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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The Wagner Forum for Undergraduate Research is an interdisciplinary journal which provides an arena where students can publish their research. Papers are reviewed with respect to their intellectual merit and scope of contribution to a given field. To enhance readability the journal is typically subdivided into three sections entitled *The Natural Sciences*, *The Social Sciences* and *Critical Essays*. The first two of these sections are limited to papers and abstracts dealing with scientific investigations (experimental and theoretical). The third section is reserved for speculative papers based on the scholarly review and critical examination of previous works.

This issue contains several noteworthy papers which encompass a variety of topics including how children with autism relate to society and the world in which they live and an analysis of the characters that E.M. Forster created in *Howards End*. The interested reader will most certainly enjoy a thought-provoking examination of Julia Alvarez's literary works and how she employs characters who develop a feminist-socialist consciousness in response to a strict patriarchal society. Also, be sure not to miss our first invited paper which explores the regenerative capacity of zebrafish to gain insight in the phenomenon of tissue regeneration and ultimately help those suffering from traumatic brain injuries.

Read on and enjoy!

Gregory Falabella and Richard Brower, Editors

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Section I:
The Natural Sciences

Traumatized Optic Tectum of Adult Zebrafish Develops Embryoid Neural Structures *In Vitro*[1]

Christopher Corbo (Biology) and Frank Garritano (Biology),
Dr. Geoffrey Church[2], Prof. Linda Raths[2] and Dr. Zoltan Fulop[2]

To test the hypothesis of whether mature zebrafish brain tissue has a regenerative capacity, blocks from different regions of adult zebrafish brains were maintained in organotypic cultures for 2, 6, 12, 24, 48, 96 hours, 7 and 14 days. The surviving tissue samples were fixed in 4% paraformaldehyde fixative with 0.25% glutaraldehyde and 4% picric acid, post fixed in osmium tetroxide and embedded in Durcupan (Fluka). Semithin (0.5 µm) sections were cut on Sorvall MT2-B ultramicrotome and stained with tolluidine blue. Sections were analyzed and photographed with Olympus BX40 compound microscope equipped with a Sony ExWave digital camera using FlashBus and Adobe Photoshop CS applications. While large number of cells degenerated and died as early as 12 hours, many managed to survive, dedifferentiate, proliferate and migrate to begin reorganization of the structure. At 96 hours clumps of newly formed cells, resembling neural-plate-like structures appeared. Similar immature cellular clumps showing different levels of advancements could be observed in several parts of the investigated blocks, indicating trials of structural regeneration. These observations suggest that zebrafish brain tissue maintains regenerative capacity even in adulthood. The authors greatly appreciate the moral and financial support of their anonymous benefactor.

I. Introduction

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) causes a variety of after effects within the body. TBI can be minor (also known as a concussion), caused by a weak, direct force to the skull resulting in nausea, headache, and dizziness and even slight memory loss. Severe TBI is a physical damage to any part of the brain or spinal cord resulting in loss of function, paralysis, or death (CDC 2003). TBI is a frequently occurring neurological disorder and

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[1] Different parts of this work were presented at the 2005 Eastern Colleges Science Conference (ECSC), the 2005 Metropolitan Association of College and University Biologists (MACUB) Annual Conference, and the 2005 Sigma Xi Annual Meeting and Student Research Symposium. At the MACUB and Sigma Xi Conferences, Christopher Corbo and Frank Garritano earned two Best Presentation Awards. Portions of this material were used as the basis for Frank Garritano's and Christopher Corbo's Senior Thesis.

[2] Faculty advisors from the department of biological sciences.

with the continuing increase in industrialization of society, it has only increased and will continue to increase. At this time there is not a treatment for severe TBI and there are many people and families that suffer from these disorders.

It has generally been believed in neuroscience research that in adult mammals, the neurons of the brain have not been able to effectively divide and regenerate (Cajal 1928). These ideas have been in place for over a century since the days of Ramon-y-Cajal, the father of neuroscience. For this reason, scientists have looked to the lesser vertebrates including amphibians (Ehrlich and Mark 1977; Esposito et. al. 2002) and fish (Davis and McClellan 1993; Sharma et. al. 1993; Zupanc 2006; Zupanc and Clint 2003; Zupanc et. al. 2003), whose brain tissue is capable of regeneration, to gain an understanding of this phenomenon. Since new interest into stem cell research, neuronal stem cells have been found even in the adult mammalian central nervous systems that have the ability to regenerate (Alvarez-Buylla and Lois 1995; Huang and Sato 1998; Zupanc and Clint 2003). With both the research in the lower vertebrates and the discovery of the pluripotent stem cells, there is now a rising new hope to possibly treat or even reverse traumatic brain injury. With this, new interest/research has immerged concerning the regeneration of the adult central nervous system and with the advanced technologies available today, different aspects of this regenerative process can be studied.

To study the events that may lead to neuronal regeneration in traumatically injured adult brain, we maintained blocks of the adult zebrafish optic tectum *in vitro* for a period of three weeks. The cellular events were monitored through a time course of 2,6,12,24 hours and 2,4,7,14 and 21 days. We selected zebrafish, *Danio rerio*, a teleost fish species that lately has emerged as widely used laboratory animal in neuro-developmental research (Westfield 1993). Previous research into the adult brains of different teleost fish species demonstrated high regenerative capacity of their CNS (Sharma et. al. 1993; Zupanc 2006; Zupanc and Clint 2003). For the organotypic culture we used a novel method adopted from Tomizawa et al. (Tomizawa 2001) and De Boni et al. (De Boni et. al. 1976) who used similar techniques to maintain whole zebrafish brain in *ex vivo* culture or cultured adult neurons of goldfish, respectively.

II. Materials and Methods

Animals

Twenty-seven fish were used in this study. The animals were maintained together in a large tank inside the lab. The animals were kept on a light cycle and fed twice a day. The experimental animals were maintained according to the Zebrafish book

from the zfin website until the surgery was performed to start the culture (www.zfin.com, Westfield 1993).

Surgical Procedure

The surgical techniques were performed in an aseptic fashion treating all tools and work area with disinfectant 70% ETOH. This was important in order for the pieces to not carry over bacterial or fungal contamination into the culture. The fish were anesthetized with a 4% tricane solution that was made in large, concentrated quantities that were then alloquatted and frozen. The tools used to remove the brains were removed with a micro scalpel, fine tipped forceps and an iris scalpel. This surgical procedure was done in a timely fashion, not exceeding ten minutes to ensure that the cells did not die before the culture could be started.

After the skull was opened, the brain was cut just below the medulla and lifted slightly. The brain was removed by grabbing the optic nerve which was the main point of anchor. The brain was placed in a dish of the culture media to give the cells immediate nutrience and osmotic conditions. The brains were first cut in the midsagittal plane for two symmetrical hemisphere pieces which then were cut in coronal plane at the border of the forebrain/optic tectum. The forebrain was cut midsagittally into its right and left hemispheres. The border of the optic tectum and the cerebellum were removed from the skull in such a way that the cerebellar piece contained part of the medulla and the cerebellum was cut midsagittally into halves. Finally, the two optic tectum hemispheres were cut in half in the coronal plane ending up with eight pieces per brain. Each of the pieces was placed into its own chamber of a six well dish in order not to have the pieces mixed up (the two same side halves of the tectum were placed in the same chamber). The pieces were then moved to the tissue culture facility. Figure 1 demonstrates how the brain was cut and organotypically cultured.

Preparation and Maintenance of the Organotypic Culture

The cultures were established in a Laminar flow hood in order to maintain sterile conditions. The pieces were removed from the six well chambers and placed onto sterile Millicell tissue culture inserts (cat# PICM03050). These helped to ensure the proper movement of the media around the tissue. The media recipe was adopted from Tomizawa et. al. All pieces were placed on the same insert in 6ml petri dish with the two forebrain at the top, the 4 pieces of tectum under them, and the 2 pieces of cerebellum under the tectum (the top of the insert where the forebrain is located was labeled with a notch by a razor). Exactly two milliliters of body temp media was added to the petri dish. This was important since too much media would kill the tissue. The Millicell insert

helped to keep a thin layer of media over the tissue which was constantly changing due to capillary action. The cultures were kept in a carbon dioxide water jacketed incubator for the allotted time according to the time course.

Histotechniques

At the selected time-point, the pieces were immersed into a picric acid fixative, containing 0.25% glutaraldehyde and 4% paraformaldehyde, for one hour followed by 1% osmium tetroxide post-fixation for another hour. This accomplished the fixation of both the proteins (paraformaldehyde) and lipids (osmium tetroxide). The picric acid fixative was chosen due to its low concentration of glutaraldehyde. This fixative is necessary for electron microscopy analysis but destroyed antigens within the tissue. With the low concentration used, electron microscopy was possible while much of antigenicity was maintained in case immunocytochemistry was desired.

The tissues were dehydrated through increasing ethanol concentrations and the embedding media (Durcupan by Fluka) was infiltrated into the tissue using propylene oxide. The samples were polymerized overnight in a 70 degree Celsius oven. The samples were sectioned using a Sorvall MT2-B ultramicrotome using freshly prepared glass knives. 0.5 micron thick sections (semithin) and were stained with tolludine blue. The blocks were further trimmed and sectioned on the same microtome with glass knives for transmission electron microscopy. The ultrathin sections were collected on 200 mesh copper grids and stained with uranyl acetate and lead citrate.

Light and Electron Microscopy

Semithin sections were analyzed on the BX40 Olympus light microscope outfitted with a Sony Exwave digital camera. Ultrathin sections were analyzed on a Philips CM100 transmission electron microscope. Photographs were captured on Kodak electron microscope film and on the Kodak Megaplus 1.4 digital camera.

Scanning Electron Microscopy

After dehydration (see earlier), some select samples were kept from plastic embedding for analysis using the scanning electron microscope. The samples were dehydrated by evaporating propylene oxide from the sample overnight. These pieces were mounted on aluminum specimen mounts and glued down with silver paint. The mounts were gold coated for 75 seconds at 10 amps using the Hitachi vacuum evaporator. After coating the samples were examined with the Hitachi HHS-2R scanning electron microscope. Photographs were captured using a Polaroid land camera with Polaroid 55 negative and positive 4x5 film.

Squash Preparation

At certain time points, tissue samples were collected and firmly pressed down onto a slide creating a monolayer out of the surviving tissue sample. After being pressed down between a piece of parafilm and a slide, the sample was fixed with dry ice and then paraformaldehyde and stained with tolludine blue, then cover slipped. This method allowed for the viewing of the interrelationship between the cells that make us the rosette structure. This same procedure was tried for scanning electron microscopy, but the preparations were not useful.

III. Results

Light Microscopy

Adult zebrafish brain was able to survive, in our experiment, up to twenty-one days. Although there are signs of cell death and tissue degeneration in all the investigated samples, the real finding of this experiment is that the adult neuronal tissue elements are not only able to survive as long in an organotypic culture setting, but that they actually begin to regenerate the region.

As early as two hours, some cells in the samples dedifferentiate, assume a round shape and begin to behave as neuronal tissue precursors such as neuroblast, glioblast and as precursors for blood vessels and blood cells (Figure 2, 2 hours). Later, beginning at six hours, these cells tend to aggregate, primarily those which happen to be at the periphery of the sample or at a region close to neovascularization (Figure 2, 6 hours-24 hours). This aggregating process lasts about four days when clearly recognizable germanitive layers can be detected. These germanitive layers show close similarities with such structures seen in embryonic development of all types of vertebrate brains. Already at four days some mantel-layer elements can be seen some of which shows morphological features of migrating neuroblast or differentiating neurons. Such dramatic activity of these cells is depicted in Figure 2, 4 day embryonic montage.

As a result of these activities, by seven days survival, the formation of the anatomical units of the tectum, the so called rosettes, begin to form as it clearly could be seen in squashed preparations (Figure 3, 7 days). Rosettes of a more advanced form could be seen in relatively large numbers in Figure 4, squashed preparations. It is interesting to note that in association with the formation of germinal layers as well as with rosette formations, large granulated cells can always be detected. Also these cells could be seen in nearly all of the cases of the newly formed blood vessels which seem to be inductive tissue structures in the formation of the germanitive neuronal layers. Although mitotic figures could frequently be seen in different locations of the whole sample surface

(Figure 2, 4 days), it is interesting to note that the number of these figures are surprisingly low as compared to the continuous change of these germanitive layers during the time course. Since, due to time limitations, we could not check for the proliferative activities of these cells, we plan to perform a BrdU experiment in the future.

Transmission Electron Microscopy

After seeing such interesting structures and activities in the light microscope, preparations for the scanning and transmission electron microscopes were analyzed. The 96 hour time point was focused on for this aspect of the study.

Through the ultrathin sections studied in the TEM, the neovascularization was observed. This was characterized by the endothelial cells forming new blood vessels and forming blood cells within the lumen of these structures. Around the neovascularization is various cisternae lined with round blubous cells. There were differences in the electron density of the cells under the electron microcope characterizing them as different cell types such as glial cells or neurons for example (Figures 5, 6, 7 and 8). Without immunochemistry, it is not possible to distinguish which cells are which.

Under the light microscope, the areas of spongy form degeneration seemed to be just the remaining skeleton of the neuropil. Under the TEM, it was apparent that this was not the case at all. There are several examples that there were cellularly functional synapses as well as functioning mitocondria. The synapses area was distinct and the synaptic vessicles were sharp and easily detected (Figures 9, 10, 11 and 12). With such defined structures, it is proof of the functionality of the region.

Myelination was easily detected under the electron microscope. New myelination was seen forming the sheething around what would be an axon. The new mylein formation is occuring around functioning axons as well. This is characterized by the microtubuols seen in the axoplasm at high magnifications. If the axon is not healthy, these structures break down very quickly (Figures 13, 14, 15, and 16).

Scanning Electron Microscope

Samples collected at 96 hour revealed very interesting proof through the SEM observation. First, the surface of the surviving tissue sample immediately showed cells covering the surface of the tissue, which was what was seen in the light microcope semithin sections. These cells formed on the periphery of the samples and grouped together. Mitotic stages were also observed, but still not seen frequently as stated in the light microscopy analysis.

Within the areas of surface cells, cisternae were seen in the forming areas proving that they are forming these ducts into the tissue to help easily supply nutrience to the lower cells. The cisternae were very numerous on the tissue surface trying to bring in as much nutrient rich media as possible.

On a broken surface of the sample, the spongy form degeneration was able to be seen displaying the various empty spaces as well as the outlasting cells, the cells which survived and did not migrate to the periphery. This was a fortunate find since the breaking of the dried tissue samples does not always work as desired.

IV. Discussion

Contrary to much of what was believed in the past, there is an adult neuronal system that has the ability to regenerate. The original purpose for this experiment was to gather control data for a hormesis study using ethyl alcohol to see if the system was able to survive longer in culture with the alcohol treatment as opposed to without. It was an interesting discovery that even without the alcohol treatment, the tissue not only had surviving cells, but these cells were also able to differentiate and develop into new embryoid structures in the *in vitro* model.

In the earlier time points, between two and twelve hours, there was a high level of death forming the spongiform regions of each sample. Those cells which did not die off did one of two things. The cells either stayed in place and survived or seemed to change in shape, becoming rounded and migrating to the periphery of the sample. Those cells which stayed in place are the enduring cells while the cells which migrate to the surface of the structure are the surviving cells. The enduring cells are for some unknown reason able to survive in the tissue. The surviving cells are the more interesting because they migrate in order to reach the nutrient rich media on the periphery. This allows them to be able to divide and form the large groups of cells seen on the periphery after twelve hours. In the later stages, mainly 48 hours and longer, these groupings give rise to the embryoid bodies.

Since these cells are forming new embryonic structures, it can be believed that these cells are a form of adult progenitor cell (Kuo et. al. 2003). These adult stem cells seem to be able to dedifferentiate and then form the necessary cells to reorganize the brain. This can be seen in the formation of new cells including neuronal cells, endothelial cells, as well as blood cells within the endothelial lumens. It is impossible to distinguish between the different neuronal and glial cells of the brain without immunocytochemistry.

The electron microscopy helps support what was seen in the light microscope. The higher magnification proved that the axons as well as the synapses are still functioning (Benbassat and Spira 1993; Tonge et al. 1998). The images seen in the figure 16 shows

complete functional units of axons and synapses. This proves that the structures are able to survive and still function. Most likely, the connections of the neurons are not at all viable, but it is promising to see these structures still present. This proves that these are not just random cells, but in fact they are cells that are connecting with each other and communicating signals.

One rare finding or rather lack of finding is the presence of mitosis. With the visual increase in cell numbers, there is a relatively small number of mitotic figures seen within the samples. There has to be some form of explanation for this, but it is not yet known.

For future research, the laboratory hopes to add immuncocytochemical tests in order to see what cells are neurons and what cells are glia. An immuno label specific for progentitor cells will also be experimented with. BrdU will also soon be applied in order to study the cell division of these cells as well as statistic evaluation of both cell proliferation and embryoid bodies (Faiz and others 2005). The ethyl alcohol study talked about earlier has also been started and preliminary data anlysis has begun.

V. Conclusion

Through this experiment, there is definite proof that there are vertebrate adult systems that are able to regenerate. This could lead to helping find a cure for many of the severe traumatic brain injury cases that effect so many people and their families all over the world. This could provide a nice model for the study of a regenerating brain and the functions as well as the effects of adult progenitior cells. There is still work to be done, but this is a good model to begin looking at the cellular specific events.

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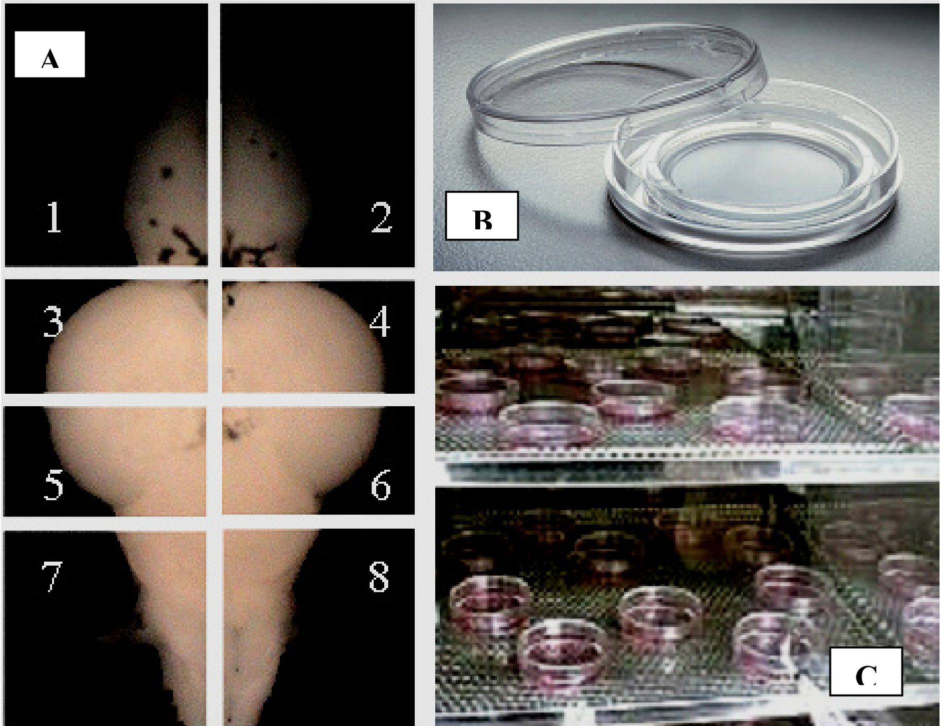

Figure 1 – Surgery and Cultivation of the Organotypic Culture

In the two and six hour photographs, cell clusters are beginning to form in an already dead tissue and migration is beginning to the periphery of the tissue. In the 12, 24, and 2 day samples, cell clusters are becoming larger and new cells are forming. The large montage is of an embryoid body forming within the four day sample. Notice the forming blood vessel with blood cells in the lumen just at the surface of the pseduostratified embryoid layer. The four photographs on the bottom are of various regenerative events of the four day sample. The first is neovascularization, the second is cell clustering, the fourth is mitotic figures, the fifth is mast cells and the last in a brown byproduct in the area of regeneration.

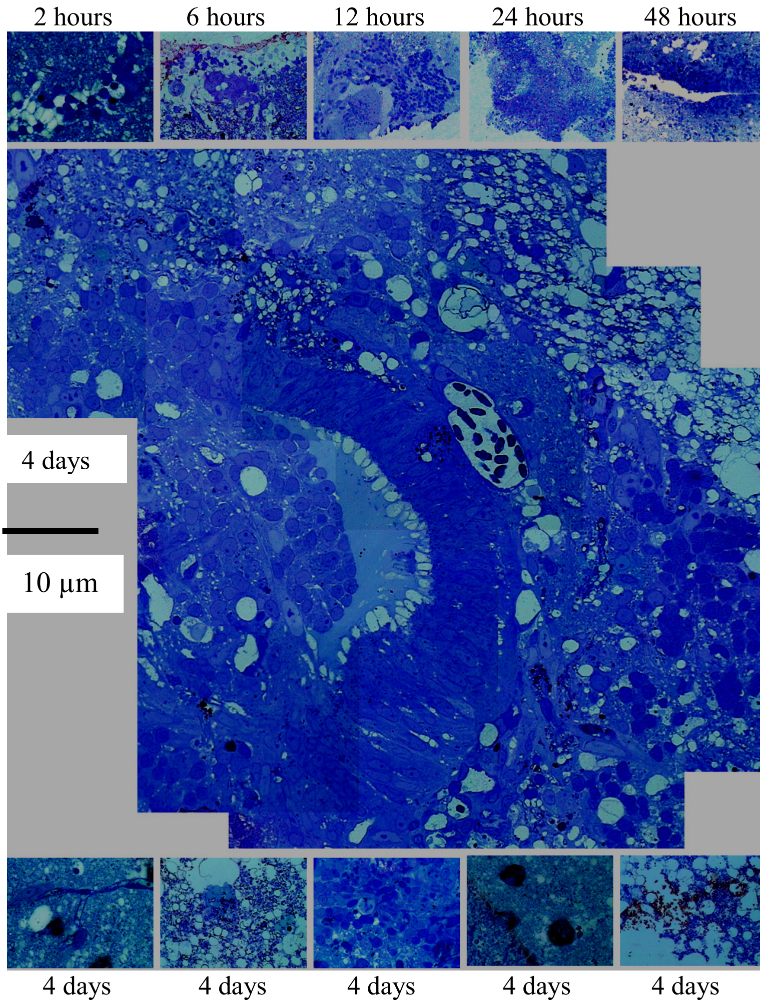

Figure 2: Light Microscopy Analysis of Surviving Tissue Culture

The upper photographs are depicting the events seen in the tissue pieces after seven days of survival in culture. The first, third, and fourth photographs are showing large groupings of cells. The second image is showing forming rosettes. Notice the spiral formation the cells are taking. The bottom photograph is a montage depicting a squash preparation showing the relationship of the cells in a rosette formation.

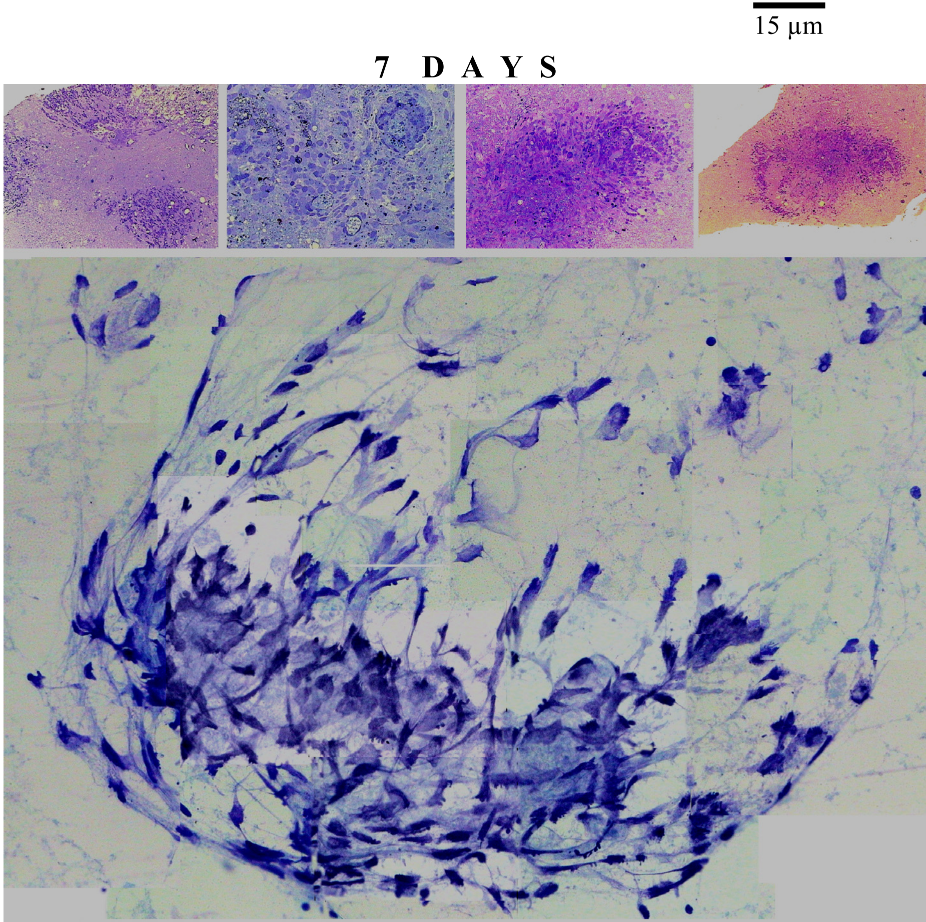

Figure 3: Light Microscopy of Seven Day Old Surviving Tissue

The photographs on the side are depicting the events occurring the fourteen day surviving sample. The first photograph is depicting the mast cells which are repairing the tissue. The second photograph is depicting the spongy-form degeneration becoming again a more dense neuropil. The third photograph is of cells regenerating an area around a cisternae. The fourth photograph is of forming myelin sheathing. The upper montage is of an entire sample showing all the mast cells present. The other two are of a squash preparation and the forming rosettes, getting more complex as compared to the seven day sample.

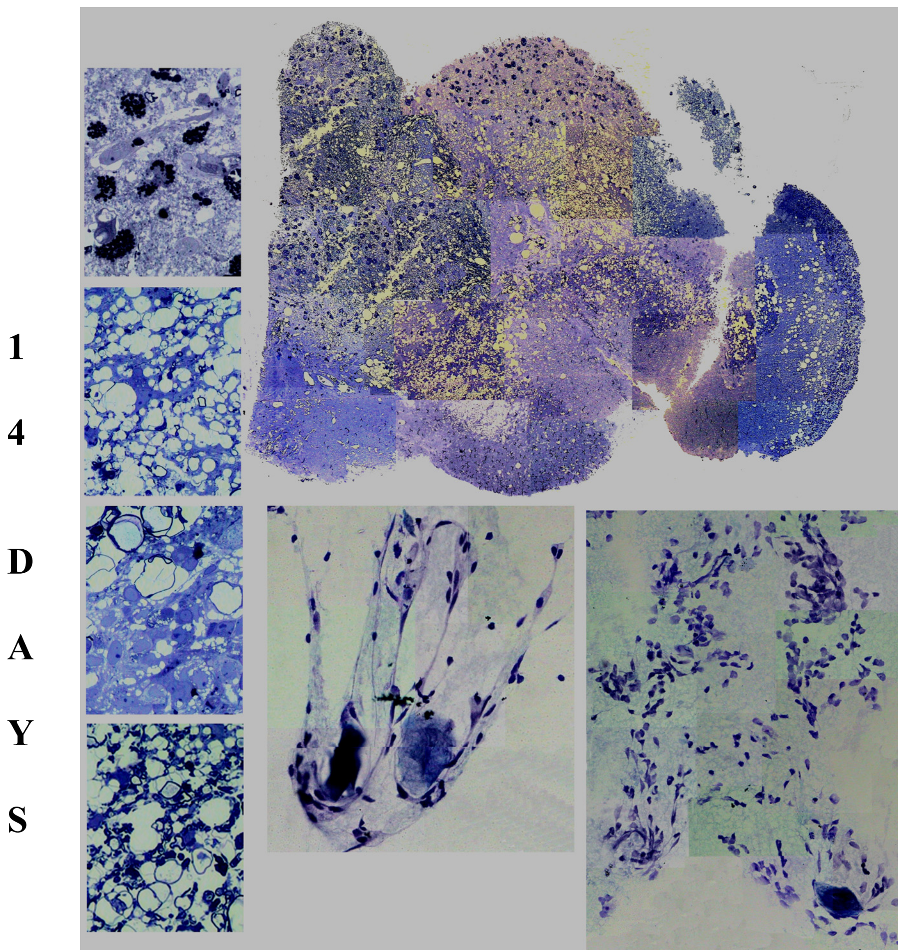

Figure 4: Light Microscopic Analysis of Fourteen Day Surviving Tissue Samples

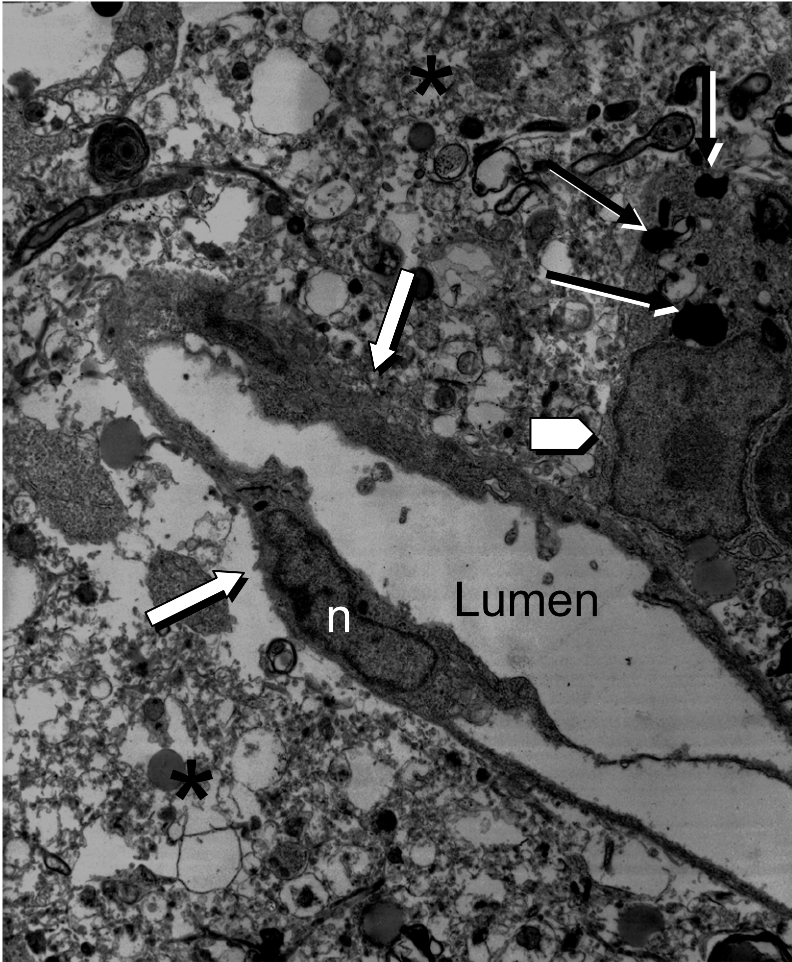

Figure 5:Neovascularization. This newly formed capillary (open arrows) is found in the region of surviving neuropil (asterisk). The nucleus of the endothelial cell is marked with (n). In its neighborhood the nucleus of a large granulated cell can be seen (arrowhead) together with some granules (small arrows).

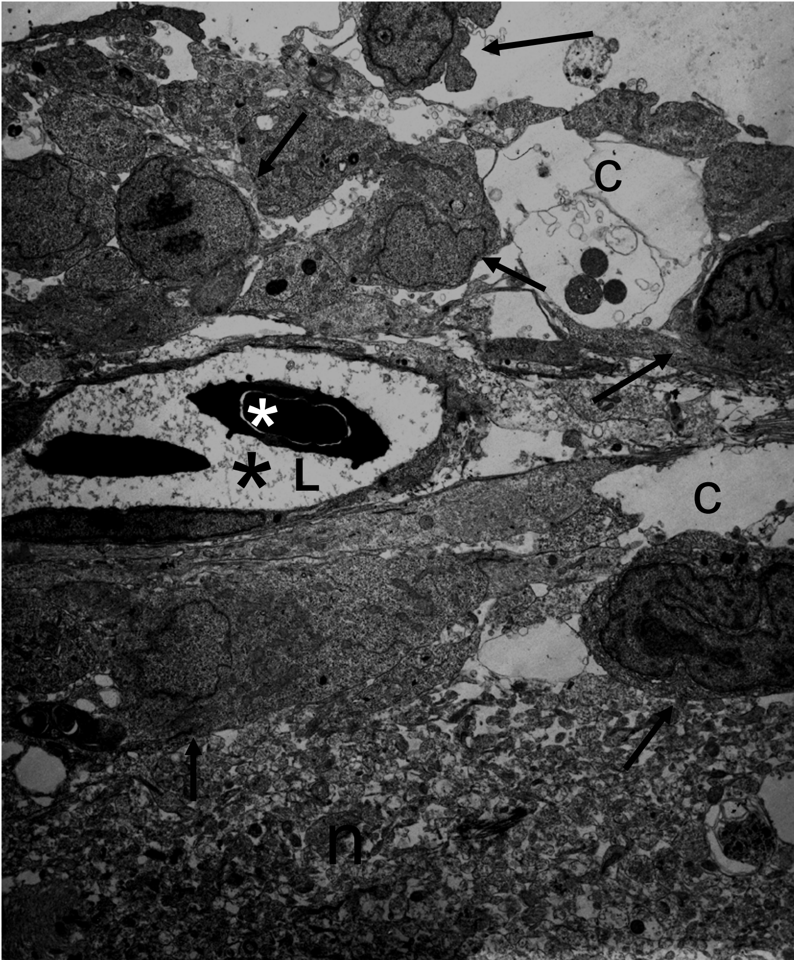

Figure 6: A blood vessel (black asterisk in the lumen, L) with red blood cells (white asterisk) is surrounded by several dedifferentiated cells (arrows) and the neuropil (n) with cisternae (c).

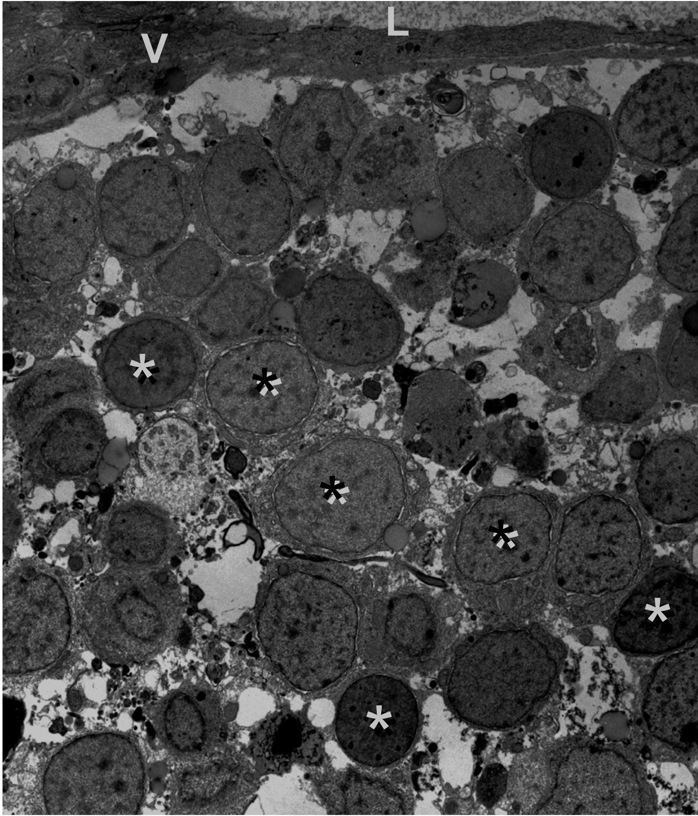

Figure 7: Group of newly formed cells in the neighborhood of a blood vessel (V; L). While there are two distinct types of nuclei, compact dark (white asterisks) and large pale (black asterisks), it is impossible to distinguish them as neurons or glial cells with this technique.

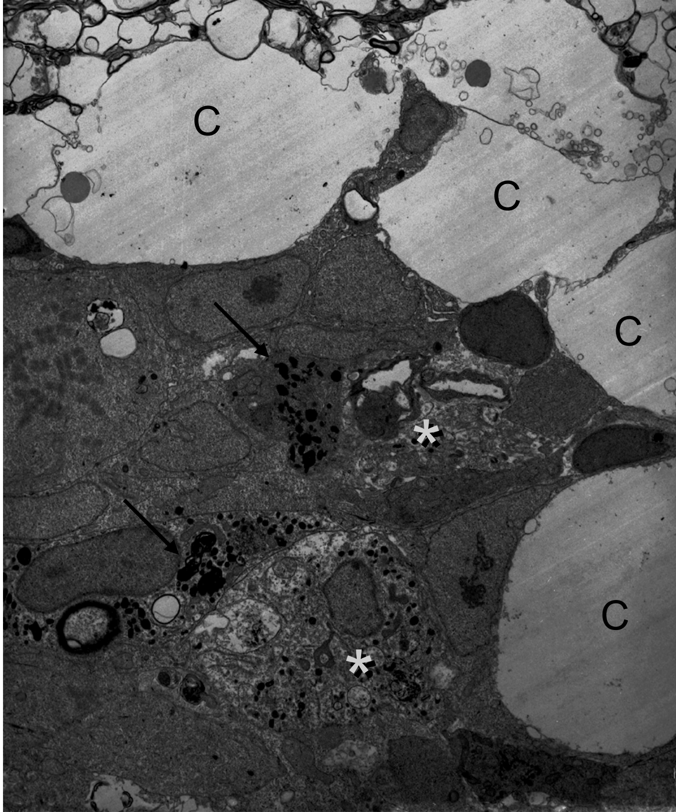

Figure 8: Neuropil. Typically there are large cisternae (c) in the neuropil surrounded by extremely large cells (white asterisks) containing different types and size granules (small arrows) resembling mast cells. These cells are also readily stained with tolluidine blue in semithin sections.

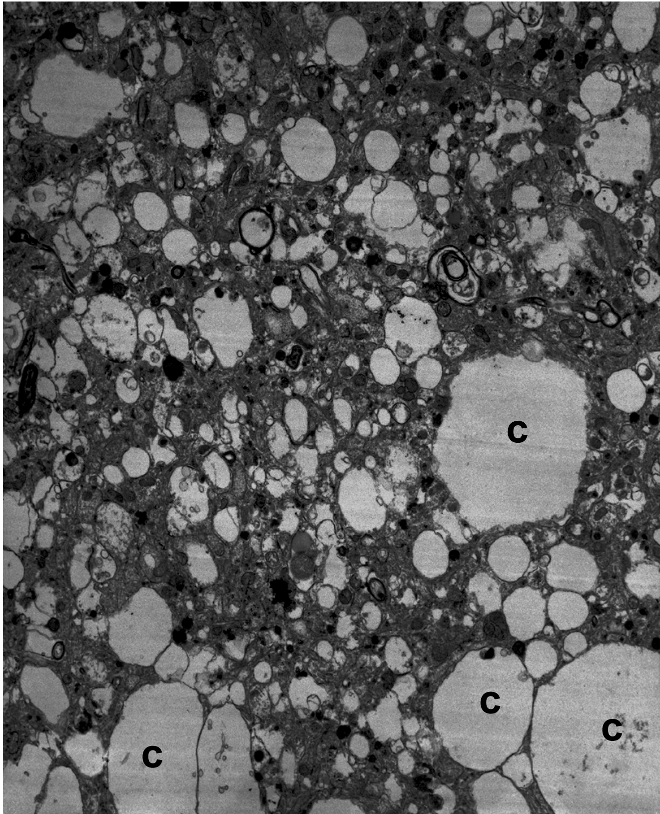

Figure 9: A low magnification overview of the surviving neuropil showing numerous large and medium size cisternae (c). Note the black granules distributed throughout the micrograph believed to be associated with the above mentioned mast cells.

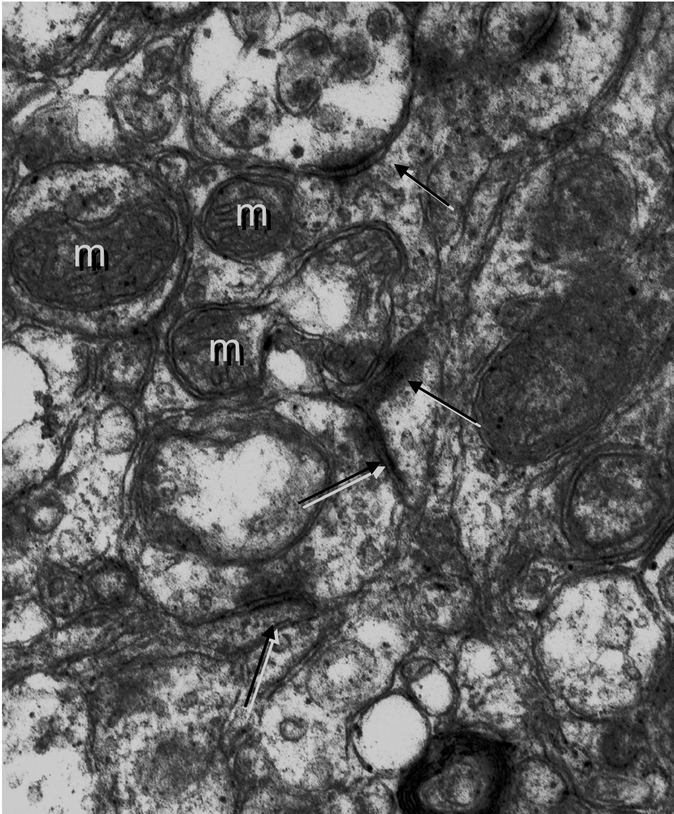

Figure 10: A larger magnification of the neuropil showing mitochondria (m) and several synapses (arrows)

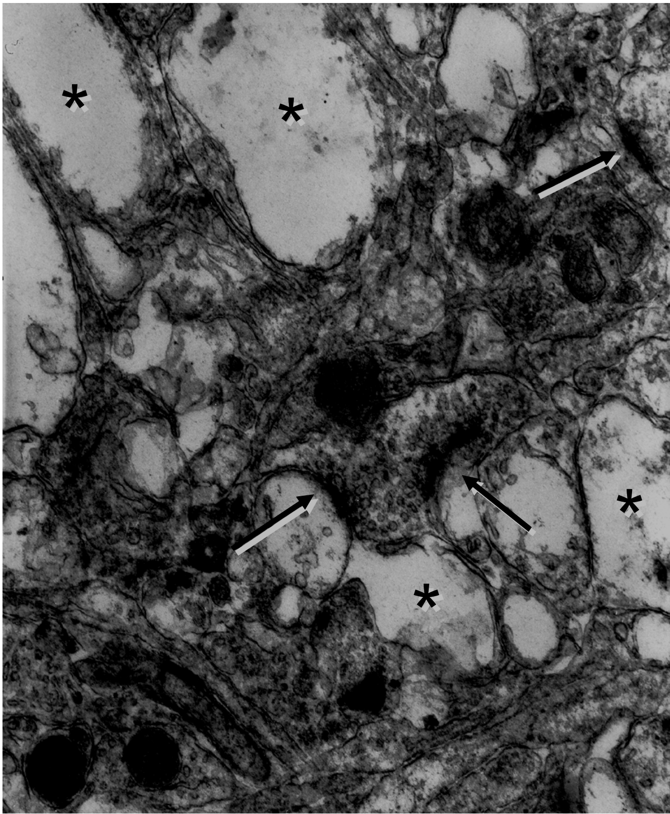

Figure 11: Synaptic glomerulus. Note the gear-like appearance of the electron-dense dendritic region (not labeled) associated with several synapses (arrows) from different axons (black asterisk) that look electron-lucent.

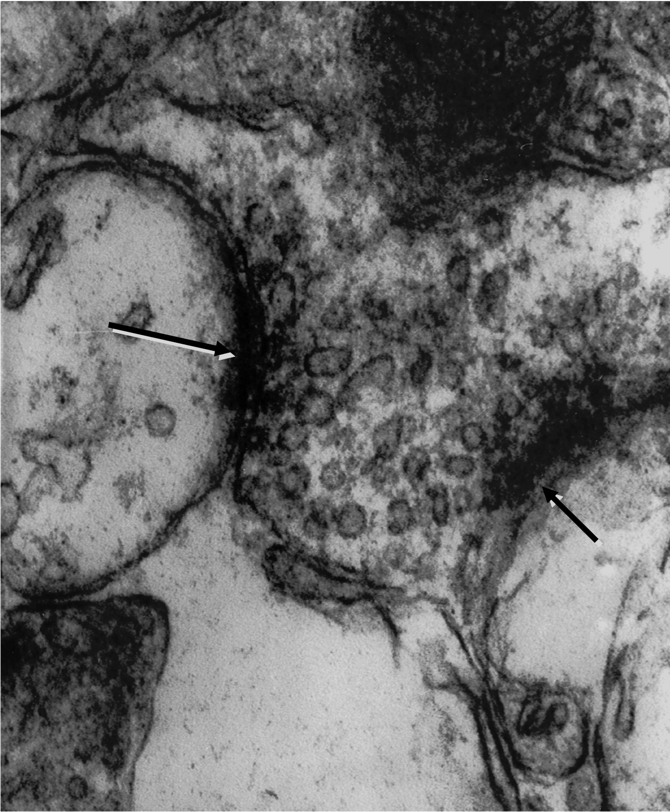

Figure 12: A large magnification micrograph of an axo-axonic synaptic complex (arrows) typically found in the neuropil.

Figure 13: An episode of myelinization.

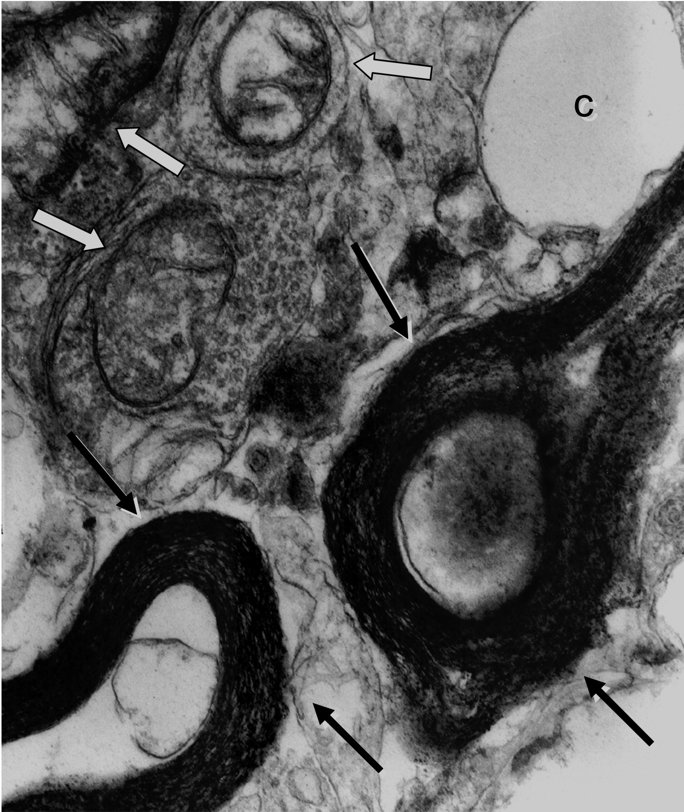

Figure 14: Another episode of myelinization (arrows). Note the mitochondria (empty arrows) next to a cisterna

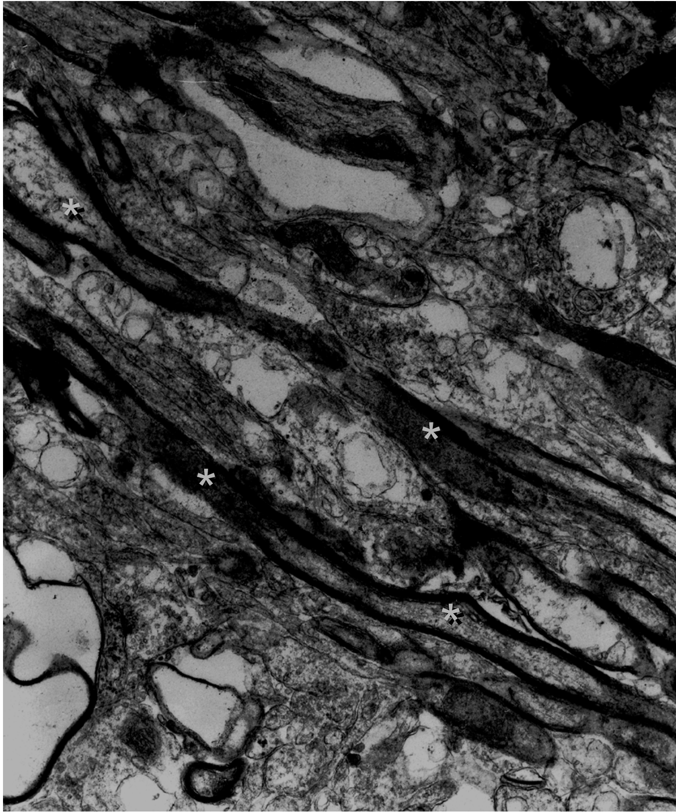

Figure 15: Low magnification overview of a neuropil region with longitudinally cut myelinated axons (white asterisk)

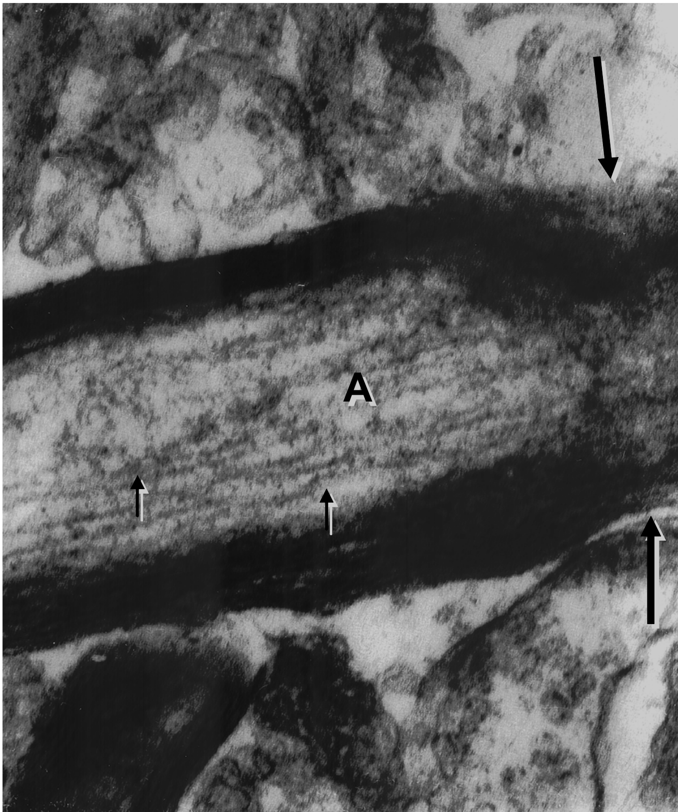

Figure 16: A myelinated axon at the region of the node of Ranvier (arrows). Note the microtubules (small arrows) in the axoplasm (A).

Section II:
The Social Sciences

How Children with Autism Relate to the Social World

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This paper discusses the ways in which children with autism relate to the social world. Previous findings indicate that autistic children lack a theory of mind; the ability to understand the intentions, feelings and beliefs of others. Research has also shown that autistic children have deficiencies interpreting the emotions of others. Connections are drawn between previous research and observations of children with autism recorded during a 100 hour internship at an elementary school. Since the underlying causes are still unknown, further studies of autism and possible interventions are necessary.

I. Introduction

Autism is a pervasive developmental disorder that affects an individual's social capabilities. Throughout a 100 hour internship at Brooklyn Blue Feather Elementary School (BBF), I noticed the ways in which children with autism relate to others and the world around them are very unique. For the most part, lower functioning children with autism kept to themselves and were very easily frustrated. They also tended to need much more sensory stimulation than the higher functioning children. Although they were much more verbal, many higher functioning children with autism spoke out of turn about very random things. They also interacted inappropriately with others. Several of them did not seem to understand the difference between their own thoughts and feelings and the beliefs and emotions of others. Over the past 70 years, these unique ways in which children with autism relate to the social world have been studied tremendously.

II. Literature Review

Kanner (1943) first described autism as a unique and "peculiar" disorder. He also believed that the disorder is more common in males. Kanner's case studies of eleven children began around 1938 and then were followed up in 1971. He found that the first noticeable symptoms consist of slower behavior development. He also stated that the children he studied had all shown "extreme aloneness" and did not respond appropriately to the "outside world" (Kanner, 1943).

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[1] Research performed under the direction of Dr. Miles Groth (Psychology) in partial fulfillment of the Senior Program requirements.

As it is generally agreed upon today, Kanner believed that autistic individuals relate to people and objects in the same manner; they lack proper "affective contact" (Kanner, 1943). In his follow up study, some participants were employed and attempting to live a normal life, whereas others had been put in a psychiatric hospital (Kanner, 1971). He ultimately decided that even after a 30 year history of autistic individuals, they still require further study. He also believed that the eleven individuals did not provide a comprehensive representation of autism as a whole.

In earlier years of study, research of autism focused primarily on the relationship between intelligence and social ability. Alpern (1967) was one of the first people who attempted to measure the functioning of autistic children. Children with autism had previously been deemed "untestable" because many of their disabilities, such as a lack of interpersonal motivation, could not simply be identified with an IQ test (Alpern, 1967). He also claimed that poor attention span is a major characteristic of both infants and autistic children. Alpern developed tools to directly and accurately assess cognitive and social development in autistic children. Using a modified infant intelligence test and parent reports concerning social abilities, he determined that children with autism can, in fact, be evaluated.

DeMyer et al. (1974) published a study based on Alpern's previous findings. Since autistic children were no longer considered "untestable," DeMyer et al. aimed to measure their IQs in relation to the severity and treatment outcomes (DeMyer et al., 1974). DeMyer et al. indicated that autistic children do not trust others. They believed that if this "distrust" could be eliminated, the child's intelligence would inevitably improve because he or she would be more willing to mimic others' behavior (DeMyer et al., 1974). Using situations such as ball play, conversation, and role play, they found that children who were more withdrawn demonstrated lower performance on developmental tasks.

Before the 1980s, there had been very few experiments regarding the autistic child's ability to understand the emotional expressions of other people (Hobson et al., 1988). Hobson et al.'s (1988) two part experiment was based off of Kanner's (1943) original idea that individuals with autism lack appropriate "affective contact" with other people. They studied the perception of both emotion and identity in adolescents who were either autistic or "non-autistic" (Hobson et al., 1988).

Three types of photographs were used in this experiment; either the whole face was shown, the mouth had been blanked out, or the mouth and forehead (including most of the eyebrows) had been blanked out (Hobson et al., 1988). Using one of the three types, sixteen photographs of two men and two women were shown to participants.

These photos displayed four different emotions; happy, unhappy, angry and scared. Participants were asked to match their photos to target photos of two men and two women showing the same four emotions.

For the identity recognition part of the first experiment, the experimenter showed target faces of two men and two women with neutral expressions (Hobson et al., 1988). The experimenter then gave the participants photographs of the same four people, who were all showing unhappy faces. The adolescent's task was to match their photographs with the same person in the target photos. They were then asked to match four happy faces, followed by four angry faces and then followed by four scared faces to the neutral target faces.

The second experiment took place just a few days later. Every aspect was exactly the same with the exception of one major component. Rather than showing the photographs to each participant right side up, as they had done a few days before, they now showed them upside down. This was done to further investigate the degree to which autistic adolescents are able to recognize emotion. Results showed that in comparison to clinically normal individuals, autistic adolescents were less able to distinguish emotion and identity in each condition. The autistic adolescents were actually better able to match their photographs with the target photographs when they were presented upside down. It was unclear, however if the adolescents with autism were judging based on emotion, or simply "matching abstract patterns" (Hobson et al. 1988). Therefore, it may be hard to conclude the extent of their difficulties in understanding emotion from this study alone.

Sigman et al. (1992) also studied the relationship between emotion and children with autism. They focused specifically on interpretations of negative emotions made by autistic, clinically normal, and mentally retarded children. They hypothesized that autistic children would show "less affect and behavioral or empathetic response" to the negative emotions of adults (Sigman, 1992). Sigman et al. tested the responses of each child to the distress, fear and discomfort of others.

To test the child's responses to the distress of others, the mother pretended to hit her finger with a hammer for 30 seconds. She was trained by the experimenter to demonstrate facial and vocal expressions of distress without using words (Sigman et al., 1992). After a 10 second neutral period, the mother would then show her child that her finger did not hurt anymore. To test the child's responses to the fear of others, a small electronic robot was used. When the robot entered the room, both the parent and the experimenter showed expressions of fear for 30 seconds, followed by neutral expressions for 10 seconds. To test the child's responses to the discomfort of others, the adult pretended to feel sick. In one condition, after the parent and child played with toys for

three minutes, the parent lay down on a couch, close her eyes and pretend to feel discomfort for one minute. After three minutes of play in the second condition, the experimenter pretended to feel ill and lay down on the couch for one minute.

Results of this study show stronger evidence than Hobson et al. (1988) of the emotional difficulties found in individuals with autism. In each situation, the autistic children did not look at the adult showing negative emotions. On the other hand, the normal and mentally retarded children were much more attentive (Sigman et al., 1992). The autistic children seemed to ignore the adult and appeared to be less concerned. This seems to support Kanner's (1943) idea that autistic children relate to people and objects in the same manner.

Baron-Cohen, Leslie & Frith (1985) defined autism as an inability to understand and cope with the social world. Although DeMyer et al. believed that the majority of autistic children are "mentally retarded," Baron-Cohen et al. argued the IQ of children with autism was not the sole explanation for their social impairments.

The ability to understand others' intentions and beliefs has been identified as a "theory of mind" (Baron-Cohen et al., 1985). This usually appears when the child is about two years of age, which happens to be right around the time when autism is first diagnosed. A theory of mind is impossible without the ability to form "second-order representations;" the ability to understand the beliefs of others (Baron-Cohen et al., 1985). Without these second order representations, the child becomes socially incompetent and shows a lack in pretend play (Baron-Cohen et al., 1985). Baron-Cohen et al. hypothesized that autistic children lack the ability to know what other people know, want, feel or believe; in short, they lack a theory of mind.

The abilities of children with autism were compared to clinically normal children, and children with Down Syndrome. The procedure consisted of a scenario that required children to understand others' beliefs. Two dolls, Sally and Anne, were shown to the children individually. Sally placed a marble in her basket and proceeded to leave the area. Anne then transferred the marble to a box. When Sally came back, the experimenter asked the belief question, "Where will Sally look for her marble?" (Baron-Cohen et al., 1985). If the children pointed to the original location of the marble, they were able to understand Sally's false belief. On the other hand, if they pointed to the current location, they were unable to understand the doll's false belief (Baron-Cohen et al., 1985). Two control questions, "where is the marble really? (the reality question)" and "where was the marble in the beginning? (the memory question)," were also asked (Baron-Cohen et al., 1985). This precaution was taken to verify that the children's answers were not completely arbitrary. The scenario was then repeated in the same

manner; however the new location of the marble was the experimenter's pocket rather than Anne's box.

Every single child who participated in the study answered both the reality question and the memory question correctly. The imperative factor in determining whether or not the children had a theory of mind was dependent upon their answers to the belief question. About 85 percent of the clinically normal children and the children with Down Syndrome answered the belief question correctly. It can be inferred that those children do, in fact, have a theory of mind. An astonishing 16 of the 20 autistic children who participated in the study answered the belief question incorrectly. The autistic group consistently pointed to where the marble really was rather than where Sally would be inclined to look. The results of this study showed that, in general, autistic children do not have a theory of mind.

Perner et al. (1989) also studied theory of mind in relation to children with autism. They agreed with the findings of Baron-Cohen et al. (1985) regarding the Sally/Anne experiment and suggested that autistic children's inability to understand others' false beliefs is due to an "unexpected change in the world" (Perner et al., 1989). Their study consisted of three main objectives; to test the autistic child's false belief, to study their ability to recognize mental states excluding false beliefs, and to find out if there is a relationship between theory of mind and the communication skills of autistic children. Perner et al. hypothesized that autistic children would be unable to identify others' mental states. Children with autism and children with specific linguistic impairments participated in this study (Perner et al., 1989). The experimenters used three different tasks to assess the children individually; a communication test, a false belief test and a knowledge formation task.

In the communication test, the main experimenter told each child that she would be hiding items from the other experimenter in two separate boxes. In each condition, one item was more appealing than the other. In the first condition, the second experimenter would not know what item was in either box. After entering the room, he asked the children what was in the box without directly looking at either one. As predicted, the children consistently mentioned the more appealing item first. In fact, many had to be prompted to tell the experimenter what was in the other box. In the second condition, the experimenter showed knowledge of where the more appealing item was and needed to be told what and where the other item was. The second condition was used to test the child's ability to understand what the experimenter needed to know. Unlike the linguistically impaired children, the autistic children did not understand this

"principle of relevance to others" and repeatedly pointed to the box containing the more appealing item (Perner et al., 1989).

In the false belief test, the main experimenter showed each child a box of candy and asked what was inside. To the child's surprise, when the experimenter emptied the box, a pencil fell out onto the table. The experimenter put the pencil back in the box and asked the child two questions; "what's in here?" and "when I first asked you, what did you say?" (Perner et al., 1989). The experimenter told each child that she was going to do the same exact thing to the next participant. She then asked the child what the next participant will think is in the box. Nineteen of 23 autistic children answered the prediction question incorrectly (Perner et al., 1989). Results of this test proved to be very similar to the Sally/Anne experiment performed by Baron-Cohen et al. (1985). For the most part, the autistic children believed that the next participant would know that there was a pencil in the box. On the other hand, all but one of the children with specific language impairments answered the prediction questions correctly. These results show that this deficiency is specific to children with autism.

In the knowledge-formation task, children were shown a variety of objects in a box. The experimenter discretely took one of the objects and put it into a cup. The child was shown the object, but the second experimenter was not. The child was then asked "does [the second experimenter] know what I put into the cup?" "Why does [he] not know that?" "Do you know which object I put into the cup?" and "Why do you know that?" (Perner et al., 1989). About two-thirds of the participants were unable to explain why they knew what was in the cup but the second experimenter did not.

These findings strongly support the hypothesis that autistic children do not have a theory of mind. It was also noted that the inability to understand what others know, think or believe is not due to "mental retardation or memory failure" (Perner et al., 1989). Perner et al. believed that these results suggest that autistic children are unable to understand how "mental representations are causally related to the world." In comparing autistic children to linguistically impaired children, they found that the lack of theory of mind in children with autism is not strictly due to an inability to communicate.

Towards the very beginning of the 21st century, autism became more commonly known as a spectrum disorder. Research regarding the relationship between theory of mind and autism began focusing on the development of the child. Around this time period, the differences in the effects of the level of functioning on theory of mind were being explored as well.

Steele et al. (2003) investigated the developmental change in theory of mind among autistic children over the course of one year. The purpose of their study was to

determine whether or not autistic children would be able to show changes in theory of mind ability over time. They also considered that these developmental changes could be due to various levels of functioning.

Children with autism were briefly tested on cognitive abilities and language. They were primarily assessed based on their performance on ten theory of mind tasks (Steele et al., 2003). To accommodate different developmental levels, these tasks were divided up into three sections; early, basic and advanced. The early level consisted of a desire and pretend task and was used to determine that each child had simple mental concepts (Steele et al., 2003). The basic level included tasks similar to Baron-Cohen et al.'s (1985) Sally/Anne experiment and Perner et al.'s (1989) false belief tasks. The advanced level was comprised of tasks that assessed more complex social and cognitive concepts (Steele, et al., 2003). These tests included things such as "second-order false belief, lies and jokes, traits, and moral judgment" (Steele et. al., 2003). The children were judged using a point system, starting with the easy level and working up to advanced, to determine where their strengths and weaknesses were. Children were then tested one year later in the same exact manner. Steele et al. found that children with autism do, indeed, show significant developmental change in theory of mind over the course of one year. This suggests that although a lack of theory of mind is one of the major characteristics of individuals with autism, they can be taught to develop their skills over time.

Frith et al. (1991) studied the cognitive basis of autism. They suggested that since this disorder does not have a single biological origin, there must be a cognitive deficit that leads to the differences in an autistic child's development (Frith et al., 1991). As previous researchers had speculated, they believed this deficiency had to do with a lack of theory of mind. Frith et al. agreed with Baron-Cohen et al. (1985) in that autistic children lack the ability to properly develop second order representations. They stated that this was in no way due to a problem in perception, memory or communication (Frith et al., 1991). In their literature review, Frith et al. showed that many other studies had found very similar results. They believed that there is an unknown missing ability causing an inability to form second order representations. They also argued that it is necessary to continue research of autism.

Yirmiya et al. (1998) analyzed the results of 40 earlier studies to compare differences in theory of mind abilities of individuals with autism, individuals with mental retardation and normally developing individuals. This investigation compiled the results of Baron-Cohen et al. (1985), Perner et al. (1989), Frith et al. (1991), and many more. Yirmiya et al. (1998) studied two central aspects of the relationship between theory of

mind and autism. First, they wanted examine whether the deficit in theory of mind occurs solely in individuals with autism. They also wanted to identify the underlying reason for the striking differences between individuals with autism, mentally retarded, and normally developing individuals in their performance on theory of mind tasks (Yirmiya et al., 1998).

Results of their meta-analyses showed that although individuals with autism show a more severe impairment in theory of mind, they are not the only group with this deficit. A lack of theory of mind is also commonly seen amongst individuals with severe mental retardation (Yirmiya et al., 1998). Just as Frith et al. argued in 1991, Yirmiya et al. (1998) concluded that autism still requires further study to determine the underlying cause of the inability to form second order representations, and consequently a theory of mind.

It has been generally accepted that children with autism are unable to understand the mental states of others, and even of themselves. Fisher & Happé (2005) explored the relationship between executive function and theory of mind in children with autistic spectrum disorder. The term executive function is used to describe "cognitive control," or the capacity to control and use their own mental abilities in an appropriate manner (Fisher & Happé, 2005). This includes processes such as planning and achieving goals, inhibition, abstract thinking, and coordination. The purpose of their study was to determine the extent to which children with autism can be taught to pass theory of mind tasks using executive function training. Tests concerning general abilities primarily consisted of language and verbal abilities. Theory of mind assessments were based off various past experiments including Baron-Cohen et al.'s (1985) Sally/Anne task and Perner et al.'s (1989) false belief tasks. Executive function tasks consisted primarily of guessing games and tasks regarding the sequencing of numbers and letters. Children were then randomly assigned to receive either theory of mind training, executive function training or no intervention at all. Results showed that after receiving the intervention programs, children were able to learn how to pass false belief tasks. Interestingly, training in executive functioning did not improve children's performance in executive function tasks; rather it enhanced their abilities in the theory of mind tasks. The children who did not obtain any intervention ended up showing little to no progress in these areas.

Using false belief and executive function tasks, similar to Fisher & Happé (2005), Pellicano (2007) also assessed the links between theory of mind and executive function in autistic children. Results were very similar and showed that there is a very strong relationship between these two processes. She ultimately concluded that in order

to enhance autistic children's theory of mind, it is necessary to provide them with executive function training.

Lee et al. (2007) argued that stereotypic behavior and impaired social interaction are the central characteristics of autistic children. They stated, however, that the relationship between these two characteristics has rarely been studied. The four main purposes of their study were to find out if increased peer interaction would result in decreases in stereotypic behavior, to assess whether peer-initiation intervention would affect motor and or oral stereotypic behaviors, to determine if the effects of peer-initiation intervention could be used in a variety of settings and if so, they wanted to know if effects of generalized intervention result in similar effects on reducing stereotypic behaviors in different settings (Lee et al., 2007).

The behavior of children with autism or other developmental disabilities was studied in a special education classroom. Observations focused on each child's initiation towards peers, response to peers/teacher prompts, interaction, motor and oral/vocal behaviors, and stereotypic behavior in free play sessions (Lee et al., 2007). The researchers studied effects of training and intervention methods on peer social interaction. Results showed that at first the children with autism did not engage in any social interaction whatsoever. However, after training and intervention, the percentage of time in social interaction increased. Lee et al. also concluded that stereotypical behavior was not consistently affected by social engagement. Stereotypical behavior did, on some occasions, tend to decrease as a result of peer interaction, however it never disappeared completely. Regardless of how much these intervention methods may improve, it is unlikely that they would ever fully eliminate the stereotypical behavior of children with autism. To this day, it is still unknown whether or not researchers will ever get to the root of this disorder.

III. Observations

I interned at Brooklyn Blue Feather Elementary School (BBF) for 100 hours. BBF is funded by AHRC, The Association for the Help of Retarded Children. This school provides opportunities for individuals who either have pervasive developmental disorders, health impairments, Emotional Disturbance, or other multiple physical handicaps. Children who attend BBF are between five and twelve years of age and about 90 percent of them have been diagnosed with autism. Research has portrayed autism as a spectrum disorder, however seeing it first hand was an incredible, eye opening experience.

I observed several counseling sessions with Courtney, the school psychologist. In one of the sessions, we pulled two seven year old boys out of their regular classrooms. Courtney encouraged each of them to introduce themselves properly to me. Even after a few prompts, they did not look directly into my eyes when talking to me. Courtney mentioned to me that the objective of the session with these two students was teamwork. Her primary goal was to make each child aware of one another. She asked them if they wanted to go outside or stay inside in her office. One of them, student B, wanted to go outside and one, student C, wanted to stay inside. She tried to teach them about the importance of compromising; however, they both did not seem to understand. Courtney said that since student B wanted to go outside and student C wanted to stay inside, we would split the session in half. When we got outside, Courtney told them that if they play together, they could play whatever game they wanted to on the playground. It was almost impossible to make them aware of each other. When they were on the playground, they split up and ran in opposite directions. Courtney and I ran after each student and encouraged them to talk to each other to find out which part of the playground the other one wanted to play on. They seemed to follow directions; however it was unclear if they understood why they were asked to play together as they have preferred to play alone.

The second half of the session was spent inside. Courtney asked that they both agree on a game to play. After quite a few disagreements, they decided that they wanted to play with toy cars. Student B lined the cars up and all student C wanted to do was crash into them with one of his cars. Courtney told him that he could only crash them if he lined up cars that student B could crash into. She said he also had to ask student B if it would be ok with him to crash into his cars. Student C still continued talking about crashing into the line of cars student B was making. Courtney reminded student C that he needed to wait for his friend so they would be able to crash the cars together. Student C could not wait any longer and started crashing into student B's cars. Student B then took one of his cars and crashed the rest of them with student C. When the session was over, they then cleaned up the cars and Courtney and I brought them back to their classrooms.

I observed another session with student B and student C a few weeks later. We played a board game with different situations to choose from on each square. They both function at very similar levels so this game seemed to be very beneficial. Many of the questions consisted of age appropriate skills they should be aware of such as, "where do you look when you are talking to someone?" Many of the situation cards had different answers to choose from, such as "A) look at their shoes, B) look out the window, C) look into their eyes, and D) look at your friend on the other side of the room." Both of the

students answered several questions correctly. Courtney whispered to me that a reason for their correct answers may be because teachers have told them over and over again how to act appropriately. She said she still does not think they understand why their answers are correct. I was curious so after one of the situation cards, I asked student B why he chose the answer, "look into their eyes." He hesitated and said he did not know. Courtney prompted and encouraged him but he still did not seem to understand why it was the right answer.

In another counseling session, I observed two different seven year old boys. We went up to Courtney's office and asked them to pick out a game together. They picked the game "Guess Who?" Courtney made up the object of the game, since neither of them fully understood the rules. She told them the goal was for one student to pick a card with a picture of a face on it and the other student would have to pick the matching face from his board. Instead of following directions, they kept helping each other find the card they had picked. Although they were not doing exactly what Courtney had asked of them, they were working together. After playing that for a while, they picked another game I had never seen before. The main object of the game was matching colors. It seemed that they had played this game many times before. They showed me how to play and asked if I would play with them. I sat down next to them and we played that game until the end of the school day. We then took the boys back to their classrooms.

In one of the classrooms, a boy, student D, walked in late and went to sit down at his desk without saying anything. The teacher reminded him that it was polite to say good morning to the class. The class said good morning and the teacher asked student D how he was supposed to respond. Student D hesitated and then, in a quiet voice, said 'good morning class' while looking at his desk. The teacher reminded him that it was polite to speak up and look at his classmates when he's talking to them. He looked up and said good morning again in a louder voice.

I also experienced a tour of the school with a prospective parent and her son. Her son was a five year old and had been diagnosed with Down Syndrome. His speech was very limited but he seemed to be a very happy child. We walked around the school and looked in some of the classrooms. The mother explained to Margaret that her son has very bad behavioral episodes because he gets frustrated when he cannot communicate. Margaret assured her that the teachers in this school work on sign language with some students and many parents find that extremely effective in managing behaviors. We stepped into one of the classrooms and the child seemed to get very happy and excited. The teacher in the class came over to him and asked if he wanted to play for a few minutes. The boy nodded and followed the teacher over to a few of the students in

the classroom. The students in the classroom were playing with blocks and the boy seemed to get very shy all of the sudden. A boy in the classroom, a higher functioning child with autism, went up to the prospective student and said, "you can come play with me" and gave him a hug. The mother looked very happy and said to me that this school seemed like the perfect place for her son. After the tour was over, the mother thanked Margaret for her time and said that she hopes the school can find a place for her son.

In another session with Courtney I observed two six year old boys. Their main goal was teamwork and Courtney explained to me that one of the boys, student G, had very low self esteem and the other boy, student H, was scared of everything. She told me that by pairing them together, she could ask student G to demonstrate something on the playground, such as climbing on the monkey bars, and show student H that it was not an impossible task. This, she said, would enhance student G's self esteem. It would also show student H that climbing the monkey bars was not as scary as he had thought because student G was able to do it.

I was also able to observe a counseling session with my supervisor, Margaret, the school social worker. Margaret's major concern with the nine year old child I observed was impulsivity. Margaret and the student played the game "Guess Who?" He seemed to be a higher functioning student than the students who played the same game in a counseling session with Courtney. Margaret's primary goal was to be able to play the game straight through. Unfortunately, he had a lot of trouble sitting down in one place for any length of time. Every couple of minutes or so, he would have to get up and run around the room. Margaret kept reminding him that when we play games, we are supposed to sit nicely in our seats. He seemed very social but constantly needed to be refocused. He asked Margaret for hints about her character until he was able to guess it. When Margaret said he was right, he got extremely excited and jumped up and down.

In one of the classrooms I observed, a nine year old boy, student O, walked past me to get a piece of paper from the computer station. The teacher, Adam said that he should say excuse me. Student O said "excuse me, lady." Adam asked what he should ask me if he does not know my name. Student O turned to me and asked what my name is and then said his name back to me and gave me a hug. Adam whispered something in his ear and student O turned to me again and said, "Sorry, can I have a hug please?" I said of course and thanked him for asking me nicely; he gave me another hug. Adam told me that he was working a lot on saying please and thank you with student O.

I also observed two five year old male students, students S and T in a counseling session with Courtney. Student S has been diagnosed with autism and student T is diagnosed with Emotional Disturbance. Student T has severe learning disabilities,

attention difficulties and behavioral issues. Courtney introduced both of the students to me and we went up to her office. She brought over a poster with several different faces displaying different emotions to the table next to the two boys. Under each face, a piece of paper was taped over the word describing the emotion. She went back and forth asking each child how the person in the picture was feeling. Interestingly, student T lost focus very easily but consistently answered the majority of them correctly. Student S, on the other hand, did not. Student S confused a lot of the faces such as unhappiness, anger and fear. Courtney and I had a hard time getting through to him. Although we were explaining the differences in their faces, student S did not seem to understand what the difference was in how they were feeling. Courtney told me that she does not feel these students should be in the same group, partly because of these differences in their abilities. Student S had previously been in sessions with another boy with autism who was recently put in a new school. Courtney said that unfortunately it seems as though student S can memorize what emotions look like but, as with many other autistic children, it is unclear if he will ever really understand the deeper meaning.

I was also able to observe two nine year old higher functioning boys with autism, student U and student V. I had seen them in a classroom before so I was excited to see them in a counseling session. They decided they wanted to play Battleship. They set up the game by themselves and I sat next to student U and Courtney sat next to student V to help them. They did not seem to understand the concept of the game; student U would hit a ship on student V's board but would not know where he would have to guess next to sink student V's ship. Regardless of how many times I explained to student U that he should guess the boxes directly surrounding the one he hit, he still continued to guess only along the very edges. Courtney said he may have a hard time following each row and column to the middle of the board. This continued throughout the game. They did not end up finishing before the end of the session so they just packed it up and Courtney and I brought them back to their classroom.

In another counseling session with Courtney, I observed a very low functioning, nonverbal boy with autism. Courtney told me that it is hard to counsel a nonverbal child. She gave him markers and blank piece of computer paper. He scribbled on the paper aggressively. After each line he drew, all he wanted to do was smell the marker. He seemed to be getting frustrated when Courtney would tell him he could not smell them; the markers could only be used for drawing. This indicated his need for extra sensory stimulation. For the remainder of the session, we took him to the sensory room. He ran around a lot at first but we calmed him down and took him over to the rocking chair. He seemed to like the vibrations. He then went over to another chair that was next to a

bunch of strings of light that were hanging on the wall. All he wanted to do was pull on them. Courtney made sure that he did not pull too hard and put them in his face. The lights in his face seemed to calm him down.

IV. Connections between Research and Observations

Throughout the 100 hours I interned at BBF, I noticed that many of my observations related to research in this area of study. For example, Kanner (1943) believed that autism is more common in males. I found that the majority of students I observed at BBF were males. Kanner also stated that children with autism exhibit "extreme aloneness" and tend to respond inappropriately to the world around them. I saw this in many of the counseling sessions I observed. For instance, student B and student C were not cognizant of each other and did not interact appropriately. In addition, they rarely looked directly at another person when being spoken to unless they were told to do so by an authority figure. My observations of students B, C, D, and O lead me to believe that they understand how to follow directions but cannot fully comprehend why they are asked to perform certain tasks.

In the classrooms I observed, I noticed that all of the teachers treated every student as if they were a normally functioning child. I can, to some extent, agree with Alpern (1967) and DeMyer et al.'s (1974) argument that there is some sort of a relationship between IQ and social functioning. After seeing children with autism in several different classroom settings, I noticed that, just as Alpern (1967) had claimed, the majority of the autistic students have a very hard time paying attention. I also found that there seemed to be significantly more advanced learning taking place in the higher functioning classrooms than in the lower functioning ones. I believe this could be due to a wide range of variables such as verbal ability or attention. I do not agree with DeMyer et al.'s belief that it is strictly due to their social capabilities.

Hobson et al.'s (1988) and Sigman et al.'s (1992) studies regarding the emotional intelligence of individuals with autism were similar to the counseling session I observed with student S and student T. Hobson et al. (1988) found that it was unclear whether or not participants were able to distinguish emotions or if they were just matching based on similarities in the pictures. Interestingly, the child with autism, student S, seemed to have much more difficulty than the other child with Emotional Disturbance, student T, in recognizing emotion. In Sigman et al.'s (1992) experiment, rather than showing children with autism pictures, they had a parent act out negative emotions. They found that children with autism were, for the most part, unable to

interpret the negative emotions of others. I happened to notice that student S confused more of the negative emotions than of the positive ones.

According to Baron-Cohen et al. (1985), Perner et al. (1989), Frith et al. (1991), and Yirmiya et al. (1998), children with autism are unable to understand the feelings and beliefs of others. These researchers believed that autistic children do not have a theory of mind. In many of the counseling sessions I observed, I found that children with autism have a hard time relating to their peers. It is probable that these researchers would argue that the inappropriate interactions between student B and student C are due to a lack of theory of mind. As I observed these two students in their counseling sessions, it was clear that they did not take each other's desires and beliefs into account. I do not agree, however, with the comparisons made between children with autism and children with Down Syndrome. In observing and interacting with a boy who has Down Syndrome during a tour of the school with Margaret, I noticed that although he was nonverbal, he seemed to be very social. I think that it is important to compare children with autism to clinically normal children to get a sense of theory of mind abilities and I do not see any reason why children with Down Syndrome should be thrown into that mix.

Although I was only at BBF for a few months, I agree with Steele et al. (2003) that it is possible to teach children with autism how to develop theory of mind skills over time. Fisher & Happé (2005) and Pellicano (2007) explored the relationship between executive function training and theory of mind. Executive function was described by these researchers as the ability to control and use one's own mental abilities in an appropriate manner. They found that in order to enhance an autistic child's theory of mind, it is imperative to provide them with executive function training. After observing various classrooms and counseling sessions, I found that all of the authority figures in this school work extremely well with this particular population of children. Even over a short period of time, I could see a number of students gradually becoming higher functioning individuals.

In addition, I also agree with Lee et al. (2007) in that it is important to use peer intervention with autistic children. In my observations, I found that children with autism relate more comfortably to authority figures. Although reasoning behind this is unclear, I think it is necessary to encourage these children to step outside of their comfort zone and interact more with their peers. I believe that counseling sessions at BBF are very beneficial to these students because they are able to interact with each other. With Courtney as the mediator, counseling sessions seem to be effective in teaching proper social skills.

V. Discussion

I found a great deal of similarities between observations at BBF and research of autism. Observations of several counseling sessions with Courtney strongly supported research regarding theory of mind in children with autism. As Baron-Cohen et al. (1985) and Perner et al. (1989) found, the majority of autistic children seem to be unable to form second order representations. It is still unclear, however, why a select few autistic individuals were able to pass the false belief tasks. I feel that more research should be focusing on those individuals rather than confirming what we already know; that the majority of individuals with autism do not have the ability to form second order representations.

I also agree with the ideas of Sigman et al. (1992) and Hobson et al. (1988) in that children with autism have difficulties interpreting the emotions of others. Throughout my experience at BBF, I found that children with autism can not always comprehend how another person is feeling. My observations strongly support research regarding emotional intelligence in autistic children.

Although a great deal of progress has been made over the past 70 years, several aspects of autism are still unknown. For example, we still do not know the underlying causes of this disorder. There could be biological factors that make an individual more susceptible to exhibiting symptoms of autism. On the other hand, it could be due to social interactions occurring before two years of age. I believe that it is a combination of both. I think that there is a biological predisposition that makes an individual more prone to the disorder; however interactions with parents and surrounding individuals very early in an infant's life could be the determining factor in whether or not the infant develops autism. The combination of a biological and socialized basis for this disorder may be the reason why there is such a broad spectrum. As many researchers have claimed, I believe that further studies of autism and possible treatments or interventions are still necessary.

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The Effects that Nurse to Patient Ratio Have on Job Satisfaction

Julie Filippini (Nursing)[1]

The current nursing shortage has brought topics to the forefront that the medical community can no longer ignore. With this shortage comes increased stress on nursing professionals, increased nurse to patient ratio, and decreased level of care. These factors are major contributors to dissatisfaction within the nursing profession. The aim of this non-experimental study was to measure the level of job satisfaction of nurses with regard to the nurse to patient ratio. Registered Nurses (RNs) in one hospital located in the metropolitan area of a New York City were asked to complete an anonymous job satisfaction questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two sections (A and B). Section A consisted of seven socio-demographic items and section B consisted of six positively stated items that were answered utilizing a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire addressed the effects of time allocation for completion of nursing care, staffing of nursing units, level of care given to patients, job satisfaction, job satisfaction as pertains to nurse to patient ratio, and morale of nurses.

I. Introduction

The nursing shortage is real and because of this, nurses are taking on roles and responsibilities that they previously did not know. The steady progression toward ambulatory surgery, as well as the push to get people out of the hospital as quickly as possible, leaves the hospitals laden with the very sick and critically ill. However, even as these new trends take hold, there are no provisions being made to help the nurses' deal with bigger case loads that stem directly from the nursing shortage.

Not long ago in California, state legislatures recognized this same conundrum and decided to tackle the issue. The initiative was so strong that today, California mandates have been set and on a typical Medical-Surgical floor, the nurse to patient ratio is 1:5, respectively. New York, on the other hand, does not require such standards and dealing with the nursing shortage has compromised the quality of care. To this, nurses take issue.

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[1] Research performed under the direction of Dr. Lauren O'Hare (Nursing) and associated with the course Nursing 400 *Nursing Research*.

If there is ever hope that the nursing profession can overcome this shortage, then the factors that continue to make nursing unappealing professionally need to be identified and then addressed. The purpose of this study was to determine if nurses would be more satisfied with their jobs if they had fewer patients to care for. It is a pertinent study today as there is an overwhelming sense of dissatisfaction within the nursing profession as well as a decrease in morale. The nursing profession often gets overlooked as a potential profession and the lack of morale of current nurses is not encouraging. If simply decreasing a case load can achieve job satisfaction, increase the morale of the nurses, and increase quality of care, then it would be prudent to implement appropriate ratio mandates on a state level.

II. Research Question and Hypothesis

Is there a relationship between nurse to patient ratio and job satisfaction? Increasing the nurse to patient ratio will increase the job satisfaction in the nursing profession.

III. Review of Literature

As it is a well known fact that hospitals are currently run like big businesses and that the salaries of nurses comprise the largest part of hospitals budgets, it is no surprise that the nursing departments are the areas that get streamlined most often when the budgets are renewed (Gale, 2004).

For years cuts in hospital nursing budgets have lead to a widening nurse to patient ratio. Complaints from nurses resonated as they became overworked and underpaid. Budget cuts have a direct affect on the quality of care, staff morale, job retention, and malpractice (Callaghan, 2003). Yet in the end, these latter issues become a heavier cost to the hospital than the reprieve that the original cuts in the nursing department may have given.

In 1999, California State Legislature passed the Assembly Bill 394, which established a minimum nurse to patient ratio in three acute settings: acute care general, specialty, and psychiatric (Doering, 2003). This was the first time in health care history that these standards were addressed and set ratios became mandatory. However, these mandates were specific to only California. While other states have adopted the idea of set nurse to patient ratios since, New York has yet to succumb to this notion. While New York does implement suggested ratios depending on acuity (e.g. a 1:2 nurse to patient ratio in ICU) the range for a typical medical-surgical floor in New York can still be from 5-9 patients per nurse and most often it is the heavier caseloads that the medical-surgical nurses are caring for.

A study conducted in 2002 suggested that lower nurse to patient ratio was associated with an increase in job satisfaction and a lower burnout rate. With an increase in job satisfaction, there is an increase in the quality of care that a patient receives, leading to a better patient outcome. Inversely, the same study found that for a nurse with a caseload of 4 patients, adding additional patients to this load would increase the risk of death, for surgical patients, by 7 % with each additional patient (Aiken, Clarke, Sloane, Sochalski, and Silber, 2002 a, b). So, nurses are torn between responsibility and accountability giving them a decreased amount of time with each patient and consequently decreasing the quality of care.

Despite the paramount importance of the quality of care, this study focused specifically on the correlation between nurse to patient ratio and job satisfaction because evidence has proven when job satisfaction improves, so does quality of care. In this study nurse to patient ratio (independent variable) was the indicator for job satisfaction (dependent variable).

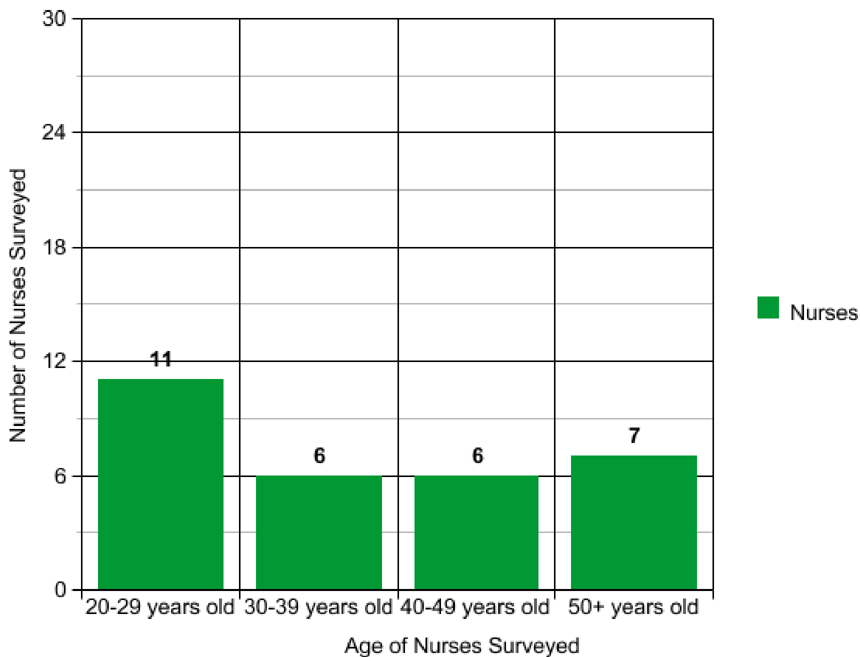
IV. Methods

This was a non-experimental, quantitative research study that was conducted by using a sample of Registered Nurses at a medium sized urban hospital in New York City. A five- point Likert Scale questionnaire was distributed to nurses on the Medical-Surgical floor. The questionnaire had two sections (A and B). Section A (page 12) consisted of seven socio-demographic items, specifically, gender, age, marital status, if the nurse had children, number of years nursing, employment status, and shift. Section B (page 13-14) consisted of six positively stated items that asked questions pertaining to job satisfaction, such as, “I am satisfied with my current job”; “I am satisfied with the level of care I give my patients”; “There is a sufficient amount of time to complete job requirements during the shift”; “There is sufficient staffing throughout the shift”; “The current morale of the nurses is generally high”; and “Decreasing the patient workload would make my job more satisfying.” Sample participants filled out the questionnaire and researcher collected the questionnaire once the participant was finished. A statistical analysis of the results was conducted once the results were collected.

V. Results

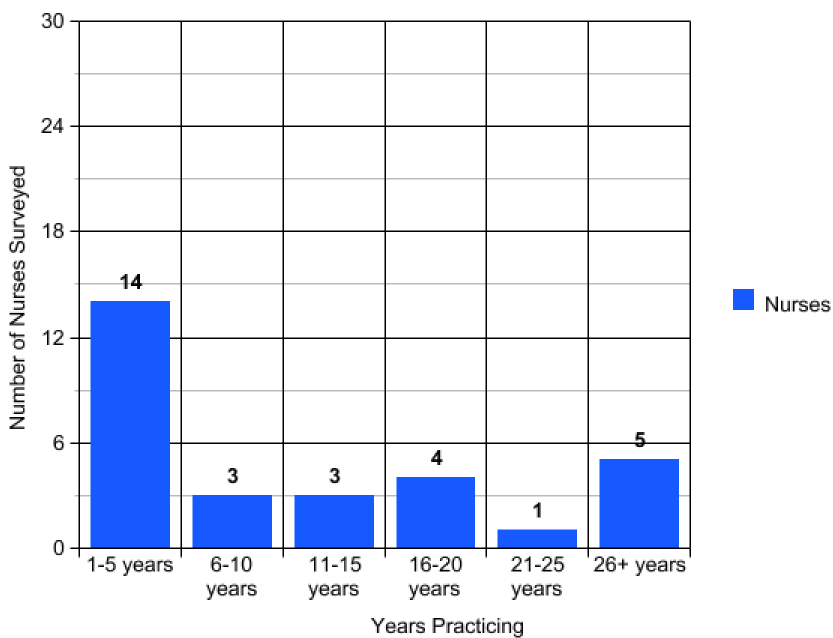
Of the total 30 registered nurses that were surveyed, all returned a completed, legible survey. As displayed on the Graph 1, 11 nurses were 20-29 years old, 6 nurses were 30-39 years old, 6 nurses were 40-49 years old, and 7 nurses were 50+ years old. A disproportionate amount of the nurses who were surveyed, 80%, were female, leaving the

male nurses to encompass only 20% of the results. 47% of the nurses were married and 53% were unmarried, while 53% had children and 47% did not. As one can see on Graph 2, a large portion of the nurses surveyed, 14 out the 30, had been practicing 1-5 years, while 3 out of 30 had been practicing 6-10 years, 3 out of 30 had been practicing 11-15 years, 4 out of 30 had been practicing 16-20 years, 1 out of 30 had been practicing 21-25 years, and 5 out of 30 had been practicing 26+ years. 97% of the nurses surveyed worked full time, while 3% worked part time. As well, 60% of the nurses who were surveyed worked the morning shift, 10% worked the evening shift, and 30% worked the overnight shift.

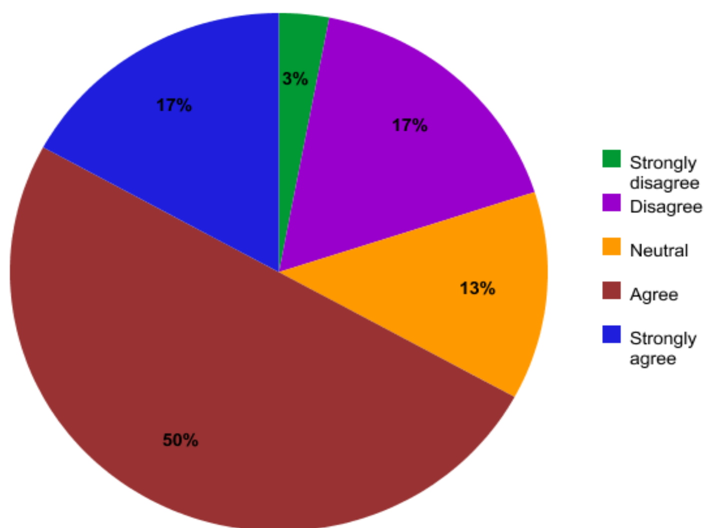


Graph 1: Nursing Demographics

Pie Chart 1 exemplifies the job satisfaction of the nurses who were surveyed. For the statement "I am satisfied with my current job", 3% of the nurses reported that they strongly disagreed, 17% disagreed, 13% were neutral, 50% agreed, and 17% strongly agreed. For the sake of determining a general sense of agreement with this statement, combining the "strongly agree" with the "agree" categories on the Likert scale yielded a combined 67% who were currently content with their profession. Because this is such a high proportion, it is a very good indicator that fewer issues would need to be addressed in order for their job to become even more appealing.

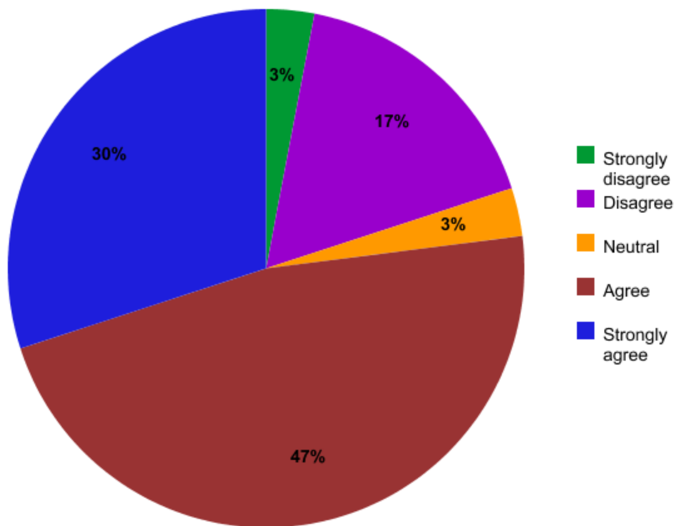


Graph 2: More Nursing Demographics



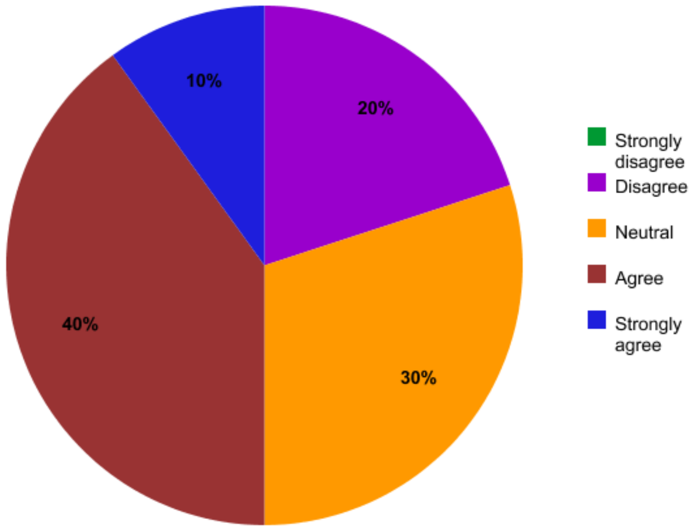
Pie Chart 1: Satisfaction with Current Job

Pie Chart 2 shows the distribution percentages related to the nurses' satisfaction with level of care that they give to the patient. For the statement, "I am satisfied with the level of care I give to my patients", 3% strongly disagreed with this statement, 17% disagreed, 3% were neutral, 47% agreed, and 30% strongly agreed. Again, combining the "strongly agree" and the "agree" categories to determine a general sense of agreement with this statement will produce a combination of 77% who agreed that they give an appropriate amount of care to their patients. This is also a positive indicator that the patients' needs are being met. As level of care can be correlated to time issues, it is apparent that the nurses on this unit, in this hospital, have enough time to manage their caseload.

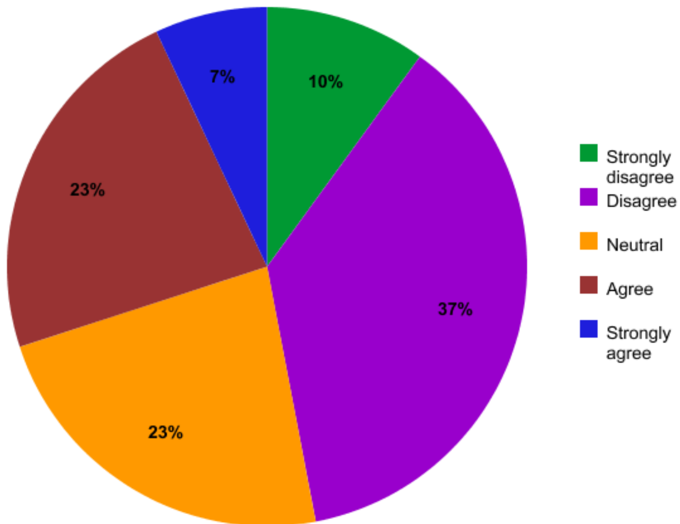


Pie Chart 2: Satisfaction with Level of Care Given

Pie Chart 3 represents the distributed percentages related to the nurses' feeling about the amount of time they have to complete their job requirements. For the statement, "There is a sufficient amount of time to complete job requirements during the shift", 0% strongly disagreed, 20% disagreed, 30% were neutral, 40% agreed, and 10% strongly agreed. A combination of the "strongly agree" and the "agree" categories generates a 50% agreement to this statement, which supports the previous statement that there is enough time to fulfill the needs of the patient.

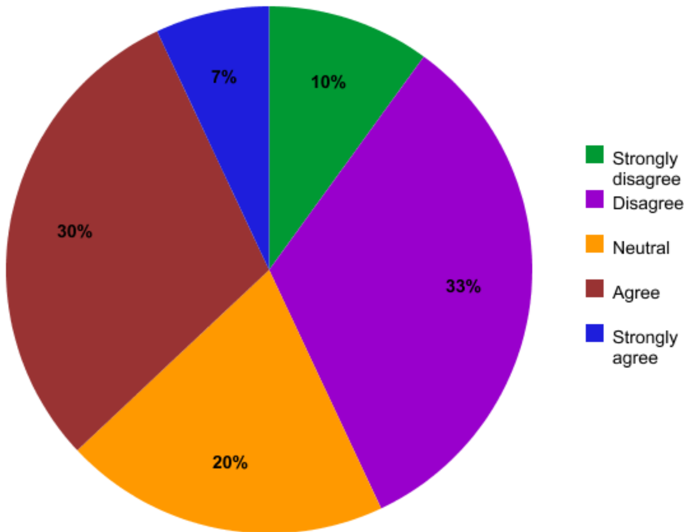


Pie Chart 3: There is a Sufficient Amount of Time to Complete Job Requirements during Shift



Pie Chart 4: Sufficient Staff during Shift

Pie Chart 4 illustrates the nurses' opinion about sufficiency of staffing. For the statement, "There is sufficient staffing throughout the shift", 10% strongly disagreed, 37% disagreed, 23% were neutral, 23% agreed, and 7% strongly agreed. Interestingly, if the "strongly agree" and the "agree" categories are combined, a total of only 30% of the nurses agreed that there was enough staffing on the unit. This seems to be in direct contrast to the two previous statements. If the nurses stated that they have enough time to complete their job and they are satisfied with the level of care that they give to their patients, then it would seem that there is sufficient staffing on the unit.

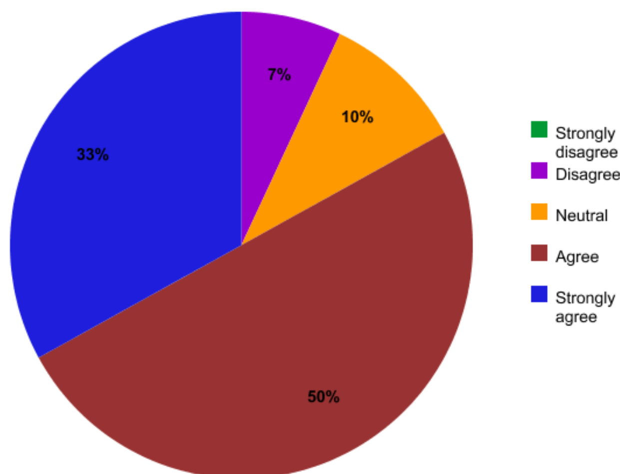


Pie Chart 5: Current Morale of Nurses is High

Pie Chart 5 exemplifies how the nurses view the current morale of nurses. For the statement, "The current morale of the nurses is generally high", 10% strongly disagreed, 33% disagreed, 20% were neutral, 30% agreed, and 7% strongly agreed. Between the "strongly agree" and the "agree" categories, only 37% of the nurses agreed that the nursing morale was high. This means that 63% either disagreed or were neutral, indicating a need for improvement in this area.

Pie Chart 6 represents the correlation between patient caseload and job satisfaction. For the statement, "Decreasing the patient workload would make my job more satisfying", 0% strongly disagreed, 7% disagreed, 10% were neutral, 50% agreed, and 33% strongly agreed. Even with the high percentage of participants reporting a

satisfaction with their job as well as with their level of care for the patient, an overwhelming percent, 83% combined between the “strongly agree” and the “agree” categories, felt that a decrease in caseload would indeed make their job more appealing to them. This is a very strong indicator that tackling an issue as simple as caseload could indeed improve the job satisfaction of these nurses and consequently could improve retention and morale.



Pie Chart 6: Decreasing Patient Caseload Would Make my Job More Satisfying

VI. Discussion

The findings of this study suggest that nurses would be more satisfied with their present job if their patient caseload was decreased. The importance of the study was to determine factors that can improve the job satisfaction for the nursing profession so that quality of care for patients, job retention, and the morale of nurses can thereby be enhanced. Aiken, et al (2002) conducted a similar study which came to a comparable conclusion. While this particular study simply set out to determine if caseload could improve the nurses’ perception of their job, Aiken’s results went as far as to correlate the increase in caseload to an increase in patient deaths. Therefore, the problem stretches beyond contentment with a job, it becomes a matter of life and death. If a nurse is incapable of adequately caring for the patient because of the size of the caseload, then certainly increasing caseload is counter effective, regardless of the nursing shortage.

While this study did uncover the fact that nurses decidedly would prefer a smaller caseload, this does not mean that the number of patients that a nurse is caring for

is the primary reason for satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the job. There is an indefinite number of questions that could have been asked in order to determine additional criterion that could improve the nurses' perception of the job, however, it was the researcher's sole purpose to ask about caseload as that also affects the patient through the quality of care. Therefore it is impossible to state that by simply decreasing the caseload each nurse would then be happy.

Because the research only used nurses from a telemetry unit of one urban hospital, it is impossible to determine if the results would have been the same if the study had included hospitals across the United States and from every type of specialty unit. The typical nurse to patient ratio on this particular telemetry unit is 6:1, which is not the standard on every unit, in every hospital. Therefore the results can not be reflective of units where the ratio is higher or lower. As the sample studied was from a single small urban hospital and sample size was small, it may not be a good representation of the population being studied, therefore it may not have had good generalizability. The fact that only 20% of the population that was surveyed was male, does not give a good representation of the male nurse population.

As well, the ethnicity of the nurses surveyed was not considered on the survey so that it does not give good evidence regarding specific ethic groups and the nursing profession. The method that was used to collect the data was a Likert scale and may not have accurately described how a subject felt about a particular statement, which may have lead to an inaccurate answers to questions asked. The questionnaire was also written by researcher and no pilot study was done prior to this study in order to accurately compare similar studies to this study. Therefore it doesn't give a consistency from previous research to this research.

A few subjects remain to be explored from this research project. The first is how to improve the morale of the nurses as nearly two-thirds of the nurses surveyed stated that they either were neutral or disagreed with that the morale of nurses is high. Often times, if the morale of the employee is high, then they are more apt to enjoy their work, perform better and more efficiently, and remain in their job. Conducting a study that could identify factors that could raise morale could help the nursing profession by increasing job satisfaction.

Additionally, determining where there is a lack of sufficient staffing needs to be addressed as well since 70% of the nurses surveyed decidedly determined that there was insufficient staffing on the floor. If nurses are able to do their job requirements in a timely fashion and the level of care that they are giving to the patients is satisfactory, then research needs to be done in order to determine which area is lacking staff.

Job satisfaction remains a strong indicator of how a person will perform their job. Finding a method to determine what makes the overall nursing profession more content will affect many other aspects of the profession. When strong correlations between an increase in job satisfaction and an increase in patient health exist then research efforts will be made to determine the factors that increase job satisfaction. If efforts aren't made to determine these factors, then the job satisfaction, nursing morale, the nursing shortage, and thereby the health of the patient will continue to deteriorate until there is a crisis. The reparation would be easier to achieve at this point rather than in a crisis, thus research should be conducted sooner rather than later.

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Survey A: Demographics

Please circle correct answer

1. What is your gender? Female Male

2. What is your age range? 20-29 30-39 40-49 50 +

3. Are you married? Yes No

4. Do you have children? Yes No

5. How many years have you been practicing as a Registered Nurse?

1 - 5 years 6 - 10 years 11 - 15 years 16 - 20 years 21 - 25 years 26 + years

6. What is your Employment status? Full time Part time

7. What shift do you work? Morning Evening Overnight

Survey B: Job Satisfaction

1. I am satisfied with my current job.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree

2. I am satisfied with the level of care I give to my patients.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree

3. There is a sufficient amount of time to complete job requirements during the shift.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree

4. There is sufficient staffing throughout the shift.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree

5. The current morale of the nurses is generally high.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree

6. Decreasing the patient workload would make my job more satisfying.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree

The 'Virtual' Self, Imitation, the 'They,' and Authenticity in Childhood

William Jock (Psychology)[1]

The existentialists argue against the classical conception of self, suggesting a "virtual" self that is indistinguishable from the world. Maurice Merleau-Ponty outlines the development of the child in his or her perception of others that leads to this distinction and gives the child a sense of self. Martin Heidegger describes how the indefiniteness of self and others initiates an "averaging out" of all others and assimilation into a prejudiced "theyness," as he calls it. In the case of "Digby" we will observe how the child develops a "virtual" self through imitation and struggles to have an authentic view of the world while an institutionalized "theyness" is imposed upon him in school.

I. Introduction

I am interested in the concept of self in regards to its objectivity, duality, and its distinction from the world. Existentialism denies all of these properties of self, leaving us with a kind of 'virtual self' (Merleau-Ponty, 1960), subjective, indivisible, and undistinguished from its world. Since it is in childhood that one is first and most dramatically confronted with these existential issues, I have chosen to focus on the child in his or her understanding and misunderstanding of him or herself.

Objectivity, Mind and Body, The World, Others

The mind-body problem and the distinction between self and world seem to be rooted in the problem of objectivity. The body is easily misconceived as objectively present in the world. It seems to be less doubtful than the mind. However, as Merleau-Ponty (1960) points out, one is in the ironic position of only being able to observe *others'* whole bodies, while viewing one's own requires a mirror. Our sensations, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings may be private and unique to us, but it is perhaps because of this that they are avoided altogether by many psychologists in favor of more "objective" aspects of human existence. For one, it is not always easy to distinguish between the sensation, perception, thought, and emotion, and also we do not have the benefit of

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[1] Research performed under the direction of Dr. Miles Groth (Psychology) in partial fulfillment of the Senior Program requirements.

another's confirming observation. Jung (1958) does not want to give precedence to the body either, asserting that "the connection with brain does not in itself prove that the psyche is an epiphenomenon" (p. 57). However, Jung perpetuates another classic prejudice of psychology that so called "inner" experience is somehow a better representation of self than so called "external" experience. The existentialists find this equally as problematic as the behaviorist prejudice that "external" experience is somehow objectively observable. Laing (1960) thwarts the latter by asserting that "confining oneself to objectively observable behavior is impossible" (p. 32). Then he approaches the problem of the mind's precedence. In schizophrenics he observed dissociation between body and mind, as they posited the mind as the "true" self. He sees this as an attempt to deal with one's anxiety over understanding the world, not an exclusive trait of psychosis. This anxiety is addressed by most existentialists and is considered to be an inevitable outcome of one's confrontation with his or her "nothingness," as Sartre (1943) termed it. It is difficult to have a conception of self when there is nothing constant or definite about one's being. Awareness of this inconstancy and indefiniteness makes one insecure, which easily explains the desire to objectify oneself. Heidegger (1927) explains that this aspect of being necessarily implies an objective meaning of being. Such objectification is a way of avoiding the confrontation with nothingness and establishing a self that is 'something.'

For the existentialists, internal experience and external experience cannot be separated from one another, so of course neither can be objectively observed, nor can either one produce a genuine representation of the person. The world as a whole influences the way one thinks; what one thinks oneself to be is no exception. Everything in one's world represents who one is; it is *what* one is. One cannot either observe others objectively, be observed objectively by others, or objectively observe oneself. For a distinction between internal and external experience to be possible, a separation between oneself and the world would have to be possible, which, the existentialists hold, is not. Heidegger (1927) was the first to assert this, contesting that the self is no more objectively present than the world. To grasp oneself is to grasp the world, but, as we have seen, we inevitably prefer to understand ourselves in objective terms. Further, since "the world is always already the one I share with others" (p. 111), one cannot be separated from others either. Without these distinctions one is left with a 'virtual' self—subjective, indivisible into mind and body, and indistinguishable from the world and others in it—onto which he or she posits an objective meaning. There is no self essentially, only virtually.

Imitation, Perception, Distinction and "Becoming"

Merleau-Ponty (1960) says one is undifferentiated from others early in life, so how does he account for the future distinction? From the phenomenological perspective that consciousness is always directed towards things in the world, he explains a process of "becoming" where one adopts the conducts of others "because they are themes of possible activity for my own body" (p. 117). This reflects Heidegger's (1927) understanding of the world as "thematic," where we encounter others in "modes of existence," not just arbitrarily acting. Indeed, there is no such thing as arbitrary action. Meaning is a precondition of any action. Merleau-Ponty also focuses on perception to explain the distinction between self and others. First, one *senses* his or her own body and then *perceives* it. Only later does he or she sense the other and then perceive him or her. While one, as we mentioned before, can only see the others' body in its entirety and not one's own, one only recognizes parts of the others body initially. One then relates the other's body parts to his own, initiating a distinction. Distinction is in full effect once the child perceives the other's body as a whole. "At six months," says M-P (which I will refer to him as from now on), "at last, the child looks the other child in the face, and one has the impression that here, for the first time, he is perceiving another" (p. 125). At three years, "the indistinction between myself and others is at an end" (p. 153).

The classical view of psychology holds that the mind is in a similarly peculiar position as the body, though its position is just the opposite: one's mind is present to oneself, but impenetrable to others. We have showed how existentialism opposes this, arguing that there is no self distinguishable from others, let alone a self divisible into mind and body. If there is no distinction within one being, then there is no distinction between beings, since they are themselves indistinguishable. M-P provides support for this by developing the process of imitation or "becoming" mentioned earlier. When one imitates the other's conduct, one cannot feel what the other is feeling nor can one see oneself the way one sees the other. Given this, one would have to perceive the other's conduct visually, translate it into a "personal motor language" (p. 116), and project a meaning onto it. For M-P, this is too contrived. He prefers the phenomenological perspective that consciousness is always directed at the world. Our conducts are the manifestations of our consciousnesses meeting each other in the world. In this sense, everything that we can consider our own was already in the world and still is. Any action one "makes" is not really made at all, but relived through him or her, having been adopted from the world. Conversely, if an action is already in the world for one to adopt but remains in the world once he or she has him or herself acted it out, one is not really adopting it and one cannot consider it his or hers. Still, from the very first gestures

mimicked in infancy to a profound thought in adulthood, one believes something to be his or hers when he or she is really only taking hold of something that is always and already in the world. Even the meaning applied to it, though it is unique to each person, is based on his or her history of experiences, which came from the world. One takes, not makes, a position in the world. While distinguishing ourselves from the others we are essentially connected to, we are, paradoxically, establishing our selfhood through their conducts, which are already here and now. Therefore, to say we are establishing selfhood is a misconception, especially given everything we have already determined about self, namely its virtuality. We are not really establishing anything, but rather we exist in different modes of being, through this imitative process that M-P calls "becoming."

The "They" and Authenticity

While one distinguishes oneself from others as an attempt to affirm a self, according to Heidegger one also, paradoxically, synthesizes his or her self with others for the same ends. As it is, the other is no more definite than the self. Because of this, one easily objectifies others, averaging them out into a single "they," as Heidegger (1927) terms it. In this manner, every other is like the next. Existentially they serve as the "they" and you and I include ourselves within this mode of being. In this sense we are not existentially ourselves, but others. The perceived benefit is a given self. One surrenders his or her understanding of the world to the limited interpretations and possibilities of the "they," ignoring the phenomenon of the world. One surrenders his or her possibilities of being to the definiteness of the "they," ignoring his or her responsibility. To exist in this mode of being is what Heidegger calls "inauthenticity." We exist in this mode of being already and, for the most part, always.

When comparing Heidegger's understanding of the "they" to the previously outlined understanding of the "virtual" self indistinguishable from others, it seems we are "already and always" in a double bind. However, like the paradox between the indistinguishable being-in-the-world and the imitating being, this issue should come to light. If we are essentially indistinguishable form one another, how do we avoid living in the mode of others? For one, living in the mode of others is not the same thing as living among others, for living in the mode of others requires an averaging out of the others. Earlier I paraphrased Heidegger in saying, "to grasp oneself is to grasp the world." Since others are in the world, to grasp others is to grasp oneself. There is nothing inauthentic about living *among* others, since it is the nature of the world of existence. Living *by* others, on the other hand is inauthentic. To be authentic, then, would be to seek an understanding of the world without ignoring the phenomenon of the world, without

ignoring possibility, without objectifying self, world, or others, without accepting the "they"'s limited understanding of the world. This doesn't mean, however, seeking one's "own" understanding of the world, since that would imply a distinction between self and world. Rather, this means seeking understanding in general. In this sense, we are not in a double bind, but a damned difficult situation.

The Case of "Digby"[2]

My first meeting with Digby told me I would be observing him more closely than other students. He was the only one not sitting on the steps where the children are dropped off in the morning. He was leaning against the railing with a stick in his hand, which I figured wouldn't be okay with the teachers, but I didn't say anything right away. I said "That came from a tree," and he showed me exactly where he found it. He told me that part of the stick had broken off, and then started swinging it. I said, "Please don't swing the stick," and pointed out the thorns on it. He said, "I see them." A GA (graduate assistant) came over and told him to find another stick, and he said he liked the one he had. She said, "Come on, we're not going to play with that stick anymore," and took it from him. He only said, "Okay."

Later that day he had the "job" of counting the children at "circle time." As he went around, counting, he included the "teachers" (graduate assistants and observers like myself). Our teacher, "Mrs. Hutchinson" said calmly, "Digby, just count the children, not teachers." He only increased his pace and enthusiasm. She said it several more times, which didn't deter him. He pretended not to hear. Then Mrs. Hutchinson said, "Okay Digby, you have to stop. You didn't do the job right." Without asking what he had done wrong, he quickly and very seriously said, "No. I'll do it the right way this time." His response implies that though he had acted as if he hadn't heard her initial warnings, he knew he was doing the wrong thing.

Next week, Digby was asked to sit on his "bottom" (he was kneeling) at circle time. He asked insistently, but not angrily, "Why?" He knew many of the answers to the questions asked about the story read in circle time. He is otherwise difficult to get a response out of. He has a glazed over look in his eyes, though he isn't what you might consider "spacey," or "slow." He doesn't smile, but squints curiously. That day during cleanup time, I was squatting, picking up blocks while Digby stood next to me with the pirate ship. I felt a block hit my shoulder. I said, "Who's throwing blocks?" He didn't look up from the pirate ship. He threw another block a moment later while I was

[2] The names of all of the individuals referred to in this study have been changed.

watching, and I said, "Don't throw the blocks. Hand them to me." He said, "But I'm throwing them so you can catch them." I said, "You have to make sure I'm looking." I turned away and Digby handed me a block.

Later that day, at circle time, everyone was seated on the floor except Digby, who was in a rocking chair next to the circle. One of the GA's asked, "Is everyone seated? Digby?" He responded, "I have a comfortable seat." Mrs. Hutchinson said, "You need to sit on the floor." He said, "Why can't I have a comfortable seat?" She said, "Because your comfortable seat is on your bottom," and trailed off with, "like the other children." He sat down on the floor apart from the others and wasn't close enough to see the activities, so I asked him if he wanted to move closer. He didn't respond. I backed away and he eventually came closer, but took his time in doing so. When the children were supposed to turn around to see the "Jobs" chart, he was lying on the ground facing the other way. Mrs. Hutchinson read each job and waited for the person whose name was next to it to raise his or her hand. She got to Digby's job and Mrs. Hutchinson had to say, "Someone isn't looking." He acknowledged this, but took his time turning around, even when she finally asked him personally to do so. His job was "Weather person," which entails describing what the weather is for that day and picking the appropriate clothes for a Velcro doll. He tried to say it was raining when it was sunny, and asked why he couldn't dress the doll himself.

During the pledge of allegiance that day, Digby didn't face the flag or put his hand over his heart like other children. When asked to do so he asked "Why?" Mrs. Hutchinson responded, "Because we are lucky to live in America, because we're free unlike some other countries." After saying the pledge, they always sing a song, "Flag of America." Digby made silly noises to the rhythm of the song, sticking his tongue out and shuffling closer and closer to the flag. The line leader for the bathroom picked a friend and each person afterwards did the same. Digby was the only one left when it was Ana's turn to pick a friend. When he lined up behind her he put his hands on her shoulder like a conga line, and she said calmly several times, without turning around, "Don't touch me," but he didn't acknowledge it. I went over to him and said, "She asked you not to touch her, so don't." He looked off into space and took his hands off of her. Then he walked towards me, staring wide-eyed and muttering. I directed him back to his spot in line.

At lunch the same day, Wesley started crying and said, "Digby kicked me." Everyone had fallen silent. Mrs. Hutchinson asked Digby why he had kicked Wesley. Digby replied, "He said he wanted to eat my food. She said, "It doesn't matter what he said, you don't kick him." Digby said, "Sorry," robotically. Then Wesley said, "He said a bad word." She asked what word. He said, "He called my food seafood." Mrs.

Hutchinson told Digby not to make fun of people's food. She asked Digby what he had said about Wesley's food. Digby replied, "Nothing. I think he's faking. I'm *telling* you." He went right up to Wesley's face and said, "Sorry," but he didn't look sympathetic or annoyed—his expression was practically emotionless. He was still eating when most people finished and started growling to himself. A GA said, "Stop making those noises. You'll choke." Digby replied, "I'm a monster." I wonder if the teachers thought so too, or if Digby actually felt like one.

Next week, Digby and I were making "cookies" out of the play-dough. He said we needed to trim the "excess" off. He "fed" me one and when it brushed my lip, he asked, "Did you lick it a little?" I said, "Not on purpose. It just touched my lip." As I took notes, he kept bringing me "vanilla wafers," and I would pretend to eat them. Each time he came over he would be more excited about the game. He didn't want to stop. At circle time, the children shared the apples they had brought into class, describing a few distinguishing properties about their apple. Digby was last to share his and he kept describing new things about it and the teachers had to ask him several times to put it away. During free time, Digby hit Liu on the head, and when he was scolded, he gave an excuse, as he often does. He was told, "It doesn't matter. We don't hit anyone on the head, no matter what." He walked over to Liu, put his face right up to his and said, "I apologize." When he sat down for circle time he said, "We don't hit little kids," and I said, "We don't hit anyone." At circle time Part Two he said, "I'm going to sit here," and placed himself away from the group. He wasn't facing the right way at one point, and Mrs. Hutchinson asked him to face forwards. He took his time turning around, and he probably would have prolonged it even further if she had asked him more than once. He had pretended not to hear at first, but when he realized people weren't paying attention to him, he faced the right way.

One day on the way inside from the playground, some jackets were unclaimed on the picnic table. I held them up and Dani, Digby, and Kelly identified them as theirs. Dani told me to take hers in, and I said, "No, it's yours. I'm just going to leave it out here. She said, "Okay," and took it. Digby wouldn't take his at first either and told me to carry it. I also threatened to leave his outside, but he didn't respond, so I just draped it over his head. He said "I'll just leave it on my head, then." Later in the week, we sang songs about Halloween at circle time. Digby was running in and out of the circle. He was asked several times to stop and finally when he was threatened with a timeout in his cubby he stopped and said, "I was floating like a ghost."

Next week, Digby said, "Play Legos with me," while I was playing with someone else. I said, "If you ask me, I'll come over in a second." He walked away and I

continued playing. He came back and said, “Can you come play Legos with me? There, that was a second.” “Okay. I’ll be over in a minute.” A little later, he came back and said, “Okay that really was a minute.” I said, “All right, I’ll be over in a second, minute. I mean, I’ll be over in a little bit.” He said, “Okay.” I went over shortly after, because he was patient. He grabbed some Legos from Keith, and I said he had to ask first. The next time he grabbed some Legos from Keith, he asked as he was doing it. I said, “He’s using those.” He went over to Keith then, and said, “Excuse me ‘Keiths,’ I need those blocks. They have faces on them,” which they did. I told him it didn’t matter, Keith was using them. Later, Liu’s father, who was a firefighter, came in to talk about fire safety. Digby wouldn’t stay seated. He kept going up to the firefighter to touch different things on his belt or helmet. The firefighter let Digby wear the helmet, and as Digby swaggered a little, he said, “You can let go.” He strained to stand up straight and when the firefighter took his helmet back, he asked, “Heavy, right?” Digby responded, “No. It was very light.” Kelly asked many questions about fire and was very longwinded. This upset Digby, who was waiting for his turn. He groaned and walked over to her, putting his hands in front her face as if to block her words. She didn’t notice until the teacher told Digby to stop. We had all been laughing a little until then.

During circle time that day, Mrs. Hutchinson went through the “jobs” on the Jobs board and skipped “Count the children,” because there was no name next to it. Digby interrupted and said, “Who’s going to count the children?” She just moved on. We sang the song “Here we are Together,” and went around the circle for the kids to sing their own name. Digby hid behind me. When it got to his name Mrs. Hutchinson said, “Digby I need to see your face.” He said, “But I’m hiding my face.” She said, “But I want to see your face. I like you.” He said, “You don’t want to not see me face?” He was standing at this point off a little way from the circle. She said, “No. Come sit down,” and asked to him to say his name. He looked off stubbornly, not wanting to, and then after a few beats he yelled his name. Usually she would have told him to say it nicely, but she just moved on. Later in circle time he looked over at me and crossed his legs like mine. We wrote a letter to the firefighter to thank him for coming, and Mrs. Hutchinson asked at the end if there was anything else we should tell him. Digby said, “Liu loves his dad,” and suggested this several times, so she could hear it.

Digby would never sit with the other children on the steps where they were dropped off in the morning. One particular day he finally listened when I asked him to sit down, but he sat behind the others where the stairs come to a platform. I said, “That’s fine,” because it was the most you could get him to do. He said, “No. I’m laying down,” but I didn’t want to play games with him. Then he called me an “A-blip” and asked me if

I knew what that was. I said, "No," and he said, "It's a type of bomb." I said, "I didn't know that," and he said, "I was joking. It's a joke." He asked me again if I knew what an "A-blip" was, and I said, "A type of bomb." He said, "No. It's a type of nut. I'm just joking." I asked if he made that up. He said, "Yeah." At circle time he wanted to sit behind Mrs. Hutchinson, but was told he couldn't. She shared music instruments with the class and Digby was trying to take some from her. When she finished explaining what they were she allowed the students to play with them, but Digby didn't want to anymore.

Digby doesn't usually like playing with the other students. This day was no exception. When Josh followed me over to the Lego table where I had been playing with Digby, Digby tried to take things from him. Josh would say, "No! I'm using that!" so I didn't have to say anything to Digby. Digby would ask, "Why?" and Josh would say, "'Cause I want to put that there." Then Digby told Josh he was building "stupid stuff," and knocked it over. Several times Josh said to him, "I'm not stupid." I didn't intervene. One of the GA's asked Digby to come over to the crafts table to work on something. Digby said, "Why?" She said, "Because I want you to." He said, "But I don't want to," not whining, just matter-of-factly. She said, "But you have to." At lunch that day, Digby said, "I'm going to sit here away from everything. I don't want to sit with the kids." Mrs. Hutchinson said, "Your friends will miss you." He said, "No, they won't." She said, "Come sit next to Liu." He said, "I don't like Liu. He's mean. He knocks down my blocks sometimes." Mrs. Hutchinson said, "He won't be mean now." Digby sat down, and said "Don't look at me," pushing Liu's face away. I said, "He can look at whoever he wants." He said, "He was staring at me." I said, "Don't push his face."

Next week, during the pledge of allegiance Digby was standing off away from the others. Mrs. Hutchinson walked over to him to tell him to move and he said, "I'm watching the flag from here." She said, "Stand in the group. We do things as a group." He asked, "Why?" She said, "That's the way we do it." Next day, we read a story about a coyote that turned purple. At the end the coyote got his "sandy coat" back, but a boy turned purple. Mrs. Hutchinson asked the class, "How would you feel if you turned purple?" No one said anything, but Digby was thinking and then said coyly, "Purple." Next week I walked into the classroom and Digby walked up to me shaking a puzzle. He asked several times, "Am I a noisy kid?" I finally said, "Yes, sometimes." He kept doing it, so I walked away. I looked over a few moments later and he was putting it together. Later I played play-dough with him, but he told me, "No, we don't flatten. We're going to do it the noisy way." He banged on it with a hammer and I said, "Okay, well not too loud." I would tell him to stop when it got too loud and he would listen.

When someone else at the table said, "It's going to be an awesome Halloween," he said, "It's going to be a *ridiculous* Halloween." He likes to demonstrate his vocabulary. One day he had been building a house out of Legos and was describing the drainage system of the bathtub and the "high definition" television.

As usual, Digby had trouble during the pledge this day. He walked towards the flag, saluting frantically, but they aren't supposed to salute until the end of the song, "Flag of America." Mrs. Hutchinson grabbed him by the arm and pulled him next to her. He kept saluting. We sang the song and on the last line, "A salute I give to you," everyone saluted. Digby kept saluting and said, "I can't stop." Next week, Digby was playing in the sandbox and so were Akim and Josh. The latter two are inseparable. Digby started involving Josh in his little game, for the most part arbitrarily—it could have been anyone. Akim was jealous though, and started saying to Digby, "You can't be my best friend." Digby didn't look up. If he heard, he didn't care. I intervened and asked Akim why he was saying this. He said, "Digby didn't make anything for *me*." I don't think Digby had *made* anything for Josh. He definitely wasn't trying to manipulate Josh's and Akim's friendship, but Akim started proclaiming, "We don't like Digby. Nobody likes Digby." He directed this at Josh, but Josh wasn't paying attention. Eventually Josh said, "Yeah, we don't like Digby," but then kept playing with Digby while Akim watched. Digby didn't seem to care about this. He didn't look up from his game once. I said, "We don't talk to each other like that. We're all friends." Another intern told Digby he was getting sand on his coat. The more she commented on it, the more ways he found to get sand on himself. She asked, "Don't you want to be clean and not smell bad?" He said, "No, I want to be dirty." One of the GA's intervened and asked, "What about your mom? What would she say?" He paused and said, "She would just say, 'Take your coat off.'"

Next week, at the lunch table kids were pointing at the alphabet characters on the wall and laughing. They would say, for example, "Look at Mr. D. He's a cow." Digby wasn't taking part until the teachers discouraged it. Then he started making loud laughing noises. He wasn't even looking at the alphabet characters. A GA said, "Settle down," and Digby said, "Let's settle up." He started making outrageous high-pitched noises and the kids started laughing harder, but not at him. I said, "Digby, stop," and he said, "But I'm making them settle up." They were quiet now, but he said, "Look at Mr. J," and started making outrageous squealing noises. They all started laughing. A week later, Digby was sitting outside of the circle again, and Mrs. Hutchinson asked him to conduct one of the Thanksgiving songs we were singing. She told him he had a lot of power as the conductor, telling the kids when and when not to sing. I was nervous to see

what he would do, but he didn't abuse it. Later in the day, however, he had to be threatened several times with a timeout. I wasn't sure if he would care, but he would freeze and his eyes would get wide at the threat.

Next week, Digby noticed a piece was missing from a puzzle that some other kids were playing with. He spent the rest of puzzle time dragging me around the room looking for "clues," calling it a "kooky mystery." He would find a toy that wasn't in its place and say, "I found the tenth clue." When it was time to clean up he kept finding new clues. I said, "It's time to clean up. That's enough." He said, "Okay. Remember, we're on the twenty-third clue." He kept reminding me during circle time and I had to tell him, "That's enough." He leaned against me, laid his head in my lap, and talked to himself, not paying attention to the activities. He tried to sit in my lap and I pulled him off, but he fell back and hit his head. It was loud, so Mrs. Hutchinson noticed and asked Digby if he was alright. He told her, pointing to me, "*He* did it." She said, "No. You did it because you weren't doing the right thing. I asked Digby if his head hurt, but he said, "No." He hid behind me for a bit, but I ignored him and when I looked over a little later he was paying attention to the story.

Next week, Digby played in the kitchen with another student and pretended nicely. In circle time he made noises while the kids said their names for the "Here we are Together." Mrs. Hutchinson stopped and said, "You're being rude." He stopped, but then continued again quietly. When it got to him he only said louder, "Boob!" or "Boop!" She said, "Okay. Sit in your cubby." He said, "No. I'll stop." She said, "No, you need to sit in your cubby and think about it." Next day, he played with blocks and Kyle helped. He wasn't very encouraging of Kyle's suggestions though. He said he was making a "race." One of the GA's asked, "A racetrack?" and he said, "No, a race." I was standing next to him and he told me, "You have to get across that line," and started running. I ran after and got across at the same time, but unlike many kids, he actually said, "We made it across at the same time." He followed it up, however, with, "But I'm the boss, so let's get that straight." He made me watch his "race" while he was away. I couldn't the whole time, so when he came back it was messed up. He said, "Come on, let's rebuild it." Kyle wanted to help, and I asked if he thought that was okay with Digby. He said, "Digby said I could." Kyle is still a new kid at this point. At one point as they were playing, he had his arms around Digby's waist. Digby broke away from him without saying anything. Kyle said to me as he walked by after Digby, "I *love* him." During cleanup time, a disagreement happened between Akim and Digby. Before anyone sat down for circle time, Josh hugged Akim and Kyle and said, "We're friends." They all said, "Yeah," and Akim said, "But not Digby." Kyle echoed him. When everyone was

seated except Digby, he said to one of the GA's, "That's the kid," and walked right up to Akim and tapped him on the head. Akim said, "He's bad. He pointed at me." Digby said, "He's the meanest kid." Akim said, "No, *he* is," and it went back and forth like this until Mrs. Hutchinson intervened. Digby kept saying it, and a GA said, "No!" right to him, but he only said it more quietly. Mrs. Hutchinson lectured the whole class about being friends and told Akim to apologize to Digby. He said it angrily and Mrs. Hutchinson said, "That didn't sound like you meant it." Digby said, "Yeah. He did mean it. He meant nothing." At lunch time Digby told each GA that came in that Akim was being mean to him "all day." Mrs. Hutchinson said, "Digby. Stop it. What? So you and Akim said mean things to each other once?" He said, "He was mean to me for no reason." Akim said, "He pointed at me." Digby kept calling him mean. Mrs. Hutchinson said, "Digby! Digby! It's over now. We're all friends, right?" Digby shrugged his shoulders.

II. Discussion

Merleau-Ponty's process of "becoming" was confirmed by some of the observations of Digby. While he spoke of a "high-definition" television, for example, he must have heard that at home and was imitating the words of his parents. He probably doesn't know what that means in terms of technology, but it had its own meaning for the purposes of his Lego home. Also, Digby's vocabulary is higher than the other children, but I wouldn't necessarily conclude that he is "brighter" or more intelligent than any of them. Perhaps he has more aptitude for learning, but in terms of his vocabulary it is just something he has imitated from others. The words are not his, nor are their meanings consistent with the source's meaning. In the "race" he built, the teacher attempted to correct him, but the "correct" word, "racetrack" meant nothing to him. In the "thematic" (Heidegger 1927) world of his existence "race" applied to what he was doing. Perhaps at some point he will adopt the word racetrack and posit it to this meaning. While he has obviously imitated certain conducts of others, he has resisted others, as in this racetrack, but also in the American Flag. It doesn't mean anything to him and he isn't going to adopt the meaning of pride. Other children are more willing to. What is intriguing about Digby is he seems to recognize much of the activities in school as arbitrary. I wonder if he will eventually feel pressure to conform, or if he will continue to recognize the absurd in life and come to appreciate Camus and Sartre someday.

From the beginning Digby questioned the purposes of many activities, and while some may merely consider him a disruptive child, I wonder if his resistance of what he deems as meaningless is a sign of authentic being. Has he simply made the "deliberate

decision to do everything alone" (Mearleau-Ponty, 1960, p. 52) because he is in a crisis, as Merleau-Ponty has observed in children of this age group? Or is he legitimately resisting the mode of being which Heidegger calls the "they," in favor of a grasp on the world? Instances such as his insistence on walking with the "not heavy" firefighter's helmet support the former, but the sincerity and seriousness that accompanied each "Why?" he asked sway me towards the latter. One could tell he was making actual judgments and not necessarily just trying to get attention.

I felt conflicted trying to discipline Digby when his questioning didn't have a legitimate answer. I didn't want to be responsible for enforcing the "they" on his being. Sometimes, however, I found myself answering as Mrs. Hutchinson inevitably would, "That's what we do." But who is this we? It is not a definite subject. It is precisely what Heidegger maintains as the averaging out of others. It's the fail-safe of such questioning, because it absorbs Digby's responsibility to his potential of being. "You can't do this, because we don't do it. You're one of us, aren't you?" and that's that. He will inevitably exist in the mode of the "they" within this school system. He tries to resist it as far as he can, but when threatened with a timeout in his cubby, "theyness" won out. Any time he was scolded for "not doing the right thing" he gave an excuse. He wasn't doing the "wrong" thing, existentially, but it conflicted with the "they."

What is so attractive about childhood when looking at this concept is that we can observe such unbridled resistance to "theyness," because the consequences are by no means harsh. Perhaps the most compelling moment of authenticity with Digby was when he had felt threatened by Akim and when Mrs. Hutchinson tried to change his way of understanding the situation. Her reasoning didn't suffice because it didn't apply to his being, but to the "they." She couldn't convince him that everything was suddenly okay because, "we're all friends." He has no legitimate reason to believe he is a part of this enforced friendship. I don't blame him for shrugging his shoulders.

Given the 'virtual' self and Merleau-Ponty's explanation of our objectification and distinction of self and others and the imitative nature of childhood, is pre-school system actually detrimental to a child's understanding of the world? The child is vulnerable to accepting what his or her teachers tell him or her. The child is still connected with the reality of subjective meaning and we enforce a false objective meaning onto his or her understanding of the world. This is bound to nurture the anxiety over nothingness that we discussed in the introduction. The school system feels the need to impose these meanings on the child in order to keep them in line, when those in charge don't even necessarily believe them. Is there any way around imposing a "theyness?" Heidegger would most likely say "no." Is there at least a better way? Exploring the

existential understanding of self and its implications on authenticity in childhood have proven useful for reconsidering the way we educate the youth who are just "becoming." Perhaps we will find a way to create a more authentic way of being, by intervening, or not intervening, in the child's development.

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Section III: Critical Essays

Julia Alvarez and the Dominican Republic: Recovering the Female Voice

Ashley Martin (English)[1]

> "*The night we fled the country, Papi,*
> *You told me we were going to the beach,*
> *Hurried me to get dressed along with the others,*
> *While posted at a window, you looked out*
> *At a curfew-darkened Ciudad Trujillo*
> *Speaking in worried whispers to your brothers,*
> *Which car to take, who'd be willing to drive it,*
> *What explanation to give should we be discovered…"*

Julia Alvarez expertly depicts the sheer terror which she felt upon fleeing her homeland in this excerpt from "Exiles." The poem, a component of the poetry book *El otro lado,* describes the moment in which Alvarez's family fled the Dominican Republic in 1960 to escape the tyranny of Rafael Leonídas Trujillo. Alvarez's father had been involved in an unsuccessful underground plot to topple the horrid dictator and the family just barely escaped to the safety of the United States. This evening, which represents a monumental turning point in the life of an innocent Dominican girl, serves as a major component of Julia Alvarez's career as a contributor to Latina literature. Through this brief poetic recollection of the eve on which Alvarez left the Dominican Republic, significant social truths concerning the Dominican identity are revealed; an identity that Alvarez embodies in her literary voice. These ideals include the exposition of a distinct patriarchal strain that runs through the very core of Dominican culture. This ideal of patriarchy is displayed in Papi's forceful and controlling voice as his family is forced to flee the country. More significantly, this brief poem exhibits the patriarchal tendencies which pervade the political atmosphere of the Dominican Republic as Trujillo is depicted as a supreme authority figure who is feared by all who surround him. Even at her young age, Alvarez recognizes the tyrannical nature of Trujillo's rule, which later contributes to the subject matter and thematic choices of many of her literary works. Specifically, three of Alvarez's novels present these ideals concerning patriarchal tendencies with respect to

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the family environment and the political atmosphere of the Dominican Republic. Alvarez's best known novel, *In the Time of the Butterflies,* explores the heroic resistance of the legendary Mirabel sisters, known as *Las Mariposas*, who are murdered for their opposition to Trujillo's patriarchal regime. Alvarez's *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* documents one family's immigration to the United States from the Dominican Republic and the way in which their cultural ideals are altered when placed in an environment that differs from their homeland. Finally, *In the Name of Salomé* tells the story of Salomé Henríquez Ureña, the poet laureate of the Dominican Republic and her daughter Camila's struggle to find her identity within her estranged native culture.

In reference to Alvarez's literary work, critic Jacqueline Stefanko eloquently articulates a fundamental purpose of Julia Alvarez as a writer. As Stefanko remarks, "poetry and stories of U.S. women of color are repeatedly about writing, about access to the power to signify" (51). This notion that Latina writing exists as an avenue for change to occur is particularly related to Alvarez's writing, especially concerning the transcendence of cultural constraints. Undoubtedly, the novels of Julia Alvarez expose various cultural truths which exist in the Dominican culture and contribute to the creation of Alvarez's strongly Latina narrative voice. This Latina voice is adopted by individuals who were "silenced for centuries by a patriarchal Latino culture, as well as the historically male-dominated literary world" as they express the complexities of the Latin-American culture (Sirias 13). Such patriarchal cultural truths are fundamental to the development of characters, setting, plot and narrative structure, as demonstrated by *In The Time of the Butterflies*, *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* and *In the Name of Salomé*. Specifically, these aspects of Dominican culture are primarily concerned with the concept of patriarchy both within the family, the government and society in general. This concept of patriarchy is closely correlated with the idea of *machismo*, which is defined as an arrogant attitude that considers men superior to women: "The concept of *machismo* connotes a man's strength, bravery, power, and importance. These qualities represent the embodiment of the ideal male within a patriarchal society" (Sirias 79). Each of these novels skillfully weaves opposing *machismo* and feminist ideals in such a way as to expose the true nature of patriarchal tendencies in the Dominican society. Such patriarchal ideals, which exhibit man's superiority and bravery, perhaps have stemmed from the spiritual rape and conquest of Latin America (Mirandé 35). This alternate philosophy regarding the concept of *machismo* is articulated by renowned philosopher, poet and Nobel Laureate, Octavio Paz and his own belief that:

> *machismo* developed as Mexican men found themselves unable to protect their women form the Conquest's ensuing plunder, pillage and rape. Native men developed an overly masculine and aggressive response in order to

> compensate for deeply felt feelings of powerlessness and weakness. *Machismo*, then, is nothing more than a futile attempt to mask a profound sense of impotence, powerlessness, and ineptitude, an expression of weakness and a sense of inferiority (Mirandé 36).

Such an alternative philosophy concerning *machismo* is remarkably displayed in each of Alvarez's novels as she exposes the true nature of patriarchal constraints in the Dominican Republic.

As is demonstrated in Alvarez's works, particularly these three novels, the author's native culture is dominated by this sense of macho patriarchy. Through the crushing political oppression of Trujillo's regime, this patriarchy is blatantly negative. This same patriarchy yields less severe consequences when viewed through the context of familial relationships, but nonetheless pervades to the very root of Dominican society. As Stefanko quotes concerning Alvarez's works, "The patriarchal confines of the family and the church are placed in direct connection to the patriarchal and totalitarian functioning of the state, establishing a relationship between feminism and socialism" (59). Though such deeply rooted tendencies are engrained into the backbone of Dominican society, Alvarez creates characters who fight this patriarchal oppression. In doing so, Alvarez reveals a stirring portrait of the innate capacity all individuals possess to be liberated; a capacity which all possess, but which few fully realize.

The history of the Dominican Republic is one of tragic instability and frequent oppression. As is articulated in Alvarez's *In the Name of Salomé*, "in fifty years, we've had over thirty different governments. Again and again our dreams are destroyed" (*Salomé* 300). This tragic reality encapsulates the political instability which the Dominican people have endured throughout their history. A major component of this political turmoil can be attributed to the United States intervention in the Dominican Republic which occurred from 1916-1924, as it capitalized on the fragile nature of the Dominican government. Seizing the opportunity to control economic facets of this neighboring country, "defenders of the protectorate justified it by pointing to the country's history of political violence and instability" (Caldor xii; Gonzales 69). During this eight-year occupation, the Dominican culture was markedly altered due to the influence of U.S. troops and institutions. Paramount among these alterations was the creation of institutions and organizations which were intended to maintain control of the Dominican people. As Gonzales states in reference to this notion of control, "The occupation's lasting legacy was the national police. As soon as they landed, the marines set about building a modern force that could control the population permanently" (72). The national police, known as the *guardia*, would prove to control the Dominican people with devastating consequences for a number of decades. Continually operating under the

pretense of noble intentions, the *guardia* gloried in the absolute power they had over the inhabitants of an entire country. As Fifi Garcia remarks about her memory of the Dominican Republic, "the property would be overrun by the *guardia* in 'routine searches for your own protection'….As for the violence around us, the guards' periodic raids, the uncles whose faces no longer appeared at the yearly holiday gatherings, we believed the national slogan – 'God and Trujillo are taking care of you'" (*Garcia Girls* 226-227). Such a statement illuminates the extreme patriarchal sentiments upon which the entire infrastructure of Dominican politics is built as Trujillo emerges as a divine authority figure, capable of employing *guardia* to fulfill his every desire.

Rafael Leonidas Trujillo's rise to power in Dominican politics is directly correlated with the United States occupation of the country and the establishment of the national police force. As a former security guard at a sugar plantation, Trujillo was noticed: "American commanders, impressed by the young man's intelligence and leadership ability, promoted him rapidly through the ranks" (Gonzales 72). With his foot in the "door of political power," Trujillo quickly gained total control of the country, proclaiming himself president in 1930. Described as a "genius of power," Trujillo's regime was characterized by corruption and brutality as he seized complete control of his people through the employment of fear (Crasweller 4). This fear was constructed to pit Dominican against fellow Dominican: "No man could know whether his neighbor, or his lifelong friends, or even his brother or son or wife, might inform against him…Everyone feared. No one trusted anyone" (as cited in Gonzales 117). In reference to this drive for complete power invoked through fear, Crasweller states, "The extraordinary need for adulation and for the proliferation of his name reflected…his knowledge of the political uses of vanity and adulation" (74). Such a statement exposes the striking sentiments of *machismo* that Trujillo possesses as a Dominican patriarch, as *the* Dominican authority figure. Abelardo R. Nanita, Secretary of the President, articulates this notion of divinity and supreme authority in his 1957 *Biography of a Great Leader*. This biography, written at the height of Trujillo's reign of corruption expresses the sheer glorification which the dictator enjoyed as "father of his country" (104). Nanita declares, with painfully flowery diction that this beloved "father" has restored a magnificent sense of peace to the tumultuous Dominican government; "Blessed be a thousand times this Peace created by Trujillo and eternal glory to the powerful hand that has brought it about!" (105). This declaration exposes a strong notion of patriarchal power, as Trujillo, and his people as well, regard this leader as an authority in possession of total power. Alvarez is adeptly in tune with this concept of Trujillo's deification as "dangerous, the same god-making impulse that had created our tyrant" (as cited in Rich 169). Clearly, Trujillo's firm belief

in masculine power, which placed him as the over-arching father of all other Dominicans, resulted in the creation of a cultural environment that promoted patriarchal ideals.

Though Trujillo's regime was characterized by severe brutality and corruption, the dictator himself possessed various insecurities that weakened the image of the ultimate authority figure that he desired to portray. Any ruler can espouse fear in his people and gain control through the employment of horrendous torturing of innocent individuals. But what can such a ruler do when his people unite in an effort to combat this oppression? Alvarez's *In the Time of the Butterflies* explores the story of the Mirabel sisters, who serve as a stirring example of Dominican resistance to the oppression of Trujillo. This novel reveals that the true nature of Trujillo's power is revealed as the feminine resistance of the Mirabel sisters provokes the insecurity of this tyrannical dictator. As these sisters, known throughout the underground as *Las Mariposas* (the butterflies), combat the oppression of Trujillo's regime, the dictator himself "confides to one of his sycophants that only two problems remain to be solved; the Catholic Church and the Mirabel sisters" in his achievement of total power over his country (Diedrich 69). During November of 1960, "incensed by the opposition of these attractive women whom he would have preferred as bedroom conquests, Trujillo instructed Johnny Abbes Garcia [head of the secret police] to 'terminate the Mirabel problem'"(Diedrich 69). This order was fulfilled on November 25, 1960 as the Mirabel sisters returned from a routine visit to their imprisoned husbands in Puerto Plata. On their descent from the mountain prison, their jeep was ambushed by secret police and the *Las Mariposas* were executed along with their driver. "The lifeless, bloodied bodies of the three women and the driver were dragged out of the field and thrown into their jeep. The jeep was driven to the edge of a precipice and hurled over" in Trujillo's attempt to explain the deaths as a tragic accident. This brutal slaughtering of innocent individuals was intended to alleviate the thorny resistance to oppression that the Mirabel sisters had forced into the dictator's side, thus restoring *El Jefe*'s (The Boss) absolute authority. However as historian Bernard Diedrich notes:

> the cowardly killing of three beautiful women in such a manner had a greater effect on Dominicans than most of Trujillo's other crimes. It did something to their machismo. They could never forgive Trujillo this crime. More than Trujillo's fight with the Church or the United States, or the fact that he was being isolated by the world as a political leper, the Mirabels' murder tempered the resolution of the conspirators plotting his end (Diedrich 71-72).

Thus, the legacy of the feminine resistance of the Mirabel sisters effectively reverses the patriarchal constraints of Trujillo's dictatorship thereby illuminating the inherent weakness of such a patriarchal façade.

Each of Alvarez's three novels exhibits the negative effect that the Trujillo regime has on Dominicans as characters either flee from the country to escape his tyranny, or in the case of the Mirabel sisters, suffer the ultimate consequence; death. The influence of Trujillo's patriarchal and absolute rule is disclosed immediately in *In the Time of the Butterflies* as Dedé Mirabel remembers a scene from her childhood. As the Mirabels relax quietly on their porch one evening, the high-minded teenage Minerva makes a remark about the Dominican political environment. To this Papi Mirabel responds "a little loudly" that Trujillo is in need of assistance in terms of ruling the country (*Butterflies* 10). Dedé's memory following this remark encapsulates the sheer terror that *El Jefe* maintains in his country as she states: "Suddenly the dark fills with spies who are paid to hear things and report them down at Security. Don Enrique claims Trujillo needs help in running this country. Words repeated, distorted, words recreated by those who might bear them a grudge, words stitched to words until they are the winding sheet the family will be buried in when their bodies are found dumped in a ditch, their tongues cut off for speaking too much" (*Butterflies* 10). In spite of the cloak of brutality which is draped over the country by Trujillo's rule, Dominicans must broadcast their undying devotion to their great leader should they wish to remain safe from the evils of the regime. This notion is articulated by Minerva as she describes the national atmosphere during her time at school in 1944. As she refers to the new history book, "with a picture of you-know-who embossed on the cover" she receives at the beginning of the school year Minerva states, "Our history now followed the plot of the Bible. We Dominicans had been waiting for centuries for the arrival of our Lord Trujillo on the scene. It was pretty disgusting" (*Butterflies* 24). Minerva's acquired understanding of the true atrocities of Trujillo's regime exists as the foundation for her attainment of a feminist socialist consciousness as she matures into a rebellious young Dominican.

Minerva Mirabel's resistance to the political oppression of Trujillo's government is best expressed through her actions at the Discovery Day Dance, which serves as a critical point in Minerva's movement of resistance to this cruel dictator. The scene of the Discovery Day Dance takes place in one of Trujillo's magnificent mansions where all of the wealthy and dignified Dominicans in the area have gathered to celebrate Columbus' discovery of the New World. In reality, this event is simply another occasion during which Trujillo will be honored as the saintly and heroic ruler of the Dominican Republic. Trujillo, who has clearly taken a physical liking to Minerva, requests that she dance with him, which initiates an uncomfortable exchange of words between the rebellious Mirabel daughter and *El Jefe*. As they dance, Trujillo attempts to seduce Minerva as he specifically voices his desire to "conquer this jewel [Minerva] as El Conquistador conquered our island" (*Butterflies* 99). The dictator's use of the word

"conquer" highlights the extreme machismo sentiments he possesses in terms of the sense of power and control he associates with his romantic relationships. Trujillo continues to over-step his boundaries as Minerva narrates the conclusion of their dance: "He yanks me by the wrist, thrusting his pelvis at me in a vulgar way, and I can see my hand in an endless slow motion rise –a mind all its own –and come down on the astonished, made-up face" (*Butterflies* 100). This profound incident marks the beginning of Trujillo's formulation of dislike and fear concerning the opposition which Minerva and the other Mirabel sisters begin to voice in resistance to his regime. This literal slap in the face which Minerva bestows upon *El Jefe* serves the figurative purpose of awakening his awareness to the complex network of resistance which exists under his very nose. Essentially, Minerva's shocking blow represents a blatant statement of resistance from the Dominican people who are tired of the silence and fear in which they live under the regime of this horrendous dictator. Clearly, the distinctly patriarchal characteristics of Trujillo's rule provoke opposition from not only the Mirabels, but also the entire country, as Dominicans struggle to break free from the confines of *El Jefe*'s tyranny.

Throughout each of the three novels discussed in this study, Alvarez skillfully weaves the customs and patriarchal tendencies of families into a commentary on the way in which these ideals penetrate the Dominican home environment. An integral aspect of each familial environment is the notion of masculine superiority, which is related to the concept of *machismo*. In each of the families Alvarez portrays, the father figure exists as the unquestionable authority figure who should be honored and respected for his duties as the protector and provider of the household. In *In the Time of the Butterflies*, the character of Papi Mirabel exemplifies this typical role of the family patriarch in regards to his attitudes and actions. Early on in the novel, it becomes clear that Papi Mirabel is ashamed of his failure to produce a male offspring, which negatively affects his self-concept in light of the macho Dominican culture. As Alvarez provides a description of each of the four Mirabel daughters, she refers to the youngest, Maria Teresa, as Papi's "final desperate attempt at a boy misfiring" (*Butterflies* 8). In an effort to "save his masculinity" and produce male offspring, Papi Mirabel breaks the ties of family loyalty and proper moral conduct when he engages in extramarital affairs with a female worker on his plantation.

As Papi attempts to produce male lineage with his "family on the side," Minerva inadvertently discovers his secret while on a "getaway rampage" though the plantation (*Butterflies* 85). Already in a frantic state concerning her father's meddling with private letters she received from the well-known political agitator, Lío Morales, the uncovering of this affair is not taken lightly. As Minerva notices her father's Ford parked outside one of the huts of his *campesino* workers, she observes four young girls standing outside,

"staring with their Mirabel eyes" (*Butterflies* 85). It takes but a second for Minerva to compile the evidence and conclude that these girls are indeed her stepsisters as she questions the eldest, "Who is your father? Do you have a brother?" (*Butterflies* 86). To this reply Minerva notes, "It was delicious revenge to hear them murmur, 'No señora.' Papa was not going to get the son he wanted, after all!" Such a reaction indicates the tremendous significance which is associated with bearing male offspring and exposes the nature of patriarchal ideals with respect to Papi Mirabel and his family.

To demonstrate further the influence of patriarchal ideals regarding Papi's affair, the conversation between Papi and Minerva in which he provides an explanation for his misdoings is particularly significant. When Minerva questions him for a reason why he pursued these extramarital relations, Papi Mirabel replies, "*cosas de los hombres*; things a man does" (*Butterflies* 92). Minerva's narration of this moment goes on to comment on Papi's explanation by exclaiming, "So that was supposed to excuse him, macho that he was!" (*Butterflies* 92). Such a statement is indicative of the *machismo* belief that men are entitled to certain actions for which they are excused due to their superior gender.

In the aftermath of this crushing discovery, the Mirabel women struggle to reconstruct the image of their father, the supposed anchor and ultimate provider of the family. In particular, Minerva and Mami emerge from this incident with an altered understanding of the Mirabel patriarch. During another heated debate concerning his affair, Papi violently slaps Minerva as he declares, "'That's to remind you that you owe your father some respect!'" (*Butterflies* 89). Such a declaration is Papi's obvious attempt to cling to his *machismo* ideals of honor and male superiority. However, Minerva's revelation which occurs after this blow is extremely revealing of the true motives of Papi's words and actions. As Minerva describes her newfound understanding, "It hit me right then and there, it hit me harder than his slap: I was much stronger than Papa, Mama was much stronger. He was the weakest of all. It was he who would have the hardest time living with the shabby choices he'd made" (*Butterflies* 89). Minerva's statement signifies that the patriarchal ideal upon which Dominican society is built is to some degree a façade behind which resides a complex network of feminine strength.

Such an environment of blurred gender roles is revealed through the character of Mami Mirabel in her response to her husband's adultery as well as in her role in the household and family. As Minerva noted, Mami was "much stronger than Papi," which contradicts the image of patriarchal power that Papi has painted of himself. However, specific examples exist within the novel that demonstrate that Papi does not always "wear the pants" in the Mirabel household. The first instance of Mami's superior role concerning family decisions occurs early in the novel when the issue of the daughters attending boarding school is raised. Mami was strongly in favor of the girls enrolling,

presumably due her desire for her children to be literate, unlike herself. However, Papi resists with the vague argument, "What's wrong with us" [like we are] (*Butterflies* 12). Ultimately Papi "caved in, but said one of us had to stay to help mind the store. He always had to add a little something to whatever Mami came up with. Mami said he was just putting his mark on everything so no one could say Enrique Mirabel didn't wear the pants in his family" (*Butterflies* 12). Such a statement bears the implication that Papi's role is inferior to Mami's, but must exist behind the façade of male patriarchy and dominance. Additionally, Mami's clout in decision-making is expressed when Papi is arrested by Trujillo's SIM. While Papi "nods absently" voicing pathetic excuses, Mami valiantly proclaims, "If he goes, I go" (*Butterflies* 103). Clearly, in crucial times of decision, Mami is the Mirabel parent who asserts herself and maintains her powerful voice. In response to Mami's courageous offer to be condemned with her husband, Papi nods, "looking like he'll agree to anything" (*Butterflies* 103). Again, Papi demonstrates an inferior familial position, which contrasts with the patriarchal ideals and superiority he generally expresses.

Through the depiction of the character of Patria in *In the Time of the Butterflies*, Alvarez also displays the patriarchal norms in Dominican culture. In reference to her marriage, Patria states, "Like every woman of her house, I disappeared into what I loved coming up now and then for air. I mean, an overnight trip to my girlfriend's, a special set to my hair, and maybe a yellow dress" (*Butterflies* 148). In such a statement, Alvarez portrays Patria as a Dominican woman who allows herself to be drowned in the patriarchal ideals of her society, only surfacing for a few feminine luxuries. Throughout Patria's portion of the novel, she repeatedly refers to the macho nature of her husband, Pedrito and her submissive role in their marriage. For example, Pedrito vulgarly refers to the nature of the couple's afternoon "siestas" in front of their teenage children, Nelson and Noris, which displays his macho tendencies. Clearly, the influence of macho ideals not only affects the physical aspects of her marriage environment but also manifests itself inside her mind, resulting in her skewed and inferior sense of identity.

Additionally, Pedrito possesses a profound pride in his *patrimonio*, the land he farms, which has belonged to his family for three generations. Pedrito assumes that his son, Nelson, will follow in his footsteps, which Patria knows to be against the eldest son's wishes. However, initially, Patria refuses to argue with Pedrito because doing so would be harmful to his self-concept and pride in his patrimony. In this way, Patria demonstrates her submissive role and compliance with the patriarchal tendencies of her family environment. Though here "patriarchal indoctrination causes her, at first to accept the belief that women should not be involved in public affairs of politics," Patria eventually affirms her commitment to the liberation of her country from the patriarchal

oppression of Trujillo. (Stefanko 60). This adjustment is verified when the Mirabel sisters become involved in the underground movement to remove Trujillo, causing Patria's inferior role to morph into one of decisive power over her husband. When Patria informs Pedrito that she has joined her sisters in the resistance, he replies with fury stating, "Your first responsibility is to your children, your husband, and your home!" (*Butterflies* 166). It is at this climatic moment that Patria asserts herself as a superior power as she states, "I wanted to hurt the man in front of me. And so I told him. His first born did not want his patrimony. And what was more, I knew for a fact that he [Nelson] was already in the underground with his uncles" (*Butterflies* 116). Upon hearing this, Pedrito succumbs to the wishes of his wife and allows the family's involvement in the underground movement. Pedrito's hasty reversal suggests that perhaps his demonstrated dominance in the familial environment was less substantial than he led others, specifically Patria, to believe. Similar to the dynamic of Papi and Mami Mirabel's marriage, Patria and Pedrito appear to exhibit the same network of feminine strength behind a front of male superiority.

As the Mirabel sisters begin to carry the revolutionary torch following Minerva's lead, they approach Dedé with an invitation to join the underground movement. However, as Stefanko concisely quotes concerning Dedé's character, "she chooses to remain loyal to tradition, standing by her husband and his decision to remain disengaged from the political sedition" (60). This loyalty to traditional patriarchal values is represented repeatedly as Dedé defers responsibilities and decisions to her husband, Jaimito. When her sisters ask for permission to use Dedé's farm as a secret meeting location, she responds that she must first ask Jaimito. As a rebuttal to the disappointed reaction she receives from her sisters, Dedé retorts, "What? I should go over Jaimito's head? It's only fair. He's the one farming the land, he's responsible for this place" (*Butterflies* 176). Dedé's statement of her inferior role in the household confirms her that notion that patriarchal ideals are embedded in her own concept of self. The excessively patriarchal personality of her husband also contributes to Dedé's submissive state of existence, which is demonstrated profoundly in the naming of their children. Each of their five boys bears the name of Jaimito, differing only by middle name. Clearly, Jaimito is the man of the family, a role which he obviously exaggerates due to the feminine environment in which he was raised. The only son of eight children, "Jaimito had taken the man-of-the-family role with a vengeance. Even his mother said he was worse than Don Jaime [his father] had ever been" (*Butterflies* 187). In light of this overly macho atmosphere, Dedé finds herself lost, unable to escape the familial restraints which bind her. She gives this as a reason, when asked why she did not unite with her sister's in their cause: "Back in those days, we women followed our husbands. Such a silly excuse"

(*Butterflies* 171-172). Similar to the manner in which Patria escapes the patriarchal confines of her family environment, Dedé also realizes that she must escape; however, for Dedé, this realization comes too late.

In *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*, Alvarez's depiction of Papi Garcia reveals similar macho tendencies. The father of four girls, the patriarch of the Garcia family is continually reminded of the characteristics of his offspring with the popular exclamation, "All girls, no boys!" (*Garcia Girls* 40). In Alvarez's native culture, not having a son is a sign of weakness, as is expressed by Mami's apologetic reply to the popular comment, "No. Just the four girls" (*Garcia Girls* 41). Alvarez, in a narrative section about the Garcia family, comments, "No one really knew if he [Papi] was secretly displeased in his heart of hearts that he had never had a son" (*Garcia Girls* 40). However, the apologetic response of Mami Garcia seems to answer such a question, as the fundamental truths about Dominican culture are revealed through her feelings of inadequacy. As is demonstrated by the significance of macho ideals throughout this novel, Alvarez provides a clear portrayal of a culture which is deeply rooted in patriarchal principles.

In addition to the patriarchal ideals displayed in *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*, Alvarez also makes statements concerning the way in which these values are altered when characters leave the Island for America. In this novel, characters adjust to certain principles as a result of their assimilation into a new American culture. For example, the actions of Cousin Mundin, who is around the same age as the teenage Garcia girls, exemplify this notion of altered patriarchal ideals in America, as compared to the Dominican Republic. One of the Garcia girls, Yolanda, remarks on Cousin Mundin's behavior as she states, "'When he's in the States, where he went to prep school and is now in college, he's one of us, our buddy. But back on the Island, he struts and turns macho, needling us with the unfair advantage being male here gives him'" (*Garcia Girls* 127). Similarly, the once feisty and rebellious Fifi Garcia, retracts backwards into an identity of submission when she is sent from America to live on the Island for a year as punishment for her feminist behaviors. Here she surrenders to the patriarchal culture and her new fiancée, "letting him tell her what she can and cannot do" (*Garcia Girls* 120). In constructing such characters, Alvarez emphasizes the significance of patriarchal ideals in her native culture as they contrast decidedly with the more liberal backdrop of the American culture.

In the Name of Salomé also displays the intense patriarchal tendencies upon which the foundation of Dominican culture rests. Both Salomé's father and her husband Pancho exhibit severe examples of *machismo* with respect to sexuality and assumed male superiority. From an early age, Salomé is introduced to her father's macho nature as he

bluntly educates her on the roles of men and women in sexual relationships. As Papi drunkenly quotes to the teenage Salomé, "women age from the bottom up, men from the bottom down" (*Salomé* 55). Such a statement encapsulates the offensive manner in which gender distinctions are referred to by males such as Papi. Similarly, concerning the negative response Salomé receives from the public for the passionate nature of her poetry she questions, "Why was it all right for a man to satisfy his passion, but for a women to do so was as good as signing her death warrant?" (*Salomé* 144-145). This inquiry provides a poignant example of the inequality which exists concerning gender roles in familial and social environments. In a similar manner, Pancho speaks to the household with a privileged and superior tone, which is reflected in his response to the family's rearrangement of hired help. When Pancho's preferred maid is relocated to the family's beach house, he protests, "But who will serve me breakfast?" a statement which painfully portrays his typically macho expectations (*Salomé* 99). Additionally, in the wake of Salomé's illness, an argument ensues between Pancho and Salomé's doctor concerning which treatment is best for her tuberculosis. As Salomé describes this argument, it becomes clear that macho ideals have eclipsed the true purpose of the discussion. She comments, "the two doctors were engaged in a medical cockfight of sorts. Both had forgotten about me" (*Salomé* 261). By referring to the argument as a "cockfight," Alvarez, through the voice of Salomé, is effectively commenting on the notion of male dominance which exists in the culture of her homeland.

Finally, the failure of Pancho and Salomé's marriage is also directly related to patriarchal ideals of male superiority. Similar to Papi Mirabel's affair with his *campesina* mujer, Pancho also seeks external satisfaction when studying in Paris. Upon returning to the island, Pancho expects Salomé to simply disregard his extramarital affairs, a demonstration of his macho ideals. However, Salomé will not accept his excuse, will not exonerate him upon the grounds of his gender. Rather, she states with conviction, "Your room is down the hallway. From now on, you go your way, and I go mine" (*Salomé* 256). Such an example of feminine convictions exposes a crucial point in life of Salomé as she begins to escape the confines of the patriarchal society in which she was previously bound.

In addition to the prominent patriarchal characters of Papi and Pancho, *In the Name of Salomé* provides a broader example of a patriarchal community through the description of characters and events. One such example occurs when Salomé visits a poetry meeting at a rich Dominican household. Prior to the meeting, Salomé is coached regarding proper female etiquette in social settings. She states, "Of course, women guests are not allowed to participate in the discussion. I've been told to keep my mouth shut unless asked 'And what does the fair sex have to say about the future of fatalism'"

(*Salomé* 129). Clearly, the expectations of female involvement in the Dominican social environment are closely aligned with patriarchal tendencies of male superiority. To further display this sentiment, Salomé's description of the welcome given to her by the host of the party is particularly revealing of this patriarchal code of conduct: "Don Noel, looking every inch the paterfamilias, offered us each an arm, but at just that moment, the minister of culture and his wife arrived…We found our way to the spot where some of the older ladies seemed to be congregating, and sat down wordlessly" (*Salomé* 129). This seemingly trivial action succinctly identifies a critical issue in the Dominican culture: in a society with a patriarchal foundation, women are briefly appreciated and regarded, but ultimately are pushed aside to fulfill their silent roles as the inferior members of their society.

As is clearly demonstrated throughout these three novels, Alvarez creates characters who expose the patriarchal values of the Dominican society and the way in which these values affect and hinder others. Specifically, Alvarez seeks to display the connection between these patriarchal values and the creation of a feminist-socialist consciousness. As women in her novels "shape their identity and negotiate the vicissitudes of love," so too are they forced to "respond to social and cultural forces" (Simon 232). The creation of such an environment that combats the oppression of traditional patriarchal forces is best demonstrated by characters in *In the Time of the Butterflies* due to the inherently political nature of the plot. In this novel, "each of the *Butterflies* represents a different facet of the political awakening of the Dominicans to the evils of Rafael Trujillo's dictatorship, as well as their need to foment a revolution" (Sirias 58). Through deliberate character development Alvarez skillfully portrays this gradual realization of the extreme patriarchal oppression which exists in their society. In Part one of the novel, the four Mirabel daughters are examined within the context of their childhood and adolescence, as each matures and becomes aware of society outside of their family. As Alvarez progressively heightens the political abrasiveness of the plot, characters' "eyes are opened, through various events, to the cruelty and injustices of Trujillo's dictatorship. Each sister, on her own, but with Minerva as catalyst, comes to the painful awareness that Dominicans live in terror of their own government" (Sirias 55-56). The development of Minerva's character particularly reflects the struggle against patriarchal oppression as she voices a resound opposition to the conventional constraints into which she was born.

Minerva's voice of opposition is first expressed in Dedé's introductory passage as she strongly declares her ideals to the family. In response to Mama's anti-feminist remark "Just what we need, skirts in the law!" Minerva objects; "It is just what this country needs. It's about time we women had a voice in running our country" (*Butterflies*

10). Following Dedé's section, Minerva's narrative moves on to describe the maturation of herself and her sisters. Through her opening lines, Minerva sets the tone for the feminist-socialist consciousness as her voice is the first to emerge from oblivion (Stefanko 59). This opening begins with Minerva's memory of watching her rabbits in their pens. She recalls feeling sorry for the creatures, confined by their wired prison-cage and likens herself to the same sense of confinement. However, upon opening the cage door in attempt to free one rabbit, it refuses to budge. Minerva's response, "Silly bunny. You're nothing at all like me," (11) exemplifies the notion that she is not confined by the oppression of her character or gender. Such a realization of self-assertion and liberation is absolutely crucial in Minerva's development of a feminist-socialist consciousness. Following the example of the caged bunny, Minerva then moves on to equate this allegory to her escape from her family's estate to boarding school. She reflects, "And that's how I got free. I don't mean just going to sleep away school on a train with a trunkful of new things. I mean in my head after I got to Immaculada and met Sintia and saw what happened to Lina and realized that I'd just left a small cage to go into a bigger one, the size of our whole country" (*Butterflies* 13). Such a statement effectively links Minerva's childhood to the awakening of political knowledge which will dictate her adulthood as Alvarez foreshadows the impending events which will thrust Minerva onto the stage of political activism.

Upon entering Immaculada, Minerva is confronted with several ideas and occurrences which forever alter her perception of the world in which she lives, specifically with respect to Trujillo's regime. Minerva's prior respect for her country's dictator quickly turns to hatred through the stories of two classmates, Sintia and Lina. Sintia, dubbed a "charity-student," emerges as Minerva's first and closest friend in Immaculada. Minerva soon becomes aware that Sintia's apparent poverty is a result of Trujillo's destruction of her family. Although reluctantly at first, Minerva exhibits growing hatred and disbelief as Sintia tells the horrid story of Trujillo, who is responsible for the deaths of multiple uncles and her brother. This knowledge signifies Minerva's definitive entrance into the realm of political activism as she now comprehends the truths of Trujillo's tyranny and oppression. This coming of age is reinforced by the arrival of Minerva's "complications" on the eve that Sintia tells her story: "This event significantly coincides with the process of de-mythification of Trujillo," as Minerva has reached a crucial juncture in her life (Zakrzewski 105). Furthermore, these physical and mental complications that Minerva experiences that evening "invoke the complications of knowledge and power within the context of Trujillo's repressive regime" (Stefanko 59). Essentially, the acquisition of this new knowledge presents Minerva with the complex dilemma as opposition of Trujillo can have dangerous consequences. Nonetheless,

Minerva, the "uncageable bunny," is prepared to take this dangerous step into political activism. This preparation is further solidified when Minerva's schoolmate, the beautiful and elegant Lina, becomes one of Trujillo's mistresses. "Used and abandoned, Lina ends up locked away in a mansion behind iron gates," which demonstrates Trujillo's repulsive patriarchal liberties. In Minerva's eyes, "Lina's story reinforces the enmeshing of sexuality with issues of knowledge, power and politics, thus securing a foundation for Minerva's feminist-socialism….She also begins to engage in a critique of the government and the record of history that seeks to deny her memories of 'herstory.' This critique quickly leads to involvement in politically subversive activities" (Stefanko 59). As a result of these transformative events in Minerva's adolescence, she later moves on to be a stronghold of underground resistance to the Trujillo regime, which ultimately results in her imprisonment and murder.

Minerva's interaction with her father's "second family" also signifies important alterations in her feminist-socialist consciousness. Upon first discovering that Papa has been unfaithful, Minerva reacts malevolently, as she is unable to accept her father's betrayal. However, in the midst of her resentment, Minerva steps in to assist Papa's other family when he is imprisoned. As she delivers the weekly paycheck to their mother, Minerva questions her: "The girls are not in school are they? May I enroll them when I get back? You know as well as I do that without schooling we women have even fewer choices open to us" (*Butterflies* 105). Though she could feel spiteful towards Papi's "family on the side," Minerva recognizes the extreme importance of assisting her stepsisters. Papi later question Minerva as to why she reacts so kindly to her stepsisters to which she replies, "Things a woman does" (*Butterflies* 92). This response imitates Papi's macho explanation for why he engaged in his affair; "things a man does." It is with this simple phrase that Minerva reveals the complex network of feminine strength that exists in her country even as a patriarchal facade casts its shadow on all inhabitants.

While Minerva Mirabel exhibits traits of political activism and resistance of oppression from an early age, the other Mirabel sisters acquire this activism in a more gradual manner as they mature in this turbulent time in Dominican history. The eldest Mirabel sister, Patria, is portrayed initially as the steadfast religious sister who operates within the prescribed gender roles of the Dominican culture. In contrast to Minerva's approval of the underground movement to remove *El Jefe*, Patria comments: "I couldn't understand why Minerva was getting so worked up. It's dirty business, that's why we women shouldn't get involved" (*Butterflies* 51). Clearly, the patriarchal confines of the Dominican culture contribute to the suppression of Patria's desires to resist the political oppression of Trujillo's regime. However, Patria soon reaches a revelation in which she acquires the necessary strength and awareness to firmly establish her position as a resistor

of Trujillo as she joins Minerva in the underground movement. As Patria examines a picture of the hated dictator, she realizes, "My family had not been personally hurt by Trujillo…But others had been suffering great losses. There were the Perozos, not a man left in the family…I had heard, but I had not believed" (*Butterflies* 53). From this point on, Patria displays an alternative awareness of her position within the paradigm of the Dominican culture as she sympathizes with the underground movement, thus acquiring her feminist-socialist voice. A second revelation occurs when Patria embarks on a religious retreat that serves as the catalyst that confirms her metamorphosis from shackled housewife to political activist. During this retreat, Trujillo orders the military to attack a unit of rebellious citizens who had been hiding in the mountains near the town in which the retreat took place. As bombs are exploding in a harsh interruption of the church retreat, Patria notices several boys from the underground movement running towards her in their desperate attempt escape. Patria's painful account of this gruesome incident reveals her final revelation as she states: "I could see them clearly; their faces bloodied and frantic…the third kept on running towards us. I looked in his face. He was a boy no older than Noris [her daughter]. Maybe that's why I cried out, 'Get down son!' His eyes found mine just as the shot hit him square in the back. I saw the wonder in his young face as the life drained out of him, and I thought, Oh my God, he's one of mine!" (*Butterflies* 162). In response to this occurrence, Patria emerges on the stage of political activism as she explicitly states that "coming down the mountain, I was a changed woman" (*Butterflies* 162). Patria displays her altered sense of feminist-socialist consciousness as she declares, "I'm not going to sit back and watch my babies die, Lord, even if that's what You in Your great wisdom decide" (*Butterflies* 162). Such a statement, which reveals resistance not only to the political patriarch, Trujillo, but also to God, the "ultimate patriarch," is indicative of Patria's escape from the confines of patriarchal culture as she joins Minerva in the growing network of outward feminine strength in the Dominican Republic.

The transformation of the youngest Mirabel sister, Maria Theresa, is perhaps the most drastic of all the sisters as she emerges from utter naivety to embrace the atmosphere of political activism. This is partially due to Maria Theresa's young age, thereby rendering her outside of the realm of understanding the atrocities of Trujillo's regime. This childhood naivety is displayed in Maria Theresa's diary as she voices her admiration of her nation's president; "I am taking these few minutes to wish *El Jefe* Happy Benefactor's Day with all my heart. I feel so lucky that we have him for a president. I am even born the same month he is. I keep thinking it shows something special about my character" (*Butterflies* 37). This statement not only exemplifies the deification which applies to the country's view of Trujillo, but also demonstrates the

ironic idea that Trujillo is possessing of an admirable character. As history has proved, and Maria Theresa later discovers, such a naïve conception of the Dominican leader is utterly erroneous. As Maria Theresa utilizes her journal as a means by which to develop her identity, she becomes progressively less naïve, particularly with regards to the patriarchal culture in which she resides. As she becomes aware of the evils of Trujillo's patriarchal regime, Maria Theresa struggles to maintain a positive image of her familial patriarch, Papi. However, upon Papi's death, Maria Theresa becomes aware of her father's extramarital affairs and alternate family, which serves as a crucial point in her development of a feminist-socialist consciousness. Again, this is revealed through her diary as she comments on her father's mistress: "I can't believe she came to the funeral mass with her girls, adding four more slaps to her big blow. I hate men. I really hate them" (*Butterflies* 118). This incident marks the juncture between naivety and maturation as Maria Theresa surfaces from the depths of cultural oppression and begins to assume her place alongside her sisters in their resistance to Trujillo. This revolution is gradual; as Maria Theresa expresses her approval of Minerva's political activism, she mentions that she herself "would never take up a gun" (*Butterflies* 123). Later, as Maria Theresa is living with Minerva and her family, she discovers the truth about her sister's recent secretive actions: "Manolo and Minerva have explained everything. I told Minerva right out, I wanted to join. I could feel my breath coming short with the excitement of it all. I don't want to be babied anymore" (*Butterflies* 142). Once again, Maria Theresa's journal entries demonstrate her development of a feminist-socialist consciousness as her shifting attitudes and ideals are displayed. Ultimately, Maria Theresa assumes the nickname of *Mariposa* #2 as she devotes herself entirely to the underground movement, to which she surrenders her life in pursuit of liberation.

Known as the "sister who survived," Dedé Mirabel presents an alternative example of a Dominican female acquiring a feminist-socialist consciousness. Though Dedé makes steps towards freeing herself from the patriarchal shackles of her marriage, she ultimately "remains loyal to tradition, standing by her husband and his decision to remain disengaged from the political sedition" (Stefanko 60). During the passages in the novel in which Alvarez describes the teenage years of the Mirabel sisters, it is evident that Dedé possesses a traditional understanding of her role as a female in the Dominican culture. This is expressed in Alvarez's description of the teenage Dedé: "Truly she has always considered sports – like politics – something for men" (*Butterflies* 69). Dedé's conventional sense of female inferiority is questioned when she becomes aware that Lío Morales, the man to whom she feels romantic attraction, is in fact an enemy of the state. Previously unaware of Lío's political beliefs Dedé states that she "didn't know Lío was a communist. She had assumed such people would be self-serving and wicked. But Lío

was a fine young man with lofty ideals and a compassionate heart. Why then, Minerva was an enemy of the state. And if she, Dedé, thought long and hard about what was right and wrong, she would no doubt be an enemy of the state as well" (*Butterflies* 75). Such a revelatory passage exposes a shift in Dedé's ideals with regards to the acquisition of a feminist-socialist consciousness. However, for Dedé, an awareness of the need to break the confines of a patriarchal culture never transforms into a concrete resolve or sense of action, as she chooses not to join her sisters in their underground movement. Following an argument with her intensely patriarchal husband, Dedé is presented with an opportunity to leave the constraints of her marriage and participate in the revolutionary cause to which she has already internally committed herself. When faced with the prospect of actually taking part in the cause, Dedé crumbles, but not because of her failure to transcend the patriarchal restrictions of her culture. Dedé states, "Jaimito was just an excuse. She was afraid, plain and simple" (*Butterflies* 184). To further demonstrate the fear which Dedé possesses in terms of liberating herself she remarks, "The problem is when I open my eyes and see for myself" (*Butterflies* 189). Again, the notion is presented that Dedé's failure to act against the oppression of Trujillo's regime is an inherent component of her character, not the result of her submission to traditional roles of women in a patriarchal society. Though Dedé wishes she could be brave and join *Las Mariposas* in their resistance to oppression, she is unable to access the inner strength necessary to resist despite the obvious negative consequences of participating in the underground movement. However, Dedé bravely emerges from the tragedy of her sisters' deaths as she "recognizes courage as her responsibility to narrate and renew the story of Las Mariposas" (Stefanko 60). Just as Trujillo fed the revolutionary fire with his execution of the Mirabel sisters, the retelling of their story places their legend in a role of continued importance in the Dominican quest for liberation. As a survivor, the story that Dedé tells "embodies the feminist-socialist paradigms her sisters generated in their politically subversive activities, thus establishing the resistant and liberatory power of narrative" (Stefanko 60). Essentially, since Dedé can tell the story of her sisters, their sacrifice was not in vain as their legend continues to have real power in the world today. This notion of the power of writing to convey worldly truths and initiate change is an essential goal of Alvarez's works.

In *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents,* the four daughters also redefine their cultural identities when in America as they make steps towards escaping the patriarchal confines of their native culture. In contrast to a sheltered life on the Island complete with restrictions and chaperones, the Garcia girls quickly adopted cultural tendencies that would be inconceivable in a patriarchal Dominican society. Instead of the Island life, "with chaperones and icky boys with all their macho strutting and unbuttoning

shirts and hairy chest," the Garcia girls learned to love their new and more liberated existence (*Garcia Girls* 109). This cultural revolution is displayed as Yo Garcia describes her sisters' actions when in boarding school: "We learned to forge Mami's signature and went just about everywhere, to dance weekends and football weekends and snow sculpture weekends. We could kiss and not get pregnant. We could smoke and no great aunt would smell us and croak. We began to develop a taste for the American teenage good life, and soon, Island was old hat, man" (*Garcia Girls* 108). Yo's statement reveals a liberation of sorts, as the Garcia girls recognize their freedom and ability to transcend the strict patriarchal restraints which had once bound them. However, this newfound freedom is a bit overdone, which is demonstrated in Mami Garcia's discovery of Fifi's bag of marijuana. Though the girls have begun to assert themselves as strong individuals in society, capable of making their own choices, they are not exempt from the negative consequences of these choices. Mami punishes Fifi by forcing her to spend a year on the Island with her aunts, but does not inform Papi of the cause of this punishment. This failure to recognize the male as the authority figure demonstrates a significant alteration in the family dynamic of the Garcia family: "Mami asked us not to tell Papi unless we wanted wholesale Island confinement. It's possible that Mami had her own little revolution brewing and didn't want to blow the whistle on her girls and thus call attention to herself" (*Garcia Girls* 116). Thus, each of the Garcia women exhibit liberatory behaviors in America as Alvarez exposes an alternative picture of the role of women in Dominican macho society.

In contrast to the amplification of patriarchal ideals when characters return to the Island in *Garcia Girls,* the evolution of Mami Garcia in America demonstrates a sense of feminist awareness; her own "little revolution" (*Garcia Girls* 116). In contrast to her daughter Fifi's backwards movement when she leaves America for the Island, Mami exhibits a positive, forward movement in America as she breaks through the macho constraints which held her captive before her immigration. In America, Mami begins educating herself in such areas as real estate and business management as she dreams of a "bigger-than-family-size life" (*Garcia Girls*, 116). In this way, Mami Garcia is redefining her identity to transcend the patriarchal ideals with which she was forced to comply back on the Island. Instead of yielding to a continued patriarchal family environment in America, Mami takes some of the control away from Papi, especially in the issue of whether or not to return to the Island once the political atmosphere stabilizes. Despite Papi's desire to return to his country, Mami approaches such a return with a combative attitude: "She did not want to go back to the old country where she was only a wife and a mother (and a failed one at that, since she had never provided a required son). Better an independent nobody than a high-class houseslave" (*Garcia Girls* 144). As is

made evident by her thoughts, Mami has invented a new sense of cultural identity, one which is no longer founded solely upon masculine and familial principles, but rather on the capacity all individuals possess to succeed regardless of gender. Just as *las Mariposas* break their prescribed gender roles and attempt to break free from their patriarchal constraints, so too does Mami Garcia as she extracts herself from a previously submissive familial role. Such liberation is indicative of a shift in the patriarchal foundation of Dominican culture as an intricate network of feminine fortitude and independence is exposed.

Salomé Ureña also exhibits the acquisition of a feminist-socialist consciousness in *In the Name of Salomé* as her revolutionary poetry "seizes the imagination of a shackled nation" (*Salomé* 358). As Salomé matures, she becomes aware of the acute political dilemmas which exist in her homeland and she develops her poetic voice as a means by which to express the oppression which she and fellow Dominicans are enduring. At first hiding behind her pen-name, "Hermanita," Salomé develops her feminist-socialist consciousness and reveals her true identity to the Dominican people to whom her poetry is directed. Salomé describes a decoration ceremony in which she is proclaimed the poet laureate of the country, which exposes vital revelations with regards to the place of the female poet in the patriarchal network of Dominican society. Salomé depicts the scene of this celebration as she remarks, "Lines from the poem were recited back to me. I bowed my head, acknowledging the applause….and a man's voice cried out, 'What a man that woman is!' It was meant to be a compliment, I suppose" (*Butterflies* 141). Salomé's internal reflection following this cry from a man in the crowd demonstrates her altering sentiments concerning her identity as a female in a culture which is rooted in machismo ideals. That Salomé recognizes that being referred to as a man is intended to be a compliment, but refuses to accept this notion, indicates that she is emerging from the shackles of the patriarchal culture in which she resides. As the creation of poetry sparks Salomé's awareness of the need to transcend the patriarchal constraints of her culture, she takes steps towards the betterment of the female condition in her country. Primary among such efforts is the establishment of a school for girls in which Salomé and her sister, Ramona, provide the gift of literacy to young Dominican girls. These young girls, who otherwise would be educated in such things as dinner etiquette and sewing, are provided with an academic curriculum as the country moves closer to the eradication of gender inequalities. Just as Minerva and the Mirabel sisters encourage their stepsisters from Papi's "other family" to attend school and become literate, Salomé, with the opening of her school, recognizes that education will be the crucial gateway through which such equality can be accessed in the Dominican Republic. In this school that Salomé opens, "girls are encouraged to read, think, and start asking

'unsettling questions.' Besides her career as a poet, Salomé believes that as an educator, she is also working to change the world" (Simon 233). This belief in the power of education to break the patriarchal constraints which suppress women in the country is also demonstrated in Salomé's relationship with the youthful Tivista, whom she employs as a maid. When Salomé discovers the young woman is attempting to teach herself how to read, she encourages her: "Please continue, you are doing just fine!" (*Salomé* 266). To this Tivista responds, "Ay, Dona Salomé, if my father finds out…" which indicates that in the traditional patriarchal culture of her country, it is considered rebellious, even sinful, for a woman to be educated. In reference to this idea of the silencing of women's voices and opinions in the Dominican Republic, Sirias comments on the effect the novel will have amongst Latinas and other women: "It is the story of a renowned Dominican poet and her daughter who speak on behalf of an entire population that historically has been without a voice. That Julia Alvarez tells their story at all constitutes a significant victory for Latinas" (143). Reaching out against this oppression, Salomé portrays a passionate commitment to education through her encouragement of Tivista and the students in her school. Salomé views such an education as the avenue by which to escape the patriarchal confines of her native culture and find the resounding voices of the women who were silent for so very long.

In addition to the depiction of the life of Salomé Ureña, *In the Name of Salomé* contains a narrative portrayal of her daughter, Camila, who struggles from patriarchal oppression even as she teaches literature in the United States. Camila, who leaves her country in her teenage years, spends a lifetime teaching students at a small university in the Northeast. It is during this time in the United States that Camila develops a new set of moral standards that contrast with the strictly patriarchal beliefs of the Dominican culture from which she fled. Perhaps the most profound example of this redefinition of cultural values is the romantic relationship Camila initiates with her female colleague, Marion. Such a relationship clearly places Camila on the outskirts of cultural appropriateness in terms of what is expected of women in her native culture. Marion, who represents a voice of feminism that beckons to Camila, thrusts her ideals concerning equality onto this impressionable young Dominican. Camila recalls Marion's response to her native culture during a visit both of them took to the Island: "Somebody has to tell these women that they are now living in the twentieth century!" These robust ideals that Marion encourages Camila to adopt are not considered acceptable by Camila's family. Camila describes the painful nature of her relationship with Marion as a "constant tug of war, caught as she was between her wild friend and her family, trying to keep the peace" (*Salomé* 76). However, as is demonstrated by her lack of communication with her family and her continued relationship with Marion through adulthood, Camila has effectively

escaped the traditional constraints of the Dominican culture, emerging with a profound sense of personal feminine strength.

The narrative that Camila Ureña provides throughout *In the Name of Salomé* also provides a commitment to education similar to that of her mother's in terms of a belief in the supreme power of education to break free from the limitations of the Dominican culture. Camila, who spends the majority of her life educating wealthy and privileged individuals at an American university, arrives at the realization that her gift of education is much needed in her native country. At the age of sixty-two, she returns to her homeland, and begins to educate the youth of her country as she finally realizes that individuals must not escape their country in order to provide a movement of resistance. Just as the Mirabel daughters remained in their country and fought against the patriarchal oppression of Trujillo's regime, Camila returns to her country in order to combat the cultural oppression which persists. Surely, as Camila, Salomé and the Mirabels understood, the key to change lies within the hearts and minds of the people and their active resistance to the injustices which exist in the country. Camila articulates her newfound sense of activism in her native country as she refers to the education of her "young compañeros:" "The real revolution could only be won by the imagination. When one of my newly literate students picked up a book and read with hungry pleasure, I knew we were one step closer to the patria we all wanted" (*Salomé* 347). This statement reveals the same commitment that Salomé possessed in her belief in education as the key through which true equality could be made available in the Dominican Republic. Though in the United States Camila was able to adapt her cultural identity to include aspects which were not permissible in her native culture, she returns to her country strengthened by these ideals and committed to the eradication of such patriarchal confines. In the final scene of the novel, Camila encourages a young, illiterate boy to trace the name on her mother's grave, which is symbolic of the continual legacy of Salomé. Camila remarks of this experience: "Together we trace the grooves in the stone, he repeating the name of each letter after me. 'Now you do it by yourself' I say. He tries again and again, until he gets it right" (*Salomé* 353). As is displayed by this touching scenario, Camila has adopted the flame of educational activism that her mother ignited decades ago in an effort to escape the limiting constraints of the culture into which she was born.

Clearly, in each of these three novels, Alvarez has created female characters who expose the complex network of feminine strength and resistance to oppression which exists amongst individuals in the Dominican culture. This creation of a sense of feminist-socialist consciousness takes the form of political resistance in the case of the Mirabel sisters, as well as social oppression regarding the Garcia girls and Salomé. This development of active resistance and feminist consciousness is expressed not only

through the content of these novels, but through the narrative techniques that Alvarez employs. Charlotte Rich, in her article concerning Alvarez's narrative methods pinpoints polyphonic narration as a superb vehicle through which the theme of resistance to oppression is addressed. In addition, Rich states concerning Alvarez's technique: "Other formal qualities of the novel coincide with the fragmentary, diverse nature of its polyphony: its mixed genres, from prose to graphic representations, and the chronological disorder of the novel, which moves back and forth between the present and various points in the past" (171). Specifically, Alvarez's utilization of polyphonic narration further confirms the notions of feminine resistance that her characters acquire throughout their individual struggles. This narrative technique is classified as a compilation of multiple narrative voices and is displayed in all of Alvarez's novels. Each novel is divided into episodic chapters told from the point of view of individual characters. This technique creates "an intimate, immediate sense of the lives of the characters," thus providing a level of depth and connectivity that is not available through traditional monophonic narrative form. As Rich states, "the most obvious manifestation of polyphonic consciousness is the differing voice of the sisters, which cumulatively evoke the experience of living under a political dictatorship in a way that transcends the narrative of each individual voice" (166). In particular, Alvarez's construction of multiple female voices reveals a pattern concerning the acquisition of a feminist-socialist consciousness. In each of these three novels, the shift from third to first person narrative is consistent with each individual's attainment of political and social awareness. In this way, Alvarez effectively utilizes the power of writing in order to demonstrate the effects of feminine resistance to the patriarchal confines of the Dominican culture.

Polyphonic narration is critical to the overall political message of *In the Time of the Butterflies* as the altered political stance of characters is demonstrated through their shift in narrative form. Such polyphonic narration "renders the form and discourse of the text itself metaphoric of the novel's central thematic focus: the Mirabel sisters' work of resistance against a totalizing force, the dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo" (Rich 166). It is not a surprise that the character of Minerva Mirabel, known for her rebellious and feminist personality, presents the first and most obvious example of a shift from third to first person narrative. Minerva, "the most educated and overtly political of the four sisters" reveals her resistance to oppression early on, which is exposed through her adoption of the first person narrative (Rich 166). As opposed to the third person narrative which characterizes the voices of her sisters in the beginning of the novel, Minerva displays a strong sense of identity and conviction to the underground movement. Therefore, Alvarez constructs Minerva's voice to mimic this possession of a strong

feminist-socialist consciousness as she eagerly joins the battle against the oppressive Trujillo.

The youngest Mirabel, Maria Theresa, is the second sister who shifts her narrative stance and speaks in the first person. This shift is consistent with the order in which the individual Mirabel sisters joined the underground movement. Maria Theresa, the second sister to commit herself to the resistance of Trujillo, presents her altered sense of political activism through the employment of first person narrative. Again, this shift in narrative stance is indicative of the acquisition of a more robust political voice as Mate also exhibits her resistance to the patriarchal oppression of Trujillo's regime. Furthermore, the utilization of polyphonic narrative with respect to the development of Maria Theresa, emphasizes the diverse viewpoints of each of the different sisters, as her undying hopefulness contrasts with the Minerva's bold voice and Dedé's submissive silence. Specifically, "Maria Theresa's optimistic voice speaks alongside her sisters, creating a polyphony that traces the experience of political oppression from the varied perspectives of those whom such tyranny usually silenced" (Rich 168). In this way, Alvarez demonstrates her adept ability to convey social truths and combat oppression through utilization of specific narrative techniques.

In terms of the characters of Patria and Dedé in *In the Time of the Butterflies*, Alvarez exercises narrative liberties in the development of the distinct literary voice of each. Each of these Mirabel sisters is characteristically submissive in terms of their adherence to the cultural constraints of the Dominican society. Thus, much of their narration is conveyed through the third person narrative stance, indicating that they have yet to achieve the profound feminist voice of strength which Minerva and Mate demonstrate. However, as Patria experiences her revelation during the religious retreat, she alters her ideals and joins her sisters in the underground movement to topple Trujillo. In a reflection of this altered state of political activism, Patria gradually adopts the first person narrative stance in a manner similar to that of Minerva and Maria Theresa. To further illustrate this shift in consciousness, Rich remarks, the voice of Patria is "temporally unified and highly episodic" as each narrative vignette "illuminates the nature of her psychological growth" (167). Patria herself reflects upon her growing strength as she remarks, "I got braver like a crab going sideways. I inched towards courage the best way I could, helping out with the little things" (*Butterflies* 154). Thus, "the episodic nature of Patria's narrative epitomizes her incremental growth from submissiveness and fear to the courage to take part in a movement that she never would have predicted herself as joining" (Rich 167). Similarly, the narration of Dedé, the "sister who survived," represents a related shift in narrative stance as she too struggles to escape her submissive state of existence in Dominican society. Only in the epilogue of

the novel, which takes place long after the murder of her sisters, does Alvarez adjust the narrative perspective of Dedé to speak in first person rather than third. This alteration signifies her development from uncertainty to a proclaimed acceptance of her role as the sole survivor of *Las Mariposas*. In the final words of Dedé's epilogue, she comes to realize the supreme potential of words as a means by which to understand what her sisters' sacrifice meant and can continue to mean to the Dominican people. Dedé reflects upon a memory of her family sitting on their front porch and remarks: "I'm thinking that something is missing now. And I count them all twice before I realize –it's me, Dedé, the one who survived to tell the story" (*Butterflies* 321). In this way, Alvarez employs the first person narrative to Dedé's epilogue in order to convey her acquisition of an affirmative voice through which *Las Mariposas* resistance to oppression can continue to resonate.

Throughout *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*, Alvarez employs narrative techniques similar to those employed in *In the Time of the Butterflies*, as displayed through a nonlinear plot line and use of polyphonic narration. In this novel, each chapter is its own mini-story, told by an individual character, which at first appears to dissolve any sense of unity that the novel may possess. However, careful consideration of the diverse narrative voices presented in the novel yields a collective and balanced representation of one Dominican family's experience as immigrants in the United States. Just as the varied perspectives of the Mirabel sisters reflect the acquisition of a feminist-socialist consciousness with respect to narrative stance, so too do the Garcia girls exhibit their altered states of consciousness through their narrative portrayals. In this novel, Yolanda is the first Garcia girl to engage in the first person narrative, which demonstrates her attainment of a specifically feminist voice as she combats the cultural oppression which she endures as a sheltered Dominican teenager in the United States. Additionally, Yolanda is the only character who uses the first-person viewpoint more than once, indicating her position as the dominant character in the novel who takes the most pronounced leap outside of the boundaries of the traditional Dominican culture.

With respect to Mami Garcia's escape from the confines of the repressive culture into which she was born, she reasserts her identity in America in a way which exhibits her strength and equality as a female. This is expressed through Alvarez's narrative techniques as she constructs Mami's voice to speak in first person throughout the chapter entitled "Mami, Papi and Yoyo." The title of this chapter reveals the three central figures who are involved in this episode that depicts an argument between Yolanda and her father, and Mami's role as the conciliator. The chapter begins with Mami's point of view in the first person narrative, but shifts mid-way to reflect Yolanda's point of view (Sirias 22). As Mami Garcia asserts her role of authority in the family in

their new home in the United States, she voices her opposition to the traditional patriarchal dominance of her husband. As Mami Garcia invents a new sense of identity in her new home and extracts herself from her previously submissive familial role, this awakening of feminine strength is transferred onto her daughter, Yolanda. Of this Sirias observes, "The interplay illustrates how, at the conclusion of the chapter, the mother will pass on the torch of creativity to her daughter, who is on her way to becoming a writer" (22). Again, Alvarez illuminates the power of writing to signify as the pen emerges as Yolanda's primary weapon, which she uses to transcend the patriarchal and gender-related confines of the culture into which she was born.

Polyphonic narration is also employed throughout *In the Name of Salomé*, which perhaps displays Alvarez's most unique experimentation with narrative structure in any of her novels to date. In this novel, "Alvarez exhibits complete mastery over the plan, design, scheme, and patterns," as she presents yet another non-linear plot told from the perspective of multiple voices (Sirias 120). Unlike *In the Time of the Butterflies* and *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*, this novel employs only two narrative voices which alternate from chapter to chapter; that of Salomé Ureña and her daughter, Camila Ureña. Alvarez constructs this non-linear novel so that, with respect to time, "the chapters narrating Salomé's voice move forward and chapters dealing with Camila's life move backwards" (Sirias 121). Thus, Salomé's narrative chapters depict a chronological pattern of her aging, whereas the narration of Camila travels in a reverse-linear pattern, culminating with her earliest childhood memories. In terms of narrative stance, *In the Name of Salomé* exposes a similar function regarding first and third person narration as is displayed by the Garcia girls and the Mirabel sisters. Salomé's character exhibits a profound sense of political activism, which is displayed by her nationalistic poetry and her commitment to the education of women in her country. In order to display this strong feminist-socialist consciousness, Alvarez chooses to tell Salomé's story from the first person narrative perspective. Due to this narrative perspective, Salomé's internal ideals and emotions are poignantly reflected through her voice, with which the audience is able to identify. In contrast, the timid and uncertain character of Camila is presented in the third person, which results in a certain sense of distance as she is "observed rather than sharply sensed" (Simon 235). Much of Camila's narrative serves the purpose of a self-analysis as she travels back in time to discover the cause of her depression and uneasiness with respect to her identity as a Dominican. Finally, in the epilogue, Camila's narration returns to present time as she describes her return to her native country. Here, Camila's narrative perspective shifts to the first person, which symbolizes her attainment of a distinct voice as she assumes her place in Dominican culture. Previously unable to incorporate her feminist-socialist consciousness into a life in her own country, Camila

concludes her tale as a transformed individual, which is skillfully reflected in Alvarez's narrative technique and writing process. In essence, Alvarez manipulates traditional narrative conventions in this novel that can be described as an "ardent testimony to the power of the deftly wielded pen" (Simon 235).

As is clearly evident throughout Alvarez's distinguished literary work, the process of storytelling is intimately connected with the author's desire to express vital truths concerning the world in which she lives. Alvarez has signified story-telling as a "moral force," which can be implemented in order to make actual changes in the reversal of debilitating social trends such as the patriarchal strains in Dominican culture. This idea of the moral force of storytelling was engrained into Alvarez's literary perspective at a young age with her introduction to the story of Scheherazade in *The Thousand and One Nights*. This notorious tale of Scheherazade's scheme to escape the tyranny of the Sultan bears striking similarities to the reign of Trujillo in the Dominican Republic and Alvarez's literary opposition to the atrocities that he thrust upon his people. Alvarez writes of this: "By the end of her storytelling marathon, Scheherazade had managed not just to transform the Sultan from a dangerous tyrant to a penitent, wise ruler but also to save herself and the women in her kingdom. That's quite a testament to the political power and moral force of storytelling!" (Alvarez "Ten Commandments" 42). Undoubtedly, this tale from childhood has influenced Alvarez's concept of her writing's purpose in the world as she employs her "deftly wielded pen" in a battle against many of the injustices she observes in the world around her. With a belief in the moral force of her storytelling, Alvarez locates unique literary angles through which she will deliver her message. As displayed in the distinctive narrative techniques and topic selection, Alvarez demonstrates this devotion to observing the world through a critical and unconventional lens. Of this Alvarez states, "Unusual perspectives are often what I write about. A duality that I hope in the writing transcends itself and becomes a new consciousness, a new place on the map, a synthesizing way of looking at the world" (Simon 232). To further elaborate upon this sense of duality which Alvarez has described, she comments, "In fact, what I love about stories is that they work precisely by being multifaceted, by exploring paradox and contradiction, by allowing competing claims of many truths" (Alvarez "Ten Commandments" 37).

This reference to the multi-faceted and contradictory nature of her writing illuminates a crucial element of Alvarez's career in terms of the non-political stance that she assumes in spite of her overtly political themes and novels. Though her novels repeatedly examine complex political issues such as the regime of Trujillo and the political relationship between the United States and the Dominican Republic, Alvarez has painstakingly assembled her novels in such a way that political judgment is not passed;

problems are merely exposed to the reader who can then formulate his or her own opinion regarding the political concerns which have been introduced. Just as Alvarez has subscribed to the notion that storytelling is a moral force, she also recognizes the danger in utilizing such stories to advance an agenda or particular theory. Concerning this notion, Alvarez firmly declares: "There's a need to tell a story; not solve a problem, but to see it clearly" (Asch 49). Surely the process of storytelling is vital in the recovery of the feminine voice in the midst of an oppressive culture, which is demonstrated in Alvarez's stirring themes concerning the resistance to patriarchal constraints in her novels. Specifically in *In the Time of the Butterflies*, "the liberatory power of speaking out in response to a dictatorship that attempted to silence all resistance" signifies the extreme influence of storytelling as a "moral force" and an agent of change in the world (Rich 172). However, in such a testament, Alvarez does not intend to declare a conclusive judgment concerning the political and social landscape of the Dominican culture. Rather, she tells this story with the intention of exposing the nature of her native culture and addressing the various injustices which she perceives to exist. With regards to this distinct non-political and anti-agenda stance, Alvarez notes: "We are not advocates for any group; our job is to state the problem correctly, to keep a clean windshield, to tell the truth, manifold and one" (Alvarez "Ten Commandments" 39). Thus, Alvarez's novels seek to expose specific truths regarding the culture of her homeland without providing a message which is preachy or demonstrative of a distinct theoretical stance.

Just as Alvarez herself remarks about her devotion to the exposition of a political problem in order to "see it clearly" as opposed to attempting to solve it, the same notion holds true to the idea of feminism as displayed in her novels. While it is clear that there exist many instances of patriarchal dominance in the politics and family environment of her native culture, Alvarez explicitly intends only to describe such cultural trends as obvious truths which pervade her native culture. As Silvio Sirias states in a criticism of Alvarez's literary work regarding this concept of feminism:

> The narrative expresses few opinions regarding machismo. The preponderance of the evidence indicates that the world she writes about, the culture that she presents to us, is out of balance. Latin American society, as portrayed in the novel, is overwhelmingly controlled by men. The reader cannot help but notice this even in the most superficial of readings. The Dominican-American author leaves it up to the reader to choose how to react to the sexism that is so pervasive in the book [*How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*] (48).

As is demonstrated by Sirias' analysis of this notion of feminism, Alvarez does not subscribe to this particular theory, nor does she attempt to preach a feminist message to her audience. Rather, she "tells the story clearly" as she exposes the multi-faceted and contradictory nature of the Dominican culture and allows the reader to determine for his or herself the way in which a possible solution may be approached.

Alvarez has remarked concerning the literary process: "The best part of the story is that we all have access to the power in the meaning-making, story-telling Scheherazade's of the books we read and the books we write" (Corpi 198). Surely through novels like *In the Time of the Butterflies*, *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*, and *In the Name of Salomé*, Alvarez creates stirring and profound statements through which readers can access a certain level of power of meaning as it applies to the real world in which he or she lives. Alvarez reveals with shocking clarity, as well as complexity, the entrenched injustices that permeate Dominican society. This "preponderance of evidence" to support the notion of patriarchal dominance, as well as the uncovering of a complex network of female strength speaks truths about the utter inequality which exists within Dominican culture. In her creation of characters who escape the confines of their patriarchal culture, Alvarez reveals the innate capacity which all individuals possess to succeed and obtain their own, distinct voice: "That is why the success of Julia Alvarez's writings, and those of other U.S. Latinas, have such great significance and resonate so strongly –they speak for an entire population that historically has been without voice. Herein lies the genuine triumph of the Garcia sisters [the Mirabel sisters, Camila, Salomé]: their stories are heard" (Sirias 45). For it is in the telling of the story, in the remembrance of the valiant struggles of others against oppression, that such battles assume meaning and initiate real changes towards the achievement of equality for all individuals.

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Forster's Impossible Connections in *Howards End*

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E.M. Forster, before even beginning the text of Howards End, writes "only connect…" on the title page. Is this to be a goal of the characters he creates, or is it a call to humanity in general? If we are all to connect, the boundaries of sex, race and class would cease to exist as dividing forces. Forster, through his creation of three families that each embody and represent the morals, aspirations, and relationships to the material context of their respective social classes in London, indirectly asserts that this unified existence could never be possible. The nature of each family is too finely ingrained to ever connect completely with households so radically different from their own.

Each household's relationship to their homes is actually the truest measure of their ability to connect with others. The families' interactions are a microcosm of society at large. The cold and materialistic Wilcoxes, exempting Ruth, see their houses are mere representations of wealth and affluence. There is no warmth in their regard towards the walls and furniture they spend their imperialistically acquired money on. In that same respect, their personalities are similarly aligned: they are ingrained to view themselves superior, and treat others as disposable. The Wilcoxes, demonstrated especially by Henry and Charles, have less than a passing interest in others and their opinions. The Schlegels see their home as a representation of themselves and an emblem of their past, but they are only leaseholders, and in time they must search for another house, another representation, and are incapable of doing so. They fiercely cling to what they know while professing an ability to adapt. The Schlegels do not understand those who do not see the world as they do, and are unable to adjust, even though they claim a desire to understand. The Basts are barely scraping by financially, and their dark, cramped flat is representative of the fleeting nature of their survival. Leonard strives to read and culture himself into higher status, hating his surroundings, his poverty, and those who recognize it. The Basts do not have the luxury of investing emotion into places that are mere shelters as opposed to real homes. Likewise, Leonard and Jacky are shady and mistrustful even when others, like the Schlegels, claim to be sincere. In Forster's treatment of all three families, values are never discussed outside the context of relationships to living space. Could we see Henry

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Wilcox in Leonard's basement apartment any more than we could see Leonard relaxing in the Schlegels' parlor? The boundaries are too stiff, the differences too vast. The inability to connect is irrefutable. The only place where the suspension of these limits exists is Howards End- but is this Forster's sarcasm or his utopia?

The dynamics between the characters provide insight into Forster's actual intentions. Leonard Bast is most easily regarded as a victim in Howards End. Ridiculed by the narrator, treated as more of a social project than a human by the Schlegels, indifferently encouraged by Henry Wilcox's advice to give up a secure job, and ultimately dying of a "weak heart", Leonard is a tragic figure. From the beginning of the novel, the reader is aware that Leonard can never become anything other than what he already is. Forster's narrator treats him callously, almost cruelly, in the comments he makes about him having "a half baked mind" in believing he could "come to Culture suddenly" (38-39). Daniel Born, in his article "Private Gardens, Public Swamps: Howards End and the Revaluation of Liberal Guilt", points out Forster's famous disavowal: "We are not concerned with the very poor. They are unthinkable…" (34). Is this mindset the reason for the narrator's treatment of everything related to Leonard as pathetic? Most telling is the description of the apartment Leonard lives in: "what is known to house agents as a semi-basement, and to other men as a cellar" (36). Born claims in his article that Forster belongs to that class of "other men" who look disdainfully upon the Basts' condition. It seems more likely, however, that it is actually Forster's created narrator who regards Leonard as so unbearable. If Forster hated the poor, the novel would be unable to serve the role that it does. The narrator's voice seems to be the creeping voice of the growing middle class, who can't bear those above and below them.

The scene in which the Schlegels start a discussion over the dispensation of imagined millions to the poor strikes a chord with Born, who finds that scene to be the clearest reminder that *Howards End* "is about the rich and the poor, and that for all their talk, the Schlegel sisters are finally allied with the former" (150). He believes that since this group of women even has the time to imagine ways to distribute wealth proves how well off they really are, and how incapable they are of understanding Leonard Bast, his marriage, his tenuous grip on culture, and his lifestyle in general. The Schlegels mistake their pity for Leonard as a desire for friendship. They naively believe that Leonard will feel comfortable among them, and cannot imagine how he does not.

The Schlegel sisters appear to be opposites, but are similar in their inability to connect. From the beginning, Helen is portrayed as an impulsive, foolish, beautiful foil to her practical, reasonable, plain older sister Margaret. Helen's fleeting nature is

encapsulated in one of her descriptions by the cutting narrator: “She and the victim [Leonard] seemed alone in a world of unreality, and she loved him absolutely, perhaps for half an hour” (250). It is amusing to read, but cruel in application. Helen wants to help in the moment, but ultimately her pity fades and she returns to her comfortable life. Later, Helen’s impulsiveness comes across even clearer in her physical expression of sympathy towards Leonard that results in her pregnancy. “Leonard seemed, not a man, but a cause” (246). Margaret, at least on first glance, seems controlled and reliable, but upon inspection is emotionally cold and actually hypocritical. She constantly discusses connection, establishing the link between inner and outer life, and abolishing the differences that separate people; yet she is rather too unmoved by humanity throughout the rest of the novel to support her words. “The more people one knows, the easier it is to replace them….I quite expect to end my life caring most for a place” (102). This comment fits in well with Margaret as the spiritual heir of Mrs. Wilcox, but where does it substantiate her claim to desire a united humanity? Her spoken motto is unity, her unspoken one is disengagement. Margaret pities Leonard, but urges Helen to forget him: “Don’t drag in the personal when it will not come. Forget him” (336). Born points out “the frequent chill Forster puts in Margaret’s voice….how can her rhetoric of connection be reconciled with such coldness?” (157). It is Margaret who is most commonly identified with the call of “only connect…”, yet it is she that remains so disconnected. Margaret did not even particularly connect with Ruth Wilcox while alive; she remained more of an enigma to Margaret than a friend. It is through Howards End that Margaret connects with the idea of Ruth, rather than the person.

The Schlegels may treat Leonard as a charity case, but Henry Wilcox cannot even be bothered to remember him or his situation. Henry’s advice cost Leonard job security and money he could not afford to lose, yet Henry remained unaffected when reminded of his blunder. Henry Wilcox does not care one bit about Leonard, cannot be moved to sympathy for him, and even goes so far as to say there was no way his company would hire him either. To a reader, the Wilcoxes immediately come off as hard, cold, and unmovable; there will be no big change in the nature of Henry or Charles Wilcox, there is nothing to explore in their personalities. They are capitalists and imperialists, only concerned with those who can help them better themselves. Alex Zwerdling, in “The Novels of E.M. Forster”, elucidates the Wilcoxes’ role in the novel, making it clear that Forster has no illusions about them: “The Schlegels are of the past and are rapidly being replaced by the Wilcoxes …who are essential to life. They have an attitude which gets things done…in the world of the Schlegels nothing ever ‘happens’ at all” (178). Zwerdling is absolutely solid in his claim that the Schlegels get nothing done

in their lives: when it comes down to their true demonstration of character, their house situation, they never can quite decide anything. Henry Wilcox moves the Schlegels to action, having them to rent one of his houses, which is demonstrative of his attitude towards living space: property as useful, not meaningful. In his article entitled “Forster’s Metaphysical Novel” Cyrus Hoy refers back to Helen’s initial perception of the Wilcoxes: “I felt for a moment that the whole Wilcox family was a fraud, just a wall of newspapers and motor cars and golf clubs, and that if it fell I should find nothing behind it but panic and emptiness” (27). The Schlegels believe staunch practicality will leave a person feeling empty in life, will leave a house void of memories, will leave nothing of any emotional value. This is the masculine element, Hoy points out, which Margaret is missing (132). Margaret, for all her talk of inner life, admires the capability of the Wilcoxes. Her desire to be like them cannot overshadow her inability to ever be like them. She wishes to connect, but they are unwilling and she is inherently incapable of closing the gap between them.

Each character’s nature is clearly mimicked in their treatment of their homes: Leonard eagerly clambering for some sort of security; Margaret and Helen, so eager to understand, yet incapable of saving the world or even making a valiant effort; Henry Wilcox, calculating and unapologetic. It is only in the farmhouse called Howards End that these three families see unity. Pat Hoy, in “The Narrow, Rich Staircase in Howards End”, sees the resolution of the novel as all the people involved “seeking a real home in the midst of chaotic change, something luminous and permanent. Howards End became that sacred place” (230). Conversely, and more believably, Daniel Born notes “that Forester interrupts his final scene with awareness of the encroaching London mass suggests he is not entirely happy with this one sided vision of serene, private, poeticized culture”. Howards End is not the utopia; people have not torn down their boundaries. It is only in the final scene at Howards End where the Schlegels, Wilcoxes, and baby Bast cease to exist as representations of differing ideals. They are people who have endured twists of fate that have enabled them to temporarily come together. The scene is too idyllic, the peace too absolute. Disconnection is inevitable.

The boundaries that separate any person from another exist solely in their minds. Perhaps if they were physical boundaries, they would be easier to destroy. Culture, class, sex, and race ingrain a sense of who is alike, and who is not. For Forster’s characters, these distinctions not only shaped their perceptions, but their emotional states and their treatment of material possessions. They became their own boundaries, playing inwards on their inabilities instead of seeking to surpass them. Leonard tried so hard to become respected as cultured, but constantly reiterated his unworthiness, his sense of not

belonging. It was mirrored in his regard for his own living space: it felt alien to him. Margaret and Helen, claiming to be able to adjust to different people, and treat them as equals, could not even maintain Leonard as a friend, they saw him as a charity case. In the same respect, they could not let go of Wickham Palace, even though they professed a desire to acquire a new house. Mr Wilcox would not attribute emotional attachment to any property, refusing to see land as more than anything to own and use, which is the same attitude he has towards people. In the last scene at Howards End, the three families are together. It is only in this remarkable place , pervasive with the earthy spirit of Ruth Wilcox, that this tenuous connection can exist. The sense of impending doom is tangible, however, and the return to the divided world, Forster proves, is inevitable.

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