) emphasizes that, e.g. nature is also given as environment (*Umwelt*) or as landscape. When the natural sciences began to treat nature as an object, aesthetics began to see nature as landscape, creating landscape paintings. Equally, history can be seen as an actual tradition which affects us, instead of a stream of facts in time. If problems of the lifeworld, to use that heavily loaded term, are declared as non-existent by ontological criteria, there will be a gap; the humanities are filling this gap regarding history as aesthetics has filled it regarding nature.

The positive stage in Comte's history of evolution cannot be the last stage since the humanities emerge *after* the natural sciences (see Marquard 98-116). Insofar as they appear after the practical sciences, which fulfill their social function through their practical applicability, they are similar to the Aristotelian theoretical sciences: they are, in this sense, useless. However, they are specific modern sciences, because even they exclude any theological or metaphysical questions out of their field of possible questions. Nonetheless, their approach cannot be reduced to the natural scientific method. The humanities have their origin in the historical-critical, the hermeneutic method of the nineteenth century; their origin is the effect of the rise of the natural sciences: the industrial society.

The Diremption of the Humanities – Compensating Losses

This context requires an explanation because it would stay incomprehensible if it is stated that the historical sense emerges in the age of the industrial society next to the natural sciences out of nowhere (Ritter "Die Aufgabe" 128). The genesis of the humanities could only be comprehensible, if it is seen "as part of the real process, in which the modern society in Europe, and nowadays in the whole world, is constituted in the form of an emancipation from its own historical origins." (Ritter "Die Aufgabe" 128-129) The process of modernization revolves every social order and value, which have seemed to be stable and eternal; the modern era is shaking. The modern world is determined by an essential diremption, "Entzweiung" (Ritter "Die Aufgabe" 129).

The term "diremption" ("Entzweiung") was introduced first by Hegel in his *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* to describe the structure of the modern civil society; he calls it the "difference" ("Differenz"): "The civil society is the difference" (Hegel 182) However, this difference is not what Marx would call "alienation." In the difference both sides refer to each other: "Particularity and universality are, by falling apart in the civic society, still bound and conditioned reciprocally" (Hegel 184).

Following Hegel, modern society suffers from abstractedness, namely from man's abstract nature of need, which befalls and breaks with the historical world because its constitution is the discontinuation of its own origin (Ritter "Aufgabe" 129). Consequently, the diremption consists of the continuing drifting apart between origin (tradition) and progress, past and future. But this drift is positive in so far as human beings as human beings could be subjects of the constitutional state only with this reduction to their abstractedness. Man is equal among equals; Hegel formulates it this way: "that I am taken as universal person, wherein everybody is identical. Man counts, because he is human, not because he is Jew, Catholic, Protestant, German, Italian and so on" (Hegel 209).

This describes the political realization of freedom during the French Revolution and, following Ritter ("Hegel und die Französische Revolution" 183-233), Hegel is *the* philosopher of the Revolution. Freedom appeared as an inalienable right of all human beings, as natural right; therefore, all other rights have been dismissed, because they have been justified by historical circumstances, metaphysics, religion or social standing. Every characteristic of the individual, which is given by its historical origin, is superseded. Everything which determined the individual in its idiosyncrasy, whether it be family origin, affiliation to a certain country etc., appears to be negligible for the revolutionary notion of freedom. Indeed, this development is positive; but it is a process of violent destruction, which is apparent at the end of the French Revolution. The Revolution tries to cut off the historical background of the individual, which is required by the universal notion of freedom as the only characteristic of being human; only an abstract right can include every human being. However, this radicalization, this negative-emancipatory concept of freedom excludes all the factors which are necessary for a political realization (in fact, this idea of freedom has its origins in history, namely in the Greek *polis* and in the Protestant idea of Christian freedom). The Revolution proclaimed to be the end of history, whereas in fact it was the continuation of history.

The condition for this absolute freedom and equality *is* the diremption, which cuts the person off from its historical origin; society's real lack of history ("reale Geschichtslosigkeit der Gesellschaft"), as Ritter ("Aufgabe" 130-131) puts it, becomes visible. Society can turn its citizens into free subjects of right and law only by unhinging them from their

history, because these personal (life-) stories distinguish humans, and therefore limit their freedom. Thus, this is the time and place where subjectivity emerges.

As a reaction to the lack of history, Kant creates the subjectivity, the inwardness. In fact, Kant expresses that in his famous words at the end of the *Critique of Practical Reason*: "Two things fill my mind with always new and increasing admiration and awe, the more often and prolonging thinking deals with these: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me" (33-36). That means, for Kant, the moral law correlates somehow with the starry heavens, and both cause admiration and awe, but not with what is in between; in fact, the moral law, or the civil morality, always demonstrates its own impotence in its worthiness. In addition, even worse, the realization of that morality is not even strived for, because it is seen as impossible. The nobility of the moral law within me is its ideality, impossibility; the will alone is free but helpless. That is Hegel's fundamental critique of Kant's concept of morality ("Sittlichkeit"). Subjectivity, "the ground of freedom" (Hegel 106) must realize itself to become free. This is "the viewpoint of difference" (Hegel 108); the infinite will to act morally on the one side, finitude (of the body, social/economic conditions) on the other. The life of modern human beings falls into two parts: the private sphere of personal and historical ties and the public sphere with the world of economy, work and business. However, the private sphere, as a correlate to universal freedom, is necessarily free; only a society which allows the individual to plan their own life, according to their own desires and historical particularities, can be a liberal society.

The French Revolution is the place where absolute freedom (universality) and the individual encounter each other and fall apart; absolute freedom turns into terror. The civic society is the "system of needs" (Hegel 189) the expression of man's unbounded ruling over nature; every human being is equal according to nature; society should satisfy the natural needs of its citizens. Man's historical background is unnecessary in this process. In the disenchantment („Entzauberung") of the cosmos, the holy grove ("Hain") becomes the piece of wood ("Hölzer") which can be burned and commercialized (Hegel 289). When the gods die, their temples are turned to stone; and history is put into the museum.

In this time, the humanities develop and, if we follow Ritter ("Aufgabe" 131), the reason is that the humanities compensate for the lack of history; like the Aristotelian *theoria*, they keep the historical world open and present for modern citizens of the state. The historical sense, which is the foundation of the humanities, wants to conserve everything, not only that with a direct relation to the present. The historian does not destroy the temples of foreign cultures in order to use its stone as construction material; they are declared being a cultural heritage.

Society creates the humanities as an organ to compensate the process of *dehistoricization*. If human products are no longer practically useful, they become objects of free understanding and cognition; they are reintegrated into the context of society. The ambivalence of the relation to history is the main problem of all philological or historical work. A text in question is familiar and foreign at the same time. It enforces one's claim, demands a respond, but lost its natural givenness. A scholar discovers an old text in his own language (familiarity) but is unable to understand it immediately; interpretation/translation is needed (maybe context knowledge). Equally in the case of a text in a foreign language; it is already understood to some extent. E.g. a shopping list in French: without speaking French, it is clearly to see that it is a shopping list (however, it could also turn out to be a secret code). And this is not limited to texts: the Parthenon in Athens might enclose its sense to its spectator, but it is clear to see that is has been built by human beings etc.; there is some continuity, but it is broken. If there were no relation, there would not be any will to comprehend, if there were no disconnectedness, there would not be any will to comprehend either. The factum of the disruption together with the continuation of history, the characteristics of modernity, are the main aspects of all hermeneutic work. Continuity and disruption are the condition of all interpretive work and of the humanities (Gründer 74-88) and that means that the humanities do not only administrate a forlorn past but reflect the present; the compensating function of the humanities does not exclude critical reflection but fosters it. However, it is a different kind of critique. It is not epistemological critique in relation to objects and nature; it is historical life that implements itself as critique. It performs the always new separation of present and past, memorization and parting, admission and rejection. Gründer (83) says the humanities receive their liability not by objectivity, but by intimacy.

Humanities Today – A Conclusion With or Without Snow

Thus, to summarize the main point and defend Ritter against the accusation of being a hopeless traditionalist: the humanities shall not save the traditions; on the contrary, that is impossible since their condition of existence was the diremption of society from its traditions. The diremption, as Ritter establishes it, is irreversible but in itself positive. The humanities have the function to keep other dimensions of sense (art, history, language, politics etc.) open, those that

would necessarily be excluded by the natural sciences. These dimensions are not smuggled into the present by the humanities, they have always been there, in form of people's life-stories, histories, objects, places etc.; but they are in danger of being overlooked, ignored or neglected.

What does that mean for the humanities today? In a time of proclaimed austerity and economizing, especially in the academic fields, a time in which the call for the negligibility of the humanities is sounding even more seductively, what does that tell us about the future of the humanities? Maybe we could say that the two cultures identified by Snow in the 1950s are still present today. Nevertheless, what Snow's analysis lacked was a retracing of the origins of this diremption. Although Snow indicated that the reasons might lie in the great change of the industrial revolution, he ignored the emergence of the humanities. Snow focused, dependent on his own biography, on the gap between natural sciences and writers, or as he calls them: "natural Luddites". His examples here are "Ruskin and William Morris and Thoreau and Emerson and Lawrence" and their reaction to industrialization:

> It is all very well for one, as a personal choice, to reject industrialisation—do a modern Walden, if you like, and if you go without much food, see most of your children die in infancy, despise the comforts of literacy, accept twenty years off your own life, then I respect you for the strength of your aesthetic revulsion But I don't respect you in the slightest if, even passively, you try to impose the same choice on others who are not free to choose. In fact, we know what their choice would be. (Snow 13)

It is paradoxical: as a writer and scientist, Snow appears to be representative of both sides, and he is indeed, but these are not the sides which are in question. How many writers work in the humanities department? Snow's argument seems to be a malicious strategy *ad hominem*. Isn't that the old attitude of the Anglo-American academic world against some parts of the humanities? This old quarrel is most alive in the existing gap, even today, between analytical and continental philosophy, the latter accused of being unscientific, and the former of no longer being philosophy. Snow's selection and description of the gap, maybe not creates, but extends it; in his view, the struggle is not between natural sciences and humanities but between (problem-solving) science and literature; or to put it another way: for Snow, humanities are literature. That is the reason why Snow ignores the whole history of the humanities. He intensifies the gap between these two cultures by following his model of rigorous science. For Snow, the history of modern science is a history of "problem solving" and he evaluates the humanities according to this idea. Snow's idea of science is much closer to the concept of a unified science (Vienna Circle) than he might think himself. He does not see that it is not the function of the humanities to "solve problems"; these problems only exist from the perspective of the natural sciences and they alone can solve them. Instead of showing their common ground, he provokes their difference. That is why he states: "There seems then to be no place where the cultures meet." (Snow 9) Of course, there cannot be any meeting space, if the problem is formulated in that way.

However, we have re-evaluated the contexts and processes, which lie in the background of the appearance of such a thing as science, either as natural science or as part of the humanities. The historical analysis showed that the humanities appeared after the natural sciences, as an answer to the social status which was caused by the impact of the natural sciences and industrialization. Thus, there is a gap between natural sciences and humanities, but this gap is not the loss of a former possessed and unified culture; it was and is the condition of modernity's existence. The humanities compensate for what the natural sciences need to lay aside. The gap was not a gap between two methods, two sciences, two cultures but inside of the scientific worldview as such (to which the human sciences, economics and social science count as well), say its objectivity, and the thereby created subjectivity of human existence or history; the diremption *is* the signature of modernity. However, it is a diremption in which both sides are related to each other: the humanities are an answer to the question of the scientific progress; they do not just exist next to the natural sciences but are intertwined with them. To Descartes' *Discours de la Méthode* (1637) belongs Vico's *Scienza Nuova* (1725), to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) belongs Wilhelm Dilthey's project of a "critique of the historical reason" (1833-1911).

If we reinterpret Snow's gap between these two cultures in terms of a diremption in Ritter's sense, we can not only reevaluate the difference between both sides of the academic world, but we can also state that as long as the modern world stays modern and pursues the project of modernity, it will need the humanities even more. Why? If the progress of the modern world means the progress of the natural sciences, it would result in more expulsion of history, more expulsion of the past in favor of the future. And if the humanities have the function to compensate for these losses, they will be needed today more than ever. The discovered diremption between natural sciences and humanities, as Snow indicates, is one of the determining states of the modern world but it is also the indication for their relatedness.

Notes

1 A useful introduction to Ritter's theory of the modern world is given by Schweda (2013)

2 This will be the function of the humanities in the modern world; however, the parallelization of theoretical science and humanities should not be taken as a one-to-one rebirth. The natural sciences have their roots in the theoretical science of the Greek as well as the humanities do, but both sides inherited different aspects (besides that, the natural sciences have more similarities with the practical, technical arts of the Greek).

3 That does not mean that these questions are not asked anymore, but they are asked in a certain way. Of course, Descartes' topic is the immortality of the soul, the existence of God, but he solves these with his new method, the scientific method (or Descartes' version of it).

4 The same is true for theology. Kant is highly concerned with the refutation of any possible proof of God's existence, that means any possible try to proof God's existence by reason (Kant A 592, B 620.)

5 The original German quotes have been provided below: "warum die als solche für ihren Bereich legitime praktische Definition der Wissenschaft hier grundsätzlich und von vornherein die Möglichkeit ausschließt, auch nur in Erwägung zu ziehen, ob die Wissenschaften daneben auch in der Bestimmung der Theorie und unabhängig von ihrer Anwendbarkeit für die Gesellschaft Bedeutung haben könnten" (Ritter "Die Aufgabe" 115).

6 "zu dem realen Prozess gehört, in dem sich die moderne Gesellschaft in Europa, jetzt überall auf der Erde in der Emanzipation aus dem ihr vorgegebenen geschichtlichen Herkunftswelten konstituiert" (Ritter "Die Aufgabe" 128-129).

7 "Die bürgerliche Gesellschaft ist die Differenz" (Hegel 182).

8 "Indem in der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft Besonderheit und Allgemeinheit auseinandergefallen sind, sind sie dennoch beide wechselseitig gebunden und bedingt" (Hegel 184).

9 "dass Ich als allgemeine Person aufgefasst werde, worin Alle identisch sind. Der Mensch gilt so, weil er Mensch ist, nicht weil er Jude, Katholik, Protestant, Deutscher, Italiener usf. Ist" (Hegel 209).

10 See for this criticism of a compensation theory of the humanities: Mittelstraß (2003, 35-50.) and Böhme (1989).

11 The term "humanities" means in German "Geisteswissenschaft". The term "Wissenschaft" means "science" and is intentionally omitted in the word "humanities." But this term, in some sense misleading and probably a mistranslation from Mills "human sciences," points nonetheless to the fact that natural sciences and humanities are both typically modern and therefore share a common ground.

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Sean McSpadden

Present Company Excluded

Early Popular Representation in New Amsterdam

Manhattan Island, now the location of New York City's most famous borough, was initially settled by the West India Company to create a central trading hub. This Dutch company monopolized both land and trade in the geographical area that would become New Netherland. Its central settlement, New Amsterdam (later renamed New York by the English), experienced a series of growing pains while under control of the Company. Although certainly not the republic exemplified by the United States more than a century later, New Amsterdam's shift towards popular participation stemmed from the West India Company's inability to fulfill its role as a sovereign political entity. Citizens of New Amsterdam viewed their relationship to the government as *quid pro quo*. They would accept the Company's authority and its commissions so long as it provided them with safety, proper amenities, and a sense (whether true or not) that they had voice and power in the decisions of the director-general of the West India Company. As New Amsterdam dealt with war, growth concerns and the need for new economic strategies, the citizens became more and more disillusioned with the Company's director-general William Kieft. Although difficult to prove that the early negotiations occurring in Company territory directly affected later American ideals of popular representation, the small shifts from authoritarian to republican power structures in the settlement opened the door for popular participation in New Amsterdam.

At its outset, the West India Company had an authoritarian structure, with its director-general acting as monocrat in the local community. The director-general was only beholden to the authorities financing and providing supplies in the Netherlands. According to Joyce Goodfriend, the Company's supervisory structure's contribution to "molding life in New Amsterdam is incontrovertible" because its "omnipresent hand" controlled all "parameters of legitimate activity" (Goodfriend 8). Goodfriend points to how the Company controlled their interests via "economic regulation" while imposing a "centralized form of government that was authoritarian in nature" (Goodfriend 9). Every decision of note was "handed down by the colony's director-general" including trade and military actions (Goodfriend 9). The director-general of New Amsterdam needed to negotiate between his obligations to the West India Company—the entity that gave him his wealth, power and lifestyle—and the citizens of New Amsterdam who enabled him to acquire the goods necessary to keep superiors in the Netherlands satisfied.

The West India Company's struggles with New Amsterdam residents were sown at the founding of the settlement. The Company struggled with its identity: would it focus solely on trade and keep its overhead low? or did colonization best forward its interests in the New World? The men in the Netherlands were "split between two factions, one in favor of trade and the other of colonization" (Klooster 67). Those in favor of a commercial focus "opposed private enterprise" and wanted to keep all trade and land in company hands (Klooster 67). They argued that the Company should limit itself to "what was strictly necessary to gain wealth in order to curtail the Company's spending on defense and the supply of provisions" (Klooster 67). By keeping their footprint in the New World to a minimum, the Company could operate solely as a trading enterprise. On the other side, proponents of colonization "emphasized the positive long-term effects of investments in agriculture and settlement," suggesting that stabilization provided the most potential for Company growth while offering a more stable form of income (Klooster 67). Colonization required a higher investment, particularly on the front end, when returns were not guaranteed and losses were probable. The Company tried to employ both strategies at once to maximize profits and its failure in strategy led to problems with local residents.

At first, the West India Company tried to keep expenses low by focusing on the fur trade and by maintaining a monopoly on both goods and land. As the Company spent more time and resources in New Amsterdam, permanent settlement of the Manhattan area became an inevitability. Because the residents focused on settlement, population growth, and stabilization, the Company and the people carried almost mutually exclusive motivations. Residents "saw that building up a society complete with a range of economic choices and social and political statuses, as opposed to a trading post under company control, would be to their benefit" (Kross 12). With this foundational conflict between New Amsterdammers and the Company, a political struggle between the director-general and the locals led to constant renegotiation that eventually unraveled the company's hegemony.

The Company found itself in a no man's land between trade and colonization. In order to grow the fur trade that it maintained a monopoly over, the Company recruited more merchants from the Netherlands. Considering that the Netherlands was not struggling economically, it became very difficult to convince people to emigrate away from an established, thriving country. Thanks to little motivation "to emigrate from the relatively prosperous home country," the Company had a hard sell to local Dutch ("Atlantic"). The Company's profits "depended upon a settled population," but the Dutch did not want to "leave their secure and prosperous homeland" for a life of hardship, instability and danger (Kross 12). Eventually, the Company came to grips with the fact that it needed to offer a carrot to potential immigrants.

The West India Company made promises to Europeans that conflicted with the reality in New Amsterdam. The Company tried to convince potential immigrants that their life in the colonies would be prosperous. Sure, good money might exist there. But on the ground, the colonial merchants did not have access to the non-monetary necessities to make this money worth much. A large portion of the real assets remained with the Company. In early New Amsterdam, "no horses, cows or laborers" could be "obtained…for money" leaving everyone "short in these particulars" (Michaelius 130). The daily lifestyle also lacked the luxury available in Europe. No matter how rich a man might be, the houses and infrastructure did not reflect a rich lifestyle. Most of the homes in New Amsterdam were constructed from "boards and thatched" with "no mason work except the chimneys" (Jogues 262). During the harsh winters, money did not equate to a guarantee of warmth or comfort. Even if a Dutch immigrant became a successful merchant, he still lacked the access to goods and amenities that these riches offered him in the Netherlands.

The lack of goods, supplies and labor led the population to want more from their Company supervisors. Because of the "materialistic orientation of the town dwellers," the locals had a general idea of the wealth of New Amsterdam and where this wealth was being directed (Goodfriend 12). In the "Representation of New Netherland," a piece largely complaining about the shortfalls of the West India Company, New Amsterdam is portrayed as mismanaged, with the director-general Willem Kieft out of touch with the wants of his citizens. The writer suggests that if the "same money (had) been used in bringing people and importing cattle" rather than focusing on short term gains like the fur trade, then the "country would now have been of great value" ("Representation 321). The piece continues with complaints about how "there should be a public school" to ensure prosperity and order in future generations (Representation 353). In addition, few Company actions had been taken on behalf of "the poor [and] the orphans" or taken "to improve schools" and "support the Reformed church" (Maika 101). The West India Company was spread thin and often failed to provide for its citizens in the same way a formal government could.

After early failures to foster Dutch immigration to the island, the Company made potential visitors a series of promises that changed its relationship with New Amsterdammers at a foundational level. In 1639, the Company renounced its monopoly on both land and trade and accidentally gave immigrants an independence and autonomy that would ultimately conflict with the Company's authoritarian structure (Kross 12). In terms of trade, non-Company merchants wanted unrestricted access to Native American commodities—a right the West India Company held exclusively. Written in 1647, the "Journal of New Netherland" describes how the land "never began to be settled until every one had liberty to trade with the Indians" because this type of trade offered the most profit and intrigue to merchants ("Journal" 271). Once the West India Company revoked its right of exclusivity, "non-Company colonists gained the right to trade along the entire eastern seaboard from Newfoundland to Florida, while metropolitan merchants could freely dispatch their goods to New Amsterdam" (Klooster 68). By allowing open competition, the Company hoped to attract more residents to the island of Manhattan.

As mentioned, the West India Company eventually revoked their land monopoly. It created a patroon system to try to grow the population and establish new towns in the area. Dutchmen who could settle "fifty colonists in New Netherland" received "extensive tracts of land, powers of local government, and some participation in the fur trade," offering these men an opportunity for wealth and autonomy ("Patroon System"). In Nicolas Van Wassenaer's description of New Netherland, he relates how those in power from the Netherlands granted "Priveleges, Freedoms and Exemptions to all patroons, masters or individuals who should plant any colonies and cattle in New Netherland" (Wassenaer 89). If a patroon founded "one or more towns" in the New World, he received the "power and authority to establish officers and magistrates there," making him the center of political power in his township (Wassenaer 91). On top of this, residents (not just the patroon himself) would be "free from customs, tolls, excise, imposts or any other contributions for the space of ten years" (Wassenaer 94). Because the Company had to court new residents, it could not treat them as employees and operate with totalitarian authority. Unsatisfied colonists would simply return to the Netherlands. Keeping a citizen-friendly structure was a great marketing tool for attracting new residents. In the "Journal of New Netherland," many of the settlers immigrated to the area based on their desire to "escape from the

insupportable government of New England" ("Journal" 313). Of course, this movement could easily work in reverse. Keeping populations high improved survival rates and commercial production in these small settlements so people became a necessity to protect the area and increase trade.

Due to the dangerous environment of the New World and wars with the Native Americans that the West India Company had to contend with, it failed to fulfill its role as sovereign protector of New Amsterdam and the nearby area. The Company contended with "both hostile New Englanders and hostile natives" who encroached on its land, occasionally stole the land outright, or hurt and murdered the residents in the area (Kross 11). With each Company failure to protect its citizens, the citizens in turn became more self-reliant and put less trust in its ability to protect them. Thanks to "the large number and widespread dispersal of homesteads" the Western India Company simply did not have the man power or resources to make "adequate defense" possible, leading to a breakdown in "societal cohesion" (Kross 13). Once the Company finally managed to attract new residents, it quickly became apparent it did not have the military to keep its expanding borders safe.

Battles against the Native Americans eroded the local trust of the Company's ability to protect Dutch immigrants. In fact, director-general Willem Kieft's actions occasionally put residents into greater danger thanks to his desire to serve justice to Native Americans based on real or perceived transgressions. In David Pietersz De Vries account of his time in New Amsterdam during Kieft's war against the Native Americans, his writing consistently returns to the Company's ineptitude. De Vries, a patroon, knew a great deal about the military actions of Kieft because of his own duty to protect the Dutch in his township. In one story, De Vries discusses how the "trifling actions" of a commander led to the slayings of his people at the hands of angered Native Americans (De Vries 214). When De Vries requested additional soldiers from Director Kieft, he told De Vries that "he had no soldiers" to assist him (De Vries 226). The Company, stretched extremely thin and lacking support from the Netherlands, did not have weapons or people to adequately defend the rapidly expanding area.

Despite this fact, Kieft pursued a revenge-based war against the local Native Americans that led to high casualties in the region. De Vries recounts how Kieft "had a mind to wipe the mouths of the savages" (De Vries 226), but how De Vries knew that initiating such a war "will murder [the] nation…[his] dwelling [his] people, cattle, corn and tobacco" (De Vries 227). Even after hearing De Vries' protests, Kieft assured him that "there would be no danger" (De Vries 227). De Vries worries that the "inhabitants in open lands" would have to "take care of himself against the retaliation of the savages" because Kieft "could not kill all the Indians" (De Vries 227). De Vries turned out to be correct and when "the savages understood that the Swannekens (Dutch) had so treated them, all the men whom they could surprise on the farm-lands, they killed" (Vries 229). Although the Company could operate as a military force and win single battles against the Native Americans, it did not have adequate man power to protect every home in the area. The Company could protect its own interests but it failed to protect against the consistent guerrilla warfare that the Native Americans utilized. During Isaac Jogues stay in the area "in the year 1643," some "two score Hollanders" were killed and the same number of "house and barns full of wheat" were also burned by Native Americans (Jogues 260). After each violent event, the towns of the greater New Netherlands lost trust in the Company's ability to act as military protector. The people would hold the Company accountable: each time it failed to protect them, they were less willing to accept its authoritarian structure and methods.

The West India Company also failed to establish protected borders against English and Swedish squatting practices. De Vries recounts how the Dutch discovered some English towns encroaching on territory claimed by the West India Company. He debates with an English official over the English right to the land:

> When sitting at the table, I told him it was wrong to take by force the Company's land, which it had bought and paid for. [The Englishman] answered that the lands were lying idle; that, though we had been there many years, we had done scarcely anything; that it was a sin to let such rich land, which produced such fine corn, lie uncultivated; and that they had already built three towns upon this river, in a fine country. (De Vries 203)

In the "Representation of New Netherland," the writer also expresses how the English took advantage of the West India Company's inability to defend its land. He writes that the "English intend to build a village and trading house there" and how the Dutch could do little to repel them ("Representation" 315). The piece describes how "nobody in this country" (that being the country under Dutch control) had the forces to "prevent them" (the English) from simply building a town without punishment ("Representation 316). Already spread thin, the Company did not have enough of a military presence to dissuade English encroachment or start a war with them as punishment for their theft.

In a similar situation, some Swedish colonists began to build a fort in New Netherland. When Willem Kieft heard about the intrusion, he "protested against it, but in vain" ("Representation" 315). Despite being the most powerful

Dutchman in the region, Kieft did not have a military force to do anything other than protest the Swedish fort. These types of international embarrassments negatively impacted the morale of New Amsterdam citizens. If the Company could not even protect *its own* interests in the region, how could it be expected to also protect its citizens' interests? With each incursion, whether from Native Americans or Europeans, trust in the Company eroded. Without this trust, each town became far more self-reliant. With this self-reliance came an impatience to remain underneath the sovereignty of the West India Company. These types of fights "on the broadest level…provided a climate wherein the various weak threads of New Netherlands' political and social structure could unravel" (Kross 15). At the very least, residents wanted far more say in the daily happenings of the Company's political struggles. Local politics, for them, would be best handled by locals because they knew invaluable ground-level information that the director-general did not.

Due to the low number of people in these communities, their isolation from each other, their constant focus on survival, and the access that citizens had to the director-general (in comparison to Dutch access to its monarch), the West India Company had to maintain open dialogues with its communities. In each airing of displeasure, written petition, and negotiation, the New Amsterdam settlers asserted their right to speak in the political arena and pushed the Company to accept more and more popular opinion into its decision-making process.

Part of the residents' assumption that their voice mattered came from their Dutch origins. Most of the day to day power in the Netherlands in the seventeenth century rested at the municipal level. Those with the most "political authority in the Netherlands" were "at the local level" (Maika 96). Higher authority acted as a review of local politics, rather than its principle actor—with silence as approbation and veto power reserved if necessary. Many of the Dutch followed the "'custom' of being a responsible community member" in exchange for "certain priveleges in return for supporting government" (Maika 97). In contrast, the director-general in New Netherland had power over every decision large and small, creating a high number of places for potential conflict.

At first, the Company used popular voice as a method for validating actions it planned on taking anyways. Occasionally, "citizen advisory groups were created to bolster the government's authority at critical junctures" to give the general populous an impression that the Company did listen to public input (Goodfriend 9). Despite the fact that these "advisory bodies had no regular status in governmental hierarchy," these groups carried enough local influence that Willem Kieft had to at least engage with them before making major decisions. The "Twelve Men, Eight Men, (and) Nine Men" were men selected to speak for the general population (the commonalty) and air potential concerns and grievances. When Director Kieft searched for popular approval of his war against the Native Americans, he allowed a council to form to discuss the matter. Unfortunately for Kieft, the council did not approve of his war. By engaging with the populous on the matter, he established a precedence where he checked in with the people before taking action. Once the council was created, it pushed for increased say in daily affairs. The twelve men, "having failed to give the endorsement it was assembled to provide, then took it upon itself to begin advising the director on other matters" (Shorto). With a taste of political power, the councilors pushed for "certain rights for individuals…or some like body, to become a permanent representative assembly, as existed in even the smallest villages in the United Provinces" (Shorto). By offering local residents a taste of republican representation, those on the council battled with the director-general on almost every decision in an effort to increase their control of the political process in New Amsterdam.

David Pietersz De Vries, for one, believed his role as a patroon and the twelve men's role as an advisory board gave both parties the right to question the director-general. When Kieft started his fights against the Native Americans, De Vries appeals to his own authority as "the first patroon," who "risked so many thousands, and also his person" to live on Manhattan Island (De Vries 226). The director-general did not have the right to take action "without (De Vrie's) assent" or "the approbation of the Twelve Men" (De Vries 226). Despite this appeal, Kieft went ahead with his attack—but by operating as sole authority, he increased local tensions and questions about his right to control such impactful decisions. Kieft's eventual removal, though not fixing the situation, showed the Company's awareness that the people's approval in local politics mattered.

Many of the locals, whether true or not, believed that the director-general only cared for the West India Company and his position in it. As mentioned, "The Representation of New Netherland" is a laundry list of complaints about the Company's failures. Although written with a clear motivation and/or bias depending on a person's outlook, this piece still accurately displays how one segment of New Amsterdam viewed the director-general. "The Representation" suggests that the director-generals always "conducted themselves just as if they were sovereigns of the country" and only focused on "their good will and pleasure" ("Representation 324). When advisory committees like the Twelve Men tried to offer input to the director-general, "they received no consideration and were little respected if they opposed at all the views of the Director" because it was "in his power to do or refuse to do anything" (Representation 333). At

moments when these committees did not feel like their voice was heard, they utilized democratic methods to try to sway public opinion and force the director-general's hand in their favor.

After each attempt to consult with the committees like the nine, eight, and twelve men, these groups earned more right to speak and more right to impact Company decisions. Even though "the functions of the Nine Men were limited," their advisory role eventually "constituted a permanent element in the governmental system" (Jameson 287). Because these types of councils never organized when the populace was satisfied with the director-general's decisions, it became an inevitability that "sooner or later they should become the mouthpiece of popular discontent," for the commonalty living "under the unprosperous condition of the province and the burdensome taxes, customs and other restrictions imposed upon its economic life" (Jameson 287). As the council's role as "speaker for the discontent" grew, its relationship with the director-general became strained. Director Kieft "perceived that the Nine Men would not communicate with him or follow his directions in anything pertaining" to their disagreements, leading him to have to continually assert his sole authority over New Amsterdam ("Representation" 350). Each time Kieft acted unilaterally, the people in turn pushed for increased representation in the political process.

The commonalty did not let their advisory boards do all the fighting for them. A pattern emerged where the commonalty would petition the director-general for action and if denied, took action anyways. After a perceived Native American affront, the commonalty "put their request in writing which was done by three in the name of them all by a petition to be allowed to attack those of Hackingsack" ("Journal" 277). When Willem Kieft did not act on their petition, a few renegades "slew those who lay a small league from the fort" (Journal 277). When these Dutch criminals were apprehended and arrested by the Company, the commonalty "collected before the Director, riotously demanding the prisoner; they were answered that their request should be presented in order and in writing; which about 25 men did; they therein asked the Director to pardon the criminal" ("Journal" 278). Petitions became an integral method in airing displeasure towards the inaction of the director-general. On Long Island, the settlers "requested by petition to be allowed to attack and slay the Indians thereabout" ("Journal" 277). When they were denied, a few "Christians attempted secretly with two wagons to steal maize from these Indians" ("Journal" 277). These transgressions of the director-general's authority gave political groups like the eight, nine and twelve men the leverage they needed to assert their right to get involved in the director-general's affairs.

In a similar situation recounted in the "Journal of New Netherland," the populace wanted to start a war with the Native Americans in retribution for a murder committed by a Native American prisoner. The people tried to sway the mind of Kieft by organizing committees and writing petitions. The commonalty, "displeased with the Director," argued that inaction would "sell Christian blood" ("Journal 276). They elected "twelve men from among them" who "resolved at once on war should the murderer be refused" ("Journal 275"). They went as far as to threaten to disregard the Kieft's authority by suggesting that "in case he would not avenge blood they would do it themselves" ("Journal" 276).

Ultimately, the New Amsterdammers forwarded an official remonstrance to Dutch authorities behind Kieft's back, asking for his removal in light of his incompetence. In this remonstrance, local residents provided a "theory of government" very similar to "the social contract," that "articulated a set of beliefs about the responsibilities of both government and the governed" (Kross 16). In this document, they listed a series of grievances they experienced under the director-general. They tried to suggest that the Company was an "arbitrary government" (Kross 16), that the "government offered no protections" from Native Americans, that officers "were appointed without the nomination or consent of the people," and that they passed laws without regard to the populous (Kross 17). The Remonstrance led to the Company removing Kieft as its director-general and signaled a move towards allowing popular voice to definitively impact those in power.

Even after Kieft's replacement, the Company's relationship could not rebound from the permanent change in the New Amsterdam mindset. Cornelis Van Tienhoven, one of the men who decided to replace Kieft, attributed the "colonists' pain" not "to lack of popular representation" but to "a governor who didn't understand the use of force" (Shorto). In his rebuttal to the "Representation of New Netherland," he suggests that the residents "would like to live without being subject to any one's censure or discipline, which, however, they stand doubly in need of" (Tienhoven 360). The Company chose Peter Stuyvesant as its next director-general. He inherited a broken system, with unruly residents trying to upend it. Although his appointment helped delay New Amsterdam's break from the West India Company, he did little to alter its inevitability. By 1652, New Amsterdam residents controlled "sufficient economic and political strength to win from the Dutch West Indian Company a grant of incorporation," allowing them to control all aspects of the municipal government (Archdeacon 35). Thanks to actions taken over a series of decades between the commonalty and the director-general, New Amsterdam residents (or its elite at the very least) gained the autonomy and control over the political system they had hoped for.

Despite the fact that the Company replaced Kieft with a director-general who viewed his sovereignty as a given, the battles between the commonalty and Kieft started a movement towards popular representation that not even Peter Stuyvesant could forestall. The West India Company's inability to tease out its role as a commercial enterprise and its role as a sovereign political entity led to the gray area that allowed for New Amsterdammers to take an increased role in the political process. Although the local residents certainly did not have the type of representation that the United States would later champion, these negotiations did help contribute (and maybe initiate) a trend towards a government operated by its people, rather than by a singular, authoritarian figure.

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Angela F. Jacobs

The Canon Takes No Notice of the Negro

Recovering Africa(ns) in the Victorian Literature Survey Course

The Victorian Era is one of the most interesting and important eras of British literature, especially considering its eventual influence on succeeding literary eras, both in Britain and the United States. Though typically lambasted, there is no doubt that the Victorian Era has a richness, complexity, and diversity that represented the multitude of experiences marking the lives of Victorian peoples. Whether fiction, nonfiction, poetry, or drama, Victorian Literature offers a wide variety of texts for study. Previous amalgamations of the Victorian literature survey course typically resided firmly within the tried-and-true Victorian canon, relying heavily upon the works of Tennyson, Stevenson, Arnold, Browning, and few other, mostly male, writers, thus presenting limited points of view and perspectives which often resulted in the students of Victorian lit survey courses developing a limited sense of what constitutes Victorian literature, namely that Victorian England was white and patriarchal, despite England having a queen at its helm and not a king.

However, this perspective is entirely false. Much work has been done in the field of Victorian literature to be more inclusive of the various voices found within Victorian literature, which in turn, has revitalized the field and its accompanying survey course. By far one of the greatest shifts within Victorian literature is the inclusion of women writers, such as the Brontës, Christina Rosetti, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and George Eliot, to name a few. A Victorian literature course that doesn't at least attempt to address "The Woman Question" would be deemed untenable in the twenty-first century.[1] Gender within Victorian literature is now considered essential to the foundation of the course itself.

Likewise, no discussion of Victorian literature would be complete without understanding how the British understood their place in the world and their influence abroad, especially as it concerned their African and Caribbean colonies. Due to the ever-expanding nature of the British Empire, the British hungered for justification for their dominance. In this regard, several authors, such as Thomas Babington Macaulay, Joseph Chamberlain, and James Anthony Froude, address the prevailing attitudes towards British imperialism in their various works. In conjunction with these authors are authors who wrote on racial science, such as Robert Knox (*The Races of Man*, 1850), Josiah Nott and George Gliddon (*Types of Mankind*, 1854), and Joseph Arthur de Gobineau (*Inequality of Human Races*, 1855). What these authors reveal is the importance of race and racial difference within Victorian England.

Highlighting these authors matters because it shows the rather unfortunate gap within the foundation of the Victorian literature course. The fact that there are several works on race demonstrates how important race was in Victorian England. Despite ending the slave trade by the 1830s, Britain was still firmly entrenched in its colonial identity and relied heavily upon its relation to the Other (of non-Western heritage/perspective) in order to fully understand itself. As Edward Said states, "The power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming or emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism" (xiii). With this stated, what texts teachers select in Victorian literature survey courses is a form of narration and creates the type of "micro-culture" within the course itself whereby only select voices and perspectives are intrinsically deemed valuable. Because of this influence, it is imperative that the voices and narratives of people of color, in particular of African descent, are included within the Victorian literature survey course, especially considering the immense influence Africa and her people had on the cultural and material world of Britain.

As the British Empire grew and matured, defining national identity became more important to the British, increasing their hunger for the Other as a means of understanding their own dominance. One such Other were the people of African descent from the various British colonies in Africa and the Caribbean, as well as from their former colony, the United States. Although the Indian colonial experience is a popular choice for understanding British imperialism and representation, Britain's African and Caribbean colonies provide untapped potential to truly understand how the British viewed themselves and their colonial subjects, especially within Britain itself.

However, this desire for the Other, especially the African Other, did not begin with the Victorians, but rather demonstrates the shifting nature of representation in Britain, at first exclusive to the wealthy and learned, then mass produced until blackness and black bodies became nothing more than representations and not actual realities. This distance between black bodies and represented blackness may have contributed to how and why black Victorians are practically unrepresented in Victorian literature anthologies, possibly symbolizing how the Victorians devoured their black populations out of social and overt cultural existence.

Despite Britain being a major player in the slave trade, it is not commonly known that any Africans set foot on British soil before the twentieth century. As Edward Scobie notes, some historians trace an African presence in the tenth century, though there are no skeletal remains as evidence. However, "[I]t is possible to go further back than the middle of the sixteenth century and find historical documents to prove that even as early as 1501 there were blacks at court in Scotland" (Scobie 8). Regarding the visibility of London's black population, Gretchen Gerzina notes, "They were as familiar a sight to Shakespeare as they were to Garrick [the famous actor and theatre-manager] and almost as familiar to both as they are to Londoners today" (2).

Several works throughout Britain's long history with Africa demonstrate their complicated and intertwined relationship, works a Victorian literature professor can potentially use as roadmaps for understanding the importance of Africa and her people to the British. The eighteenth century is rife with these works, as slavery was still well in effect, though, unknown to the British, waning in public and legal support. The theatre was a popular place for portraying racial differences, especially in drumming up sympathy on the plight of African peoples, such as the play *The Slave* by Thomas Morton (1787), Henry Bates' *The Black-a-moor Wash'd White* (1776) and Isaac Bickerstaffe's *The Padlock* (1768).

The Georgians had complex views of race and race relations as slavery painted peoples of African descent as being sympathetic characters on the stage and within the British psyche. With the advent and popularity of a new genre, the novel, Georgian Britons found another way to devour Africa and her peoples, in particular, slaves, but only if they were wrongfully enslaved, as the British had a complex relationship to the slave trade. They loved the new products and delights this industry brought, but also felt sympathy towards enslaved Africans. As Scobie notes,

> This English love of the "Noble Savage," the black man of talent and accomplishment, has never failed to excite wonder and bewilderment; for, while the English will put up all sorts of social and constitutional barriers in order to prevent black people from entering and living in Britain, they will, at the same time, sing the praises of black writers, poets, singers, musicians, cricketers, athletes, or boxers. (87)

Though the Victorians' attitudes towards their black population was not as seemingly friendly as in the Georgian Era, with less exploitation of the actual black body in lieu of exploitation of representations of the black body, especially on stage and in caricatures, throughout the Victorian era, images and representations of African peoples were still in high demand. As Gerzina writes, "Victorian England drew upon its slaving past and colonial present to visualize people of African heritage" ("Black Victorians" 4). Though less about actual blackness and more about whiteness, these representations and exaggerations were commonplace throughout Victorian England, aiding the foundation-building of British national identity. "The ubiquitous "blackness" that David Dabydeen[2] has described in the eighteenth century, when the Black British population was at a peak unequaled until the post-World War II immigration, was transformed by the Victorians into a sense that they had defined, had described, and knew black people" ("Black Victorians" 5). This hunger for black representation by the Victorians continued well towards the end of the Victorian Age, with Gerzina noting, "At the end of the nineteenth century there was a surge in the importation of African material culture into museums and other public and private collections" ("Black Victorians" 4).

The Victorians regularly satiated their hunger for black representations via exhibitions, such as those at the Crystal Palace, circuses, and pantomimes at Astley's Royal Theatre. Outside of these exhibitions, black musicians and singers entertained a rapt audience in music halls, such as the compositions of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. However, this adoration came with a caveat. "It is not only that the English refused to treat blacks with any semblance of equality in the years before the turn of the twentieth century. To them blacks were also objects of fun. That elegant, Edwardian man-of-letters Max Beerbohm in writing of the 1880s, said that on the evidence of the music hall and comic papers the English populace thought blacks 'mirth-provoking'" (Scobie 119). The Victorians were also not immune to the pleasures of entertainment, consuming large quantities, with music and theatre being heavy favorites. "At the end of the nineteenth century there was a surge in the importation of African material culture into museums and other public and private collections" ("Black Victorians" 4).

Oddly enough, it was the popular American novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, published in 1852, a staple of American nineteenth-century literary survey courses, that best demonstrates the Victorian lust for black representation. Though often played by white actors, this novel was recreated heavily, with several amalgamations created that reflected, not so much the American landscape to which it belonged, but the various landscapes familiar to Victorian Britons. Uncle Tom is sometimes featured surrounded by palm trees, or characters rode on Arabian steeds. Oftentimes, the Black slave dialect was replaced by a combination of a Scottish, Irish, or Cockney accent (Gerzina, "Black Victorians", 4-6). Through this consumption, Victorian Britons not only consumed the American slave conceit, but also devoured the landscapes and peoples from the various British colonies.

In exploring the depths of the Victorian voracity towards representations of blackness, it is important to understand how blackness was constructed by actual black people. As Paul Gilroy notes, "Striving to be both European and black requires more specific forms of double consciousness" (1). In other words, black Britons had to navigate a world that was not their own, a world in which their representation was more important than their reality. In exploring the concept of the black Atlantic identity, how blackness was constructed throughout the various colonies and former colonies of the British Empire, the United States included, Gilroy writes, "these ideas about nationality, ethnicity, authenticity and cultural integrity [...] crystallized with the revolutionary transformations of the West at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries" (2). Needless to say, these very ideas greatly impacted Britain's black population, especially in the Victorian Age as their images became commodified and consumed to the point of near erasure of the black community as a distinctive community.

Like their American counterparts, the Black Victorians were living illustrations of Homi Bhabha's concept of ambivalence, in which he states, "colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite*. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an *ambivalence*; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference" (126). For the Victorian Black British, what this ultimately led to was this: the greater British culture assimilated aspects of the African culture while denying the social integration of African peoples. As stated earlier, Victorians, in general, looked upon their black population as being for entertainment and the Victorians devoured entertainment voraciously, with the theatre providing the primary means by which Victorians could mimic Africa and her peoples while remaining ambivalent about the true lived lives of literal Africa and her peoples.

However, this mimicry did afford opportunities for peoples of the African diaspora, such as the Fisk Jubilee Singers, the pride of Fisk University, an HBCU in Nashville created in 1866. Their choir was well-known to Victorian audiences, both in America and in Britain. Other notable connections include Ida B. Wells, an African American abolitionist, who found a warm reception in Britain from 1893 and 1894 in creating sympathy and support for the anti-lynching movement. Her work, "A Colored Woman in Another Country Pleading for Justice in Her Own," and overall message, was well-received by the Victorian British audience who saw her "as both representative and exemplar of the black race" (qtd in Gerzin "Black Victorians" 89).

As explored above, the Victorians were especially fond of the representations of Africa and her peoples, though not necessarily the actual realities of those peoples. Although several popular works of the time integrated attitudes towards black people and colonies within their narratives, in her examination of the required anthology for a Victorian literature survey course, Fisch writes that though anthologies aren't known for staying abreast of cutting edge scholarship, the fact remains that "[t]he problem is that my students' only exposure to the Victorian period comes from a survey of the Romantic/Victorian period...Since many of my students are going on to teach secondary and elementary school, mostly in urban environments, the political ramifications of the Norton's omissions are troubling" (354). In fact, though Fisch was teaching from the seventh edition (2000), the ninth edition (2012) also has the same discrepancy. Although, it now has a section entitled "Empire and National Identity," Africa appears to still be conspicuously left out. (Side note: the anthology for The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century contains selections regarding slavery, despite slavery still being an issue into the early nineteenth century.)

As Antoinette Burton writes, in quoting Gayatri Spivak, "It should not be possible to read nineteenth-century British literature without remembering that imperialism, understood as England's social mission, was a crucial part of the cultural representation of England to the English" (61). In her examination of the colonial implications within *Jane Eyre*, Burton notes the dis-ease with which the colonies are addressed. She writes, "Jane's self-formation occurs in the midst of a variety of colonial matrices and is finally, if not fully, contingent on them. Mr. Rochester's fortunes are embedded in West Indian intrigues (his marriage to Bertha, his financial investments), and so are Jane's- both by heritage (her uncle in Madeira) and, towards the end of the novel, by moral conviction and emotional attraction" (61).

It is impossible to understand the foundation of this novel without exploring the colonial implications, in particular the dichotomy of Jane versus Bertha.

Even more blatantly, William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* also treats its black character, Miss Swartz, in a questionable, even disrespectful, fashion, which provides an opportunity for discussing Victorian colonialism and representations of blackness. Scobie writes, "It was perhaps in *Vanity Fair* that Thackeray showed the clearest insight into attitudes of the middle and upper classes in the early years of the nineteenth century. It is the younger generation rather than the older in *Vanity Fair* which is conscious of race and color as marks of social inferiority" (123). Although it has been argued that the scorn Miss Swartz endures within the novel is Thackaray's attempt at satirizing the exclusivity of English society[3], the fact remains that is portrayed in a very unflattering light. She pays twice the tuition at Miss Pinkerton's Academy because she is mulatto; her clothes are often mocked; and George Osborne's makes crude references towards her color, calling her a "Hottentot Venus," a reference to Sarah Baartman[4].

What these texts, and a cursory glance at some of the poetry selections from the Norton ninth edition to the Victorian Era, show (such as Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point" and Robert Browning's "Caliban upon Setebos") is the amount of work still needed to show the literature and the people of the Victorian Era as they represented their world. As much as the British reveled in the African representation, they even more so revered reinforcing their own representation that was contingent upon their relationship to others.

When it comes to presenting Victorian Literature to students, there lies both the difficulty of selecting seminal texts and the importance of presenting Victorian England as it would have been for the Victorians themselves. Any literature instructor can attest to the difficulty of whittling down a century's worth of texts for a semester-long course. Because of this difficulty, it is little wonder that anthologies provide thematic guides an instructor can use in order to touch upon several of the most important issues in the Victorian Era, such as gender, science, class, and national identity. However, it is also equally as important to introduce race relations into Victorian literature survey courses, especially considering that so much of what built British industry and imperialism relied upon British juxtaposing with the world around them, and not just with other European powers. Much like Burton's analysis of *Jane Eyre* exposes how the characters' fortunes depended upon colonial and imperial pursuits, so did Britain's. According to Gerzina, "The English only began to see themselves as 'white' when they discovered 'black' people" ("Black London" 5). Questions such as ""What does it mean to be English?" and "What does it mean to be British?" greatly plagued the Victorians, especially as their world became more international through the various colonies in Africa, the Caribbean, India, and the South Pacific.

There are several strategies an instructor can employ in order to introduce race relations into Victorian literature, any of which depend upon the course description, instructor preference, or even student feedback. When it comes to course design, it is imperative to understand the scope of the course before proceeding to alter it, which may include understanding the purpose of the course and its alignment with other courses. For the Victorian Literature survey course, students typically are English or Literature majors who may or may not have taken Romantic Literature previously or, if they have, this course may also be lacking in readings on race relations in British society. Whatever the case, the strategies presented below may prove to be a helpful means by which to include readings on race, especially as it pertains to Africa, into a Victorian Literature survey course.

One of the easiest strategies for exploring race relations in Victorian literature is by first assessing the texts already included. As noted above, both *Jane Eyre* and *Vanity Fair* offer opportunities to explore race relations in Victorian Britain and are rather popular texts in this course. Another rather popular text is Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899). As Patrick Brantlinger states, "[...] *Heart of Darkness*, I believe, offers a powerful critique of at least certain manifestations of imperialism and racism, at the same time that it presents that critique in ways which can only be characterized as both imperialist and racist" (365). Though not without its controversy, *Heart of Darkness* does allow for students to explore how the Victorians viewed Africans and the African continent, while also exploring how the British saw their version of imperialism as opposed to that of another country (the Congo was the property of King Leopold II of Belgium). As Harry Shaw states, one of the defining features of the historical novel is its fictional probability: "A novel's power to illuminate life and its intrinsic beauty as a formed work of art depend in large measure to its probability in both [the way it fits the world it imitates and the way its parts fit together to produce a unified whole]" (21). What these popular novels reveal is how race and national identity were narrativized for Victorian readers, who were voracious readers. The novel both reflected and directed how they understood their very existence.

For those courses where an anthology is used, another strategy for exploring race relations for Victorian literature is utilizing and supplementing that selected anthology. As Fisch notes above, anthologies are not known for staying abreast of the latest trends; therefore, it is up to the instructor, or even English or literature department, to do so. Though

many anthologies may lack in comprehensive coverage of race relations in Victorian Britain, they oftentimes provide adequate context for introducing race into the curriculum, namely by their thematic sections on Empire, Imperialism, or even National Identity. For example, *The Norton Anthology on English Literature, The Victorian Age, Vol. E* (2012) has such a thematic section entitled, "Empire and National Identity." Although the emphasis is broadly on British viewpoints on empire, there are a few selections that can serve as segues into addressing African people, in particular, such as James Anthony Froude's *The English in the West Indies* (1888). Though not about Africa per se, the people of the West Indies are of African descent (It is important to note that any discussion of Africa and African people must also include the Caribbean due to the relocation of millions of African people during the slave trade).

Though seemingly unrelated, within this same anthology lies the works of Charles Darwin and his publications *The Origins of Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871). Though his views were lambasted by the religious community, in particular, they do provide a rather interesting thematic segue into how the Victorians understood their dominance in scientific ways. The primary argument against Darwin stems from *The Descent of Man* where he claims a common ancestor between humans and other mammals. This connection caused discord, which can be further explored in other scientific works that sought to utilize science as a means of explaining dominance. These works include Robert Knox's *The Races of Man* (1850), Josiah Nott and George Gliddon's *Types of Mankind* (1854), and Joseph Arthur de Gubineau's *Inequality of Human Races* (1855). What these works represent is how the Victorians came to understand their right to rule.

Beyond the Norton anthology are other anthologies that more specifically include sections regarding race and empire, such as *The Longman Anthology of British Literature*, Vol. 2B "The Victorian Age," 4th ed which includes a section entitled, "PERSPECTIVES: Travel and Empire" that includes Sir Henry Morton Stanley's "Through the Dark Continent" and Mary Kingsley's "Travels in West Africa," along with Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point" (the same as the Norton guide). In *The Broadview Anthology of British Literature Volume 5: The Victorian Era – Second Edition* there is a section entitled "CONTEXTS: BRITAIN, EMPIRE, AND A WIDER WORLD" in which there are quite a number of works focusing on Africa, such as excerpts from Thomas Carlyle's "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question," *Fraser's Magazine* (1849) in conjunction with an excerpt from John Stuart Mill's "The Negro Question," *Fraser's Magazine* (1850) and Charles Dickens' "The Noble Savage," *Household Words* (1853) with an excerpt from Thackeray's Letters to Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth, as well as Mary Kingsley's work "Travels in West Africa" and another Stanley work, entitled *In Darkest Africa*. Though by no means an endorsement, as stated previously, though anthologies can be lacking in adequate material involving Victorian race relations, there are works which can serve as jumping off points by which to delve into the subject.

For those instructors seeking to add new works into their Victorian literature courses, whether or not due to adequate segues already in place, there are quite a number of interesting texts to consider, an interesting selection includes *Allan Quatermain* (1885) by H. Rider Haggard and is a fictionalized adventure tale set in various African locales. Like many adventure tales featuring a white male protagonist in a foreign location, Haggard's tale includes tropes students will likely be familiar with, such as the native sidekick who provides social commentary and a protagonist who tires of the civilized world, preferring the 'wildness' of foreign lands. A nonfiction companion to this work may include David and Charles Livingstone's *Narrative of An Expedition to The Zambesi and Its Tributaries: And of The Discovery of The Lakes Shirwa and Nyassa, 1858-1864* (1866), which is now in public domain and can be accessed for free online. David Livingstone was a well-known Scottish missionary and served as a British emissary to parts of Africa.

Other interesting pieces to include, though perhaps not without difficulty, are periodicals, which are often excluded in literature courses. Children's journals, like *The Child's Companion*, mostly propagated by Christian organizations, were not shy in addressing the issue of race and racial relations in Victorian England and her colonies. Satirical periodicals, such as *Punch*, would also sometimes address the racial tensions within Victorian England. The importance of including these types of texts in a literature course serves two primary functions: a) expose students to texts that are considered "low brow" in order to illustrate the various texts Victorian readers enjoyed and thus b) expand their concept of what constitutes 'literature,' as it is easy for those studying literature to discount those works that are not deemed 'scholarly,' no matter their cultural significance.

However the above works may be sufficient starting points for addressing what can be called "The Race Question" or even "The Negro Problem" (in reference to John Stuart Mill mentioned above), no unit on race in Victorian Britain would be adequate without utilizing the works by actual people of African descent. Although, in parroting Toni Morrison, Timothy K. Nixon notes that, "White writers' development of black characters reveals much about the authors' worldviews by nature of the purpose or the function for which such literary characters are created" (938),

solely addressing issues of race in Victorian literature via the lens of white authors is insufficient. Just as it is not enough to simply include texts with women characters, it is not enough to simply include texts with characters of African descent. Merely reading novels or works about women will not suffice to claim the inclusion of the female voice within Victorian literature. The same is argued for black voices. So, while the mentioned texts include African characters, as they are not written by authors of African descent, they are not enough to qualify as being truly adequate to understanding the lives and materiality of black British people.

One of the richest sources of works written by African people stems from Britain's Caribbean colonies, one of the greatest sources of wealth for the British empire. One such work is *The Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands* (1857), written by Mary Seacole herself, who was also a well-respected British-Jamaican business woman and became famous due to her work in the Crimean War. Her work is particularly important in that, unlike her British counterpart, Florence Nightingale, who was heralded as a heroic nurse during the Crimean War, Seacole had to tell her own story of heroism. (There is even an interesting poem about Seacole's plight after the Crimean War (1853) that appeared in *Punch Magazine* (6th December 1856) along with an accompanying illustration.). What is particularly unique about Seacole's narrative lies in the hybridity of her identity as both English and Jamaican, or even Creole, Seacole's narrative demonstrates the double consciousness outlined by Gilroy above. Seacole's narrative demonstrates Seacole's understanding of her Victorian audience and their relative unfamiliarity with mixed-race persons. In fact, interestingly enough, as Howell notes, Seacole put especial emphasis "that the white subjects in her books feel familiar and comfortable with her" (109). Although written largely to de-emphasize race and highlight her public works, Seacole is keenly aware of the racial prejudices of the Victorian reader.

Although Seacole's novel is a compelling example of a work by a person of African descent about a person of African descent, careful research will attest that it is the most utilized text for discussing race relations between the white British and their black subjects. Perhaps unsurprisingly, though not less unfortunate, it appears to be *the* text written by a Black British Victorian subject currently known. One plausible reason for this discrepancy may lie in Britain's past. While the eighteenth century contains multiple published works by people of African descent, the Victorian Age does not. Through a careful analysis of the popular eighteenth century works by African people, it immediately becomes apparent that slave narratives were immensely possible. Could it be that, in the absence of slavery, Victorian Brits soured on their African population?

Interestingly enough, one group of writers of African descent who did gain popularity in the Victorian Era was the African American abolitionist, such as Ida B. Wells, as previously mentioned ("A Colored Woman in Another Country Pleading for Justice in Her Own"). Wells, along with her contemporary, such as Frederick Douglass, engaged in speaking tours to attain support for their anti-lynching campaigns in the United States. In fact, Wells assisted in co-editing several anti-racist journals, such as Catherine Impey's *Anti-caste*.

By the same token, including Douglass' "Farewell Speech to the British People, at London Tavern, London, England, March 30, 1847," where he states, "I will tell my colored brethren how Englishmen feel for their miseries. It will be grateful to their hearts to know that while they are toiling on in chains and degradation, there are in England hearts leaping with indignation at the wrongs inflicted upon them," both of these works highlight the dichotomy of how Victorian England treated its own African subjects versus its former African American subjects, an interesting look into how Britain positioned itself on the world stage. By no longer engaging the slave trade, the British posited themselves as being superior to their American counterparts and were a willing and apt audience to receive the supplications of the embattled African American and African slave in America. What these works, and others like it, allow is for Victorian literature students to begin understanding the transnationalism intrinsic within race relations between the British and their African, and former African, subjects, a transnationalism that allowed the Victorian British to perpetuate the image of their racial superiority and false sense of benevolence.

Although most of the works mentioned above are primary texts from the Victorian era, because of the dearth of works by actual Black British writers from this era, it is important to supplement these texts with contemporary online works that can provide much-needed context, for both students and instructors. For example, *The Guardian* has some articles on its website that address the Black British, especially during the Victorian Age. One notable article, "Hidden Histories: The First Black People Photographed in Britain – In Pictures" (2011) provides visuals by which students are able to see what the actual people of Victorian England looked like, an important aspect of providing proof of the existence of black people in England. Monique Todd's *CNN* article, "Striking Photos Reveal Hidden History of Black Britons in the Victorian Era" (2015) likewise provides photographic evidence, thus further providing a means to uncover this often overlooked aspect of Victorian history.

While the resources above are primarily aimed for students, it is also important to provide resources specifically for instructors, as it is difficult to teach something that is not understood. While the beginning and middle of this article can serve as a resource for understanding the basis for the presence of people of African descent in Britain, it is by no means exhaustive. While there is a dearth of scholarship regarding the black British before the twentieth century, especially once slavery is abolished, there are scholars and works that seek to illuminate this hidden history. Some of these texts include: Gerzina's *Black Victorians/Black Victoriana* (2003), Scobie's *Black Britannia: A History of Blacks in Britain* (1972), Jan Marsh's *Black Victorians: Black People in British Art: 1800-1900* (2005), and *The Oxford Companion to Black British History* (2007), to name a few. Though not exhaustive, what these works provide is a window into the world of black Victorians in Britain, a community so important to Victorian life, their invisibility is certainly unfortunate.

Despite the current dearth of knowledge regarding blacks in Victorian England, the Victorians themselves were ravenous for all things representing Africa and African-descended peoples, although the actual people were oftentimes treated scornfully, especially once slavery was abolished (1807; Slavery Abolition Act (1833)) and the plight and bodies of black peoples could no longer be commodified for personal wealth. From their images and representations, whether in theatres, music halls, or exhibition halls, the Victorians found a way to satiate an appetite for blackness that had engulfed the British peoples hundreds of years prior to Queen Victoria's reign. Sadly, the black Victorians themselves became almost quite literally swallowed up by the British poor, having continuously been denied adequate opportunities to advance in British society. In the end, it appears that the Victorian appetite proved too great and the black British community, once a distinctive community of its own, all but faded from the collective British history.

Although there is some scholarship regarding blacks in Victorian England, this scholarship and, thus, this knowledge is seemingly never presented to current Victorian literature students, who deserve to become fully engrossed in the materiality of the Victorian Era. These students represent the future, especially those who become future educators, and the future is looking ever more diverse. As calls for diversity increase, the Victorian literature course must answer this call or become stagnant. Much like the field of Victorian studies and pedagogy opened its arms to the works of women authors, so must the field open its arms to the works and lives of the Victorian Black British. Hopefully, this addition will lead the way for further inclusion and diversity.

Notes

1 See Stacey Floyd, "Getting More Bang for Your Buck: Teaching Nineteenth-Century Literature and Gender in a Survey Course," *Teaching Victorian Literature in the Twenty-First Century: A Guide to Pedagogy*, edited by Jen Cadwallader and Laurence W. Mazzeno, 2017, pp. 111-23.

2 *Hogarth's Blacks: Images of Blacks in Eighteenth-Century English Art,* 1987.

3 Phillips George Davies, "*The Miscegenation Theme in the Works of Thackeray*" [Modern Language Notes, vol. 76, no. 4, Apr. 1961, pp. 326-331.

4 Baartman was paraded around London and Paris as part of "freak shows," where her body, especially her behind became the object of exploitation. After her death in 1815, her skeleton and a plaster cast of her body was also kept on display and exploited, first in the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle d'Angers in France until they were moved to the Musée de l'Homme in 1937 in Paris, until 1974 and 1976, respectively. Her remains were eventually buried in her homeland in 2002. See "The Significance of Sarah Baartman" (Justin Parkinson, *BBC News Magazine*, 7 January 2016) for recent controversy regarding Baartman's legacy and contemporary exploitation.

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Sandra Young

"Fuck Tha Police"

The Poetry and Politics of N.W.A.

No one withdrew after syllabus day.

In the semester I piloted a first-year seminar course, the "Rhetoric of Protest Songs," on the first day of class, I introduced the topic of the class and myself. However, before I gave students the syllabi, I confessed that I knew little about music. I told them I Googled and YouTubed, and read our text to gain knowledge about protest songs. I told them the "Rhetoric of Protest Songs" was a writing class, and rhetoric means persuasion. "In this class, you'll write academic essays about protest songs. And we'll listen to some music."

What are protest songs? Thanks to the internet and YouTube this is the music of political activism and it's more in-your-face-no-holds-barred-tell-it-like-it-is-speak-truth-to-motherfuckin'-power-defiant than ever. Especially in Trump's America. It is music that shines a glaring light on abuses of power and demands change. Protest music is also poetry and a new generation is discovering the multimodal ways to blend poetry and politics into protest songs.

The first few semesters I taught this class my focus was twentieth and twenty-first century protest songs of all kinds. I gave students the freedom to choose their protest songs, hoping they wouldn't get lost in the sometimes profane and defiant lyrics. I wondered if the mostly white students from the suburbs attending a private Catholic university would be ready to delve into both the poetry and the politics of protest songs. But I was encouraged by their response. They met protest songs head on. They researched and wrote argumentative essays about the poetry and politics of songs that spoke of war (The Vietnam War, from Country Joe and the Fish, 1968, "I Feel Like I'm Fixin' To Die Rag," and Afghanistan and Iraq, from Green Day, 2004, "American Idiot"), poverty (Prince, 2004, "United States of Division"), police killings (Bruce Springsteen, 2014, "American Skin"), the environment, (Joni Mitchell, 1967-1968, "Big Yellow Taxi"), LGBT rights and pride (The Village People, 1978, "Y.M.C.A.," and Lady Gaga, 2011,"Born This Way"), and women's issues (Beyoncé, 2011, "Run the World (Girls)"), among other topics.

We debated, argued, challenged assumptions and stereotypes, and when discussions got dicey, especially relating to songs about domestic violence, like Tracy Chapman's 1988 "Behind the Wall," the class would get quiet for a few moments, and then loud as each side reinforced perspectives and prejudices. As I watched my students work to find common ground and right themselves, I reminded myself that students need to learn how to confront differing opinions and discover that heated discussions can produce cool compromises. Throughout that first semester, most students focused on the songs' *words*, as they connected the words to *issues*, and rendered conclusions about the effectiveness of the songs in changing minds.

Then, after a few semesters, I felt confident that students *could* tackle social justice issues, so I narrowed my focus for the next semester. That class would choose songs, from the 1960s to now, by hip hop and rap artists that addressed issues confronting some members of a specific group – people of color.

This paper discusses my plan for the semester, and specifically on two of the three essay assignments, "Protest song lyrics as poetry," and "Protest song lyrics as politics." In this paper, I argue that two white male teens, John and Evan (their aliases), demonstrated that their generation was prepared to tackle social justice issues – even issues that sometimes only tangentially touched them. Both John and Evan wrote about N.W.A.'s 1988 ground-breaking song, "Fuck Tha Police," but from different perspectives: John dealt with the lyrics as poetry; Evan, the lyrics as politics.

First, some backstory about the first-year seminar, a required course that replaced Academic Writing, is required. In this course, faculty across the Arts and Sciences curricula adhered to the seminar's learning objective about teaching writing skills but taught the seminar from whatever angle they think would appeal to students. In developing the "Rhetoric of Protest Songs," I choose protest songs because their issues, passionate, personal, polemic, and political, chronicle social justice issues. Writing about social justice issues is a form of activism.

Throughout my career, my pedagogy has sought to disrupt and confound students' comfort levels. I agree with the positions of Dennis A. Lynch, Diana George, and Marilyn M. Cooper in their article, "Moments of Arguments: Agonistic inquiry and Confrontational Cooperation," in which they state that "reconceiving argument that includes both confrontational and cooperative perspectives, [is] a multifaceted process that includes moments of conflict and

agonistic positioning as well as moments of understanding and communication” (63). In researching and writing about protest songs, I hoped my students would begin to understand their places in the web of social, cultural, civic, political, and racial matters. I hoped they would take transformative steps and link their own writing about social justice issues to what happens in their real-world everyday lives.

The text I used for my first few classes was Dorian Lynskey’s 2011, *33 Revolutions Per Minute: A History of Protest Songs from Billie Holiday to Green Day*. He defines a protest song as a “political issue … which aligns itself with the underdog” and says the “point of protest music, or indeed any art with a political dimension, is not to shift the world on its axis but to change opinions and perspectives, to say something about the times in which you live” (xiv-xv). Most of my students embraced Lynskey’s definition, and some chose songs listed in his text, though many others found their own songs online.

Protest songs are also poems. In fact, Marlene K. Sokolon defines protest poetry in her article, “The *Iliad*: A Song of Political Protest,” as poetry that, “celebrates a voice on behalf of victims of injustice, the poor, the oppressed” (49). In the wake of recent protest demonstrations, growing crowds vocalized the line, “Fuck Tha Police,” as both poetic tributes to lives lost and political statements of continued unrest. Often, chants of “Hands up, don’t shoot” or “I can’t breathe,” morphed into “Fuck the police.”

In 1988, when the lyrics, “Fuck Tha Police” permeated white communities and entranced white teens, the question was why? The simple answer: the song made their parents nuts. If parents hated a song, then it must be good as a typical teen attitude. This was a song that described an alien world of drugs, violence, sex, and danger. When Ice Cube rapped that the “police think they have the authority to kill a minority,” some teen boys heard him rapping to a different kind of “minority” – them – and they raced to buy *Straight Outta Compton*.

In 1992, Alan Light’s “Rappers Sounded Warning,” in the *Rolling Stone*, writes that Ice-T, who was also no fan of the police, recognized that there’s a “new generation of white teens listening to rap and being exposed to a minority perspective for the first time.” Ice-T says: “They’re saying … ‘these rappers are talking to me, and it’s making me understand. Why did John Wayne always win? Weren’t we taking that land from the Indians? Haven’t we been kind of fucked-up to people?’ They’re starting to figure it out.” Ice-T was referring to white teens, and two of them, John and Evan, answered his questions.

In 2008, Marcus Reeves wrote *Somebody Scream! Rap Music’s Rise to Prominence in the Aftershock of Black Power*. In the chapter about N.W.A., “Niggas Selling Attitude: N.W.A,” Reeves reminds us that the record industry is in the business of making money. He says that “gangstafied rap was as much a verbal response to demoralizing social and economic conditions as it was an innovative way to sell records” (105). Reeves, quoting the owner of Priority Records, Bryan Turner, credits white teens for pushing the sale of *Straight Outta Compton* into the millions. “White teens in the Valley picked it up,” he said, “and they decided they wanted to live vicariously through this music.’” Not much has changed today.

Living vicariously through music. It’s what many of us do. Music is connotative. Students (people) of all stripes are challenged to make their own meanings and find their own values in the music. The connotative nature of music proves that music is inherently rhetorical – it persuasively grabs us and demands attention. We interpret lyrics and construct our own meanings.

What meanings could suburban white teens take from N.W.A.? The song “Fuck Tha Police” flashed a strobe light on the lives of O’Shea Jackson (Ice Cube), Eric Wright (Easy E), Lorenzo Patterson (MC Ren), Antoine Carraby (DJ Yella), and Andre Young (Dr. Dre). It reported on their lives lived in survival mode on the sub-standard streets of Compton. Their song, not meant as a social or political commentary, was the authentic, lived experiences of these young men. It was treatise on lives lived in poverty because of economic inequality. Of homes in the inner city – a coded term for the ghetto – where danger and violence pervaded all aspects of life. The ghetto, where poorly educated boys became thugs in gangs, and then committed crimes. The ghetto, where girls became mothers too young, and then went on welfare. A place where drugs were available on every street corner. The men of N.W.A. rapped the powerful truth of their dehumanizing encounters with police profiling and brutality.

Then, on that Syllabus Day, in that class focused on protest songs about issues concerning some people of color, I fired-up the computer and began with a montage of YouTube clips of protest songs starting in the 1960s. So, as I began my history lesson, I turned to my notes, research, music lyrics, and as much jive as a middle-aged white woman can summon.

“Are you ready?” I asked.

"'Are you ready niggas? You've got to be ready,'" asks three black poet/musicians, the Last Poets (a name for several groups of artists), when they take the stage in Harlem in 1968. Ready for the revolution. Called the "forefathers of rap," in Sheila Rule's 1994 *New York Times* article, "Generation Rap," she says that they "welded revolutionary politics, incendiary street language and jazzy musical accompaniment into a polyrhythmic wake-up call to America." Specifically, Black America.

I explained that the "revolution" the Last Poets spoke of was often associated with the 1960-1970s Black Power movement that demanded the continuation of civil rights for African Americans. Broadly defined, the revolution is about economic, political, social, housing, and educational empowerment, with an emphasis on black identity and pride. Its artistic component, the Black Arts Movement, included musicians, poets, novelists, playwrights, and fine artists. The revolution, both political and artistic, rejected the dominant values of white American mainstream, and sought to define and establish its own framework of ideologies.

I paused. They're listening. I continued.

Two years later, in 1970, the Last Poets thought that maybe Black America wasn't ready for the revolution. Their spoken word, hip-hop song, "Niggers Are Scared of Revolution," spoke a frank reality:

Niggers are scared of revolution
But niggers shouldn't be scared of revolution
Because revolution is nothing but change
And all niggers do is change.

Soon after that declaration, their song, "Wake Up, Niggers," was an unsubtle call to wake up. However, with the salvo, "When the Revolution Comes," they seem to have given up. They rap:

When the revolution comes
When the revolution comes
When the revolution comes some of us will probably catch it
on TV, with chicken hanging from our mouths.

Then in the final lyrics of this song from the Last Poets, they gave their black audiences a bit of a poetic and political back-hand when they rapped: "But until then you know and I know niggers will party and / bullshit and party and bullshit and party / and bullshit and party and bullshit and party..." That damning declaration from the Last Poets, I told my students, was about the lack of motivation of their own people.

Their cause was taken up by Gil Scott-Heron's "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised," I continued. Scott-Heron's 1970 reminder was squarely directed at black audiences. Called the "Godfather of Rap" and the "People's Poet," he offered a spoken soulful matter-of-fact prediction:

You will not be able to stay home, brother
You will not be able to plug in, turn on and cop out
You will not be able to lose yourself on skag
And skip out for beer during commercials.

Because, "The revolution will be live." Pay attention, Scott-Heron seemed to allude.

By 1971, I told my students, the revolution was getting a bit hotter, though to some, it's still a bit confusing. Sly and the Family Stone's funk/soul "There's a Riot Goin' On," started with a call for action, "Mayday, mayday there's a riot going down"; it explains where and what's happening, but yet, the song ends when the "YOUTH" asks: "What the fuck is going on? / What the fuck is going on? / Can I get a straight answer?"

The revolution, I said, had stalled.

James Brown, the Godfather of Soul, seemed fed up and was giving up. In his 1971 album, 40th Anniversary Collection, the song, "There It Is, Pts. 1 & 2," he hesitated about joining in the revolution, and said let's just have fun, though there's a small understated warning. Listen for it:

Wipe the sweat
Going to have some fun
Time's getting short
we got to move
But in the meantime
Mama, we got to groove.

So, bring on the groove. Stevie Wonder's soul/pop, "Living for the City," in 1973, seemed hopeful and optimistic because, "His parents give him love and affection / to keep him strong moving in the right direction." So, he kept

going. But, like James Brown, there was a limit to what he could take in the current political environment, when he admonished his black audience in the last verse:

I hope you hear inside my voice of sorrow
And that it motivates you to make a better tomorrow
This place is cruel no where could be much colder
If we don't change the world will soon be over.

Yet, Stevie Wonder, too, seemed to give up.

By 1975, Curtis Mayfield's album, There's No Place Like America Today, continued the pessimistic black dystopic vision of Sly when he sings in "Hard Times," that he's fearful of white America. "Cold, cold eyes on me they stare / People all around me and they're all in fear / They don't seem to want me but they won't admit." As the song continues, the character sings that he'll "play the part I feel they want of me"; and finally

From my body house I see like me another
Familiar face of creed and a brother
But to my surprise I found another man corrupt
Although he be my brother he wants to hold me up.

Mayfield's lyrics seemed to describe 1982 New York, a hotbed of hot-button issues like crime, unemployment, and growing poverty. Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, combined the angst of the 1970s and the negativism of the early 1980s with their blast of despair, "The Message." Grandmaster Flash's Melle Mel gave hip hop voice and political perception to what's going on with these lyrics: "It's like a jungle sometimes / It makes me wonder how I keep from going under." They rapped about "broken glass," "people pissing on the stairs," "rats," and "junkies." He says that he's "Got no money to move out, I guess I got no choice." And, like other poet/musicians, there was a warning, a petition, a plea, that repeated throughout: "Don't push me, 'cause I'm close to the edge / I'm trying not to lose my head."

Melle Mel continued:

I can't walk through the park, 'cause it's crazy after the dark
Keep my hand on the gun, 'cause they got me on the run
… You grow in the ghetto, living second rate
And your eyes will sing a song of deep hate
The place that you play and where you stay
Looks like one great big alley way…

And

It was plain to see that your life was lost
You was cold and your body swung back and forth
But now your eyes sing the sad, sad song
Of how you lived so fast and died so young.

Grandmaster Flash's "The Message," detailed the inventory of social ills in New York, but in Los Angeles a different genre of rappers was gearing up to blow the lid off the world of hip hop.

My students listened. Nodded.

The lid began to blow in the 1987 rap hit, "6 'n the Mornin'," when Ice-T brags:

6 in the morning, police at my door
Fresh Adidas squeak across the bathroom floor
Out my back window I make a escape …
And the streets to a player is the place to be...
Gold on my neck, my pistols close at hand
I'm a self-made monster of the city streets
Remotely controlled by hard hip-hop beats
But just living in the city is a serious task
Didn't know what the cops wanted, didn't have time to ask.

Channeling the Last Poets, Ice-T seemed to be ready.

Two years later, Schoolly D's 1987 taunted, "Am I Black Enough for Ya," and claimed that "All I need is, my blackness," and that he was "just rough and tough, and takin' no stuff." He swaggered that he's "too damn powerful / I'm still a bad boy." And he finally declared: "My name Schoolly D, I'm never alone." So, there, he seemed to say.

While Ice-T and Schoolly D got street cred for beginning the subgenre of hip hop called "gangsta rap," violently cock-sure musicians who associated with the gangster or "gangsta" lifestyle, still they didn't push the envelope with their music.

Then, in 1988, that envelope was not only pushed, but ripped wide open. One group crashed into the gangster rap scene and would dare to say the unsayable.

I paused. Scanned my audience. "Are you ready? Do you know what's coming next?" Some smiled. I continued.

Dr. Dre announced: "You are now about to witness the strength of street knowledge." He and Easy E, MC Ren, DJ Yella, and Ice Cube are Niggaz Wit Attitude (N.W.A.). The song responsible for the lid-blowing is "Straight Outta Compton," the title tract of the album of the same name, and the set-up for the song that would cement their legacy. In "Fuck Tha Police," they used their "street knowledge" to say the unsayable: "Fuck the police coming straight from the underground."

"Fuck tha," I said. "T-h-a, not t-h-e. Tha. Fuck Tha Police." They looked at me. I continued. "Do you recall that the Last Poets chanted this challenge to Black America in 1968: "'Are you ready niggas? You've got to be ready.'"

I take a long look at my students. "Are *you* ready?"

N.W.A. was ready. Twenty years after the Last Poets, "Fuck Tha Police" blasted another rhythmic shockwave into the sensibilities of America. This time into White America.

This was the song that launched a thousand controversies, diatribes, and extreme over-reactions, I told my students. This was the song that triggered N.W.A. to promote themselves as "The World's Most Dangerous Group." This was the song that got no radio play, but managed to irritate the LAPD and the FBI sent N.W.A. an intimidating letter. This song got white America parents alarmed, got white teens tantalized, and got millions of records sold.

I stopped and looked at my students. "Are you ready?"

They were.

The day after syllabus day, I went into the details of the syllabus, and the three assignments. Here, briefly, are two of the assignments.

Essay #1 – Protest song lyrics as poetry: Protest songs are poems. In this first essay of about 500 words, choose 1 song from any hip hop group from any decade and examine it as a poem that deals with a social/cultural/political issue/ problem/event. Identify the issue of the song. For this essay, you'll use 1 literary focus area (plot, character, symbol, setting) to interpret, analyze, evaluate the poetry (lyrics) of the song, and argue how/why it resonated with audiences. The evaluation and interpretation of this song is entirely your own opinion.

Essay #2 – Protest song lyrics as politics: Protest song lyrics are political. For this second essay of about 750 words, you'll examine any 1 song from any hip hop group from any decade that deals with a social/cultural/political issue/ problem/event as a political statement. Don't use the same issue or song from Essay #1. Use 2 secondary research sources about the song's issue. Your argument will concern whether the song's issue/problem/event at the time of the song resonates today. Do not research the lyrics of the song. In-text citations and works cited page.

I reminded students of my acronym W. A. S. & P., which is **W: writer.** You. **A: audience.** In college, your professor and classmates. **S: situation.** The situation is your writing assignment's specific details. **P: purpose.** The purpose of the assignment is what your professor wants you to do – inform or argue or persuade or explain. Throughout the course, I slyly inserted rhetorical strategies and techniques, such as Toulmin's concept of warrants and claims, methods for finding and evaluating research. For kicks, I introduced deductive reasoning. My hope was that the issues in their chosen protest songs would trigger engagement and produce aha moments of social awareness in my students. My pedagogical hope was to convert high school writers into college writers.

I don't give trigger warnings. In my classroom, all issues are on the table, and none are censored if students are respectful of others' opinions. This fact alone surprised many students, because protest song lyrics can be offensive. Students chose the songs, studied their lyrics, and researched and wrote. Many students found their voices, let the artists and songs speak to them, and connected current hot issues with those of the past. In doing so, students realized the relevancy of the issues. We are experiencing a zeitgeist moment for protest music. Many of my students took ownership of their positions about political issues in their writing.

My students, John and Evan, had their own zeitgeist moments, and "Fuck Tha Police" led the way. Each choose N.W.A.'s principal song for one of their essays. For John, it was Essay #1 – Protest song lyrics as poetry. Evan used the song for his Essay #2 – Protest song lyrics as politics. In John's essay, he critically analyzed, evaluated, interpreted, and argued the song's lyrics about police brutality; Evan's essay focused on profiling, he added research and used lyrics to support his position. I quote from their essays.

To be honest, I was a bit surprised that my class would embrace writing about protest songs concerning issues of some people of color. I wondered why these suburban white teens, whose lives were seemingly free of the kind of conflict rapped by protest song artists, were attracted to the music's issues. These students had probably never experienced the situations, terrors, and unrest described in these songs. Especially, I was intrigued by what John and Evan might learn from "Fuck Tha Police."

For John and Evan, "Fuck Tha Police" worked to shake them out of their semi-protected shells. Perhaps the song produced nascent activism in John and Evan. In doing so, they may have become just a little more aware. A little less comfortable. A little more "woke."

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But what meanings could suburban white teens take from N.W.A.? The song "Fuck Tha Police" flashed a strobe light on the lives of O'Shea Jackson (Ice Cube), Eric Wright (Easy E), Lorenzo Patterson (MC Ren), Antoine Carraby (DJ Yella), and Andre Young (Dr. Dre). It reported on their lives lived in survival mode on the sub-standard streets of Compton. Their song, not meant as a social or political commentary, was the authentic, lived experiences of these young men. It was treatise on lives lived in poverty because of economic inequality. Of homes in the inner city – a coded term for the ghetto – where danger and violence pervaded all aspects of life. The ghetto, where poorly educated boys became thugs in gangs, and then committed crimes. The ghetto, where girls became mothers too young, and then went on welfare. A place where drugs were available on every street corner. The men of N.W.A. rapped the powerful truth of their dehumanizing encounters with police profiling and brutality.

How did my students fit into this scenario? Were my students living vicariously the lives of N.W.A.? When Ice Cube declared, "We can go toe to toe in the middle of a cell / Fucking with me cause I'm a teenager," did John and Evan see themselves? Or were they indulging in teenage bravado? Were they re-casting the established stereotypes of blacks in jail cells? Did they have any idea what the song was truly about? Did they grasp the irony of white teens glomming onto a song directed at black audiences? Did they even know what "white privilege" meant? "White privilege" – that term itself freighted with controversy.

I would find out. In his Essay #1: Protest song lyrics as poetry about "Fuck Tha Police," John (white, 18, upper middle class) was up-front in recognizing his white privilege. His familiarity with Macklemore's 2005 song "White Privilege" propelled us into a 30-minute (almost half the class) discussion. When I asked the class to define "white privilege," it was a long few seconds before someone spoke up. In that conversation, a few eyebrows arched, one or two voices shrilled, but no chairs were tossed. And maybe for some of my students, there were tacit insights into understanding white privilege and its place in their lives.

In Essay #1, the point of this short first essay allowed students to familiarize themselves with the processes of college writing and workshopping. In all of their essays, I stressed that student opinions are important as long as they don't contradict facts, and that their interpretations and analyses of their songs must be entirely their own points of view. I hoped that when students opined about their songs and connected the lyrics to issues, conversations would lead students to see how hot political issues of the past are still relevant today.

For Essay #2, I introduced research. Though I continued to encourage my students to find their voices and express their own opinions, they also critically examined other opinions from their research. Even though this was a first-year writing course, and even though I don't require deep dives into research, I did expect due diligence when they researched their protest songs' political issues. I allotted a significant part of class time for researching, questioning, and drafting. Remember, I gave my students lots of freedom in choosing their songs. So, I figured they owed it to me to stay focused.

For John, the issue for Essay #1 (protest song lyrics as poetry) of "Fuck Tha Police," was easy – police brutality. Yet in his pre-writing phase, he dug into why he was moved by the song. In a workshop discussion about his draft, he pulled up Macklemore's "White Privilege," on his laptop and pointed to these lines: "Hip-hop started off in a block that I've never been to / To counter act a struggle that I've never even been through." And:

> So here comes history and the cultural appropriation
> White teens with do rags trying to practice their accents
> From the suburbs to the upperclass mastering a language
> But hip hop is not just memorizing words

It's rooted in authenticity something you literally can't learn
But I'm gonna be me so please be who you are.

John followed Macklemore's advice.

John said that he wanted his essay to show how rebellion was in the "eye of the beholder," and that his rebellion – a tattoo – was how he was, like Macklemore insisted, "gonna be me." So, this 18-year-old did get into the poetry of "Fuck Tha Police" by interpreting the character of MC Ren. John said that when MC Ren took the stand in N.W.A.'s pseudo-courtroom drama of mocking the police, he explained how and why he made decisions, and how MC Ren asserted his right to be who he is. John wrote that when the cops pulled over MC Ren, when "'Lights start flashing behind me,'" he said, "'that shit don't work, I just laugh / because it gives em a hint, not to step in my path / For police, I'm saying, 'Fuck you punk!'" John said that "MC Ren makes a decision to laugh at the cops because they're 'scared of a nigga', and that 'Taking out tha police, would make my day.'" John wrote: "I'm not a gangsta, but I can rebel. I'm not going to really laugh at a cop that pulls me over, but later I might."

When John related the character of MC Ren in "Fuck Tha Police," he discovered he had an unlikely kinship with the rapper. John recognized another teenager in the rapper, and he didn't let his white privilege get in the way of his empathy. What I learned is how John understood the lyrics as powerful tools for sociopolitical change. In John's writing I saw the onset or maybe continuation of activism when he debated with his class about white privilege. He linked the political power – the "authority" – of the police over MC Ren because "the niggas on the street is a minority." And he analyzed the character of the rapper (now a middle-aged man), he saw a teen rebel, like himself. Although, as John admits, he's not about to go gangster.

Let's also remember that the line, "Fuck the police coming straight from the underground," isn't the first line of the song. In the opening, N.W.A. set up their own courtroom drama in which we witnessed a rapping script complete with speaking parts for the rappers and a cop: "[MC Ren as Court Officer]" says:

Right about now, N.W.A. court is in full effect
Judge Dre presiding
In the case of N.W.A. vs. the Police Department
prosecuting attorneys are MC Ren, Ice Cube
and Eazy-motherfucking E.

In creating their own bizzaro episode of "Law and Order," the rappers sought a reversal of that classic paradigm. They put the cops on trial in a kangaroo courtroom fantasy.

What John taught me, a middle-aged, white woman, was to move past the shock of the profanity-laced, explicitly violent lyrics of "Fuck Tha Police," and focus on the rappers as characters in the song, and how they used language. Then, in my research, when Geoffrey Baker suggest in his 2011, "Preachers, Gangsters, Pranksters: MC Solaar and Hip-Hop as Overt and Covert Revolt," I listened again to the song, and I heard the rappers testify. I heard them use their "street knowledge" to tell their stories of daily abuses, and become masters of their "imagined domain" (237), the courtroom fantasy, which is, as Baker says, is the "end-point of every narrative" (237). John had moved past the lyrics to envision himself on trial and defending his right to be himself.

Looking past the jarring lyrics, I also saw N.W.A. as hyperbolic humorists who wrote playful poetry. In writing "Fuck Tha Police," N.W.A. accomplished what Baker asserts is the "most graphic violence…violence that is performed *graph*ically: *in writing*, in language" (238). Furthermore, by setting the song in a courtroom, the rappers used parody in a mocking re-enactment of real trials, says Bryan McCann, in his 2012 article, "Contesting the Mark of Criminality: Race, Place, and the Prerogative of Violence in N.W.A.'s *Straight Outta Compton*." By making fun of the LAPD, the rappers cast off the stereotyped "mark of criminology" seared on them by white America, and became tongue-in-cheek tricksters having a bloody good time while the authorities – politicians, cops, and parents – heard their figurative language and wordplay as literal threats.

Evan, another 18-year-old, began his Essay #2 (protest song lyrics as politics) about "Fuck Tha Police":

> There will always be a problem in the world of politics.…In the 1970s and 1980s…law enforcement was not serving justice to every citizen. They targeted African Americans, mainly young black men because they believed they were involved in drugs, robbery, or murder. Protesting against police brutality…artists creating music to help speak out…[the] N.W.A. wrote 'Fuck Tha Police'…to show how the neighborhood of Compton, California was affecting them, but then they had an effect right back on them with these lyrics, 'Smoke any motherfucker that sweats me // or any asshole, that threatens me // I'm a sniper with a hell of a scope // Taking out a cop or two, they can't cope with me.'

He found research from *Billboard,* in Alex Gale's "Ice Cube: 'Police Have Become Our Worst Bullies.'" Evan writes:

> Ice Cube, a member of N.W.A., spoke … about the politics he faced during the times he was creating music. Gale had interviewed Ice Cube, who states, 'We wanted to show that when we did a song like 'Fuck Tha Police' that it wasn't just about us…It was more of an anthem for people to be able to fight back and to have a song they can all rally around…We wanted to show that our music had an impact on the community as a whole.'

Then, Evan added his considered opinion:

> N.W.A. was trying to warn people about what was going on politically…Ice Cube believes that their song's significance is that it shows the problem that the police are trained to win no matter what and that they are not held accountable for their actions even if it's killing an innocent kid. He also believes that politicians…try to discredit rappers who speak out about political issues.

Recall during our earlier debate about white privilege, that John referred to Macklemore's 2005 song, "White Privilege." Then, Evan countered John with Macklemore's 2016 "White Privilege II." His favorite parts of the song, he told the class, were when Macklemore (and Ryan Lewis) introduced other voices and opinions, like N.W.A. did in "Fuck Tha Police."

In his essay, John wrote that, "…like the cops in 'Fuck Tha Police,' these other voices/opinions didn't seem to see what was happening around them, nor did they understand the irony like in 'White Privilege II.' When Macklemore raps, 'It seems like we're more concerned with being called racist / Than we actually are with racism…"

Evan, like John, seemed to connect the dots from Eazy E's raps questioning cops' motivations, when he quoted "They put out my picture with silence // Cause my identity by itself causes violence" to Macklemore's raps about questioning his own motivations: "If I'm aware of my privilege and do nothing at all, I don't know…So what the fuck has happened to my voice if I stay silent when black people are dying."

In writing about "Fuck Tha Police," John wrote about the lyrics as poetry and Evan about lyrics as politics, they seemed to be "checking their white privilege." Were John's and Evan's arguments about police and profiling forms of activism? Had John and Evan earned their "'woke badges'"? These are some of the questions that Amanda Hess posits in her 2016 *New York Times Magazine* article, "Earning the 'Woke' Badge." To be considered "woke" Hess says, is "a back-pat from the left," an acknowledgement that you grasp the historic struggle against prejudice and racial injustice. "'Woke,'" Hess notes, "denotes awareness," but also "connotes blackness. It suggests to white allies that if they walk the walk, they get to talk the talk." But Hess and others cautioned that if whites appropriated a black culture then they must be willing to confront other whites.

John and Evan endorsed Hess' call to action when they both discussed Macklemore. At the end of his "White Privilege II," Macklemore raps:

> The best thing white people can do is talk to each other
> And having those very difficult, very painful conversations…
> I think one of the critical questions for white people in this society is what are you willing to risk
> What are you willing to sacrifice to create a more just society?

Yet, if whites risk over-playing the "stay woke" mantra, they might wind up like the cop on trial in "Fuck Tha Police," when Dr. Dre proclaims, "The jury has found you guilty of being a redneck/white bread, chickenshit motherfucker."

In that class focused on issues concerning some people of color, my students studied song lyrics that ran the gamut of current political talking points: police brutality, domestic violence, profiling, Black Lives Matter, gun violence, and civil rights. They formulated positions, debated, and argued. They shared opinions, outrage, and sometimes optimism.

By specifically writing about the poetry and the politics of N.W.A.'s 1988 song, "Fuck Tha Police," John and Evan helped their classmates realize that police brutality and profiling has never really stopped. Now, when students hear the names Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Sandra Bland, Freddie Gray, and too many others, they may connect N.W.A.'s song to the demonstrations and protests happening now. In fact, in Chris Moore's 2015 *Mass Appeal* article, "'Fuck Tha Police': N.W.A.'s Most Courageous Song is Still Relevant as Ever," Ice Cube states, "'Fuck Tha Police' was four hundred years in the making. And it's still just as relevant as it was before it was made." In a world of 24/7 social media and cell phone videos, students can see what's happening around the country.

My students may not have known that when they researched and wrote about protest songs they were entering an ongoing conversations about the role of social justice activism. They do now.

The next semester, on syllabus day, students knew what to expect. No one withdrew from that class, either.

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Sandy Feinstein with Bryan Wang and Jannah Martin

Aventure

Throwing the Gauntlet in University Humanities Courses

Aventure is what knights on quests did: they set off on *aventure*, sometimes having an explicit goal in mind—the Grail, to become a knight, to rescue maidens, the queen, fellow knights, kings, even an entire people. They expected to meet challenges along the way: recreant knights, perhaps dragons, inevitably wonders. They put themselves at risk; they could lose their horse, their love or squire, their life, their honor. Though the knights set out into the unknown on quests that had no guarantee of success, their authors, led by the conventions of the genre and their imagination, knew where they wanted them to go, how they would get there or if they would get there, what their challenges would be, and how each test would be met.

In our modern world of rapid communication, of MapQuest and Google Maps, and very different expectations for human beings and fictional characters, *aventure* might not seem an ideal model on which to structure an education, even an honors education. Though the first word defining Chaucer's Knight, "honour," preceding "trouthe, fredom, and courtesie," has been appropriated by academic programs, and the second word appears in the mission statements of many honors programs, few (any?) advertise the importance of taking risks, of failing or losing one's way.

Losing one's way as a medieval knight is not correlated to reputation or rank: good and bad romance knights get lost in the vague landscapes of *aventure*. Knightly achievement is not quantitatively measured any more than the distance from one tournament to another where he, or she, may excel or fail. Being lost, or not having a clear plan, never mind actively seeking an ill-defined quest or one-to-be-identified only after it is accepted, is not part of the imaginative landscape, or programs, of higher education.

My efforts to teach critical thinking and creative problem solving repudiate the conventional wisdom in education that insists on a clear mapping of the route, a word ominously close to "rote." In the humanities, as in the lives and conditions represented by its disciplines, the route is not clear; it is not learned by rote. A clear set of directions may be important to develop a foundation: medieval knights in training learned how to ride, tilt, and joust, among other things, before they represented the causes of the court or entered tournaments. To become knights in the Middle Ages—in reality or romance—required learning at court and in the field, alone and with others, by example and experience. But their education was no guarantee of their future success at court or in the field, or even of survival, no matter how much they excelled at each skill. Rhetorical skills mattered, too: they might keep one in good stead or have a deleterious effect. If only Chrétien's Lancelot had tried to explain to Guinevere his two-step hesitation in mounting the cart of shame or she had explained why she was mad at him before rejecting his homage, he might not have attempted to kill himself and her beauty might not have withered (however temporarily) when she heard the news.

What can we assume students know, or should know, before setting out on their varied modern quests in education or career? Do very different kinds of demands, expectations, and contingencies—being able to choose a career but not knowing if it will still exist in a world where developing technologies increasingly replace human labor—require more structure, or less, in one's education? Can there be a prescribed path for teaching originality, critical thinking, creative problem solving, and effective communication?

The syllabus and assignments I post may seem vague to anyone used to a page or more of instructions for papers, lab reports, or team projects. My reasons for privileging *aventure*, whether by providing syllabi that cover only the first three or four weeks of a course or by omitting details that provide explicit directions for completing assignments, extend beyond the stated course objectives duly included and beyond transparent pedagogic ones, that is, beyond what students likely registered for to fulfill a requirement. I want writing and literature courses to be more than a hoop to jump through that results in a degree and a dive into the job market because the humanities could well prepare students for the life they didn't expect, for what cannot be anticipated, whether "good" or "bad."

One of my aims, omitted from the goals and objectives dutifully listed on the syllabus, is to prepare students for the unexpected in their academic lives and beyond. That may sound presumptuous for someone who, besides composition, teaches Medievalism, The Quest, Arthurian Legend, and, most recently, a team-taught cross-disciplinary

course, “From Beast Books to Resurrecting Dinosaurs.” Knowing there are few who would, or could, choose my area of study or career path—majoring in English isn’t even possible where I teach—has made me wary of assumptions about the future and, in turn, committed to arming students for unexpected, inevitable change.

Perhaps there are students who will become exactly what their first composition for me, a statement of purpose, claims: journalists, despite the ever shrinking paid prospects; accountants, despite the increasing presence of programs to do the math and much more; teachers, despite the shrinking dollars for education and increasing reliance on remote education; computer programmers, despite the unexpected moral and political challenges becoming ubiquitous; engineers, despite the unexpected changes in applications, design, methodologies, and labor needs.

As an English professor now for nearly forty years, *aventure* has taken me to Tennessee, California, Kansas, Pennsylvania, Denmark, Bulgaria, and Syria; in each of these places I learned to adapt to new academic environments and unfamiliar cultures, where students studied English for a variety of reasons: in Syria, because they hadn’t passed the qualifying test for engineering or medicine but wanted a university education, and English was the only field they qualified for; in Bulgaria, because developing sophisticated language skills could, they hoped, improve their qualifications for scholarships to study in the United States and other English language countries. Despite these kinds of differences, though, students’ quests were otherwise remarkably similar: interchangeable career goals (or lack thereof), hopes, dreams. I learned variability in goals and motivation was more a matter of personality and perceived ability than of circumstances or cultural imperatives. The desire was to succeed, to DO something, to get away, to make one’s family proud, to avoid yielding to fear and desperation, which not all managed to do. The majority of students majored in what would accomplish those goals, no matter their personal predilections or strengths. Some had the good fortune to have parents who saw them as successful no matter their major or chosen career. Unfortunately, this kind of acceptance was rare at the colleges and universities where I’ve taught.

The question, then, is how to prepare for what one cannot anticipate? What can students do when their best laid plans are foiled, whether they do not succeed in their chosen major or they do? How are they to respond to unanticipated economic contingencies: shrinking job markets or radically changed ones; technologies making once guaranteed areas of employment obsolete; diminished job mobility; a major or a job not being what was expected, hoped, or desired? *Aventure* is both what is found along the way and how the challenges faced are addressed. Engaging *aventure* in a safe place with others, in a classroom, may prepare students to adapt to what cannot be controlled.

What does *aventure* look like in a college class? It is not haphazard. There is, for one, a syllabus. In this plan for a semester of writing or reading, risks are acknowledged, but “failure” is made to be, like a hero’s setbacks, a temporary condition. Papers may receive “no grade,” require rethinking, rewriting, and resubmitting, not just once but numerous times until students arrive at their goal, whether a particular grade or an essay suitable for submission to a conference or competition. By taking on the challenge, whether of submitting assignments early for pre-grade comments or doing optional rewriting, students individually determine their commitment to the endeavor. Grades are both the guerdon and the obstacle, for some motivating, for others anxiety producing. In either case, neither the topic nor the number of required sources may seem enough of an informational guide. The expectation for an organizational strategy, sufficient development, and appropriate style may not be considered adequate direction without each one being explicitly parsed into an iron clad rubric: the kinds of transitions (for 1, 2, or 3 points added), the number of grammatical errors (for 1, 2, 3 deleted), how many examples to support how many ideas (for 10, 20, 30 points).

I’m not sure it’s possible or desirable to explain everything a course will cover from the outset. *Aventure* allows for changes in the direction of a course, which responses to assignments can help determine. When I develop a course or create an assignment I have definite ideas of what I want to accomplish and what I should cover. Similarly, when writing a paper, I think I know what I will argue, but new research, dissatisfaction with the idea or structure as I work, impulse or inspiration, and talking with others—whether friends or editors—may prompt a shift in direction. Though changing course can feel disorienting, the sense of discovery also makes it exciting. To constrain ideas and how to represent them by delineating each element of assignments to be graded according to a rubric can take away one of the pleasures of thinking and writing: experimenting with something new, taking risks. Rubrics challenge teachers to quantify what is not uniform, to perpetrate illusions of what cannot be simply defined and accurately measured: originality, organizational strategy, sense of an audience, substantive development, rhetorical sophistication. The only components easily quantifiable are surface errors, the least important of all, pedagogically speaking. Lacking models, students may, however, propose an original idea rather than imitate what has been provided.

I try to model what I teach. I do each assignment, so I’ll have an example in case the class seems too lost or anxious to be productive without one. When I team teach, I do the assignments created by my colleagues, partly to

learn and partly to get a sense of the difficulty of what we are expecting of our students. Most recently, in the team-taught interdisciplinary course, "From Beast Books to Resurrecting Dinosaurs," I worried about embarrassing myself with my pathetic responses to assignments designed by my co-teacher, a molecular biologist (whose major did not exist when I was in college). While I nervously threw out idea after idea until finally coming up with one classifying dragons and, another, creating a model university metaphorically structured by DNA, the students confidently offered up their remarkable representations of classification and models with far less anxiety and frustration than I did. For the assignment on models, one student produced two. With this contrast in attitude, understanding, and productivity in mind, I asked that student, Jannah, if she would reflect on her experience, which she has below:

> When looking at a rubric as a sort of "model" for an assignment, it's easy to see, at least as a student, where the traditional method of assessment and instruction can fall short: mandate a detailed, restrictive model, and any assignment or paper based off of it becomes explicit and unimaginative. There's typically very little wiggle room for originality, let alone experimentation or anything that goes beyond the bounds of the prompt. However, without this prescriptive model, I had the freedom to draw, develop, and explain my own connections to the prompt, and, as a result, the ability to create my own conclusions. This freedom allowed me to "play in the space" and experiment with visuals, concepts, and formats whenever whim or academic *aventure* compelled me. For the model notebook assignment, I decided to mesh two of my interests, theology and geography, into a set of models that I then used to describe the progression of evolutionary understanding over time and how cultural beliefs have affected our understanding of science. The assignment called for a written description along with the model itself, which gave me the opportunity to defend and explain my interpretation of the odd collection of models I used.

Jannah also recalls how her classmates responded to another of our assignments, for which they were given still less guidance, which means I must have originally designed it. As she says,

> The 'Zoo View,' a semester-long assignment for which our class was told only to 'assemble images of creatures,' then curate them 'according to different schemes used throughout history,' produced an incredibly wide assortment of presentations, each reflecting part of our bespoke area of interest in the course or in our majors. From the same prompt came musical compositions, taxonomic trees based off of pets and encountered wildlife, algorithmic search queries, and MLB team classifications, all of which were considered 'correct' within the generous parameters of the prompt.

It was my colleague who imposed a modicum of order with the verb "curate."

But rather than speak for this colleague in science I still can't believe agreed to teach with me after fair warning, I asked him to define his own context for understanding and engaging *aventure*. Here is his response:

> My pedagogical training is recent, during this era of detailed learning objectives, rubrics, and assignment descriptions, and in a field—molecular biology—that typically provides undergraduates a highly structured educational experience. In teaching with Professor Feinstein, however, I discovered the spirit of *aventure* alongside the students. I learned to open in my own assignments adequate territory for students to interpret, lose themselves, experiment, fail, and pursue what they could not have initially imagined. The experience was freeing; it was *exhilarating*. Spurred by the unanticipated delight that attends setting students upon the quest, I offered, in a molecular genetics course for graduating seniors in biochemistry, a project in which students defined the what, how, why, and to whom of a final presentation of their semester's laboratory work. Although initially disorienting for some of the young scientists, the project kept at bay all traces of senioritis: ultimately, students appreciated the encouragement to take ownership of their learning experience and the opportunity to exercise their creativity—and their work was enthusiastically presented and received at an event for the college's science division during finals week.

Bryan and I were both anxious about engaging each other's disciplines and pedagogies but excited about learning together.

According to Bryan, those oriented to the sciences expect explicit steps, or, in his words, "detailed instructions, at least in their early undergraduate years." As he explains,

> There are formulae in math and chemistry; there are protocols in the laboratory. Science is orderly. It's later, such as when they apprentice themselves to working scientists, that students discover the incompleteness of textbooks and the value of synthesis, application, divergent thinking, and interdisciplinarity. Then they relate to science no longer as a collection of facts and a defined method, but as a creative act.

Bryan's is the point of view of a scientist, which, while I came to appreciate and learn from, may account for why I didn't major in any science, despite ornithology being my favorite college course. I attended college twenty years

before he did, in the early seventies, when students were pushing against restraints, demanding change, which may be partly why it's so hard for me to fathom the reascendance of what seems such an old-fashioned way to approach any subject.

In today's pedagogies, whether in science or humanities, order and explanation are foregrounded, made explicit, based on a model of deduction. The method of *aventure*, by contrast, takes a more circuitous route to its objective. It lacks a clearly marked path or a set of instructions to discover one. The grail is to be found somewhere, the right question will eventually be posed, and the imprisoned Lancelot will be rescued, all by seeming accident in Chrétien, Malory, and von Eschenbach. But there is purpose all the same.

Purpose informs everything in *aventure*, in romance and the classroom, even from the very first action taken. In the course Bryan and I taught together, for example, I created the initial journal assignments with the intention of focusing students on readings that would also begin their preparation for a unit test on key words and a paper on how the meanings of words change. After having read selections from Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*, students were asked to "Create an etymology of your own name and draw conclusions about your lineage, behaviors, and appearance. Compare to others of your kind in word and image." That's all. Unsurprisingly, most students Googled their names and, without attribution or identifying sources, summarized what they found. The majority did not create an original etymology: they located one, which they then appropriated; and, consequently, they had difficulty transferring what they learned about their names to themselves. Making comparisons also proved challenging. While most students did not use the classical and early medieval readings to model how they might create a personal etymology, Jannah did, noting, as she explains,

> Included in the prompt itself was the word 'create,' which, combined with the class discussion that came along with the reading of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the far-fetched inferences of Pliny, Isidore, and Aristotle, gave me the idea to include not just previously existing etymologies, but also original and technically inaccurate ones. While I did do some research into the linguistic background behind my own name, most of my energy and focus went towards establishing connections and tailoring those comparisons into some sort of coherent, personalized etymology. When the strict definition of my name didn't line up with what I wanted to communicate, I chose to interpret in the same way that Isidore did, more or less eschewing official etymologies and creating new ones that better fit the narrative I was trying to develop.

Jannah extrapolated from class readings and discussions, and, like Isidore, from what she knew about languages, while also providing authorities for her claims and making up original ones.

The readings were intended as models to replace a set of directions dictating where the etymology should be found or from what it should be constructed (Historical records? Dictionaries? Parents or family friends? Fiction?), or how many—if any—sources should be used and attributed. The syllabus noted that journal responses submitted 24 hours before the deadline would receive feedback students could use to revise their submissions before turning them in for a grade by the due date. This was an early assignment, the first-to-be-graded journal, that would reveal what students knew how to do and what some would need to be guided to learn how to do. While the journal may have been the first of its kind for a majority of the students, Jannah was among those who had prior exposure to not being told what to do or how to do it. She recalls her initial reaction to assignments in her first course with me:

> This lack of concrete direction in my first semester English class with Professor Feinstein initially promised to be the source of constant frustration and stress. Coming from high school courses, both honors and otherwise, where the expectations were clearly laid out, the prospect of writing a paper without any sort of rubric was akin to driving blindfolded. Saying that there wasn't any concrete direction is a bit unfair. I had direction: a prompt, related assigned readings, multiple professor and classmate conference sessions. What I actually wanted, and discovered was missing, was a sort of ultimatum, one that would explicitly dictate what I was supposed to produce and the route I was supposed to take to get there. My initial papers and journals, the first few tentative forays into uncharted waters, reflected my continued adhesion to the aforementioned assessment vehicle even in its absence. It would take the entirety of my first English course, and perhaps most of the second, for me to view the prompt not as a blueprint for the end product, but as rather a starting point for me to branch off of as I saw fit. When I stopped being forced to think about papers as mindless, transactional assignments, my writing methods and projects also began to diverge from traditional papers and journals. Assignments that, in a standard course, could have been endlessly boring, rote affairs became opportunities for me to research and read more about things that I was interested in, and to present them in ways that reflected whatever major I was pursuing at the time.

Student writers need guidance at different times and in different areas, or when even the same area, they require

different kinds of guidance. That guidance may be individual or part of a classroom lesson for all, depending on the responses.

Students need to develop individual interpretive skills, too. But how to do that with a model predicated on one-size-fits-all? If writing is individual and interpretation subjective, then addressing each student's efforts benefits from being individualized as well. A partial syllabus is easier to revise and reorient than one marching relentlessly through a semester toward goals that might not be achievable unless adapted to students' abilities as teachers gradually discover them. What's missing is allowing for *aventure*.

Romances are episodic and repetitive: knights face conventional challenges over and over again; the enemies vary little. Losing a horse, being unexpectedly unseated, does not mean a forever after on unyielding, cold ground. In Chrétien, even Lancelot is unhorsed and for reasons undergraduates may well relate to: daydreaming while on his quest, about his love, no less. Getting back on the horse and into battle for a student may just mean learning to move on from a disappointing test or rejection letter from a job or graduate school.

Being willing to take on the seemingly impossible has its advantages and fewer consequences than students expect. Sir Kay, whose ambitions in Chrétien's *Knight of the Cart* resulted in his being wounded but also in Lancelot's coming to his and the Queen's rescue, is a reminder that a knight may overreach and fail, gain a reputation as a fool, but still stay undaunted, still be beloved by the King and the court.

Unlike in medieval romance, however, where characters do not "develop," in the humanities classroom we expect students to learn and be able to transfer skills and understanding, to grow as scholars and as human beings, too. In an education designed as *aventure*, the ideal is to learn critical thinking and creative problem solving because without those skills, students and graduates may be stymied by what they face. In short, their quests may be stopped in their tracks for lack of being able to adapt to what isn't mapped. In engaging the unfamiliar and seemingly open-ended, the unexpected and, perhaps, feared, whether reading an alien language like Middle English or learning to write for a range of audiences, students may develop ideas they didn't know they had, ideas that could be groundbreaking in their chosen fields as well as in the humanities.

Fears of the unknown future, then, despite the ominous signs, could be allayed with lessons learned by *aventure*. In the Middle Ages, you had to have faith, to believe. Now, we have to work at it. It may look like an impractical medieval romance to accept a quest that lacks for details, as Mark Twain's Hank Morgan complained, but even that can-do American, finding himself in Camelot, learned that progress, profit, and even love can result from the unlikeliest of unexpected journeys.

Colleen Coyne

"True to How the Real World Would Operate"

Incorporating Narrative Practices into a Service-Learning-Based Professional Writing Course

As many students turn away from humanities fields toward more "practical" majors—business administration, accounting, computer science—English, history, and other humanities departments are left to make the case that a humanities degree is still useful (Schmidt). However, it is not a difficult case to make: one key job of the humanities is to help students cultivate both critical thinking skills and the ability to empathize with diverse human experiences in order to engage meaningfully in the world. In fact, many of the most sought-after skills of new hires—written and oral communication, interpersonal skills, creative problem-solving, analytic thinking (see, e.g., Ahmad and Pesch; Camacho; Kohn; Ortiz et al.; Zartner et al.)—in a variety of industries are developed by studying fields such as literature and other humanities subjects.

Along with a general push toward "professionalization" in the fields of technical and business communication, there has been a movement toward splitting off from the "home" English department, further separating the "literary" from the "professional." However, like Patrick Moore, I urge colleagues on both sides of the literature–professional communication divide to recognize the mutually beneficial partnership between the seemingly disparate fields –for faculty and students alike. Specifically, I would like to offer professional writing – an umbrella term for an array of documents, texts, and approaches one might encounter in the workplace (however broadly defined) – as a vital site of humanistic inquiry, as much as literature or creative writing is, and emphasize the essential relationship between the two. Professional writers think creatively, analytically, and rhetorically, asking important questions, foregrounding awareness of others, and building relationships. One feature of professional communication—storytelling—is particularly fruitful for forging connections across disciplines and cultures, a truly humanistic aim. (Although it is worth considering the distinctions between *story* and *narrative*, here I will use the terms interchangeably, as others such as Richard; Dalpiaz and DiStefano; and Hansen have done). Narrative—as an element of both process and product—is an integral pedagogical tool that allows students to consider the ethical implications of their writing and their identities as citizens of the world, especially important as students prepare to enter their first "real world" jobs.

Telling Professional Stories

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, "narrate" comes from the Latin *narr□re*, to relate or recount, as well as *gn□rus*, for knowing, skilled (by contrast, we might consider its relationship to "ignore" or "ignorant"). Following Hayden White and others, including Roland Barthes, for whom narrative "ceaselessly substitutes meaning for the straightforward copy of the events recounted" (119), we can identify narrative as a key element of documents that shape perceptions, persuade readers to action, and help forge relationships within and among people and organizations. Peggy J. Miller has presented narrative as a relational practice—that is, one in which the self is constructed in relation to other people. Listeners and readers—our audience—inform and influence how we present ourselves, particularly through story. Therefore, we can conceive of narrative as an opportunity to consider audience and relate our story—and create a relatable story—and as an opportunity to connect to others by sharing what we know. This way of thinking about narrative has definite implications for building community both within and beyond the classroom.

Narrative usually takes different forms in the literary and professional worlds, and storytelling as an act asks different things of literary and professional writers. I appreciate the definitions offered by Kendall Haven, who construes story as "a detailed, character-based narration of a character's struggles to overcome obstacles and reach an important goal" (79), and by Richard Maxwell and Robert Dickman, who delineate story as "a fact, wrapped in an emotion that compels us to take an action that transforms our world" (5). With these definitions in mind, we can think of stories as being rooted in truth and lived experience and—perhaps most importantly—as tools for enacting a change in perception or process. Stories ask listeners to make connections to new ways of being in the world, and thereby compel listeners to become agents for change. In the business world, problems need solutions—and in successful endeavors, problems get solved—and stories are a main way of communicating both a premise and a resolution.

Many forms that might find their way into the professional writing classroom are conducive to narrative, including performance reviews, progress reports, portfolios, cover letters, résumés, and even the elevator pitch. In a service-learning-based professional writing course in particular, narrative practices enable student-writers to engage with the broader community through projects in which they use the knowledge and skills developed in the classroom to produce important work for partner organizations.

Narrative and Community Engagement

In "Treating Professional Writing as Social *Praxis*," Thomas P. Miller advocates for stressing the "social and ethical dimensions" (57) of professional writing. If we consider professional writing as *praxis*, we open up the possibilities for it shaping, and being shaped by, the public context in which it lives. As such, professional writing courses are often good matches for service-learning (Mahin and Kruggel 324), which asks students to contribute their knowledge and skills to a partner organization, which in turn offers students coveted "real world" experience that translates not only to the nonprofit sector, but also to the private sector, with its increasing focus on corporate social responsibility (Bowers 69). To be sure, this experience is often seen as having the practical purpose of filling out a résumé, or of getting a foot in the door for a future career. Service-learning experiences can also help "close the gap between educational writing and workplace writing" (Kohn 180). Perhaps more importantly, though, many have observed that service-learning deepens community engagement, and I argue that narrative is the vital link between the two. Narrative processes and practices are what allow for a meaningful and lasting engagement. This also becomes a more ethical engagement—one rooted in genuine connection to and care for others (see Stephens and Kanov). When a professional writing course incorporates service-learning, it is crucial that narrative be a part of the curriculum—and I would encourage instructors of professional writing to consider integrating the essential functions and purposes of narrative into their broader pedagogical philosophies.

In teaching key elements of professional writing, such as reader-centeredness and persuasion, I present these concepts through stakeholder theory (Kimme Hea and Shah). When writers think of their audience as stakeholders, a new kind of ethical relationship develops. Writers must think about audience needs and desires, about how their writing—and by extension the actual impact of their documents (whether notifying their audience of a policy change, new leadership, or a product or service for sale)—affects real people. If we look at this through a narrative frame, we might ask: Who is our audience? What do they want, and why? What is their story? How can we connect with our audience to both fulfill their needs and achieve our own goals? This is ethical work, in the sense that it allows student-writers to develop ways of understanding themselves as citizens of communities both local and global, to see themselves as entering into relationships with other people. In doing so, they realize that they have a real impact on the world, hopefully for the better.

Michael Pennell and Libby Miles identify service-learning as a site for problem-based learning, which by its nature is messy, complicated, and dynamic, and we might recognize these features of problem-based learning in both scholarship and the "real world." Pennell and Miles note the capacity for both service-learning and problem-based learning as fertile ground for ethical development. By extension, the work that students do in service-learning projects cultivates inquiry and lays an ethical foundation for their work after college, regardless of the fields they will enter. The relationships they build during service-learning, too, can be instrumental in their professional lives, and are foundational to their self-conception as community members who make productive contributions to society. Narrative plays an essential role in this identity construction.

Narrating Community-Based Learning in Business Writing

A few examples from my own pedagogy may be useful for illustrating what I have just described. At Framingham State University, Business Writing is an upper-level professional writing course into which I have incorporated a significant service-learning component—specifically, a type of service-learning known as community-based, project-based learning. This course's particular version of service-learning, then, entails an ongoing relationship with a community partner wherein students work on a series of projects for the organization. Over the course of several semesters, the class has partnered with Downtown Framingham, Inc. (DFI), a nonprofit organization committed to the revitalization of downtown Framingham through its cultural and economic development.

Because each semester's projects are developed in consultation with our community partner, we do not initially have a clear set of requirements, assignments, and deadlines to follow, and we have to work with our partner to establish them, and to re-assess them as the semester goes on. Understandably, for many students – and for their professor – this

uncertainty can be stressful. However, in the "real world," employees may have to grapple with changing deadlines and priorities, and other situations that require flexibility and adaptability; learning how to navigate these potentially messy situations in the classroom is just as valuable as learning how to write a proposal. (Here, too, I am reminded of connections to literature and creative writing, where productive ambiguity is a desirable quality). Ultimately, we wind up with a specific set of projects to work on, all of which are meant to be public-facing, including blog posts about community policing and sampling Guatemalan baked goods, press releases about the 6 Mile Moment during the Boston Marathon, and business profiles of restaurants and media companies, among others. Here are excerpts from three such projects:

> *Neca's Bakery: Your Next Sweet-Tooth Craving*: "In the midst of me learning about the cookies, she started to tell me about her children and how now that they are older they love to visit Guatemala. She was smiling when she explained how they have a whole new appreciation for their culture, in particular the food. Within only a few short minutes, a bakery that had felt intimidating and new felt comforting and familiar." (Student A)
>
> *Pho Dakao: East Meets West on Concord Street*: "I met with Dang [the restaurant owner] in the dining room, a quaint and traditional—though decidedly modernized—space, to discuss his aspirations for his growing business, as well as his connection to Framingham, including his quest to bring a new Eastern-flavored option to the Western palate. Over the course of our talk, I noticed just how frequently the terms 'opportunity' and 'initiative' came to my mind as such a young entrepreneur explained his quick rise to success." (Student B)
>
> *Making Strides Toward a Safer Community*: "Historically, the walking beat is not a new concept, but it is regaining momentum after motorized vehicles reshaped patrol work. Downtown Framingham has had two full-time officers on foot patrol for three years. After speaking with two of these officers, I see how their presence is making a valuable difference." (Student C)

While Students A and B are focused on specific businesses, Student C addresses common safety concerns about downtown Framingham. These are different aims, but in each of these projects, students describe interactions with business owners and other community stakeholders (people from diverse backgrounds that represent the downtown Framingham population), telling their stories and also telling the students' own stories of acquiring new knowledge and changing perceptions—and ultimately communicating these transformative moments to a wider audience.

Another aspect of the course has been especially conducive to narrative practices: the reflection journal. Although reflective writing generally is not a standard part of many professional writing courses, it is becoming more common in the workplace (Lawrence), and it is an integral part of any service-leaning-based class. In service-learning, there is an ethical component of reflection at work, and reflection is what lives in that hyphenated space between "service" and "learning." Many studies tout the benefits of reflective writing for professional development and communication. It allows writers, as Holly Lawrence puts it, to "see the personal in business writing . . . [to be] more accountable to themselves and others" (203). This accountability is also noted by Kathleen Blake Yancey, who recognizes that reflection requires us to "circle back, return to earlier notes, to earlier understandings and observations . . . [and] asks that we explain to others . . . so that *in explaining to others we explain to ourselves*. We begin to re-understand" (24). In the context of reflective journals, writers craft narratives of exploration, discovery, and transformation; they tell stories of being challenged in unexpected ways, of growing into new ways of thinking, and of realizing connections to others that they may not have been aware of before.

In my Business Writing course, although some students are excited and confident from the beginning, many of them begin the semester hesitant about the safety of downtown Framingham—which has an arguably undeserved reputation among FSU students for being dangerous—and concerned about their level of preparedness and how far out of their social and academic comfort zones this project will take them. Students' initial impressions, as narrated in their first reflection journals, include being afraid of communicating with business owners and making mistakes; lacking the experience and confidence they perceive necessary for working in this new context; feeling apprehensive about having enough resources to be successful in their projects; and being both excited about getting hands-on experience and nervous about venturing downtown.

These same students ended the semester with a new appreciation for the diversity of cultural experiences found in downtown Framingham, which they acquire through talking to business owners, artists, immigrant entrepreneurs, town officials, and residents. In these interactions, they exchange stories, and they complete their course projects by listening, reflecting on, and then re-telling that story in a new form that considers DFI's audience and goals. In doing

so, they develop their own stories about gaining "real world" experience and making new and unexpected discoveries in Framingham. In their final journal entries, students have expressed pride in the work they'd created, excitement at having found new eateries and other destinations downtown (with one student expressing regret that they hadn't done so sooner), and enthusiasm for supporting the work of a nonprofit organization; many students noted that the projects helped them become more patient, flexible, and adaptable. And in the anonymous feedback forms I collect at the semester's end—another opportunity for reflection—one student noted that "this experience…feels very true to how the real world would operate. Everything does not always go as planned... However, finding ways to work around potential setbacks that may slow us down is crucial."

This kind of community engagement helps students articulate their own personal and professional development, which in turn can help them more effectively create employment materials (e.g., résumés, cover letters, portfolios), engage in professional conversations (e.g., networking, elevator pitches, interviews), and even develop cross-cultural communication skills, which are important in an increasingly global workplace (Barker and Gower 305). The community-based learning component of Business Writing offers its own unique set of challenges—including occasional communication issues with the community partner, and varied degrees of student buy-in (specifically related to perceived relevance to their expected career paths and typical group work hurdles). But ultimately, it offers students a transformational learning experience and opportunities to see their work have a life beyond the classroom. Working with a community partner has opened up so many possibilities for the Business Writing course, at the same time as it provides value to the community partner and contributes to the relationship between the university and the surrounding area.

Professional Writing and/in the Humanities: Synthesis & Synergy

Despite my support for narrative's place in professional writing, I am not advocating that we implement a one-size-fits-all approach to teaching narrative. Certainly, it has different functions in a professional writing course, a fiction or creative nonfiction workshop, or a literature course. These fields all have their own relationships to and with narrative. But offering students a business perspective on narrative—and explicitly acknowledging how we can better forge connections among professional writing, creative writing, and literary studies—reminds students, teachers, and administrators of the work of the humanities. What I *am* advocating is a kind of paradigm shift, one in which it would not be unusual to find a literary text prompting discussion in a business writing class, or a literature class asking students to produce business documents as a means of analyzing literary texts. Additionally, as I have noted, offering service-learning opportunities, and incorporating narrative practices into those experiences, are ways of cultivating empathy and deepening students' connections to the world around them—also common goals of humanistic study.

It is imperative that we keep these potential synergies in mind as we continue to narrate the role of the humanities and humanistic inquiry at our institutions, within the English discipline, and to society at large. Reading and writing are and should be recognized as creative acts, and at the same time they are and should be practical instruments for realizing professional goals. Students should not feel that the passion to study short stories and the need to write a résumé are fundamentally at odds, or that there are irreconcilable differences between what they want to do and what they are "supposed to" do. Granted, this may seem idealistic. But if we do not find hope in the possibilities of humanistic study, where can we find it? Professors and students alike can be some of the best advocates for the humanities, and we must see it as our mission to realize and articulate the connections between these genres and practices as we continue to narrate our own personal and professional stories.

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Julie O'Connell

The Power of a Story

I have long believed that stories have the power to mirror our experiences and provide us with objectivity and perspective to examine ourselves more clearly. Stories are our lifeblood, our means of discourse, and the fundamental reason why the humanities are so attractive to us. As writer Patrick Hicks eloquently states, “Stories offer us identity and hope. Stories help us to remember the past and imagine new futures. Stories make us human. Stories give us meaning.”

Throughout time and literature, the story has had a predictable arch. I can look for that pattern in any story, and usually, I can find it. It does not matter what kind of story I’m dealing with: a movie, a graphic novel, or even a computer game. Good stories like *To Kill a Mockingbird* move from stasis to crisis to climax to resolution. This is how it is for us, again and again, and so we read these stories, again and again, or witness the events being told and retold under the guise of new names, new settings, and new configurations. The stories we read not only reflect our lives, but they also shape them in terms of the choices we make.

Now more than ever, I see how essential it is to pay attention to which stories get told and why. It may seem like an obvious point, but my experiences have shown me that dominant narratives marginalize and even silence important stories. What I have come to realize is that we tell stories to ourselves and to others in order to justify our preconceived notions and manipulate what others think about us. Since every story is real to each of us, no singular story is real, which is why there is danger in a singular narrative because it creates stereotypes that are incomplete narratives (Adichie).

It all goes back to Plato’s cave, where we learned that empirical evidence (what we perceive from our senses) cannot be taken at face value because it may be shadows, and we may, indeed, be trapped in the cave of our own limitations and misunderstandings. Our preconceptions can also shape our perceptions to the extent that what we believe becomes what is real. Now more than ever, we need to recognize which stories are being told because their misuse and distortion is marring the fabric of American culture. As Roy Greenslade recently said in *The Guardian*, “We are living in a post-truth society where it is extraordinarily difficult to correct falsehoods passed on so swiftly and indiscriminately.” I would add that in the post-truth world, we are fed dualistic narratives that force us to choose. For instance, in the Republican narrative, we hear a story of competition for limited resources and a fearsome opponent (such as an immigrant) trying to take those resources and inflict harm on us. In contrast, the Democratic narrative is often defined as the move to reach across differences, cooperate, and create prosperity for everyone. Author Amy Jo Kim points out that these two stories reflect the two types of games people like to play: zero-sum games, where opponents compete to win, and non-zero-sum games, where individuals partner to collaborate and increase resources for everyone. Some narratives bifurcate us in that the stories we hear contradict the stories we once knew. Take the story of America as it is told through the symbol of the Statue of Liberty and contrast it with the daily doses of xenophobia and the tribalism which characterize the current political climate. Paradoxically, Americans seem to be drawn toward and retreating from these stories.

No doubt, the stories of communities and cultures have the power to shape our perspectives of truth. Language, with all of its possibilities and limitations, has been used to construct stories about the world. One might argue that all stories are valid within the contexts in which they emerge, but in today’s world, narratives are being misused to speak to and for entire groups, and stories are being employed to pose as factual accounts with the aim of influencing or even controlling individuals and the choices they make. For instance, throughout the 2016 Untied States Presidential Election, Russian agents used sites such as Facebook to tell false stories and illegally influence election results. Evidently, narratives can be weaponized to harm large systems once thought sacrosanct.

This is not a new phenomenon, but it is one that confronts all of us now more than ever. America’s deepest cultural and political divisions are being propagated by stories. Is President Trump a dangerous manipulator, an uncensored change agent, or one of myriad of other narrative constructions in between? It depends on whose story you believe (and, of course, there are many more than we can ever even imagine). There are stories “he” tells, stories he tells his people to tell, alternative facts, “fake news,” factual reports about “fake news,” propagandized “fake news” stories

planted to counter facts and spread more seeds of untruth, and even the story I am telling here about this storytelling machine, just to name a few. It is wearying to keep up with all of the stories. They are lies, half-truths, and optical illusions: images we see in our own way to tell ourselves the story that is obvious to us. In all cases, our story is not the entire story, and yet that is the very thing that we, in our self-centered realities, fail to remember. The obvious danger of our lack of awareness is that the stories we believe in not only divert us from what is real, but they also make us speak and behave in certain ways (as voters, consumers, etc.).

All of this happens in the context of our social media platforms, where technology affords us the opportunity to construct stories about ourselves and others to look cool or professional or intellectual. Who am I? Am I the same person I claim to be in my Instagram or Twitter or Facebook or LinkedIn profiles? Is this who I really am or just a string of narratives I tell about myself? Perhaps I look good, but do I have substance? Am I solid Godiva or a hollow chocolate bunny? Today, our technological devices deliver a daily bombardment of stories made possible by countless arms of the media and by our social media manipulations. It makes me long for the pause, in that sometimes, stories deserve greater time and attention, and often, the most important part of the story is what we do not immediately understand. In *Star Wars*, as Luke hangs into the abyss, he says, "My father is going to get you," to which Darth Vader replies, "I am your father." Luke understood Darth Vader in a particular way based on what he knew, but that was not the whole story. Similarly, in *The Wizard of Oz*, what Dorothy believes about Oz is not the whole story, but neither is what we believe about Dorothy since we find out in the end that it is all just a dream. Sometimes we think we know the story and then it turns out to be entirely different than what we thought.

What about the meta- and micro-narrative aspects of stories? Sometimes, I am inside of a smaller story, and I cannot see the larger story behind it that connects all the smaller narratives around me. I think of Georges Seurat's famous pointillist painting "A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte" (1884) wherein there are many smaller stories within the bigger picture. Seurat's masterpiece includes a wide range of narratives involving mothers and children, a monkey, dogs, boaters, soldiers, and the elderly. There is a man leaning on his elbow and a girl playing in the field. The larger view is the riverbank—and larger still is the canvas—and even larger is the realization that everyone's stories and lives are connected by the same things (in Seurat's case, by purposefully painted dots). Up close, we see the dots, but from a distance, we see everything. Ultimately, these multiple perspectives serve to unite, not divide, us.

In her celebrated TED talk, Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Adichie explains that stories make us who we are "but to insist on only…negative stories is to flatten…[our] experience[s] and to overlook the many other stories that formed…[us]." In an America where division reigns, war looms, the Paris Accords have been abandoned, extreme weather events persist, Civil Rights are under siege, refugees are imprisoned, immigrants are demonized, and equal protections are threatened, we must look past narratives of division and remember the larger story we share and the only one worth telling: the one we tell together. As musician Bob Weir recently said on the subject of storytelling, "I get to step aside, I get to be somebody else and that somebody else is –all of us. It's a shared experience." Stories "have been used to dispossess and malign" (Adichie), but they also empower us, humanize us, and bind us together as one.

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Adam Hansen

For Katie

St. Mary's, 27/3/18

The lighthouse carpark's almost empty
but for a couple older than us now
with a woman older than them behind,

and the skylark's fretwork flow from the fields
soaking the headland in careful grace-notes
marking time and space for those like us now

watching wild ponies, while waves' low chords
swell to banked-up sky-shapes over us now
and water-coloured spires, schools, arcades, flats –

and one fret more means all that is resolves
to this, a trick of the light and pitch, a switch
in keys of something and nothing, then in us now.

Ana M. Fores Tamayo

Adjunct

I am nobody.

Walking through the false tears
Of sand,
I bristle at the thorns
Of moon.

I am nothing.

I come and go dreaming big dreams of empire
Yet sawdust falls around me
Covering my nestled spine in leprosy.

I used to hover orchids purpled in oblivion.

I would linger softly with loving touch over a book,
rustling its Poems, savoring its letters, its text.

But no longer do they speak to me.
No books
no writing
no words
no people.

All have left me.

And so I stand alone,
thinking myself empty
Visible to none,
a shattered vessel

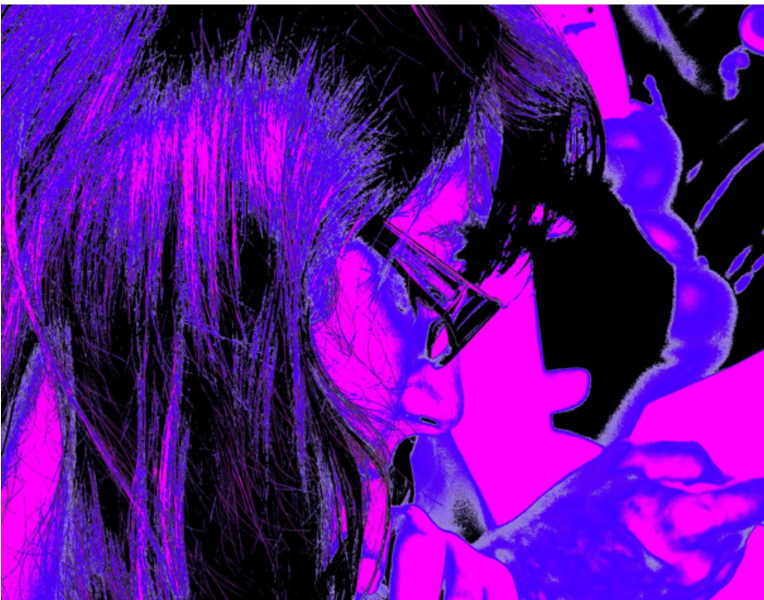
Ruined by a broken pen.

Ana M. Fores Tamayo

The Grad Student

The professor's witch-haired smile
shakes grayly in the tepid air.
His goat feet tooth responses
with inequities transcending.
Absurdity masks his eyes,
while her own face traces naiveté with treason,
and inanities wryly print
her shrouded gestures
even as the night descends
on the instructor's droning voice.

The tired student listens closely,
playing doodles
to the chalkboard of technology,
yet Descartes mathematically concludes
that all is doubt but doubt itself.
I think therefore I am
but not because her mind's not thinking:
far away from blackboards and from schoolbooks
and eclipsing shadows,
the meandering poet cannot sing.



So she smiles unthinking at the crumpled tie
who's mouthing words
on the power of existence,
and she dreams on
to a future where the
poet
will stand tall, while
writing
love songs and wild sonnets
to pursuing destinies
with persevering hope.

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