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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, theoretical and empirical). The third section is reserved for speculative papers based on the scholarly review and critical examination of previous works.

What is the fastest way to get from point A to point B on a frictionless plane? Are sweatshops a thing of the past? Why did so many of New York's Irish, who had been so ill treated by their neighbors, decide to enlist in the Union Army during the American Civil War? Did the media downplay Helen Keller's political activism as a socialist and a radical? The answers to these and other questions lie on the pages that follow.

Read on and enjoy!

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# **Section I: The Natural Sciences**





# Time of Flight Calculations for Linear and Non-Linear Approximations to the Brachistochrone Problem

Vincent Lombardo (Physics and Mathematics)<sup>1</sup>

This paper examines and compares multiple types of approximation methods to a problem in physics (more particularly mechanics) known as the Brachistochrone problem. Johann Bernoulli was the first to officially propose the question; a question which at first glance may seem trivial: what path would an object take such that it slides in the *least* amount of time under the influence only of gravity, and neglecting friction? Most would answer that such a path must be that of shortest length: a straight line. However, Bernoulli discovered that this was in fact not the case; remarkably the solution turned out to be a very special type of curve known as a cycloid. The research presented in this paper explores and compares the time of flight calculations for a two-segment linear approximation, as well as circular and parabolic approximations to the cycloidal brachistochrone, utilizing conventional calculus, in an effort to determine which types of paths are best suited for time of flight minimization.

## I. Introduction and Historical Background

Although Swiss mathematician Johann Bernoulli is credited with first proposing the Brachistochrone problem (which in Greek comes from the words “brachistos” meaning “shortest” and “chronos” meaning “time”) in 1696 as a challenge to his fellow mathematicians, Galileo was in fact the first to consider the question:

*Given two points A and B in a vertical plane (with A not lower than B), what is the curve traced out by a point acted on only by gravity, which starts at from rest at A and reaches B in the shortest time? <sup>2</sup>*

Galileo studied the problem in his famous work Discourse On Two New Sciences but first in a more simplified way. He considered two line segments inscribed on the arc of a circle as illustrated in Figure 2. Galileo then later by extension (incorrectly) suggested

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<sup>1</sup> Research performed under the direction of Dr. Otto Raths.

<sup>2</sup> Donald C. Benson, “An Elementary Solution of the Brachistochrone Problem,” *The American Mathematical Monthly* 76, No. 8 (October 1969): 890.

that the path of quickest descent was in fact the arc of a circle itself, but it was not until the problem was proposed later by Bernoulli that the full, correct solution was derived.

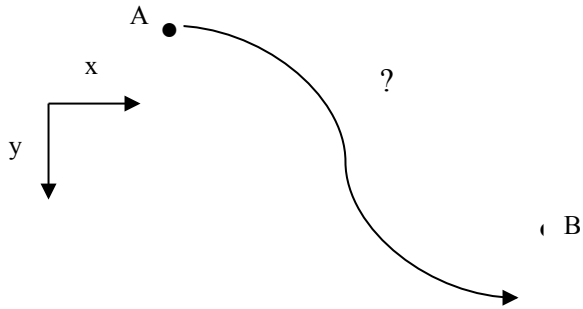


Figure 1: An illustration of the Brachistochrone Problem

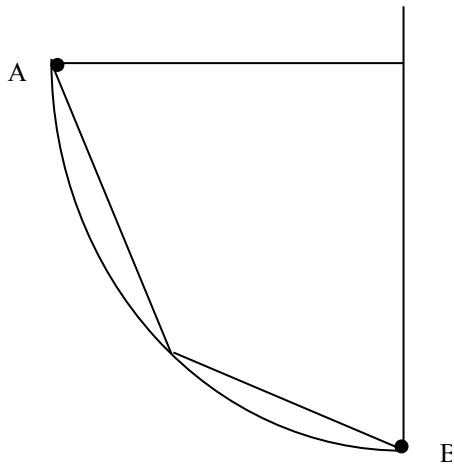


Figure 2: Galileo's Two-Segment Solution

The Brachistochrone problem drew widespread attention at the time when it was raised by Bernoulli, and elicited (correct) solutions from some of the most renowned

names of the 17th century including Jacob Bernoulli (John Bernoulli's own brother), Isaac Newton, Gottfried Leibniz and Guillaume de l'Hôpital.<sup>3</sup> Each determined that the path of quickest descent was, not as Galileo had suggested, the arc of a circle, but a curve very much related to a circle: the cycloid. A cycloid is the path traced out by a point on the circumference of a circle as the circle moves along a straight line (as shown in Figure 3 below.) A physical argument (rather than a mathematical one which will be explored shortly) for why the Brachistochrone is a curve and not a straight line is rather simple: as the object initially traverses a curve, the vertical component of the gravitational force acts more predominantly on the object, allowing it to pick up speed which the object then retains as it transitions into a more horizontal motion for the duration of the fall.

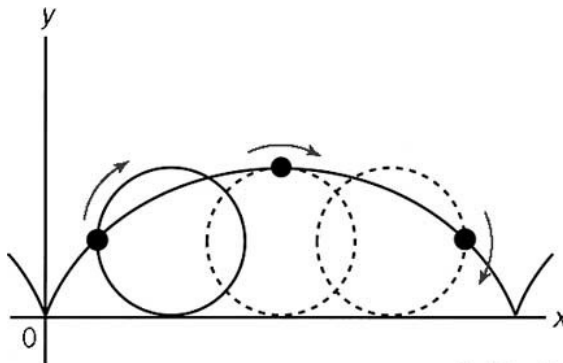


Figure 3: The path of a cycloid

But more interestingly, due to its degree of difficulty, the Brachistochrone problem in fact prompted the invention of what would be a new branch of mathematics designed specifically for tackling such “optimization” problems. While revisiting the problem in the mid 1700s, Leonhard Euler developed this more sophisticated method which he used to obtain the same solution as his predecessors; a method which he would later call the “calculus of variations.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

## II. The Calculus of Variations and the Euler-Lagrange Equation:

The calculus of variations deals with maximizing or minimizing (“optimizing”) functionals and integrals of functionals. In ordinary mathematics and calculus, a function is a relation between a set of inputs and a corresponding permissible set of outputs with the property that every input (usually defined on  $\mathfrak{R}$ , the real numbers) “maps” to a single output (also a real number.) Functionals on the other hand, are functions of functions; they instead map from a set of functions to the real numbers. The calculus of variations therefore seeks to find the curve, surface etc., for which integrals of functionals of the form

$$I(y) = \int_a^b F(y, y', x) dx$$

attain a stationary value (maximum or minimum.) Unlike conventional calculus where these points occur at locations where  $f'(x)=0$ , extrema of functionals occur only when the Euler-Lagrange partial differential equation is satisfied: <sup>5</sup>

$$\frac{\partial F}{\partial y} - \frac{d}{dx} \left( \frac{\partial F}{\partial y'} \right) = 0$$

In deriving the full solution to the Brachistochrone problem we can see where contemporary mathematicians would have hit the “snag” which Euler bypassed through this new method of variational calculus. Since the solution we are looking for is the equation of a path which produces minimum time, which could be one of any number of different possible curves, it turns out we are in fact trying to minimize (an integral of) a functional!

We first consider the velocity a particle would have at any point along the curve by utilizing the conservation of energy which states that the total change in kinetic and potential energy must be zero:

$$\Delta KE + \Delta PE = 0$$

where the kinetic and potential energies of the particle are given by

$$KE = \frac{1}{2}mv^2 \quad \text{and} \quad PE = mgy(x)$$

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<sup>5</sup> Leonid A. Dickey, “Do Dogs Know Calculus of Variations?,” *College Mathematics Journal* 37, No. 1 (January 2006): 21.

Therefore since the conservation of energy tells us that the total potential energy of the particle at the top must be converted to an equal amount of kinetic energy at the bottom, solving for the velocity  $v$  in the conservation of energy yields the famous

$$v(y) = \sqrt{2gy}$$

We next consider an infinitesimal element of distance that the particle would traverse along the curve:

$$ds = \sqrt{(dx)^2 + (dy)^2} = \sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{dy}{dx}\right)^2}$$

and then we apply these definitions to calculate the time required to traverse a distance  $ds$ :

$$dt = \frac{ds}{v} = \frac{\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{dy}{dx}\right)^2}}{\sqrt{2gy}}$$

and finally integrate from A to B (sum up) each of these differential time elements to obtain the total time of descent:

$$t = \int_A^B dt = \int_A^B \frac{\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{dy}{dx}\right)^2}}{\sqrt{2gy}}$$

It is this integral which we therefore wish to minimize, so from here we would apply the Euler-Lagrange equation which would yield a first-order, non-linear, ordinary differential equation the solution of which is best given by the parametric equations:

$$x = \frac{1}{2}k^2(\theta - \sin \theta) \quad y = \frac{1}{2}k^2(1 - \cos \theta)$$

Which precisely describe a cycloid!

### **III. A Linear Approximation to the Brachistochrone Problem**

The first part of the original research conducted for the purposes of this paper was done as part of an investigation into a two-segment linear approximation to the typical cycloidal brachistochrone. The question was posed as follows:

*Consider a unit square as shown in the accompanying diagram. If we create a path comprised of the two line segments shown, at what angle  $\alpha$  does the time for an object of mass  $m$  to travel from A to C become a minimum?*

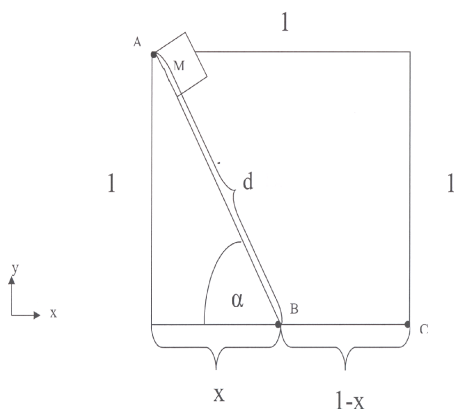


Figure 4: Diagram of a two-segment linear approximation to the Brachistochrone problem. The motivation is to obtain an equation for the total time as a function of alpha and apply a theorem from ordinary calculus to locate the point of minimization. To do this, we calculate the time of flight for the object along the path by ordinary calculus and its applications in Newton's second law. We first sum up all of the relevant components of the forces acting on the object in the direction of motion (in this case the components of the forces acting in the x-direction; we do not care about the y-components as we are assuming the surface is solid and that the object does not "bounce" or lose contact with the surface during its motion.) We then apply Newton's second law which states that the net force acting on an object is equal to the object's mass times its acceleration. This allows us to obtain an equation for the acceleration of the object as it travels down the inclined portion of the path:

$$\sum F_x = ma_x = mg \sin \alpha \quad \therefore \quad a_x = g \sin \alpha$$

We can now apply what we know from conventional calculus. Acceleration is defined as the rate of change of an object's velocity, which is in turn defined as the rate of change of the object's position. In calculus terminology, a rate of change is known as a derivative and therefore we can anti-differentiate (integrate) the object's acceleration twice in order to obtain an equation for its position as a function of time:

$$v(t) = \int a(t) dt = \int g \sin \alpha dt = gt \sin \alpha$$

$$x(t) = \int v(t) dt = \int gt \sin \alpha dt = \frac{1}{2} gt^2 \sin \alpha$$

(\*Note: As part of the process of integration there is usually an arbitrary constant added to the anti-derivative. However, since by convention we have the object beginning from rest and starting at an initial position  $x(0) = 0$ , the constants of integration drop out.)

At this point we now can apply basic trigonometry: the sine of any angle of a right triangle is equal to the leg opposite the angle divided by the hypotenuse of the triangle:

$$\frac{1}{d} = \sin \alpha$$

Therefore the distance the object will travel along the inclined portion of the path is given by

$$d = \frac{1}{\sin \alpha} = \csc \alpha$$

We can now use our equation of position obtained earlier to calculate the time taken to travel this distance:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1}{\sin \alpha} &= \frac{1}{2} g t^2 \sin \alpha \\ \therefore t_{AB} &= \sqrt{\frac{2}{g} \csc \alpha} \end{aligned}$$

At this point we now have half of the information we need in order to make the attempt at minimizing the time of flight. We now proceed to calculate the amount of time it would take for the object to travel along the bottom portion of our path, in the same manner as above with one minor difference: gravity no longer acts to accelerate the object; it merely slides along the bottom beginning with the velocity attained during its motion down the incline. This velocity can be calculated by conservation of energy; the total potential energy the object had at the top of the incline is converted fully into kinetic energy.

Therefore:

$$PE_{top} = mg(1) = KE_{bottom} = \frac{1}{2} m v^2 \quad \therefore v = \sqrt{2g}$$

and by the same method as before we integrate to obtain the equation for position as a function of time and use it to calculate the time to travel along the bottom:

$$x(t) = \int v(t) dt = \int \sqrt{2g} dt = \sqrt{2gt}$$

$$(1-x) = (1 - \cot \alpha) = \sqrt{2gt}$$

$$\therefore t_{BC} = \frac{1 - \cot \alpha}{\sqrt{2g}}$$

(\*Note: We have once again utilized trigonometry in the middle step as there exists a relationship between the distance  $x$  and the tangent of the angle  $\alpha$  given by:

$$\tan \alpha = \frac{\text{Opposite}}{\text{Adjacent}} = \frac{1}{x} )$$

We now have constructed an equation for the total time it would take for the object to travel along the entire two-segment linear path:

$$t_{AC} = t_{AB} + t_{BC} = \sqrt{\frac{2}{g}} \csc \alpha + \frac{1 - \cot \alpha}{\sqrt{2g}}$$

It is this equation which we now must “optimize.” We wish to find the angle  $\alpha$  for which the time is a minimum and in order to do so, we must apply a theorem from ordinary calculus:

*Suppose that  $f$  is a function defined on an open interval containing the point  $x_0$ . If  $f$  has a relative extremum at  $x = x_0$ , then  $x = x_0$  is a critical point of  $f$ ; that is, either  $f'(x_0) = 0$  or  $f$  is not differentiable at  $x_0$ .<sup>6</sup>*

In short this theorem tells us that if we take the first derivative of our function for the total time and set it equal to zero we should be able to find the critical point  $\alpha$  at which the minimum time occurs:

$$(t_{AC})' = -\sqrt{\frac{2}{g}} \csc \alpha \cot \alpha + \frac{\csc^2 \alpha}{\sqrt{2g}} = 0$$

which reduces very nicely to the simple equation

$$\cos \alpha = \frac{1}{2} \quad \text{or,} \quad \alpha = \cos^{-1}\left(\frac{1}{2}\right)$$

which since  $0 < \alpha < \pi/2$ , yields a final answer for the optimal angle as

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<sup>6</sup> Howard Anton, Irl Bivens, and Stephen Davis, *Calculus: Late Transcendentals Single and Multivariable*, 8th ed. (Wiley, 2005), 235.



$$\alpha = \frac{\pi}{3} = 60^\circ$$

and we can now substitute this angle back into our original equation for the total time to obtain our first time of flight calculation:

$$t_{AC} = \sqrt{\frac{2}{g}} \csc \frac{\pi}{3} + \frac{\left(1 - \cot \frac{\pi}{3}\right)}{\sqrt{2g}} \approx 0.61679 \text{ seconds}$$

As part of the investigation into this linear approximation, we also calculate (for comparison purposes) the time of flight for the path of shortest distance: the direct straight line connecting points A and C. We approach this calculation by direct integration as in the method shown earlier when deriving the general (cycloidal) solution.

The equation for the line connecting the two points is given by  $y=-x$ . For ease of calculation we have shifted our coordinate system as shown in the diagram below; A is the origin, and C is the point (1,-1):

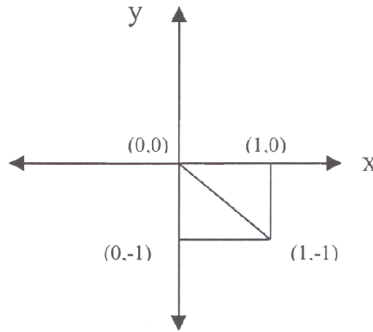


Figure 5: The straight line path given by the equation  $y=-x$

$$t = \int_0^1 dt = \int_0^1 \frac{ds}{v} = \int_0^1 \frac{\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{dy}{dx}\right)^2}}{\sqrt{2gy}} dx = \int_0^1 \frac{\sqrt{1 + (-1)^2}}{\sqrt{-2g(-x)}} dx = \frac{1}{\sqrt{g}} \int_0^1 \frac{1}{\sqrt{x}} dx$$

(\*Note: By convention we take all velocities to be positive, hence why we have hit the denominator of the second to last term with an “extra” minus sign.)

$$= \frac{1}{\sqrt{g}} \left[ 2\sqrt{x} \right]_b = \frac{2}{\sqrt{g}} \approx 0.963855$$

This confirms that the two-segment linear approximation is in fact (despite its larger path length) quicker than the straight line!

#### **IV. Non-Linear Approximations to the Brachistochrone Problem**

The second portion of the investigation performed for this paper involves studying two different methods of non-linear approximations to the Brachistochrone Problem: circular and parabolic. The approach to calculating the time of flights along these types of paths is almost identical to the previous method: we setup and directly integrate an equation for the total time. The caveat here is that the integration is nowhere near as trivial as it was in the linear case. The integrals we encounter are a special type of integral known as “elliptic” integrals. The difficulty in evaluating these integrals is that while many are tabulated, there exists no actual analytical solution; they typically cannot be evaluated in terms of elementary functions.<sup>7</sup> We are therefore left only with two options to perform the computations: utilize a computer program to determine the value of the integrals or apply some knowledge from calculus as a method of numerically approximating the integrals.

##### The Circular Approximation

The first non-linear path we consider is the arc of a circle as shown in the diagram below:

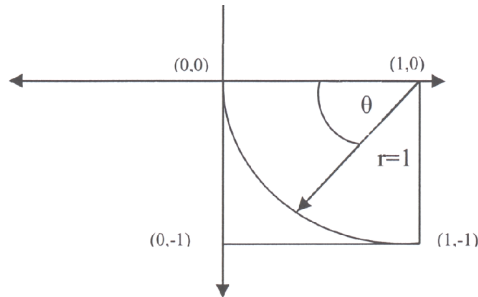


Figure 6: The path of a circular arc

We now setup the expression for the total time (this time utilizing polar coordinates):

<sup>7</sup> Paul Glaister, “Transformations of Improper Integrals,” *Mathematical Gazette* (1997): 93.

$$dt = \frac{ds}{v} = \frac{rd\theta}{\sqrt{2gr \sin \theta}}$$

where the differential arc length element  $ds$  is equal to the radius of the circle times an infinitesimal change in the angle  $\theta$ , and the velocity is obtained once again by the conservation of energy:

$$\frac{1}{2}mv^2 = mgy = mgr \sin \theta$$

Therefore when we integrate we obtain the expression for the total time:

$$t = \int_0^1 dt = \int_0^{\pi/2} \frac{rd\theta}{\sqrt{2gr \sin \theta}} = \sqrt{\frac{r}{2g}} \int_0^{\pi/2} \frac{d\theta}{\sqrt{\sin \theta}}$$

but since we have chosen to perform the calculation on the unit square, the radius  $r$  is equal to 1 so the integral we wish to evaluate is:

$$t = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2g}} \int_0^{\pi/2} \frac{d\theta}{\sqrt{\sin \theta}}$$

As mentioned before, this integral cannot be computed by analytical methods as an anti-derivative does not exist. Therefore we instead utilize a method taught in calculus which involves performing a substitution to convert the integral into a more “friendly” form and then expanding the integrand in an infinite power series known as a “Taylor Series” (or in our case since it will be centered at  $x=0$ , a “Maclaurin Series”) which we then can integrate term-by-term. We begin with the  $u$ -substitution:

Let  $\sin x = u^2$ . Then  $x = \sin^{-1} u^2$  and  $dx = (2u)du / (1-u^4)^{1/2}$ . The limits of integration will also change since:  $0 \leq \sin x \leq 1 \therefore 0 \leq u^2 \leq 1 \therefore 0 \leq u \leq 1$ , and our integral becomes:

$$t = \frac{2}{\sqrt{2g}} \int_0^1 \frac{1}{\sqrt{1-u^4}} du$$

We now utilize the concept mentioned above from ordinary calculus which states that a function (in this case our integrand) can be expanded in an infinite power series of the form

$$f(x) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} a_n x^n = a_0 + a_1 x + a_2 x^2 + \dots$$

where the coefficients of the terms in the series are related to the values of the derivatives of the function about the center of the series, as given by Taylor's Formula:

$$a_n = \frac{f^{(n)}(0)}{n!}$$

We first start by expanding a more simple function,  $f(x)=1/(1-x)^{1/2}$  in this way, and will later perform a small substitution to obtain the series for our integrand:

$$f(0) = 1$$

$$f'(x) = \frac{1}{2}(1-x)^{-3/2} \quad \therefore \quad f'(0) = \frac{1}{2} = \frac{2!}{2^2 \cdot 1!}$$

$$f''(x) = \frac{3}{4}(1-x)^{-5/2} \quad \therefore \quad f''(0) = \frac{1 \cdot 3}{2^2} = \frac{4!}{2^4 \cdot 2!}$$

and therefore by mathematical induction,

$$f^{(n)}(0) = \frac{(2n)!}{2^{2n} \cdot n!} \quad \forall n \geq 0$$

so then,

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1-x}} = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(2n)!}{2^{2n} \cdot (n!)^2} x^n$$

We now perform the small substitution we alluded to earlier. We replace  $x$  by  $x^4$  to get the series for our integrand:

$$\frac{1}{\sqrt{1-x^4}} = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(2n)!}{2^{2n} \cdot (n!)^2} x^{4n}$$

and we are now in position to compute a numerical series for our integral which represents the total time for the object to travel down the arc of a circle:

$$t = \frac{2}{\sqrt{2g}} \int_0^1 \frac{dx}{\sqrt{1-x^4}} = \frac{2}{\sqrt{2g}} \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(2n)!}{2^{2n} \cdot (n!)^2} \frac{x^{4n+1}}{(4n+1)} \Big|_0^1$$

which finally gives us:

$$t = \frac{2}{\sqrt{2g}} \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(2n)!}{4^n \cdot (n!)^2 \cdot (4n+1)}$$

(For completeness we check to ensure that this numerical series does in fact converge to some finite number by applying the “Ratio Test” from ordinary calculus which states that:

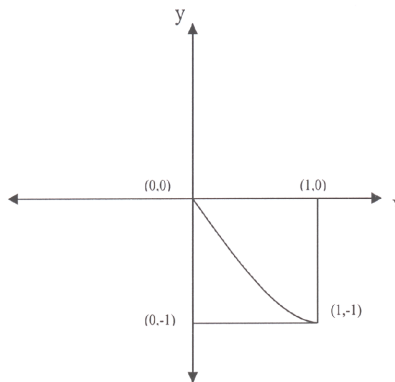
$$\text{If } L = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{a_{n+1}}{a_n} \text{ and } L < 1, \text{ then the series converges.}^8$$

which, although we omit the algebra, is true for our series.)

Now that we have obtained a numerical series for our integral, we can make a fairly accurate approximation of the total time required for the object to travel down the path by evaluating the first few terms of the series. In addition to doing this, we can (and have) also enlist the aid of mathematical computer software (in this case Maple) to evaluate the integral for us and confirm that our approximation method is accurate. If we do this, we obtain our third time of flight calculation:  $t \approx .59192$  seconds.

### The Parabolic Approximation

The second non-linear path we consider is that of a parabola shown in figure 7. Before we can do anything else, we first need the equation for this parabola. In order to find the parabola which goes through the two points (0,0) and (1,-1) we begin with the general form and make note of what information we already have:




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<sup>8</sup> Anton, Bivens, and Davis, *Calculus*, 666.

Figure 7: A parabolic path

$$y = ax^2 + bx + c$$

$$y(0) = 0$$

$$y(1) = -1$$

In addition to these pieces of information, we also make the observation that at the “turning point” of the parabola, the function has a horizontal tangent (slope = 0), which in calculus terminology means the derivative of the function must equal zero:

$$y' = 2ax + b \quad , \quad y'(1) = 0$$

Utilizing this information provides us with a system of linear equations, the solution of which gives us the coefficients for our parabola:

$$a + b = -1$$

$$2a + b = 0$$

$$\therefore a = 1, b = -2$$

and our parabola is

$$y = x^2 - 2x$$

We now proceed by direct integration as before, to calculate the total time required for the object to slide down the parabola:

$$t = \int_0^1 dt = \int_0^1 \frac{ds}{v} = \int_0^1 \frac{\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{dy}{dx}\right)^2}}{\sqrt{2gy}} dx = \int_0^1 \frac{\sqrt{1 + (2x-2)^2}}{-2g(x^2 - 2x)} dx = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2g}} \int_0^1 \frac{\sqrt{4x^2 - 8x + 5}}{2x - x^2} dx$$

and for simplicity and brevity we utilize Maple to calculate this definite integral for us, yielding our fourth and final time of flight calculation:  $t \approx .59496$  seconds.

## **V. Results, Conclusions, and Further Study**

Summarized in the table below are our time of flight calculations for each one of our Brachistochrone approximations:

Type of Path	Approximate Time of Flight (seconds)
Straight Line	.63855
Two-Segment Linear	.61679
Circular Arc	.59192
Parabolic Arc	.59496

Table 1: Time of Flight Data

From this data we can see that the order of quickest paths is: circular, parabolic, two-segment linear and straight line respectively. Intuitively this perhaps makes sense: we already know that the quickest path is the cycloid which is in fact related to the circle, so naturally the circle would be the quickest among these approximations (and in fact would justify the conjecture of Galileo if we did not know any better.) The parabola comes in as second quickest since it is still a curve, which allows it to hold true to our earlier explanation regarding gravity and why the Brachistochrone is a curve and not a straight line. Finally, the two-segment linear path comes in third as despite the fact that it is not a curve, the steepness of the  $60^\circ$  line relative to the straight line (which lies at  $45^\circ$ ) still allows the object to pick up a little more speed than it normally would.

While we have merely scratched the surface of this fascinating subject, it is evident that there exist many applications in the physical world for what we have studied here, particularly in engineering and sports. For example, the design of roller coasters is often influenced by the Brachistochrone problem. When designing the track of a roller coaster, the primary goal of the engineer is to develop a ride that will maximize the thrill of the riders. A few ways this can be accomplished might be by maximizing velocity and thereby also minimizing the time of flight between sections of the track. In shaping the track similar to a cycloid, the engineer does just that, and allows the cars to rapidly pick up speed giving the riders a terrific thrill. Or in sports such as professional downhill skiing or bobsledding, the entire goal is to reach the end or bottom in the quickest time, faster than all the other racers; almost a word-for-word description of the Brachistochrone problem.

There is of course much more still that can be investigated with regards to approximation methods for the Brachistochrone problem. While not presented here, it is of course possible to consider the inclusion of friction. The magnitude of the force of friction is related to the normal force acting on an object, with direction opposite the velocity vector (which is tangent to the curve) as shown in the diagram below.

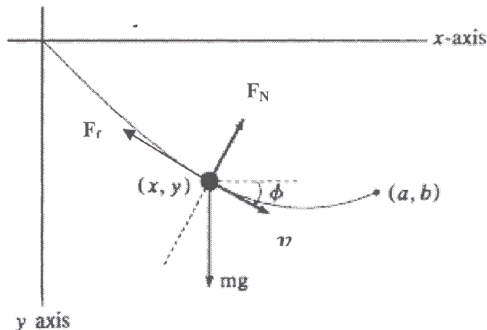


Figure 8: Diagram of the forces acting on a particle traversing a curve with friction

So given the equation for the particular path in question (which even if not known, can usually be calculated as we have done) it is possible to include an expression for the frictional force in Newton’s Laws and calculate the time of flight for varying degrees of kinetic friction. In doing so, one might pose the question: at what value of  $\mu_k$  does the Brachistochrone path lose its “ideal” nature in favor of the straight line? There is no doubt that at some point the non-conservative nature of the frictional force will kick into effect because of the excess path length of the Brachistochrone relative to the straight line, and at that point perhaps the straight line does in fact become the ideal path.

Another possible route one might investigate is the possibility of optimizing the time of flight within *families of curves* by varying parameters. Perhaps it is possible to find say, the ideal exponential path among all possible exponential paths  $e^{-x}, e^{-2x}, e^{-3x}, \dots, e^{-\alpha x}$  by varying the parameter  $\alpha$ . The motivation is basically the same as it was in our construction of the two-segment linear approximation: obtain an expression for the total time as a function of the parameter, take the first derivative, and ascertain if there is a particular exponential curve which minimizes the time of flight.<sup>9</sup> And of course this

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<sup>9</sup> For further exploration into this method which has already been investigated using parabolas and  $N$ th roots, refer to the article by LaDawn Haws and Terry Kiser titled



method could perhaps also be applied to other types of curves such as circles, or perhaps even a series of polynomials. In fact if one could manipulate the coefficients of a series of polynomials and perhaps in doing so prove that the series converges to a cycloid, then such a calculation would provide an alternate method of obtaining the general solution to the Brachistochrone problem *without the need for variational calculus* which would be quite interesting. However, no matter where the investigation goes from here there is no doubt that the Brachistochrone problem will in the future continue to fascinate, captivate, and challenge the best minds in physics and mathematics, just as it has for hundreds of years.

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## **Section II: The Social Sciences**



# **Establishing God: The Effects of Missionization and Colonialism in Vanuatu**

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The South Pacific Islands are an incredibly large portion of the world that could give modern scholars insight into the history of religion and missionization and it has not been explored enough. This particular study focuses on Vanuatu, a country in the South Pacific that consists of eighty-three islands. I will be focusing specifically on Pele Island which has a population of approximately one hundred and twenty people. While only a few hundred miles away lies Port Vila, a modernized part of the country which consists of constant imports and exports as well as modern technology and tourist attractions, the natives of Pele Island have a very strong attachment to their land and their environment and refuse to lose their heritage. On Pele, it is apparent that the missionaries failed to integrate the Ni-Vanuatu cultural understanding of religion and pushed Christianity as a completely new way of life ignoring their already established cultural customs. Ultimately, when the Christian missionaries left the islands they also left behind a clash of cultural morals and values among the local people. This study explores this more in depth and looks closely at how and why Christian religious influences have affected not only their individual family values but also the values they have as a collective community at large.

## **I. Introduction**

The South Pacific Islands include twenty-two island countries spread across over one third of the globe (See Figure 1). Each island country has a unique story of how colonialism and missionization, and specifically how the role of the Christian god was brought to their home disrupting hundreds of years of their local cultural customs and traditions (George, 2010). Vanuatu specifically has a rich and disturbing history of colonialism. The country lies between the Solomon Islands and New Caledonia, and contains a string of eighty-three islands. The country of Vanuatu was previously known as New Hebrides and previously the British and French governments owned individual

<sup>1</sup> Research performed under the direction of Dr. Celeste Gagnon and Dr. Walter Kaelber in partial fulfillment of the Senior Program requirements.

islands that made up the country, before gaining independence in June of 1980. The current population is 202,200 people, with the largest ethnic groups being Ni-Vanuatu and Melanesian. The most common language spoken is Bislama, a creole derived from English, French and a native island tongue. However, there are over one hundred and ten languages spoken throughout the eighty-three islands, most of which are dialects of Bislama, however English and French are also widely spoken. Tourism is now a major industry that contributes to a large portion of income for Vanuatu's residents. Additionally, many of Vanuatu's residents gain their income by working in the agricultural field, growing cocoa and provide beef and timber for export to neighboring countries such as Australia and New Zealand.

Although Vanuatu consists of eighty-three islands I will be focusing specifically on Pele Island (See Figure 2), which has a population of approximately 120 people. Only a few hundred miles away lies Port Vila, a modernized part of the country characterized by import and export activity as well as modern technology and tourist attractions (George, 2010). In contrast, the natives of Pele Island have a very strong attachment to their land and their environment and resist modernization in favor of traditional practices. Moreover, the people of Pele refuse to incorporate new technologies and, therefore are among the few people left in the world to live a self-sustaining life growing their own food, building their own shelters and joining as a community to take care of the raising of their children. Religion has always been an issue in Vanuatu, since the early European missionaries came to the islands to convert the native people to Christianity. Primarily in the 1800's missionaries were at their peak and well on their way to their goal of converting natives, especially on smaller islands such as Pele, which were and still are very isolated to current modernization (George, 2010). Today, some of the islanders still hold to their ancestral tradition in combination with their faith in Christianity, while other natives have rejected their traditional religious beliefs all together. On Pele Island the religious influence the missionaries left behind has torn at the fabric of their community over the last century. Furthermore, it is apparent that the missionaries failed to integrate the Ni-Vanuatu cultural understanding of religion and pushed Christianity as a completely new way of life ignoring their already established cultural customs. Taylor (2010) explains how this caused a clash in the minds of the native people leaving them with unanswered questions and anxiety about god and their culture. Ultimately, when the Christian missionaries left the islands they also left behind a clash of cultural morals and values among the local people. This study explores this more in depth and looks closely

at how and why Christian religious influences have affected not only their individual family values but also the values they have as a collective community at large.

## **II. Pre-Missionization Vanuatu**

### Social Political Organization

There have been many societies organized in chiefdoms around the world (White, 2006). In most countries throughout the South Pacific that maintain a chiefly structure, chiefly leadership was granted to those who had strong personal qualities, in combination with economic achievement (Bolton, 1998). Traditionally, the chief was chosen from a family with a history of producing community leaders, however it is important to note that leadership did not *always* have to be hereditary. Additionally, the chief was expected to be a person who was able to protect his people from potential threats to their traditional cultural customs. The word chief could also be described and defined in the anthropological context as a community leader, but more specifically as a person who stands as a representative for the community when it comes to dealing with interactions with people of the outside world, which differs drastically from a nation-state power structure (Bolton, 1998).

The countries of the South Pacific have, for the most part have had chiefly power structures (Bolton, 1998). However, during colonialism it was the primary goal of missionaries to eliminate the power structure and hierarchy of the chiefs that held authority within their separate communities in order to implement a new structure and control by a modern nation-state. It was clear that colonialists took the Western approach by introducing formal education in attempt to modernize natives and destroy the chiefly structure. According to White (2006), Western formal schooling was a symbol of modernity and technological advancement that still, post-colonialism, is forcing its way into non-Western societies. Placing the Western model for schools and education systems at the forefront of non-Western people's value systems. Implementing a Western schooling system proved a form of symbolic capital, which ultimately introduced prestige into dominantly egalitarian societies (White, 2006). While most colonialists knew chiefs would ultimately feel threatened by implanting formal education and therefore destroying their traditional power structure, it seemed to be a pattern that missionaries granted chiefs the roles of being priests and teachers in their respective societies (White, 2006). However, in most societies this caused tension due to pulling apart their frame of reference when it came to status and power structure, later causing them issues in

adapting and determining status differentiation. Furthermore, English became the only language to be taught and spoken in schools across the South Pacific, which would later become a new symbol for accumulating personal capital. Chiefs were automatically granted the role of being identified as individuals with a high level of education, regardless of having yet gone through the process of Western schooling. This caused a cultural shift that encouraged colonialists to implement their Western ideas and ultimately redefine the role of the chief. Now the chief would be chosen by the level of achieved education and Western idea of status.

It was the goal of missionaries to eliminate any rituals that were once deemed dangerous to outsiders of the community, in order to protect themselves during the mission process. This was achieved by granting the chiefs the prestigious role of being spiritual intermediaries between the common people and the Christian god (White, 2006). Securing this role to higher-ranking chiefs was essential in order to acquire the land the missionaries needed in order to establish posts and schools. Christian missionaries would depend on the cooperation of the chiefs in order to achieve their goals and assume smooth daily operations, especially during the founding years of establishing their mission schools across the South Pacific.

Particularly in Vanuatu, prior to missionization, it was important that the chief was seen by his people as a sub-god or a visionary (Spriggs, 1985). There are many ways in which chiefs were separated from the common people in Vanuatu. Chiefs practiced polygamy and were required to have two or three wives, while the common men practiced monogamy. The chief of a village tended to marry with only other chiefly families or families that carried prestige in a village. Each chief was granted a special area of the land that was labeled his own where he was able to practice important ceremonies including marriages and sacrifices. While all people practiced cannibalism after the sacrificial death of a person in their community, only the chief was permitted to regularly practice the eating of human flesh. Like the act of cannibalism, the drinking Kava, a native narcotic drink, could only be routinely done by the chief. The common people only consumed Kava during a special ritual event with the permission of the chief. In death, the body of the chief would be buried under his house, with his head exposed. The body would be provided food offerings until the head had rotted down to the bone. It would be then be placed on a pole as a ritual of sacrifice. The bodies of common people were dumped into the sea. It was also common for many people to be killed at the chiefs funeral as a sacrifice to accompany the leader in the after life. With the introduction to Christianity, these cultural traditions were slowly changed. Chiefs were told that these



traditions were sinful and instead were encouraged to become leaders of the new Christian god and practice new Western cultural traditions. One of the key aspects that encouraged this change was that the Christian missionaries began to introduce the Western concept of sin and the consequences that would come from accumulating sin and going to hell in the afterlife. Previously, in Ni-Vanuatu culture sin was accumulated by a person whom practiced stinginess and lacked generosity amongst the community. It was seen as noble for the poor people of the community to starve themselves for months in order to save their funds and crops to purchase a large pig or hog to contribute to a community celebratory feast. The person to provide the largest food contribution would be given praise and therefore accumulate equity which would in turn give them a higher chance of going to heaven in the after life. However, with teaching the Christian idea of sin came the abolishment of cannibalism, polygamy, the consumption of kava and killing women in the community. Instead, Chiefs were encouraged to practice Western nuclear family values, which included being dedicated Christians.

The role of women in the community also changed dramatically with the introduction of Christianity (Spriggs, 1985). It was noted by early missionaries Inglis and Geddie in 1854 that there was incredibly disproportionate number of males. This was due to the high rate of female infacide, as well as the practice of widow strangulization. A ritual that occurred after the death of a woman's husband where she would be strangled to death in order to accompany her husband in the after life. This was done because a widowed woman in Ni-Vanuatu society were not viewed as valuable if she was infertile and had no husband to which to attend. It is clear that the best customers in the beginning to the early missionaries were young men and women. Women because they were suffering from widow strangulization and infacide but young men because they had very few women left to marry. Primarily these two groups accepted Christianity because they had the most to gain from a new set of customs and the destruction of the traditional religious and social system. However, first the missionaries had to deprogram the Ni-Vanuatu traditional religious beliefs and demonize their god's in order to be successful in implementing religious rules amongst the Ni-Vanuatu culture.

#### Religious Beliefs Pre-Missionization

The native god, *Tagaro*, has a special place in the hearts and the history of Vanuatu. The spirit Tagaro came from the Polonysian god *Tangaroa*, whom is best known as the New Zealand Maori god of the ocean (Taylor, 2008). While Tagaro is a spirit filled with contradiction he is also the soul of decision making, who is responsible

for leading the chiefs who have the power to lead the people as well as the god who controls the essence of mother nature at her best and her worst. Tagaro shares a similar character and demeanor to the god Shiva who is important in Hinduism, and who is referred to as the god of destruction and recreation (Taylor, 2008). Shiva, like Tagaro, is paradoxical god who represents all things opposite; he is both fully female and fully male, he represents destruction and recreation, and is thought to be constantly present on earth and in the universe. Moreover, for some people he is the god of light, love and forgiveness and for others he is seen as a murderous, dark god of fire and who is known to spread bad luck. However, unlike Shiva, Tagaro is responsible for giving luck to his people and is responsible for guiding his people on the consumption of certain foods and movements that will help with continuing fertility. Taylor (2008) shows clearly how Tagaro is a stranger god that has been lost in the midst of Christianity's almighty forgiving god. Pre-colonialism Tagaro and other traditional native gods contributed to the political and social ideas that informed the accepted social roles of people living in their community. Therefore, once Christianity changed the role of god, specifically Tagaro and his demeanor, so social roles were subject to change. Before the idea of the Christian god took a strong hold in the Ni-Vanuatu culture, Tagaro was known as the all-knowing creator of the universe. However, since the introduction of Christianity, the current role that Tagaro plays is very confusing and somewhat frustrating to the natives. Some people blame Tagaro for the history of sin and label the god as a cannibalistic murderer, who contributes to an inward conflict among the people.

In the past missionaries had simply ignored the presence of the native gods, however by the mid nineteenth century it became evident to the missionaries that Tagaro would be an ongoing issue with which they would have to deal with (Taylor, 2008). To this end, they initiated a dialogue with the Ni-Vanuatu people that presented Tagaro as an oppositional figure to the Christian god. They represented Tagaro as a murderous misguided god, who had the goal of tricking his people and the new Christian god of light. The Christian gods goal was to forgive the sins that Targaro had put upon his people. It is evident that the missionaries used the native god, Bwatmahanga, who is known to be a deity involved in the spread of knowledge and the provider of peace when Mother Nature is angry with her people, as an example of how Tagaro was the devil. There is no clear evidence that the story of Bwatmahanga and Tagaro, titled "The Story of Raga," originated prior to the arrival of the missionaries. Rather it is assumed by scholars that the story was created by the missionaries in an attempt to demonize Tagaro in the eyes of the natives. The story tells of Tagaro and Bwatmahanga's friendship. One

day Tagaro wished to visit Bwatmahanga to collect food, however the wind was too strong to cross the river by canoe so Bwatmahanga threw the food across the river, for Tagaro to eat. Once the wind subsided Tagaro was able to successfully cross the river and Bwatmahanga and him became close friends. The two gods travel around the islands together, however Tagaro began to trick Bwathahanga. For instance, Tagaro told him to grow his yams upside down, and talked him into building a canoe out of the wrong wood which cause it to sink. Tagaro even tricked him into burning himself to death in his own home. Thereafter, Bwathahanga was referred to as the god of mother earth and fire. He declared, “whatever island Tagaro should make, I shall be there as fire” (Taylor, 2008, pp. 426). It is clear that Tagaro was an easy god to manipulate in the eyes of the natives by tweaking and redefining the god through an oral story. Tagaro was used by the missionaries to create opposition to the good almighty Christian god.

### **III. The History of Missionization**

Anthropological analysis of Christian missionary societies have discovered a formulaic approach to conversion among South Pacific natives (Morrell, 1946). The missionary goal was to establish a relationship with chiefs in order to protect their mission. Most of the documentation that has informed present day scholars on the issue of missionization and colonialism specifically in Vanuatu and the South Pacific is in the form of letters that missionaries themselves wrote and sent to their families, churches and newspapers in Europe in which they described their experiences in detail about their personal trials and tribulations in dealing with attempting to westernize and spread their word of god to their uncivilized culture (Smith, 1997). Archaeological evidence suggests that the islands of Vanuatu were first colonized four thousand years prior to colonialism (Spriggs, 1985). The first recorded outsider coming to the islands was a man from Polynesia, Roy Mata, sometime during the first three years of the 1600’s, followed by a Spaniard, Ferdinandde Quiros, in 1606. While we do not have much information regarding the first two earliest non Ni-Vanuatu men to set foot on the islands, we do have information regarding Captain Cook who first recorded seeing the island of Anelcauhat in August 1774 (Taylor, 2010). As Cook approached, the Ni-Vanuatu natives came to meet him in canoes waving large spears and shouting, in fear he proceeded to sail to the island of Tanna where the natives ignored him and let Cook leave and attend to his business in peace. The first Europeans to have landed on the island were Ward and Lawler who came to cut sandalwood. Prior to the first European missionary in 1839 it is documented that there were a number of sandalwood cutters and whaling vessels that routinely visited the

islands of Vanuatu. From 1830 to 1839 most of the people who came for trade did not survive. In 1839, John Williams became the first European missionary to visit Vanuatu under the London Missionary Society (Smith, 1997). However, his visit was short as he was killed by a tribe of natives on the island of Erromanga when he wandered inland to discover new people to spread his word of god. Prior to his death Williams had assigned three Samoan teachers to attempt to live on the island of Tanna under the London Missionary Society in 1842. It is known that they were the first Christian missionaries to attempt to visit Tanna, which Captain Cook had previously spotted in 1774. They were later joined by Henry Nisbet, George Turner and Thomas Heath who were reverends representing the London Missionary Society. However, in 1842 there was a serious epidemic that wiped out three quarters of the population. It is estimated that the population of Vanuatu was 20,000 prior to 1842 but post plague, the population had dwindled to approximately 4,600 (Smith, 1997). Furthermore, due to the plague, reverends Henry Nisbet, George Turner and Thomas Heath were only there for seven short months before they were forced to flee to Samoa in fear of their lives. The London Missionary Society worked with the people of Samoa, who they had converted some years before this time, and sent them in their place as they were able to spread the word of god in a safer way due to having less of a cultural barrier between them and the Ni-Vanuatu natives. After several attempts Reverend John Geddie and his wife arrived in 1848 and setup the first successful and permanent Christian mission base on the island of Aneityum in Vanuatu, remaining there until 1872.

Reverend John Geddie of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, unlike Williams, conversed with the Samoan missionaries who had a good understanding of the geography of the islands and devised the most effective places to send his Samoan teachers whom he brought with him in order to help spread the word of god (Spriggs, 1985). Geddie's plan was to send his teachers to first convert the chiefs of the islands he deemed as safe, and then let the chiefs convert their people with their social and political power. Because Geddie worked through Ni-Vanuatu's cultural customs, he was very successful in his endeavor. Only ten years later in 1858, there was a school in every district and a Christian Church in most of the districts on the major islands of Vanuatu. From 1852 to 1876 Geddie was joined by Reverend John Inglis of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland. It is evident from their journals that they differed very much in their views and thoughts on how much authority they had over the Ni-Vanuatu people. Inglis described their authority as very limited and thought that they were not very influential. However, Geddie thought that they were in a sense starting a Christian

revolution by involving the chiefs in their endeavor. In 1851 there was a flu epidemic that killed a great number of people, mostly affecting villages that had yet to be converted. This news of disease coming to the villages that had not yet accepted the word of god was perfect for Geddie's mission, as he then was able to mark those people who had died from the flu as members of only the heathen villages. This gave the missionaries power, because they were able to label the villages hit by the flu epidemic as villages receiving the punishment from god.

It only took a few months after the flu epidemic for Geddie and his team to implement new laws to push their Christian values into the native people's every day lives and to slowly begin to change their cultural customs (Spriggs, 1985). Because the team of missionaries had vaguely similar idea of the mental image of heaven and hell that the Ni-Vanuatu people had, it was easier to implement the new rules by simply changing the rules for entry into heaven. Previously stinginess was the only a social act in the Ni-Vanuatu culture that would condemn someone to hell. The Christian missionaries aimed to change stinginess to sin, including the deadly sins identified in the Christian Bible. "There was no hint of hell or punishment in the next life, in the Ni-Vanuatu traditional religious beliefs but on the contrary punishment consisted of depriving the offender of pleasure in this life, either through premature death or through sickness leading to a lack of success" (Taylor, 2010, pp. 436).

Geddie began by outlawing all feasts as he saw them as a waste of large quantities of food, and because they included gatherings of large numbers of non-converted people who were potentially opposing the Christian faith (Spriggs, 1985). The only feasts that were allowed to be held were part of marriage ceremonies or the openings of new churches. These occasions were closely monitored by Geddie and his team. It was in Geddie and Inglis's best interest to re-establish the chiefs power amongst their people in order to gain their people's support once again. It was agreed after the meeting that the chiefs would now hold high positions in the church as deacons and be eligible to eventually become reverends. At the end of 1854 Geddie and his partner Inglis asked the chiefs of the surrounding islands to come together for a meeting in an attempt to form a united government democracy. This was in part an attempt for the chiefs to once again feel important and powerful as they had lost power with the introduction of Christianity. Now instead of the chiefs holding the entire responsibility for protecting his people, god was now responsible for protecting his people. At the end of 1858 there were fifty six schools placed on every major island in Vanuatu, with a missionary teacher placed in each school spreading the word of god and successfully reaching the young men and

women in the villages leading to profound changes in Ni-Vanuatu cultural customs. By the 1959 Geddie and his team had successfully banned polygamy, cannibalism, feasting, war, widow strangulization, female infacide, dumping bodies at sea, as well as tobacco and kava consumption. At this point most people in Vanuatu considered themselves Presbyterian Christians.

### The Lead Up To Independence

Geddie and Inglis paved the way for many other missionaries to come in to the islands of Vanuatu and spread the word of god without fearing for their lives (Taylor, 2010). They had successfully transformed local ideas of stinginess into sin and created an eternal hell as a source of punishment. By the late 1950's a new movement was beginning in Vanuatu that consisted of a combination of Protestant, Catholic and Anglican ideas. The islands were no longer ruled by Presbyterian Christians but was now divided: Anglicanism in the North Pentecost, East Ambae and Maewo; the Churches of Christ (also known as Presbyterian Church) in Nduindui and Wesr Ambae; and Catholicism dominating the South Pentecost (See Figure 1). However, there was a movement emerging that Ni-Vanuatu which came to be called "kustom," referring to those people whom were looking back to their traditional beliefs and some traditional cultural practices (Taylor, 2010). This led to a number of kustom counter movements that caused conflict between church and state during the 1960's. Due to these counter movements and cultural and religious issues between the church and state there was a clear drive during the 1970's to push for independence. In June 1980, after seventy-four years, New Hebrides officially became independent from French and British rule and was renamed Vanuatu (MacClancy, 1981). However, the political parties that had successfully formed for the first time in the 1970's left the Ni-Vanuatu people with a foreign concept of democracy that they were not prepared to accept easily. While Vanuatu had once been converted and known as completely a Presbyterian Christian country it was now being divided with the introduction of Catholicism and Seventh Day Adventist. After a year of war in 1979 the parliament of Vanuatu finally declared a Christian democracy.

### IV. Cargo Cults and Revitalization Movements

The nature of Anthropology introduces a broad understanding of cultural religions and rituals, tracing process of religious change (Vokes, 2007). Wallace (1956) who was particularly interested in the social role of religious change coined the term

revitalization movements. However, there were few articles that pre-dated Wallace in an attempt to touch on religious change, such as Tylor (1871) who conducted a study on belief, ritual and magic in primitive cultures which became one of the first studies in anthropology to touch on religious change. Additionally, Frazer (1890) who attempted to put together an encyclopedia of world religious diversity and attempted to study each religions process of cultural change that subsequently influenced traditional religious change. Frazer (1890) stated that, “all religions, across all times and places, could be understood as re-enactments of a primordial drama of what we would now call revitalization, in which a symbolic figure of the ‘divine king’ is periodically sacrificed in a ritual of renewal” (Vokes, 2007, pp. 312).

Wallace (1956) was able to focus on religious change as both individually motivated as well as incorporating the effects of historical context. He defined a revitalization movement as an organized and conscious effort by members of a community to wish for a more satisfying or productive culture. The people of that society must perceive their own culture as unsatisfactory and therefore must implement a new cultural framework including the change of relationships and cultural traits that include symbols, communication and the change of religious rituals. It is important to note that these shifts do not occur through deliberate changes made by members of a society, but instead through a gradual chain-reaction effect. In order for change to be a revitalization movement it must occur over a generation, it must be a fast process of cultural change. Wallace (1956) suggested that in order to understand revitalization one must think about human society as an organism and culture as patterns of learned organisms behavior. For example, the culture teaches the organism to breathe and stay alive, allowing the organism stays in a state of homeostasis through living in harmony with the behavior it has learned from its culture. However, once the organism is disrupted and put under stress it will do anything to preserve this matrix through the behaviors that have contributed to its survival. While the people of a culture act as individuals, they perform behavior that is learned, which contributes to keeping their society in a state of homeostasis and protects their society from outside threats. It is crucial for every person in society to have a mental image of their culture in order to reduce stress levels to their society as a whole. This mental image Wallace (1956) refers to as the maze, referring to the individual’s personal experience and world view in combination with perceptions of their surrounding environment. This includes ways in which this maze can be manipulated by participants in society as well as the self in order to minimize all levels of stress, and therefore to keep the organism as the society and the self, at a state of

homeostasis. Changing the mazeway involves changing the entire image of the self as well as the image of society, culture and behavior. Therefore, when a society comes together under stress of colonialism or missionization they must choose to tolerate the stress of the mazeway or change the mazeway in an attempt to eliminate the stress and return to a level of homeostasis. When people change their mazeway to eliminate stress, we call it the revitalization process. Wallace (1956) argues that revitalization movements are not unusual, in fact not many people will live through an entire life time without experiencing some form of revitalization process. Moreover, some of the most important modern religions have gone through profound revitalization movements.

The structure of the revitalization process consists of five overlapping stages. These stages include; the steady state, period of individual stress, period of cultural distortion, period of revitalization and finally a new steady state (Wallace, 1956). For the majority of the population there are cultural patterns of behavior that lead to satisfying individual needs contributing to the needs of a well established and effectively operating community. It is normal that the techniques used for keeping the society in a state of homeostasis might change gradually through time with the introductions to new technologies. However, changes are usually minimal and only in place to minimize stress, changes also are expected to stay in code with cultural behavioral rules. This stress begins gradually at the individual levels. Once the individual experiences these stresses it leads to increased stress knowing that their individual mazeway may be inadequate. It is when there is a prolonged experience of individual stress that it begins to put ones world view at risk and leads to cultural distortion. Moreover, culture is distorted in the eyes of the community at risk, therefore stress levels begin to rise beyond the individual level. This leads to people in the society being in a state of apathy causing symptoms of anxiety. This process of revitalization can lead to the death of a society, a population can deteriorate due to famine, economic downfall, war or increasing death or birth rates due to high stress levels in society for an extended period of time. However, when it comes to missionization there are ways that a society can overcome this part of the movement. In order for a society to go through a revitalization movement successfully, they must go through six major tasks (Wallace, 1956). The reformation of the mazeway must be lead by the new chosen prophet or leader of the society. The people of the society must be brought to revelation in a moment or multiple moments of insight by the new prophet or leader, these moments are often referred to as inspiration or revelation. The subsequent revelations must lead the people to believe that their old mazeway is one of sin and therefore they must be saved by the adaption of a new mazeway or worldview. The



prophet must preach his revelations to the people of the society. The goal of this stage is to make it clear to members of society that they will be under the care and protection of the chosen god and that the convert will materially, economically and spiritually benefit from a new cultural paradigm. There must then be political organization which occurs in the religious institution. Disciples are chosen and more leaders that hold power in the institution. While the organization stage is coming to its peak there will always indefinitely be resistance. If there is organized violence against the new political structure or religion being implemented organized hostility towards the non-believers occurs and the emphasis shifts towards combating the non-believers, isolating them from their culture. As the population comes to accept the new religion and political transformation there is a cultural transformation that slowly occurs causing individuals to successfully adapt their mazeway and cultural behaviors to compliment the new religious structure and to ultimately return their society to a state of homeostasis. Furthermore, if the religious and political structure that is newly implemented is effective in reducing the societies stress levels it becomes successfully established. It is rare that the new religion will successfully change all aspects of the culture, however the majority are able to be changed. Once these stages have been accomplished, the people of society have solved its problems with the stage of routinization and a new cultural system has proved to be successful a new steady state will come to exist.

Beginning in the 1940's and 1950's in Vanuatu cargo cults developed out of this revitalization process (Crowley and Crowley, 1996). A cargo cult can be defined as a movement that includes a range of rituals and practices, which occur due to having experienced contact with colonizing countries (Otto, 2009). Referring to the cult as a "cargo cult" comes from the belief that ritualistic acts will lead to obtaining material wealth. It is apparent that cargo cults originated in Melanesia during Western colonization, which brought on the obsession with wanting to obtain Western goods. Otto (2009) argues that Melanesians, like the people of Ni-Vanuatu, felt overpowered by white people. Furthermore, there was a strong connection between the value system of the colonizers and the colonized. It became evident that Melanesians were unable to ignore that white people had a much higher standard of living, which caused feelings of inferiority. It was easier to be able to latch onto a particular point of time in history when life was less stressful for these island cultures and therefore focus on a new kind of salvation. The focus on the cargo therefore gave hope in achieving the same level of wealth, which was essential for Melanesian people to experience during times of severe cultural stress. Cargo cults seem to be common particularly across the South Pacific due

to the history of missionization. Furthermore, it is not hard to understand how this religion came into being (Crowley and Crowley, 1996). The idea of a messianic figure, an African-American soldier, who would arrive by ship or plane bringing them canned food, Coca-Cola, chocolate bars and a refrigerator was completely plausible. Furthermore, there is a sense of solemn silence left on these islands, with the airstrips completely overgrown with vegetation and no signs of the military or John Frum returning. This has left the Ni-Vanuatu people in a lost state with a lack of support and an unsympathetic government.

Specifically the development of these cults were tied to the end of World War II, when the Americans set up military bases on the islands in the South Pacific (Crowley and Crowley, 1996). The John Frum followers are an example of one of the more famous cargo cults in Vanuatu. Annually the residents of the island Tanna gather to reenact John Frum, who was an American navy officer, returning with his abundance of cargo. This event is held every February and is titled the "John Frum Festival." Crowley and Crowley (1996) describe the scene where the army bases still stand some seventy odd years later surrounded by cobwebs and completely overgrown. A ripped American flag still stands next to their national flag of Vanuatu completely worn out from age. The Ni-Vanuatu have decorated their church with the American Red Cross which is the symbol they use for their god John Frum. The American Red Cross is seen throughout the island as a symbolic reminder that their savior will one day return. The John Frum Headquarters building, which is located in the middle of the island is also decorated with Red Crosses but also has numerous pictures of Jesus Christ, who they call John Frum. Additionally, there is a plaque that hangs in the Headquarters with all the names of men who went to prison in the name of religion during the 1940's and 1950's. During the festival Ni-Vanuatu people will dress up in military uniforms or camouflaged branches and leaves, as well as displaying mock rifles carved from wood in order to reenact battles. The natives will also paint USA on their bodies and chant, "USA, USA, USA" during the reenacted battle scenes. Throughout the day the women and children perform rehearsed dances. During the afternoon of the festival Crowley and Crowley (1996) observed a man driving an imaginary car built out of a cardboard box with a large leaf as the imaginary steering wheel.

After conducting an interview with the chief of this village of Tanna, Isaac Nikiu, Crowley and Crowley (1996) discovered that the Ni-Vanuatu people who are John Frum worshipers are against the Vanuatu's prime minister, Reverend Walter Lini. Interestingly, as a people they are also completely against the use of money, against

missionaries and conversions and wish to return to their past cultural customs. Cargo cults are a clear example of how the Christian missionization failed the Ni-Vanuatu people and divided a nation through introducing Western goods and technology. It is clear that prior to missionization, but more importantly prior to World War II, the people of Tanna believed their island was the center of the universe and lived a life of peace. Once the missionaries and later the military invaded it became clear to the natives that they were in fact the bottom of the social scale with no wealth, social capital or power. Furthermore, they blamed their ancestors and gods for their present injustices. The issue became worse when the Ni-Vanuatu not only saw white people with these advantages but also African-American people. This caused serious psychological problems for the Ni-Vanuatu who were trying to understand why people who looked like them also had these advantages and they did not.

## **V. Conclusion**

Religion has always been an issue in Vanuatu, since the early European missionaries came to the islands to convert the native people to Christianity (George, 2010). Today, some of the islanders still hold to their ancestral tradition in combination with their faith in Christianity, while other natives have rejected their traditional religious beliefs all together. Furthermore, it is apparent that the missionaries failed to integrate the Ni-Vanuatu cultural understanding of religion and pushed Christianity as a completely new way of life ignoring their already established cultural customs. The countries of the South Pacific have, for the most part have had chiefly power structures (Bolton, 1998). However, during colonialism it was the primary goal of missionaries to eliminate the power structure and hierarchy of the chiefs that held authority within their separate communities in order to implement a new structure and control by a modern nation-state. It was clear that colonialists took the Western approach by introducing formal education in attempt to modernize natives and destroy the chiefly structure. Western formal schooling was a symbol of modernity and technological advancement that still, post-colonialism, is forcing its way into non-Western societies (White, 2006).

Reverend John Geddie of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia was the first successful missionary to come to Vanuatu. It is apparent that his success was due to conversing with Samoan missionaries who had a good understanding of the geography of the islands and therefore was able to devise an effective plan. Geddie sent Samoan teachers whom he brought with him in order to help spread the word of god (Spriggs, 1985). Additionally, Geddie's sent his teachers to first convert the chiefs of the islands

he deemed as safe, and then let the chiefs convert their people with their social and political power. Only ten years later in 1858, there was a school in every district and a Christian Church in most of the districts on the major islands of Vanuatu. By the 1959 Geddie and his team had successfully banned polygamy, cannibalism, feasting, war, widow strangulation, female infanticide, dumping bodies at sea, as well as tobacco and kava consumption. At this point most people in Vanuatu considered themselves Presbyterian Christians. Geddie and Inglis paved the way for many other missionaries to come in to the islands of Vanuatu and spread the word of god without fearing for their lives (Taylor, 2010). They had successfully transformed local ideas of stinginess into sin and created an eternal hell as a source of punishment. However, there was a movement emerging that Ni-Vanuatu which came to be called “kustom,” referring to those people whom were looking back to their traditional beliefs and some traditional cultural practices (Taylor, 2010). This led to a number of kustom counter movements that caused conflict between church and state during the 1960’s. Due to these counter movements and cultural and religious issues between the church and state there was a clear drive during the 1970’s to push for independence. In June 1980, after seventy-four years, New Hebrides officially became independent from French and British rule and was renamed Vanuatu (MacClancy, 1981).

Beginning in the 1940’s and 1950’s in Vanuatu cargo cults developed out of this revitalization process (Crowley and Crowley, 1996). Referring to the cult as a “cargo cult” comes from the belief that ritualistic acts will lead to obtaining material wealth. It is apparent that cargo cults originated in Melanesia during Western colonization, which brought on the obsession with wanting to obtain Western goods. Otto (2009) argues that Melanesians, like the people of Ni-Vanuatu, felt overpowered by white people. Furthermore, there was a strong connection between the value system of the colonizers and the colonized. It became evident that Melanesians, similarly to Ni-Vanuatu people, were unable to ignore that white people had a much higher standard of living, which caused feelings of inferiority.

Very little research has been done on where the Ni-Vanuatu people’s beliefs lie today and why. Future research should focus on who Jesus Christ is to the Ni-Vanuatu people and what Christianity now means to them. Who is more important to their fundamental beliefs, Jesus Christ or their native gods? Additionally, can a Ni-Vanuatu person believe in spirits as well as traditional Christian gods without cultural isolation? Further research should be done on the Ni-Vanuatu family structure, including the modern role of women in their society. This research should include how marriage plays

a role in modern society, what women's current responsibilities are in the community and in the household. I believe this research will help future scholars to understand more about how Christian missionization has affected the Ni-Vanuatu culture and how their religious affiliation has or has not affected their family values and the roles of women. This research will benefit the scientific community in understanding the missionization process as a whole and how to avoid damaging cultures in the future.

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## Nguna, Pele and Emao

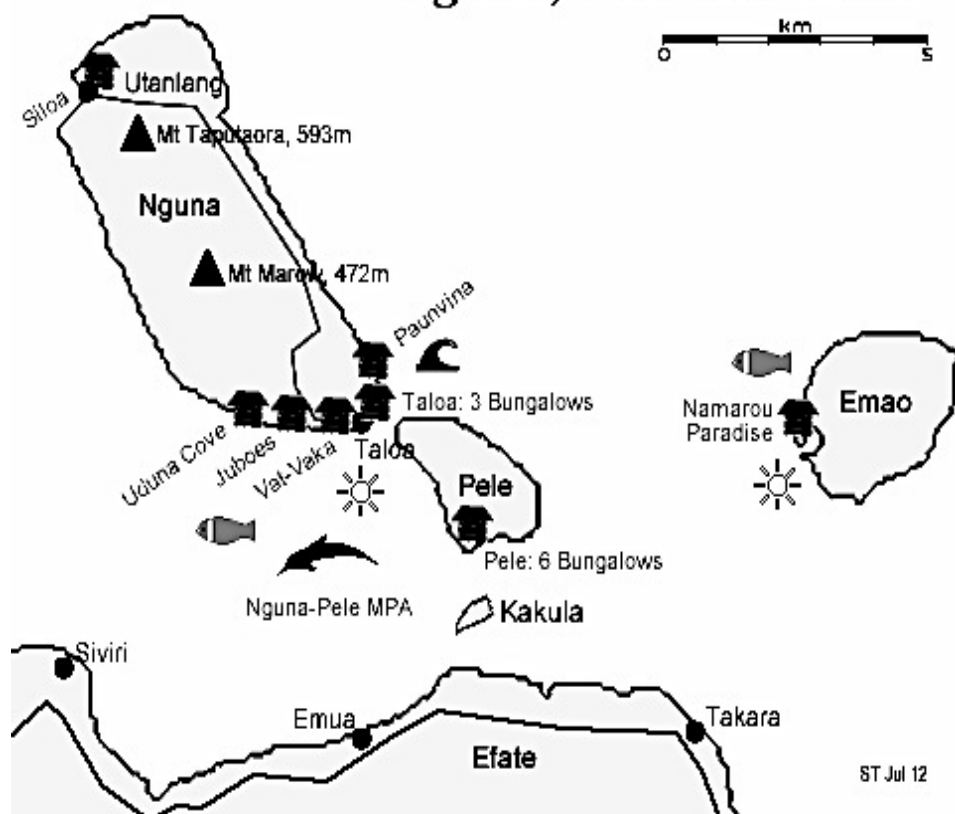
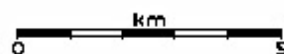


FIGURE 2: Close Up Map of Present Day Vanuatu, Pele Island.



# **Behind the Label: Comparison of Garment Sweatshops in Dhaka, Bangladesh to New York City and Milan**

Christopher DeFilippi (Government & Politics)<sup>1</sup>

For the past ten years, the Bangladesh textile and garment industries have nearly doubled in size. Today, there are over 5,600 textile factories with 4.5 million Bangladeshi employed. As factory conditions worsen for workers, exports continue to soar. Bangladesh's Ready-Made Garment (RMG) exports make up for 80 percent or \$21.5 billion of the country's total exports. Similar textile factories or "sweatshops" in Bangladesh are found across the world. Whether in New York City or Milan, a one and third tier city respectively according to Sociologist Mark Abrahamson, have fewer but, analogous factories. The most underdeveloped parts of these well-developed cities contain sweatshops similar to the ones found in Bangladesh. Sweatshop workers, who are mainly women, are underpaid and overworked, placed in unsafe conditions and some even die in these unsafe factories. As the global garment industry continues to grow, factories across the world are left unnoticed. This paper will analyze and compare worsening factory conditions in undeveloped Bangladesh to New York City and Milan as the garment industry continues to globalize.

## **I. Literature Review**

When defining sweatshops, focus is often placed on the physical condition of a garment factory rather than a workers experience. The (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1994) believes a factory is operating as a sweatshop if "an employer that violates more than one federal or state labor law governing minimum wage and overtime, child labor, industrial homework, occupational safety and health, workers compensation or industry regulation." As Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) and governments join the fight to end sweatshop labor, (Hapke, 2004) states a sweatshop definition should include, "working for abusive supervisors and not able to take paid sick leave or vacation." Though sweatshop definitions vary, if individuals are working in a factory with unsafe or

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<sup>1</sup> Research performed under the direction of Dr. Patricia Moynagh and Dr. Abe Unger in partial fulfillment of the Senior Program requirements.

unjust conditions there is a good chance the factory is operating as a sweatshop. Although many like the International Labour Organization study sweatshop conditions in the third-world, there is no clear, concise, general definition of what criteria makes a factory a sweatshop.

Awareness of current sweatshop conditions within the international community is growing. Bangladesh factory conditions continue to worsen for workers while export demand has nearly tripled in the last ten years. At one time Bangladesh was not expected to thrive in the international garment and textile market. Scholars as studied in (Rahman, 2011) believed Bangladesh's garment and textile industry could not compete in a global market once the Multifibre Agreement was removed. (Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, 2013) estimates Bangladesh's total exports are valued at \$21.5 billion and roughly eighty percent of the country's total trade. Studies suggest, Bangladesh exports will continue to grow. McKinsey & Company predicts Bangladesh is on track to be the top garment exporter in the world by 2020 (Berg, Hedrich, Tochtermann, 2012). Although China currently leads the garment industry in total exports, the study found global buyers are simply concerned with low labor and production costs. (Berg et.al., 2012) finds "86 percent of the chief purchasing officers in leading apparel companies in Europe and the United States plan to decrease levels of sourcing in China over the next five years because of declining profit margins and capacity constraints." In the future, global buyers are expected to shift even more production to Bangladesh factories, as demand rises, regardless of the consequences.

Bangladesh factory conditions worsen by the day. The BBC Panorama Documentary, "Dying For A Bargain" (BBC, 2013) studies garment factory conditions across Dhaka. The study's findings are astonishing. Not only is Bangladesh known for having the lowest labor costs in the world, workers are placed in unsafe conditions and work long hours to meet unreachable quotas. Supervisors claim workers stay voluntarily in order to keep up with demand. Although individuals work a twenty hour shift, overtime is never paid. Supervisors are seen keeping two sets of timesheets in order to keep production high and costs low. BBC also found, global buyers don't often check on the factory's management as long as the costs remain low. A recent increase in factory fires has brought much needed attention to the truth behind the label. Although informative, the documentary does not bring to light the struggles women face in the garment industry. Gender inequality is quite prevalent in factories regarding pay, employee treatment and management. Today, the garment industry is made up of nearly seventy percent women. (Foxvog, Gearhart, Maher, Parker, Vanpeperstraete, Zeldenrust,

2013) found women remain in the lowest grade jobs and even when promoted, they are often paid less than their male co-workers. (Alam, Bahn, Bormann, Burckhardt, Giese, Saam, Schröder, Wötzel, 2008) similar to (Foxvog et.al., 2013) studies the conditions women face working in the garment factories. Women are often harassed and abused as others work in factories with polluted water and unsafe conditions. Studies prove women, who are the majority, truly encounter the worst conditions.

These conditions that are found in third-world garment factories are not just limited to Bangladesh. Similar if not identical conditions are found in global cities like New York City. The New York State Labor Department takes garment factory violations very seriously. (New York State Department of Labor, 2013) extending the (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1994) definition states, all New York City factories must be registered with the Labor Department for oversight and inspection. However, the definition specifically focuses on New York State garment factories. The New York State Labor Department, Special Task Force for the Apparel Industry found Suburban Textiles, Inc. (trading as Forest Uniform Corp) was operating with sweatshop-like conditions. (New York State Department of Labor, 2009) found the factory overworked employees, had unsafe conditions and “failed to pay employees required overtime wages, despite assigned workweeks of up to 80 hours, and also violated the state’s day of rest requirement.” These conditions are similar to the ones found in Bangladesh garment factories. Both (Lu et.al. v. Alexander Wang Incorporated et.al., 2012) and (Lin et.al. v. Great Rose Fashion, Inc. et.al., 2009) describe unsafe and unjust conditions found in New York City garment factories.

Unsafe and unjust conditions are also found in Milan garment factories. However, literature specifically focusing on Milan garment sweatshops is lacking. Scholars including (Wu, 2008) and (Manzo, 2011) study the strong divide between Italians and Chinese migrants. As garment factories and Chinese wholesale stores open in Milan’s Chinatown, many Italians feel migrants are competing with the locals. Since Chinese wholesale items are much cheaper, many would prefer the mark-off items rather than the designer brand. In order to properly argue this paper, a case study on Milan was conducted by studying stores and garment factories along Via Sarpi, a main street in Milan Chinatown. The study found factories are placed in inaccessible locations, mostly off of Via Sarpi and are often unsafe to even enter. Low lighting, long hours and overall poor conditions are present in Milan sweatshops.

As the garment industry continues to globalize, one and third tier cities have similar factory conditions to Bangladesh. (Abrahamson, 2004) studies globalization and

ranks cities based on cultural and economic industries. New York City stands alone on the one-tier platform as it outnumbers all other global cities with the amount of cultural and economic industries it contains. Abrahamson defines Milan as a third tier city as it lacks cultural industries but, has major economic industries.

This paper will compare and bring awareness to sweatshop conditions in Bangladesh to sweatshops in modern-day New York City and Milan. The garments we wear have a story behind them. The women who work in unsafe factories for long hours suffer as the global buyer and consumer profit. Even in a global city, sweatshop conditions exist in many garment factories. After completing a self-conducted case and research study of New York City and Milan sweatshops, factory conditions prove garment and textile factories are quite similar to ones of the third-world. Though the future is bleak, the world is becoming aware of the sacrifices and suffering that's found behind the label.

## **II. Globalization of the Textile and Garment Industry**

Today, the world textile and garment industry is valued at over \$700 billion and, represents 2.2 percent and 1.6 percent respectively, of the world's trade. In order for developed countries to make a larger profit, many outsource garment manufacturing to developing countries. The garment and textile industries are major contributors of income and employment for developing countries. Both industries employ nearly 75 million individuals yearly. For a top garment and textile exporter like Bangladesh, garment workers make up eighty percent of the labor force. As the garment industry continues to expand, developing countries continue to build factories to meet demand. Garment factories or "sweatshops" are found in both developed and developing countries. For global buyers, profit comes before factory safety for workers in these developing countries. Surprisingly, New York City and Milan, two global cities have similar garment factory conditions found in developing Bangladesh.

The term sweatshop is often used to describe factories in both the garment and textile industry. The U.S. Department of Labor considers a factory a sweatshop if, "an employer violates more than one federal or state labor law governing minimum wage and overtime, child labor, industrial homework, occupational safety and health, workers compensation or industry regulation" (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1994). However, some anti-sweatshop organizations and scholars believe the definition should also include if an individual is, "working for abusive supervisors and not able to take unpaid sick leave or vacation" (Hapke, 2004). Many garment factories found in both developed and

developing countries meet sweatshop criteria. Garment workers risk their lives daily just to make a living, however, earning a living wage is nearly impossible in the garment industry. One of the main reasons global buyers outsource their manufacturing is for cheaper production and labor costs. Sweatshops, not only in developing countries like Bangladesh but in New York City and Milan, have workers earning much lower than the estimated living wage. “The idea is that full-time workers and their families should earn enough to afford a basic acceptable living standard and so not have to live in poverty” (Anker, 2011). Even though Bangladesh, the United States and Italy have a legal minimum wage, it is much lower than the calculated living wage. What occurs in the factories that produce the labels we wear is truly alarming.

Many of our clothes that bear the “Made in Bangladesh” label have a story. Although we may not know who specifically made the garments, there is a good chance they were made in a sweatshop. Sweatshop conditions are making headlines around the globe. Garment workers risk their lives in order for the western world to profit. Though Bangladesh, New York City, and Milan’s sweatshops are different, some happen to be quite similar.

### **III. Bangladesh**

#### Bangladesh, Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

Bangladesh was not always one of the top garment exporters in the world. The Multifibre Arrangement (MFA) which began in 1974 “constructed an elaborate quota system that limited the quantity of clothing and textiles that forty different countries could export to the United States, Canada and Europe” (Garwood, 2011). Bangladesh’s garment industry prospered under the MFA, “due to the zero or low rates faced by exports from Bangladesh to the USA and the European Union” (Ahmed, 2009). During this time, Bangladesh attempted to equate themselves with other large Ready-Made Garment (RMG) exporters like China, Japan and Vietnam. Bangladesh, having the advantage with low import rates compared to other RMG exporters, “a market for Bangladesh RMG in the USA and stimulated growth of the RMG industry” (Bhattacharya and Rahman, 2000). However in 1994, The MFA ended and was replaced with the Agreement on Textile and Clothing (ATC). The ATC worked with the World Trade Organization phasing out quotas by 2005. While Bangladesh began to expand its garment industry during the MFA, many believed Bangladesh would not be able to compete with China’s low manufacturing costs. Studies predicted there would be winners

and losers in the post-MFA global apparels trading regime and that Bangladesh was likely to be one of the losers (Rahman, 2011). Surpassing expectations as shown in Table 1, exports soared once quotas were removed. So, how did Bangladesh come out on top? As the garment industry continued to globalize demand for garments produced at low costs increased. As predicted, “China would gain most in a quota-free regime... able to increase their share in the European Union apparels market from 12.9 percent in 2004 to 24.2 percent in 2009; in the US market, the corresponding figures were 19.0 percent and 43.2 percent” (Rahman, 2011). Even though China gained, post-MFA, Bangladesh was still able to thrive by keeping production and labor costs low. Today, Bangladesh still has the lowest paid factory workers and production costs in the world, allowing the country to compete in a global market. Although China still controls a major portion of the garment industry, Bangladesh’s demand continues to grow, paving its way for the number one spot.

Table 1: Ready-Made Garment Industry Export Growth

Year	Ready-Made Garments Exports (Million US\$)	Bangladesh Exports (Million US\$)	% of Ready-Made Garments in Bangladesh’s Total Exports
2005-06	7900.80	10526.16	75.06
2006-07	9211.23	12177.86	75.64
2007-08	10699.80	14110.80	75.83
2008-09	12347.77	15565.19	79.33
2009-10	12496.72	16204.65	77.12
2010-11	17914.46	22924.38	78.15
2011-12	19089.69	24287.66	78.60
2012-13	21515.73	27018.26	79.63

**Source:** Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, Bangladesh’s RMG Export to World (2013).

Today, Bangladesh is the second largest garment exporter in the world. RMG exports are at record highs and make up for nearly 80 percent or \$21.5 billion of the country’s total exports (Garwood, 2011). A country that was once predicted to fail is now on track to surpass China in total exports in the next five years. McKinsey & Company forecasts, “export-value growth of 7 to 9 percent annually within the next ten years, so the market will double by 2015 and nearly triple by 2020 (Berg, Hedrich, Tochtermann 2012). This continual growth would put Bangladesh on top. The survey also found, “86 percent of the chief purchasing officers in leading apparel companies in Europe and the United States plan to decrease levels of sourcing in China over the next five years because of declining profit margins and capacity constraints” (Berg et.al., 2012). It

proves, global buyers are only concerned with profit, not what's truly happening behind the label. Although Bangladesh has "challenges ahead with infrastructure, political stability, skilled workforce and materials," (Berg et al., 2012) Bangladesh is on its way to being the top garment exporter in the world.

### Bangladesh Garment Workers Compensation & Production Costs

In order to keep Bangladesh competitive in the global market, prices as they have been in the past must remain low. So, how much does it cost to produce clothing? In Bangladesh, the production cost and clothing markup is startling. According to a 2011 O'Rourke Group Partners Report, "a generic \$14.00 polo shirt sold in Canada and made in Bangladesh actually costs a retailer only \$5.67" (Westwood, 2013). This low cost of production keeps Bangladesh competitive with China. The cost breakdown includes, "Factory overhead, \$0.07, agent \$0.18, labor \$0.12, factory margin \$0.58, freight/insurance/duty, \$1.03, and materials and finishing \$3.69" (Westwood, 2013). A shirt that sells for \$14.00 has a 60 percent markup when sold in the United States or Canada. In comparison to the United States, "a denim shirt made in the US would cost \$13.22 compared to only \$4.70 in Bangladesh" (CNN, 2013). Labor costs affect total production costs dramatically. The United States' cost breakdown includes, "\$0.75 industrial laundry, \$5.00 materials and \$7.47 labor costs compared to \$0.20 industrial laundry, \$3.30 materials and \$0.22 labor costs" (CNN, 2013). Labor costs in the United States are 106 times more than in Bangladesh. Since developed countries cannot compete with production costs of developing ones, developed countries garment imports are on the rise, outsourcing garment manufacturing forever.

Though Bangladesh is "home to the world's fastest-growing export-apparel industry, prevailing wages gave workers only 14 percent of a living wage" (Worker Rights Consortium, 2013). Bangladesh's minimum wage is one of the lowest in the world as "the monthly minimum wage for entry-level workers in Bangladesh's garment sector [is] \$39 per month – about half of the lowest applicable rate in other major garment-exporting countries, such as Cambodia (\$80), India (\$71), Pakistan (\$79), Sri Lanka (\$73) and Vietnam (\$78)" (International Labour Organization, 2013). This was a major contributor to Bangladesh's production growth post-MFA. Garment workers in Bangladesh make half as much as other garment workers across the world allowing for low operating costs and higher profits.

### Bangladesh Employment & Factory Growth

As the garment industry continues to globalize, factory demands are higher than ever. Today, there are over 5,600 textile factories with over 4.5 million Bangladeshi employed. As Bangladesh's garment industry developed, factories as well as jobs increased collectively as seen in Figure 1 and 1.1. As discussed earlier, if Bangladesh's garment industry continues to grow, factory numbers will increase along with employment. Factory managers will have no other choice but to hire more workers. If the McKinsey & Company projection is accurate and garment exports double and triple, employment and factories will grow respectively.

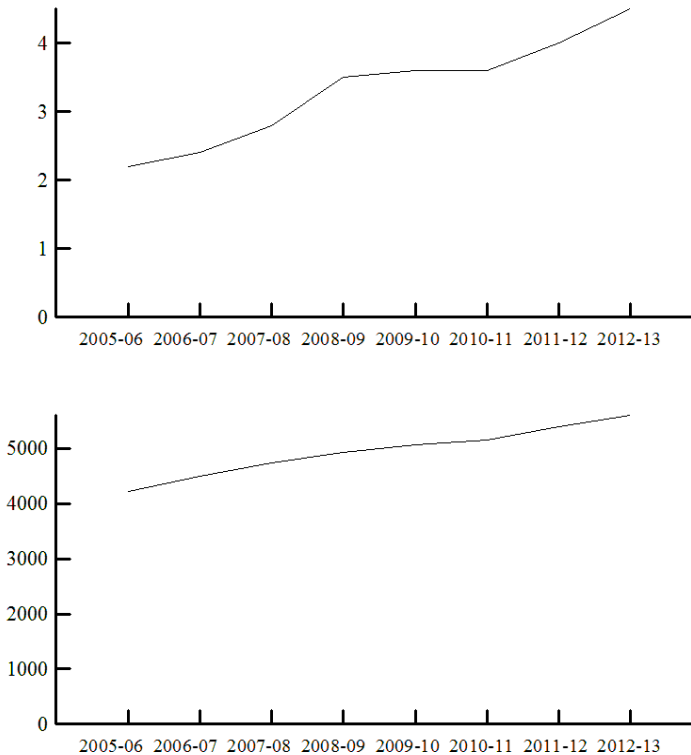


Figure 1: Employment (top) and factory (bottom) growth in Bangladesh 2005-2013. Source: Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA). (2013). Membership and Employment.



### The Truth Behind the Label

As the Bangladesh garment industry continues to grow, factory conditions are worsening for workers. Besides a low minimum wage, workers often work long hours and through the night. BBC's Dying for a Bargain, brings to life the long days of garment factory workers. The report found, although workers are working overtime, supervisors are not reporting the time, leaving worker compensation at a minimum. At the Tung Hai Sweater Factory in Dhaka, "supervisors keep two sets of timesheets, workers may have worked until 10:00pm but, their timesheets say they left at 5:00pm" (BBC, 2013). In an interview conducted with sign operators one stated, "It is written here that we go inside at 8:00am and come out at 5:00pm but, in reality we come out at 7:00pm" (BBC, 2013). The report is astonishing as workers are aware supervisors are keeping two sets of timesheets. One book will record their regular shift and another will record their overtime. Not surprisingly, the overtime timesheets are neglected. When Tung Hai Sweater Factory supervisors were asked about employee overtime they said, "[workers stay] to achieve their target production" (BBC, 2013). Many buyers do not know about the mismanagement of the factories. Kalpona Aktar of the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity says, "[buyer] audits nearly never work" (BBC, 2013). Hiding information from global buyers will keep them from outsourcing production to other factories. However, buyers take a risk when purchasing clothes from sweatshops. Global buyers fear that trade unions, nongovernmental organizations, human rights groups and consumers' associations in developed countries may accuse them of encouraging their suppliers in developing countries to run sweatshops (Mottaleb and Sonobe, 2011). As the McKinsey & Company report found, fair wages and factory conditions are not as important to the global buyer as cheap production.

The Tung Hai Sweater Factory is not the only one factory breaking codes of conduct. Ha-Meem Sportswear Ltd. is a factory doing the unthinkable. One worker was in the factory for 19 hours and paid just \$3.20. He says, "my feelings are bad, and my health is too, in the last two weeks, approximately, it's been like this for 8 nights, last week there were 6... or 5 night shifts" (BBC, 2013). The worker was due back at the factory in just four hours to complete another 19 hour shift. When speaking to the Compliance Manager of Ha-Meem Sportswear, he says "[workers] end at 5:30pm" (BBC, 2013) even the night workers were caught leaving the factory around 2:00am. Employees are not even compensated for their overtime work. Although managers state overtime is "voluntary," workers have no choice but to meet these growing, unreachable

quotas. In the future, garment workers hours will only increase as the growing factory demand will have to be met.

With low labor costs come poor factory safety. Hundreds of workers are placed in dirty and unsafe factories for long periods of time. “Workers suffer numerous injuries, poor ventilation, bad lighting, high temperatures and high humidity” (Khanna, 2011). Factory fires are also quite common and unfortunately have serious consequences. In January 2013, an illegal Dhaka garment factory with no safety codes broke out in flames. The factory was a subcontractor, specializing in sportswear. Sadly, the fire killed 8 Bangladeshi garment workers but, could have killed more. At the time of the fire, “the factory had two exits and one of them was locked” (BBC, 2013). It’s common for supervisors to lock the gates from the outside, trapping workers. The supervisor said, “He pulled the gates closed in order to keep the workers from stealing” (BBC, 2013). If a fire started and workers were trapped, those who leave unharmed must watch the workers who couldn’t escape, perish. In April 2013, Rana Plaza in Dhaka, “housed five garment factories, came crashing down, claiming at least 1,132 lives, cracks had appeared in the wall the previous day, yet thousands of garment workers were forced to return to work in the factories housed on the upper floors” (Foxvog, Gearhart, Maher, Parker, Vanpeperstraete, Zeldenrust, 2013). As discussed before, workers have no choice but to stay and finish their work. Rana Plaza’s conditions kept worsening by the day. Workers informed supervisors they would not return to work until conditions were safe but, “were threatened with the loss of their whole month salary which was due to be paid at the end of the month if they refused to show the next morning” (Foxvog et.al., 2013). Workers were greeted the next morning “with a loudspeaker voice saying: “All the workers of Rana Plaza go to work, the factory has already been repaired” (Foxvog et.al., 2013). Rana Plaza collapsed just an hour later, bringing both shock and dismay to Dhaka. If factory safety was just as important as production costs, workers in Rana Plaza should not have returned until the factory was repaired. Rana Plaza opened the world to the unjust conditions Bangladesh garment workers face every day but, conditions are far from changing. In May 2013, the Tung Hai Sweater Factory also experienced a factory fire killing 8. According to Bangladeshi News Reports, “the factory was closed when the blaze erupted at 11 p.m. but that the company’s managing director and other executives were holding a late-night meeting with a top police official on an upper floor of the 11-story building” (Yardley, 2013). The Tung Hai Sweater Factory is the same factory that didn’t report workers overtime. If the fire occurred a month earlier, hundreds could have died as many worked past nightfall.

Factory fires are becoming daily events in Bangladesh and nothing is being done to prevent them. If supervisors continue to lock gates from the outside to prevent workers from stealing, death is inevitable. Fires are becoming more and more frequent, as millions of garment workers lives are at risk. Low pay, unrecorded overtime hours and safety hazards, are found in many sweatshops across Bangladesh. Unfortunately, women and children see the worst of these conditions.

### Garment Factories v. Bangladesh Women

A majority of Bangladesh garment factories are filled with women. By working, women have an opportunity to support the household financially. To date, “over 70 percent of Bangladesh’s garment workers are women [in an] industry [that] claims to improve the position of women, including liberating them from repressive family structures which afford them limited freedom” (Foxvog et.al., 2013). Gender inequality is prominent among garment factories, “women remain in the lowest grade jobs and even when promoted they are often paid less than their male counterpart” (Foxvog et al., 2013). If wages were not low enough, women are paid even less than men, “the preference for hiring women is, in fact, an employer preference for a compliant and low cost workforce” (Ahmed, 2004). Though many women work as a way to support their family, they are left in constant poverty. Unfortunately, “these low wages mean that, despite toiling up to 90 hours a week, these women are trapped into a cycle of poverty, most struggle to provide for their families and the majority live in constant debt” (Foxvog et al., 2013). Women are stuck in a patriarchal society no matter in the workplace or at home. A system that claims to liberate women from family structures only places them in another environment that limits their freedoms.

Earning a living wage is not the only problem women face in the garment industry. Garment factories affect women’s health dramatically, “inhalation of dust, chemicals and repetitive tasks is also a serious issue, some women have reported experiencing irregular menstrual cycles once they began working in the garment factories” (Garwood, 2011). Women often ignore their health as reaching quotas is most important. If a woman becomes sick, she is often fired due to a delay in production. Pregnant women receive the worst treatment, “pregnant women [are] either forced to leave their jobs or fired before they have their babies, losing their income, instead of getting paid maternity leave to which they are legally entitled” (Shefali, 2004). Harassment is also evident in factories. Women risk their lives walking to and from work, as well as “face harassment by the owners which includes verbal, physical and sexual

abuse and the use of swear words are also very common” (Khanna, 2011). Even though conditions are rough, women have no other option than to work in these unsafe factories.

The stories of women garment workers are appalling. Rekha, a 19 year old sewing worker says, “In the factory, I really feel as if I’m suffocating, we often pass out and the toilets are simply horrible I’m even afraid of using them the drinking water isn’t clean, and even though a water filter was installed, it doesn’t work (Alam, Bahn, Bormann, Burekhardt, Giese, Saam, Schröder, Wötzel, 2008). Suhada another garment worker discusses the difficulties of factory work. She says, “I usually work from 7 o’clock in the morning until 7 o’clock at night but also occasionally to 10 o’clock, we also work at night” (Alam et.al., 2013). Long hours are not the only problems Suhada has to deal with. After going two days without eating, Suhada made a mistake on the job, “the foreman made a big fuss about it and sacked me on the spot. I burst into tears and begged him not to sack me, but it was no use” (Alam et.al., 2013). Banu describes the consequences when a Bangladesh factory has no work, “I received my wage, but two days’ pay was docked, one day because I was absent, and the second because the factory had no work when the factory has contracts, we are forced to work overtime when there are no contracts, we are forced to take unpaid holidays.” (Alam et.al., 2013). Women continue to suffer on a daily basis with poor factory conditions, inaccurate pay and safety.

For a young girl growing up outside of Dhaka, working in a garment factory is certainly not her dream job but, she may not have much of a choice. Sweatshops across Bangladesh have harsh working environments but are still filled with workers. So, why do women stay in the factories? Some work because they have to support themselves, “father and mother can’t feed me, my brothers can’t feed me, and my uncles can’t feed me, so that is why I am working in garments, to stand on my own feet, since I am taking care of my own expenses, I have no obligation” (Kibria, 1995). Women have no other choice but to work in these grim garment factories. Farida, a married woman with two kids is a perfect example. She says, “I spend many days and nights on the streets, I know what hunger is, I cannot do anything else except some kind of work in a factory or as a housemaid, I don’t think about the future” (Alam et.al., 2013). A garment factory worker who flees the terrible conditions may be like Farida, unemployed and on the streets. Though conditions are bad, living impoverished and homeless is far worse. Bangladesh garment workers are eventually paid for their work, but it’s too late.

### A “Dead” Wage

Bangladesh garment workers receive a living wage only in the worst circumstances. According to Bangladesh law, garment workers must be compensated upon injury or death. Most recently, the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006 was amended, increasing compensation in cases of death or injury, “for deaths, the amount of compensation has been ascertained at Tk. 100,000 (\$1,200) per worker and for a permanent total disability, the amount fixed is Tk. 125,000 (\$1,600) per worker, in case of an accident that may happen due to employer’s negligence, the compensation amount shall be double” (Bangladesh Labour Department, 2006). Workers finally receive the compensation they deserve after working long hours in unsafe sweatshops. The proper, “living wage for a family in Bangladesh is just over Tk. 12,248 (\$160) per month” (Asia Floor Wage, 2011). Unfortunately, Bangladesh garment workers have to die in order to receive a living wage, but even then some factories bend the rules.

Garment factories don’t always follow the Bangladesh Labour Act. Some families of the deceased factory workers in the Rana Plaza collapse still haven’t received compensation. To date 834 families have received Tk. 20,000 (\$257) from the government to cover burials costs and the dependents or legal heirs of 777 dead workers have received payments ranging from Tk. 100,000 (\$1,285) to Tk. 400,000 (\$5,140) (Foxvog et.al., 2013). As discussed before, over 1,100 garment workers died, leaving many families without compensation. Most of the money paid to the victims’ families was “paid from the Prime Minister’s Fund, which received donations originating from a number of governmental, non-governmental and private donors” (Foxvog et.al., 2013). As for the injured, “thirty-six amputees and paralyzed workers have also received compensation from the government in the range of Tk. 10 lakh (\$12,870) and Tk. 15 lakh (\$19,305) each; of these workers, two have since died in the hospital” (Foxvog et.al., 2013). Though Bangladesh workers and families receive some compensation, the value of a human life is sadly only equivalent to a Bangladesh workers realistic living wage. As Bangladesh garment workers are continually put in unsafe conditions, they are only looked at as machines rather than humans.

### **IV. New York City**

Over 100 years ago, the Triangle Factory fire killing 146 brought changes to laws on a local and national level. In New York, the state “passed 36 safety laws, spurring other states to do the same.” (Smith, Yardley, Clifford, Greenhouse, Lew, 2013). The United States Congress then “banned child labor, set a national minimum wage, and

guaranteed overtime pay” (Smith et.al., 2013). Though the United States mainly imports its garments, New York City garment factories still manufacture apparels and employ thousands. The peak of the New York City garment industry occurred in the late 1990’s. Garment factories and employment boomed in areas outside of Manhattan, making areas similar to underdeveloped Sunset Park, Brooklyn, sweatshop headquarters. The New York Times reported on sweatshops in the 1990’s as, “dim, dusty warehouse, red and blue rags covered the four windows, shutting out all natural light, bundles of cut cloth sat piled in haphazard mounds, some stacked taller than a worker... rows of mid-aged Chinese women hunched over sewing machines, squinting and silent” (Bao, 2012). Workers suffered with unsafe factory conditions, unreachable quotas and unpaid wages. As New York State passed stricter laws with regards to factory safety and conditions, many believed it would be the end of the garment industry. Nancy Green author of Ready-to-Wear and Ready-to-Work, believed, “during that time when progressive reformers, labor leaders and state legislators endeavored to improve labor conditions by passing new legislation and enforcing laws, manufacturers also argued that too many constraints would make the landscape of the garment industry disappear altogether from the city” (Green, 1997). Although the government has taken a stricter role on garment factories, the industry still exists throughout New York City. After much needed government reform, the garment industry has revised labor and factory conditions. However, there are still complications and sweatshops similar to those of the 1990’s can unfortunately be found across New York City today.

### New York City Factory Employment

As operating and labor costs increased in New York City, garment manufacturing was outsourced to developing countries. Today, only 16.6 thousand individuals are employed in over 1.800 garment factories in New York City much different from 39.8 thousand at the turn of the millennium. As more government restrictions are placed on factories, many end up shutting down. Garment factories are scattered across New York City, most frequently found on the Lower East Side, and in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. Both areas are frequently populated by migrants who are more common to work in the garment industry. Although garment factories were originally predicted to close as stricter government restrictions were forced upon them, however, it’s rising production costs that are forcing manufacturers to close up shop. If garment imports continue to increase, New York City factories and employment will continue to diminish.

### New York City Factory Regulations

Throughout the years after the Triangle Factory fire, New York State continually passed laws that protect workers in garment factories. In 1929, the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) was established. In order to prevent sweatshops from running, “garment industry manufacturers and contractors are required by law to register with the NYSDOL” (New York State Department of Labor, 2013). Today, there are over 1,800 New York City garment factories registered in the database. The NYSDOL define many conditions they believe exist if a garment factory is operating as a sweatshop. Sweatshops can have, “only one exit, blocked or locked fire exits, no fire exit signs, poor ventilation, holes in the factory floor or ceiling, employees who have hand rashes, dirty restrooms, bad lighting, machines and fans lacking safety guards, trash, clothing or other obstacles block aisles and doors, or aisles less than 36 inches wide” (New York State Department of Labor, 2013). Sweatshops often have more than one safety violation. A sweatshop also exists if, “employees are not paid on time, workers do not receive wage statements with their pay, there are no overtime rates for piecework, payday is missed, no regular payday, time clock broken or not used, payments for weekend or overtime work made separately” (New York State Department of Labor, 2013). Factories must follow labor laws for employees working longer than forty hours per week. Overtime regulations state, “after working forty hours, employees must receive overtime at one and one-half times their hourly pay rate, pieceworkers must receive one and one-half times their average rate after working forty hours” (New York State Department of Labor, 2013). Although New York State Labor laws protect workers in the garment industry, some factories choose to break labor laws.

Although there are over 1,800 registered garment factories, sweatshops often do not meet regulations and hide from the New York State Labor Department. A factory that isn't registered “is breaking state law and is a sweatshop operation” (New York State Department of Labor, 2013). A factory must follow regulations of the Department of Labor Special Task Force for the Apparel Industry. The Task Force “inspects manufacturers and contractors, with respect to their respective production employees, for compliance with the labor law” (New York State Department of Labor, 2011). Though sweatshop conditions seem unconventional for a modern day society, sweatshops are found throughout New York City and continue to ignore New York State labor laws. Sweatshop workers are often placed in unsafe conditions, have unequal or no overtime pay and some are even hospitalized for being forced to overwork.

### New York City Sweatshops

The New York Department of Labor takes garment factory violations seriously. In 2009, The Apparel Industry Task Force raided “Suburban Textiles, Inc. (trading as Forest Uniform Corp.), a garment manufacturer and issued an order confiscating all garments made at its facilities as well as all manufacturing equipment” (New York State Department of Labor, 2009). Forest Uniform Corp. violated NYDOL labor law three times over the last three years, “as a result, for the first time, the Labor Department utilized the Order of Confiscation provision in State Labor Law, which allows the Apparel Industry Task Force to confiscate apparel and equipment from any manufacturer or contractor found to be liable for two or more separate labor law violations during the preceding three-year period” (New York State Department of Labor, 2009). The factory ignored labor laws that protected workers safety and wages. Both Forest Uniform Corp and contractor Technical Garment USA Co., Inc., failed to maintain proper payroll records and register the factories in New York. Technical Garment USA Co., Inc., “also failed to pay employees required overtime wages, despite assigned workweeks of up to eighty hours, and also violated the state’s day of rest requirement” (New York State Department of Labor, 2009). Both factories not only held overtime pay but, individuals worked over eighty hours per week and were only compensated for forty hours. A sweatshop in a global, developed city like New York also treats employees like machines rather than humans.

The Labor Department also found Technical Garment USA Co., Inc., failed to provide wage information and incorrectly managed time cards, “Technical Garment USA Co., Inc. had been using two sets of time cards for each employee, the time cards used for payroll recordkeeping never showed more than forty to forty-five hours of work, paid at the correct rates, however, the real time cards [showed] workers toiling up to eighty hours, and sometimes seven days in a given week” (New York State Department of Labor, 2009). Employees stated sweatshop managers, threatened to fire them if they complained about the conditions or “tell the truth” (New York State Department of Labor, 2009). In order for the factories to receive their confiscated garments, Forest Uniform Corp. and Technical Garment USA Co. Inc. must pay workers their back-due wages. How much is owed to the garment workers? The NYDOL states, “a total of nearly \$500,000 is estimated to be owed in wages and damages to 16 workers” (New York State Department of Labor, 2009). If the sweatshop raid was not alarming enough, Forest Uniform Corp. and Technical Garment USA Co. Inc. manufactured New York Police



Department dress uniforms. The New York Police Department has, “authorized members of the service to purchase dress uniforms that are sold privately and that are manufactured by Forest Uniform” (New York State Department of Labor, 2009). Since the raid, the New York Police Department has removed Forest Uniform Corp. from its list of manufacturers police officers can purchase uniforms from. Sweatshops treating employees as machinery in a developed society is unthinkable, however, it occurs more frequently than one may think.

Lin et.al v. Great Rose Fashion, Inc. et.al.

Long Island City is a growing sweatshop neighborhood. In 2009, Hui Lin, Pin Yun Zhang, Wen Ming Lin, Huang Chen, Ai Yi Lin and Yu Jiao Lin filed a class action complaint against Great Rose Fashion, Inc., Silver Fashion, Inc., Great Wall Corp., Ping Nen Lin, Xiao Yan Lin, and Fang Zhen. The Plaintiffs claim, “they were deprived of a minimum wage and overtime pay in violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act and New York Labor Law while working at the Factory” (Lin et.al. v. Great Rose Fashion, Inc. et.al., 2009). Both Ping Nen Lin and Xiao Yan Lin owned and managed Great Rose Fashion Inc., Silver Fashion Inc., and Great Wall Corp. The owners received the complaint on December 18, 2009, two months after it was filed. Plaintiffs state, “immediately following receipt of the complaint, [the owners] engaged in a series of adverse employment actions, such as reducing their hours, altering their form of payment, and harassing them and other workers about the suit” (Lin et.al. v. Great Rose Fashion, Inc. et.al., 2009). The Plaintiffs were eventually terminated from their jobs as a result of filing the complaint. The garment workers claim they were treated unfairly as soon as they filed the complaint against the owners. Yu Jiao Lin stated, “two women called her into an office, asking why she had filed the complaint and to explain what they had done wrong, she felt nervous after the meeting and felt that something was not right” (Lin et.al. v. Great Rose Fashion, Inc. et.al., 2009). Even though the workers filed a lawsuit, they have a right to be treated with respect. The next day, Xiao Yan Lin “interrupted the workers to call Yu Jiao Lin forward and to announce that Yu Jiao Lin filed a complaint against her, she proceeded to point at her and called her a ‘heartless person,’ cursed at her and declared that she ‘was the one who had caused all this problem” (Lin et.al. v. Great Rose Fashion, Inc. et.al., 2009). Eventually, the Plaintiffs hours were reduced as a result of filing the complaint. When they left the factory, Weu Ming Lin saw employees still working at the factory as quotas still had to be reached. This was quite a different scenario, as in the past many worked long hours. Before, “workers would labor at the

factory until midnight or ‘until the dawn’ (Lin et.al. v. Great Rose Fashion, Inc. et.al., 2009). On December 31, 2008, the factory owners informed the Plaintiffs the factory was closing. When the Plaintiffs returned to the factory on January 5, 2009, they saw workers and their belongings in the factory that was supposedly closed. Though the case is pending, the garment workers have evidence that proves they were unlawfully treated. The owners only reduced the hours of the Plaintiffs and eventually fired them due to the complaint. According to the New York State Department of Labor, sweatshops are not only factories that have safety violations but, also have wage violations. Great Rose Fashion Inc., can still be characterized as a sweatshop as it had employees working overtime without compensation as well as owners harassing employees. These conditions that are found in developing countries’ garment sweatshops are surprisingly found in one of the fashion capitals of the world.

*Lu v. Alexander Wang Inc*

Sweatshops not only manufacture cheap clothing, some produce top, designer labels. Alexander Wang’s garment factories made headlines in 2012. Two garment factory workers Wenyu Lu and Flor Duarte filed a complaint over “unpaid compensation caused by time shaving, unpaid overtime premium, liquidated damages, unpaid medical leave and lost compensation and other compensatory and punitive damages caused by Alexander Wang’s retaliatory measures against them for complaining about the workplace abuse” (Kraselnik, 2012). Hours before and during Fashion Week nearly tripled. Lu and all factory workers, “were required to work a regular schedule from 9:00am to midnight, six days per week, during the six week period leading up to and including each of the four Fashion Weeks that take place annually in New York City in February, May, September and November” (Lu et.al. v. Alexander Wang Incorporated et.al., 2012). Though garment workers worked ninety hours per week, not all of the hours were calculated. On February 12, 2010, Lu “was forced to work from 9:00am in the morning until 10:00am the next morning for a total of 25 hours with no break” (Lu et.al. v. Alexander Wang Incorporated et.al., 2012). During Lu’s twenty-five hour shift, he suffered from stomach pain and was “pressured to continue to work or be fired” (Lu et.al. v. Alexander Wang Incorporated et.al., 2012). Lu eventually collapsed and was sent home. Lu was later hospitalized for twelve days with no compensation. These unreachable quotas make unsafe working conditions for factory workers. On January 24, 2012, Lu “was ordered to a professional grade leather trouser, from cut to finish in four hours, regularly, this requires twelve hours of work” (Lu et.al. v. Alexander Wang Incorporated et.al., 2012). When Lu could not finish the work, he was called “slow,

unskillful, lazy, stupid” (Lu et.al. v. Alexander Wang Incorporated et.al., 2012) and told he must stay until the work is done. When Lu complained about the unjust and cruel working conditions to his supervisors, he was fired.

Durate another garment worker, had a similar situation. Durate worked long hours without compensation and suffered from a severe injury that required surgery. Durate says, “Her physical decline was caused by the stress of long hours of work in order to stay employed” (Lu et.al. v. Alexander Wang Incorporated et.al., 2012). After her return to work, she was required to work more than ninety hours per week attempting to reach implausible quotas. Durate was ordered by managers to “finish a high grade leather jacket in one hour, while work of this type would normally take skilled tailor eight to ten hours to complete” (Lu et.al. v. Alexander Wang Incorporated et.al., 2012). When Durate complained, she was also fired.

Both suffered from the severe garment factory conditions affecting their health. When Lu and Durate complained to their managers regarding the unpaid hours and conditions, both were terminated. All workers, “suffered similar working hour abuse, poor working conditions and physical and emotional abuse caused by managers berating them if they are unable to make samples within impossible deadlines” (Lu et.al. v. Alexander Wang Incorporated et.al., 2012). Along with unreachable quotas, garment workers “were forced to labor in a 200 square foot in size [factory room] with more than twenty [other] garment workers inside” (Lu et.al. v. Alexander Wang Incorporated et.al., 2012). These conditions are certainly hard to imagine in a city like New York. Interestingly enough, this case was dismissed. According to New York Federal Court Judge Harold Baer, “[he] dismissed the suit brought against the company by two former employees, following an undisclosed settlement between both sides” (Steigrad, 2012). Even though an agreement was made, Wang still denies any of the sweatshop allegations against his factory. If allegations were truly inaccurate, Wang should have let the New York District Court decide, rather than reaching a settlement.

Some garment factories are still dangerous and inhumane for workers across New York City. Though conditions and compensation are improving, advocacy groups still work to end sweatshops across the city. As the garment industry continues to globalize, New York City garment factories are shrinking, though no one knows the true number of factories that hide and violate the law.

## V. Milan

Recently, a Chinese and Italian rivalry has developed across Milan. Tensions between the locals and many legal and illegal migrants developed as wholesale shops and garment factories began opening in Milan's new Chinatown. Though rare, garment factories in Milan are often hid behind boxes, along alleyways and behind storefronts as stricter government regulations are pushing the industry to the south of the country. Chinese immigration as a whole is on the rise in Italy. Today, there are over 300,000 Chinese migrants populating Italy, with Milan having the largest concentration of Chinese migrants with just over 13,000. As the wholesale and garment industry continue to increase throughout Italy, more Chinese are expected to migrate to Italy.

### Milan Chinatown

Milan's Chinatown is the center for illegal wholesale stores and garment factories. Along "Via Sarpi, [there are over] 500 businesses crammed into a square kilometer" (Kington, 2007). Streets are often empty from cars and Italian locals, as Chinese deliver wholesale items from store to store. The Chinese living in Milan "have for some time now been regarded and described as a closed, silent introverted and isolated community" (Manzo, 2011). This quest for migrants to assimilate into the Italian culture is difficult. Both sides have different work ethics as, "the Chinese work ethic is based on breaking ones back for 16 hours a day" (Manzo, 2011) versus the relaxed, worry-free Milanese lifestyle. This division among cultures builds a divide in society. As the migrants continue to populate the Via Sarpi area, there is "a constant flow of goods, vehicles, vans, trolleys, boxes, fumes and rubbish" (Manzo, 2011). Milan's Chinatown is just a small sample of what is happening to the luxury, "Made In Italy" label.

### "Made In Italy"

Today, the Italian textile and garment industry is valued at \$13.1 and \$22.1 billion respectively. As the industry continues to grow, local Italians hand making garments are being pushed out, as costs are cheaper in the illegal migrant factories. Many believe, "part of the resentment is cultural: the city's classic Italian feel is giving way to that of a Chinatown, with signs in Italian and Chinese, and groceries that sell food imported from China" (Donadio, 2010). Not only do Italians feel the "brand" is in jeopardy but, believe it's a competition with the Chinese. Italians think, "the Chinese are

beating them at their own game — tax evasion and brilliant ways of navigating Italy’s notoriously complex bureaucracy — and have created a thriving, if largely underground, new sector... the result is a toxic combination of residual fears about immigration and the economy” (Donadio, 2010). However, Chinese migrants just want to work. A worker who was injured in a 2007 police riot that occurred in Milan said, "We just want to work - he explained - live in Italy, growing there, our children who are born in Milan, we never did anything, we are not criminals, we do not deserve this treatment" (La Repubblica, 2007). When mark-off brands are manufactured and sold in Chinatown, many would prefer to spend a fraction of the cost and purchase the mark-off item. Although migrants are now more involved in the wholesale services industry, the garment industry still happens to exist in Chinatown.

#### Case Study: Milan Garment Factories

Over the past ten years, Milan has seen a shift from manufacturing to services. Although, “manufacturing to Chinese entrepreneurship remains significant (ca. 43% of the companies), [manufacturing], tends to gravitate to decentralized industrial districts (especially those textile - in Prato, Reggio Emilia, Italy” (Cologna, 2008). After visiting Milan’s Chinatown, I was able to see these wholesale stores in action. Stores along Via Sarpi were filled with garbage bags containing apparel and textiles. While walking the streets of Chinatown, Milan culture disappears. A slow, relaxed lifestyle immediately becomes a cautious and a faced paced environment. Workers often looked nervous, guilty and confused as new garments are produced in the warehouse as well as new items being brought into the shops. Many of these stores had gates rather than actual doors. The illegal mark-off Burberry and Gucci items are visible from the outside. Workers in these stores seemed hostile and worried as I checked out each of the shops. A colleague of mine who was fluent in Chinese spoke to one of the restaurant owners. She stated “I came to Milan for a better life I’ve been here for twenty years, trying to fit in, that’s why many of us are here” (Chinese Migrant, Age 30). After speaking with Chinese migrants many just want to assimilate themselves and make a living in Milan. Along Via Sarpi, stores were small, cramped and often unsafe to even enter. Garments and wholesale items were piled to the ceiling. In one factory, a small desk for a worker was pushed in the corner as garments filled the floor. Even though the store already seemed full, another migrant then rolled a cart filled with even more items. Behind some of these storefronts, housed garment factories. These factories similar to the storefronts were small, cramped and unsafe. One of the factories on Via Sarpi contained little light and no windows as

migrant workers, looking exhausted hunched over machines, sewing illegal mark-offs. Although I was not allowed to enter and look around the garment factories, many had characteristics similar to factories found across Italy. Often, “Chinese immigrants are recruited by ethnic Chinese businesses which are widely known for having poor working conditions, particularly true for those in the textile, garment and leather industries the major sectors for Chinese employment where the high walls of manufactories...make them susceptible to labour abuse and exploitation” (Wu, 2008). It’s common in the Italian-Chinese manufacturing industry “for employees to work a fourteen hour day, seven days a week” (Wu, 2008). Even in a global city like Milan, sweatshops are often found endangering both legal and illegal migrants. The Italian Government is certainly aware of sweatshop manufacturers but, do little to change regulations on a national level. In Milan a highly industrial city, manufacturing is being pushed further south as, stricter tensions and restrictions are placed on the Chinese migrants. Xiu Ling a Chinatown merchant explains, "every day I get a fine, we are here to work, we are not gangsters, we do not kill anyone, just work and paying taxes, the police want the evil Chinese, indeed Italians can work, but we don't prevent it and now I have closed the shop, how can I feed my children? Pay the rent of the house?" (La Repubblica, 2007). As tensions rise in the North, migrants are now flocking to other parts of Italy as government restrictions are lesser in the South.

## **VI. Global City Study**

Comparing New York City garment factories to Dhaka, Bangladesh was not a coincidence. In New York City or Milan, a one and third tier city respectively according to Sociologist Mark Abrahamson, have fewer but, analogous garment factories. New York City is considered a one tier global city as it is “the central hub of the global network regardless of how it is defined” (Abrahamson, 2004). New York City is a cultural and economic hub and therefore a leading global city. Abrahamson believes, “New York stands alone at the global city apex” (Abrahamson, 2004). As a third-tier city Milan, “remains globally significant given the broad consequences of the organizations and activities it houses” (Abrahamson, 2004) however, lacks cultural industries. New York City excels with a number of cultural and economic industries, Milan however, “can [only] be considered a specialized economic center” (Abrahamson, 2004). Both global cities no matter one or third tier have a garment manufacturing sector. Conditions that are often found in Dhaka, Bangladesh, a developing, third-world country, are found in factories in these global cities. Garment workers are often placed in unsafe conditions,

have abusive supervisors, and many risk their lives just to make a living. These cities that are cultural and/or economic hubs have a dark side, one that many are not aware of. After studying, visiting and analyzing garment factory conditions in New York City and Milan, comparisons can be made to the many garment factories found in Bangladesh.

### Findings

When examining factory conditions in New York City, Milan and Dhaka, Bangladesh, commonalities are found in all three cities. After analyzing and graphing the similarities, New York City and Milan sweatshops are closely related to ones in Bangladesh. Although garment factories are found less frequently in Milan than in New York City, conditions are similar for workers. Table 2 charts comparisons between the garment factories in the three cities. Although Bangladesh has the worst factory conditions, New York City factories possess more similarities than factories in Milan. Both Bangladesh and New York City garment factories had supervisors keeping two sets of timesheets. Employees who worked more than forty hours a week and sometimes reaching eighty or ninety hours were never compensated for their overtime. The majority of garment workers stay to reach improbable quotas but, only receive pay for forty hours. Workers employed by Alexander Wang Inc. described conditions many workers experience in Bangladesh factories. Workers health is affected greatly as many are in unsafe, unventilated factories for long periods of time. In Bangladesh and New York City, both women and men who worked over eight hours a day saw a significant decline in their health and some were eventually hospitalized. New York City and Milan factories are also comparable with regards to factory safety. Employees work in small areas with poor ventilation and lighting as well as garments blocking main exits. Factory fires in Bangladesh often start due to poor equipment and a lack of fire safety codes. Blocking exits in these tightly packed factories creates an even more dangerous environment. Although factory fires are not as common in New York City and Milan, fire safety laws are consistently ignored as floors and exits are illegally covered. Some of the most underdeveloped parts of these global cities contain elements and workplaces similar to a third-world country. Garment workers often women and migrants face abusive and forced labor as factory production demand increases. Workers who are unable to keep up with the workload are often insulted and reprimanded. Whether in Bangladesh, New York City or Milan, workers are put in uncomfortable situations even

Table 2: New York City and Milan Factory Comparison

	New York City	Milan	Bangladesh
<b>Worker Compensation</b>			
Labor	✓	N/A	✓
Poor Timesheet Reporting	✓	N/A	✓
No Overtime Compensation	✓	N/A	✓
Excessive Hours Worked	✓	✓	✓
<b>Factory Safety</b>			
No Fire Safety Codes	✓	✓	✓
Poor Ventilation	✓	✓	✓
Poor Lighting	✓	✓	✓
Unsafe Factory Size	✓	✓	✓
<b>Worker Treatment</b>			
Abusive/Forced Labor	✓	✓	✓
Workers Terminated Post-Complaint	✓	N/A	✓

if they are already working at their full potential. As discussed earlier, supervisors often push employees to reach these impractical quotas. Those workers who choose not to work overtime or fall short of reaching their quotas, are fired in New York City, Bangladesh and most likely Milan. Factories must keep up with demand in order to make a profit. If workers complain about conditions similar to Bangladesh factories in New York City and Milan, supervisors tend to terminate employment in order to hide the true factory conditions. Factories in New York City and Milan, two global cities, shockingly resemble conditions found in developing Bangladesh. Although New York City and Milan continue to shift garment manufacturing to the third-world, some factories that still exist resemble Bangladesh more than one may think.

### Discussion

Comparing sweatshops in Bangladesh to ones found in two fashion capitals of the world is truly alarming. Although the United States and Italy mainly outsource garment production, New York City and Milan garment factories bring the third-world



into these global cities. Individuals who work in the garment industry are often subjected to these unsafe conditions. This paper brings awareness not only to factories in Bangladesh but, all factories throughout the garment industry. Scholars often focus on the third-world even though similar conditions are found in their own cities. Studies focusing on sweatshop conditions in New York City and Milan in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are rare. Since factories are not as prevalent as they once were, the garment industry of these global cities is often ignored. The majority of Bangladesh garment workers live below the poverty line, much like those working in factories in New York City and Milan. These workers often play an insignificant role in society, making change improbable. Bangladeshi women especially, will continue to suffer as they are treated unequally in both society and the workforce. Until global brands prioritize garment factory safety in Bangladesh, New York City and Milan, factory employees will continue to work in unsafe sweatshops.

The garment industry in the developed world is often filled with migrants just looking to make a living. In Bangladesh however, workers may also be uneducated but, are quite skilled in garment manufacturing. If all garment factory workers received a living wage, the industry would be quite different. As the garment industry continues to globalize, production will shift from China, Vietnam and other top garment exporters to Bangladesh. The main difference is in these countries, workers are paid a living wage. As labor and operating costs rise in China and Vietnam, buyers are seeing shrinking profit margins. Bangladesh is appealing for buyers as labor and operating costs are nearly half as much as other countries. No matter the risk, Bangladesh garment prices draw buyers from the developed world.

Much like Bangladesh, developed countries' garment production within illegal sweatshops is increasing. Although government regulations are shutting sweatshops down, those that exist have lower operating and labor costs than those of a legal garment factory. Garment workers will continue to see poor conditions, disrespectful supervisors and extremely low wages. In an industry that is so vibrant and often a significant part of the developed world's culture, the backstory that is often untold is frightening. The garment industry should not have a majority of manufacturing taking place in developed and developing countries sweatshops. When finding cheap clothing, one may wonder how the item is so cheap.

The globalizing garment industry's future seems predictable. More and more production will be shifted from garment exporters that pay workers a living wage to the countries like Bangladesh that keep labor costs extremely low. Garment workers will be

unable to meet the growing demand, causing many to overwork affecting their health greatly. More workers will be hired in the already small and packed factories, causing a higher risk of factory fires. For New York City and Milan, as costs rise, production will continue to shift to factories with cheaper production costs. In New York City, garment manufacturing in illegal sweatshops will increase. As for Milan, production as it is now will continue to shift to cities in the south of Italy. The garment industry is a business. Companies and global buyers win and those who produce the garments lose. However, do companies and global buyers actually win?

The question is tough to answer. Global buyers win if consumers continue to spend their money in stores that outsource production to Bangladesh. If consumers are informed of the conditions found in garment factories of the third-world and continue to shop in the stores, change is unlikely. Like global buyers, consumers look for cheap clothing. Companies that often purchase their clothing from garment factories in Bangladesh have seen a rise in sales. H&M, one of the top garment buyers in Bangladesh states, “the H&M Group’s sales including VAT increased in local currencies by 11 percent during the financial year” (H&M Hennes & Mauritz, 2012). Walmart also saw an increase in garment sales, by “focusing on basics drove apparel sales to the best comp sales performance in 7 years” (Walmart Stores, 2012). As more consumers become aware of conditions found in Bangladesh sweatshops, it will be interesting to study if consumer behavior is shifted to stores that outsource manufacturing to factories that make garment worker safety a priority. If consumers prioritize cost much like global buyers, garment factory conditions will not matter. Clothing prices will continue to be the number one priority for consumers.

## **VII. Conclusion**

This paper analyzes factories in the third-world to ones found in New York City and Milan, a one and third tier city respectively. No matter if one examines a garment factory in a global city or the third-world, conditions are often similar. Sadly, change looks bleak as the growing production demand in Bangladesh will only keep garment workers in sweatshops longer and conditions poor. When thousands flock to New York City and Milan for their bi-annual fashion weeks, the fashion world as we know it will continue to profit. An industry known for designers, elegance, and glamour has an untold and often forgotten story behind the label.

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# **Imprisoning Sexuality: Exploring the Fluidity of Sexuality and Sexual Behavior Within the Marginalized Sub-Culture of Women's Prisons**

Joey Sergi (Anthropology)<sup>1</sup>

This project will examine the roles of sexuality and sexual behavior within marginalized sub-cultures, ultimately addressing this behavior's implications for the overarching Euro-American conception of sexuality. In past ethnographic research on marginalized communities, there is often an element of non-normative sexuality, although this is typically not the overall focus of the ethnography (e.g., see Bourgois and Schonberg 2009). Specifically, this research will focus on women's prison systems, examining the ways in which the shifting sexual identities and behaviors exhibited by inmates, although traditionally marginalized and considered oppositional (Kunzel 2002), can be understood through the context of a larger socio-sexual system. The prison system is an ideal case study since it is an isolated environment, it is understood by many scholars to contain a distinct culture of its own (e.g., see Pardue et al. 2011 and Tewksbury and West 2000), and it has often been documented that sexual identities emerge contrary to normative Euro-American values, yet the sexual actors still identify themselves and are identified by others as being normal or heterosexual (Kunzel 2002). The cultural and social processes within prisons are similar to other dominant modes in non-marginalized communities and should not be written off as oppositional. By conceiving of prison as a marginalized sub-culture, applying a critical lens to the existing literature, and employing anthropological theories to understand behavior, this research seeks to demonstrate that sexuality within prisons is in glaring opposition to the naturalized and dominant models of sexuality within the Euro-American perspective. Suggestions are made for further research that may allow an analysis of prison sexuality to reveal the ways in which ideals and expectations of sexual identity are formed, what purpose they serve in society, what situations sexuality tends to be fluid in, and what factors contribute to respective enforcement or lack of enforcement of normative values.

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<sup>1</sup> An honors thesis written under the direction of Dr. Alexa Dietrich and Dr. Celeste Gagnon.



## I. Literature Review

It is first necessary to provide an overview of the research that has been conducted related to this topic. Herein, I consider literature from many disciplines including anthropology, sociology, nursing, criminal justice, and penology, as it relates to female sexual behavior within prisons and sexuality as a whole.

### A Suspicious Oversight

Ever since prison life has come under study, homosexuality within prison walls has captured the imagination of laymen and researchers alike (Ward and Kassebaum 1964, 1965; Blackburn et al. 2011). Despite this interest, little to no formal research has been done on sexuality within the prison systems and what this may imply for sexuality in general (Pardue, Arrigo, and Murphy 2011; Kunzel 2002). Joseph Fishman, a former prison inspector, wrote, "...the subject of sex in prison-so provocative, so vital, so timely...is shrouded in dead silence"(Hensley 2000:2). Although that statement was made in 1934, the 21<sup>st</sup> century researchers who dedicated their time to the study of prison sex still felt that Joseph Fishman's statement was relevant.

While some scholars have contributed to the knowledge base of prison sex, it is almost always with the intention of furthering political goals or in regards to policy. When research is conducted for other purposes, it is "often marginalized by professional colleagues and viewed skeptically both by colleagues and the public" (Tewksbury and West, 2000:368). In addition to this lack of scholarly research on prisons in general, research specifically on women's prisons is even sparser. This is most likely because as of 2009, the female prison population was 18% compared to 82% males (Department of Justice, 2009). However, the rate at which women are being incarcerated has been higher than the rate at which men are being incarcerated since 2000 (Department of Justice, 2007; Koscheski and Hensley 2001). Within the research that has been done on women in prison, just as with men's facilities, the component of sexuality within the institutions remained largely unexplored (Koscheski and Hensley 2001).

Sexuality within prisons, though scarcely directly addressed, has undeniable implications for the Western notion of viewing sexuality (Kunzel 2002). To attempt to fill the gap of what these implications may be I will analyze the available research in great detail in hopes of extracting connections not previously made. My main areas of concern are theories on the social construction of sexuality, reported prisoner sexual behaviors, and the prevalent theories on explaining homosexuality within the prison systems.

Similar to Davis and Whitten (1987) homosexuality within this review will be defined as same-sex sexual behavior, whether or not the participants identify as gay or bisexual.

### Constructing Sexuality

There exists a pervasive notion in Western culture that one's sexual identity, defined by their sexual desires and behaviors, constitutes a large and revealing component of one's overall identity and self (Kunzel 2002; Parker 2001). This notion is not in fact a universally natural assessment, but rather a recent social construct. Foucault (1978) locates the formation of the Euro-American sexual identities in the early twentieth century. As Kunzel (2002) explains, around this time, "what one did, and with whom, came to define who one was" (253). With this notion of identity based on sexual acts came the definition of the homosexual as something distinct and abnormal from the heterosexual (Foucault 1978).

This notion of sexuality, however, does not hold up when applied to many situations cross-culturally (Kunzel 2002; Parker 2001; Davis and Whitten 1987, Barry 2001). Barry (2001) analyzes homosexual relations as a form of kinship. He explains a situation of ritualized homosexuality in Melanesia. In this instance, homosexual behavior is not considered deviant, but rather "a "predictable" outcome of a particular combination of age, gender, and kinship (20)." He states that homosexuality illustrates Levi Strauss' (1963) concept that kinship ties are not objective, but rather an arbitrary system of representations within human consciousness. Barry (2001) identifies both age and kinship ties as major factors in the precipitation and acceptance of homosexual behaviors.

Crabtree (2009) applies an existentialist perspective to the study of sexuality, but comes to a similar conclusion as Barry (2001) and Levi Strauss (1963) regarding the importance of kinship. She states that primarily, sexuality is a fundamental aspect of our desire to be interrelated with others. This undermines the biological argument that homosexuality is somehow perverse, since the primary goal is interaction, not reproduction (Crabtree 2009). She then goes on to make the distinction that although these ties are in fact culturally constructed, they exist and are informed by a historical, social, cultural, and political context. These factors influence how people view themselves, how they identify, and what sexual behaviors they ultimately engage in or consider desirable.

In a cross-cultural analysis of homosexual behavior, Davis and Whitten (1987) found that there is a much greater abundance of homosexual behavior in the world outside of Euro-American cultures. Their analysis led them to question the Western

assumption that homosexuality is a life-long and exclusive status. The author's suggested that lifelong homosexuality is uncommon, while bisexuality or ad hoc homosexuality are much more prevalent cross-culturally. Davis and Whitten's (1987) analysis is both helpful and troublesome. Their analysis is best viewed within the frameworks presented by Crabtree (2009) and Barry (2001). It should not be interpreted to imply that homosexuality is not a real phenomenon, but rather that cross-cultural analysis demonstrates that sexuality is fluid and may change over time.

### Reported Prisoner Sexual Behavior

Prisons are considered by many researchers of the institution to contain a culture of their own (e.g., see Pardue et al. 2011 and Tewksbury and West 2000). By viewing prison as having its own culture, it becomes easier to apply these theories of sexuality to inmate sexual behavior since behaviors can be understood as being influenced by cultural factors. As Kunzel (2002) suggests, the sexual acts and actors within prisons confound the Euro-American historical narrative that separates sexual identity into a binary. Within these Euro-American cultures, often in sex-segregated spaces, sexual identities emerge contrary to these normative notions in which the participants identify themselves and are identified by others as being normal or heterosexual. Prisons are one of these spaces, and instead of dismissing them as an anomaly, they should instead be considered valuable resources of information to contribute to our overall understanding of sexuality.

Researchers prior to the 1960's primarily relied on staff and inmate perceptions of sexual activity to gather a picture of sexual life within prisons. (Koscheski and Hensley 2001). Halleck and Hersko (1962) were the first to gather comprehensive data and apply statistical analysis to a female institution. Using a biographical inventory and an anonymous questionnaire, they found that 69% of inmates were involved in some type of homosexual behavior. Ward and Kassebaum (1965) found that a conservative estimate based on prisoner and staff reports was that at least 50% of the female inmates were engaged in homosexual behavior. Giallombardo's (1966) study similarly asked staff and inmates to estimate the amount of female homosexual behavior within the prison. Prisoner estimates were around 90-95%, while staff reported 50-75%.

In 1981, Propper (1981) took a more comprehensive approach to the issue. She conducted a comparative study of four female juvenile institutions. Using self-reported data she found that at least 14% of the girls were in steady relationships with other girls, and that at least 10% had kissed another girl while incarcerated. In yet another new approach, Greer (2000) conducted intensive interviews with 35 women in a single

institution. He found that 10 of these women had been involved in a sexual relationship with another woman during their prison term. Koscheski and Hensley (2001) followed by distributing anonymous questionnaires to female inmates in a correctional facility. When asked about their sexual orientation while incarcerated, 55% reported being heterosexual, 31% bisexual, and 13% said they were lesbians. These were marked changes from the sexual orientations they indicated prior to incarceration. Interestingly, aside from these self sexual-identifications, they found that approximately 75% of the women reported kissing or touching a female prior to and during incarceration and half of the inmates engaged in oral sex with a female prior to and during incarceration.

A study of sexual coercion within female institutions had not been conducted until 1996 (Pardue et al. 2011). However, the issue has recently received more attention due to the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003. According to Pardue et al. (2011) sexual violence in women's prisons contains a wide variety of behaviors specific to the environment. These behaviors come in three forms and may range from manipulation, compliance, or coercion in the form of tacit pressure to forcible rape. (Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson 2002). In their study of sexual coercion in a Midwestern prison system, Struckman-Johnson et al. (1996) found that reports of coerced sex for women were relatively low, coming in around 7%.

Although the estimated rates of homosexual activity within prisons vary widely within the body of research, it is safe to say that sexual activity amongst incarcerated women does in fact occur, and continues to be a large component of prison life. Struckman-Johnson et al.'s (1996) estimate of sexual coercion rates compared to reported sexual activity indicate that the majority of sexual activity that occurs amongst imprisoned women is not coerced but rather consensual. This information, coupled with Koscheski and Hensley's (2001) findings that reported sexual behavior and self-sexual identification do not correlate, directly challenges the Western binary view of homosexuality and heterosexuality.

### Situational vs. True Homosexuals

In order for researchers to rationalize homosexuality produced by "circumstance, architecture, and environment (253)," the term situational homosexual became prevalent in the twentieth century (Kunzel, 2002). In reports, ethnographic records, and firsthand accounts, there is oftentimes a mention of situational versus true homosexuality within prison systems (Kunzel 2002; Pardue et al 2011; Ward & Kassebaum 1964; Morgan 1997). Ward and Kassebaum (1964) first address this

phenomenon in their landmark study of homosexuality within women's prisons, however they use the term jailhouse turnout instead of situational homosexual. They found that this distinction between situational and true homosexuals appeared to be very important to the inmates themselves. This notion has later been supported by other ethnographic studies conducted in women's prisons (Morgan 1997; Maeve 1999).

The definitions of situational and true homosexuals set forth by Ward and Kassebaum (1964) were contributed to by the prisoners in their study. These definitions continue to be used by researchers today. The jailhouse turnout, or situational homosexual, is a person who had their introduction to homosexuality within prison. The assumption is that these women will most likely return to heterosexual relationships upon release from prison (Giallombardo 1966; Morgan 1997; Maeve 1999). This is in contrast to the true homosexual, women whose sexual orientations were lesbian prior to their incarceration (Ward and Kassebaum 1964; Pardue et al. 2011).

It has been put forward by researchers that women perceived as situational homosexuals are looked down upon by other prisoners compared to true homosexuals (Giallombardo 1966, Morgan 1997, Maeve 1999). Giallombardo (1996) suggests that this is because the primary goal of these interactions by the women who considered themselves true homosexuals was to experience a sincere and stable relationship predicated on love. It is presumed by prisoners that situational homosexuals only engage in homosexual behavior for the positive rewards they received from these encounters (Pardue et al. 2011; Morgan 1997). As Morgan (1997) suggests, being with someone in prison can carry a desirable social standing. She claims to have witnessed that in some cases, women become disinterested once they have exhausted the relationship for its benefits. Thus, situational homosexuals are associated with drifting in and out of relationships or allowing themselves to be sexually exploited, which is less respected by other female inmates than true homosexuals who are perceived as looking for love (Pardue et al.; Giallombardo 1966; Morgan 1997).

In their recent typology of prison sex within women's facilities, Pardue et al. (2011) claim that the distinction between situational and true homosexuality is still important to note. There are issues, however, with their assessment of the research preceding them. The authors are selective in the findings they choose to represent in their typological report. For instance, the authors quote Kunzel (2008) on the reasons why lesbianism within prisons may have received less attention in the past, but disregard the fact that her work fundamentally disagrees with the classification of situational homosexuality.

Kunzel (2002) feels that the term situational homosexuality is aimed to distinguish homosexual practices in prison from true homosexuality, which would then have a somatic or psychic origin, thus only affecting ‘certain people’. Similarly, Katz (1976) argues that to distinguish situational homosexuality is actually fallacious in nature, as all homosexuality is situational in that it is given meaning by “its location and time in social space”(11). Kunzel (2002) traces back the literature on prison sex and notes that a distinction originated in the mid-twentieth century. As homosexuality began to come to the forefront of American society, the fear that rose from this shifting social climate translated into fears about homosexuality in the prison systems. She argues that social scientists created situational homosexuality to try to repress their concerns about how prison homosexuality demonstrated the fragility and instability of heterosexuality outside the prison. In summation of her point, Kunzel (2002) says that situational homosexuality should be understood not as an actual description of sexual acts connected to the environment, but rather a “rhetorical maneuver by which midcentury social scientists sought to contain the disruptive meanings of sexual acts...” (265).

The definitions and support for the concepts of situational and true homosexuality have clearly shifted over time. Researchers relied heavily on the inmate’s own classifications of each other (e.g., see Ward and Kassebaum 1964 and Giallombardo 1966). This is problematic, however, as the inmates were inevitably influenced by the binary concept of sexuality in which they were raised. These cultural ideas influenced not only the inmates but also the researchers, as Kunzel (2002) correctly points out that the term situational homosexual was a reaction to observed behaviors by social scientists to maintain the dominant discourse.

#### Important Hypothesis vs. Deprivation Hypothesis

Within the literature, there are competing views over how the prison sexual subculture has developed over time. The two main contending hypotheses are the importation hypothesis and the deprivation hypothesis (Blackburn et al. 2011). Traditionally, the importation model has been used to explain ‘true homosexuality’ and the deprivation model has been used to explain ‘situational homosexuality’ (Pardue et al. 2011). Sykes (1958) was the first to introduce the concept of the deprivation hypothesis with his study of American maximum-security prisons. Ward and Kassebaum (1964) followed by applying the deprivation theory to women’s prisons for the first time. The deprivation theory suggests that inmates adapt to the deficiencies of prison life by creating ways in which they are no longer deprived (Blackburn et al. 2011; Sykes 1958).

Ward and Kassebaum (1964) suggest that prisoners will develop an ‘inmate code’ in which they play certain roles that eventually form specific social systems involving themselves, the guards, and the institution itself. Following this theory, just as prisoners may form a black market of contraband that has been smuggled into the prison, they may turn to homosexuality as a substitute for the heterosexual relations they cannot engage in while incarcerated (Blackburn et al. 2011; Ward and Kassebaum 1964). The competing theory, the importation hypothesis, suggests that prison conditions do not create a subculture, but rather that inmates bring “a culture with them into the prison” (Irwin and Cressey 1962,142). This perspective suggests that inmate behaviors are a result of their behaviors and lives on the outside (Blackburn et al. 2011). Thus, homosexual behavior within the prison would be conducted by those who participated in it prior to their incarceration.

Since the development of these hypotheses, studies have been conducted in an attempt to add support to both sides (Blackburn et al. 2011). Propper (1981), conducted an exhaustive analysis of four female juvenile institutions and three coed institutions. Her conclusion was the vague, yet decisive statement that prison homosexuality was affected by a countless number of cultural, personality, and biological variables prior to incarceration. She felt that prior homosexual activity was a strong and direct predictor of prison homosexuality. Pardue et al. (2011) claim that the importation theory is the correct assessment, yet they misrepresent findings by Koscheski and Hensley (2001) to support this statement. The most recent and methodologically sound research on the topic finds that neither the deprivation nor the importation hypothesis can account for all prisoner behavior. Hensley (2000) draws on Ibrahim’s (1974) work where he outlines six factors that influence sexual behavior within prisons. The factors combine components of both the importation and deprivation theory. He seems to try to find a medium between the two hypotheses when he states that both the social structure of the prison as well as inmate culture are what produces homosexual behavior. Koscheski and Hensley’s (2001) study similarly suggests that the importation theory is too simplistic to address the topic. Their data, based on 245 inmates, suggests that while homosexual behavior prior to incarceration was a variable, it is not the only predictor of homosexual behavior within the prison facility. The data showed that the most significant predictors were prior homosexual behavior, age, and increased length of incarceration. Aside from women with prior experience, women who were younger and women who were incarcerated for longer periods were also much more prone to engaging in same-sex sexual activities. This data connects to Barry’s (2001) model of sexuality, in which he found that both age and

kinship ties were heavy influencers of sexual behavior. It is also interesting to note, that it was not always the inmates who reported activity prior to incarceration that engaged in said behavior once inside (Koscheski and Hensley 2001).

The inability of the research to isolate either the importation or deprivation hypothesis as the true cause of homosexuality in prisons suggests that the answer lies somewhere between the two. As suggested by the study conducted by Koscheski and Hensley (2001) there are a variety of factors that may influence inmate sexual behavior while inside prison. These hypotheses stand in an interesting position when connected to previously discussed theories on sexuality. The lack of resolution between the two suggests that Western definitive notions of sexuality are not as clear-cut as the general population and social scientists may wish to believe.

### Summation of the Literature

As evidenced by my discussion of the social construction of sexuality, Euro-American discourse on sexuality suggests that there exists a binary between heterosexuality and homosexuality, with heterosexuality as the right or normal choice (Kunzel 2002; Parker 2001; Davis and Whitten 1987, Barry 2001). The sexual behavior of female prison inmates not only demonstrates that homosexual behavior is a large component of prison life, but the self-sexual identifications compared to actual sexual behaviors inevitably calls the concept of a true heterosexuality into question. The inability to reconcile the debate between the deprivation and importation hypotheses implies that the genesis of homosexuality within the prison system is as complex as outside of it. This suggests that Kunzel's (2002) denial of the existence of situational homosexuality is valid, and as Katz (1976) suggests, all homosexuality, or sexuality for that matter, should be considered situational.

In general, I believe that by lining up the inconsistencies of research with a social constructionist theory of sexuality and pointing out the influence of dominant modes of thinking on researchers, this review contributes to the notion that sexuality within prisons is worth examining due to its implications for sexuality in the free world. As Kunzel (2002) says, alleged situational homosexuality "should not be understood as simply marginal or oppositional." Its implications have been "buttressing, often disquieting, and always revealing of the fissures and fault lines of a modern sexual system in the making" (256). In the past, researchers and social scientists may have chosen to disregard prison sexuality as situational, something that has no bearing on non-marginalized people, but this review aims to suggest that it is time a more comprehensive



look be taken at what prison sexuality truly implicates for the Euro-American understanding of the heterosexual binary.

## **II. Theoretical Implications: An Anthropological Analysis**

As the literature review suggests, there are alternative methods of understanding sexuality within prison societies. Many anthropological theories lend themselves quite easily to the topic. They provide an alternative framework to the normative discourse on sexuality in prisons that will allow it to be more easily connected to sexuality within society at large.

### Addressing Biases within the Literature

When evaluating the research on sexuality within prisons, it appears troublesome that researchers have not made the connection between prison sexuality and sexuality at large. In a somewhat ironic twist, given the definition of marginality of the mind as, "...when one excludes certain domains of phenomena from one's thinking because they do not correspond to the mainstream philosophy" (International Geographical Union (IGU), 2003:2), previous researchers have mentally marginalized an already marginalized sub-culture by ignoring its implications for general sexuality. Fitting with the explanation, as Kunzel (2002) identified, this was most likely done because it challenged the existing hetero-normative discourse.

This is not to say, however, that this exclusion was an intentional act by previous scholars. Instead, it should be understood that researchers, just as people, are prone to subjectivity and bias. Although ideally scholars should view their work through a critical lens, shedding themselves of ethnocultural values, they too are inevitably products of their culture, thus this ideal is not always the case.

In anthropology specifically, there is a history of allowing preconceived notions to influence the data interpretation of examples from other cultures. In Leacock's (1978) critique of Ruth Landes' (1938) study, she points out that despite overwhelming evidence that women were in fact not subservient to men, Landes (1938) constantly contradicts her ethnographic observations by applying her Western ethnocentric interpretations (Moore 2008). Similarly, Freeman (1999) critiques Margaret Mead as, "an example of the way in which a highly intelligent observer can be blinded to empirical reality by an uncritical commitment to a scientifically unsound assumption" (212), for her willingness to accept Samoan girl's statements about sexual liaisons (Moore 2008: 100).

Although the validity of these critiques is open for debate, what is notable about them is that both of these situations concern the topics of gender and sexuality. This demonstrates that shedding views on these topics is no easy task, even for a professional; as Foucault (1978) indicates, concepts conflating gender, sexuality, and identity are extremely ubiquitous. Anthropologists too are prone to this, likely due to the ethnographic nature of their work. As LeCompte (1987) highlights, ethnographers do not have a tool as many other researchers do, to act as a dispassionate mediator between the observer and the phenomena they observe.

### The Social Construction of Sexuality as Evidenced by Marginality

To understand the ways in which sexuality may be fluid, it is first important to understand how sexuality operates. Foucault (1978) traces the genealogy of sexuality to show that it is not something fixed, rather it is a social construct that has changed and served a multitude of purposes over time. The way in which Foucault (1978) conceives sexuality as having come to be seen as an integral part of identity in Euro-American cultures is related to its relationship with knowledge and power. If as Foucault (1978) indicates, power is omnipresent, sexuality cannot simply be understood as something that is repressed. Instead, power is just as productive as it is repressive, thus sexuality is actually a conduit for power.

Sexuality in itself can also be considered a form of panopticism (Foucault 1975). Drawing on Foucault (1990), Gounis (1996) uses his work with marginalized communities to suggest that people who exist in spaces of permanent captivity, constantly under the influence of the mechanisms of control, have no option but to “conform with the institutional expectations and views about one’s self” (113). If sexuality can be understood as a panopticon, Gounis’ description of conformity in captivity can be applied to both marginalized and non-marginalized communities. With the sense that everybody is constantly talking about and monitoring other’s sexual behaviors, cultural participants internalize the dominant discourse on sexuality and take it to be a natural fact. This unseen power influences people’s identities, feelings, and ultimately actions.

This power, as Foucault (1978) explains, comes along with a shift from the “right of death” of the sovereign nation to the modern “power over life” (136). With this emphasis on fostering and preserving life comes the inadvertent regulation of the body and sexuality. This emphasis naturally changes the understood and intended meaning of

sexual acts from pleasure to reproduction, thus the dominant mode of sexuality will become the one that fosters reproduction.

Bourdieu's (1989) discussion of capital and its translation into power becomes useful in understanding the ways in which power is gained through heterosexuality. Being in a heterosexual relationship in mainstream Euro-American culture affords the three types of capital Bourdieu (1989) discusses due to its association with reproduction. The label of both heterosexual and parent provides symbolic capital, the labels present a set of meanings and a specific place in society. Parents and heterosexuals also gain social capital, in that they are conforming to the expectations of what a productive person should be contributing to society, i.e. reproduction. Economic capital is then provided by the government in the form of tax and pay benefits to those who have children. As Bourdieu (1989) points out, these forms of capital translate into power. Since heterosexual relationships provide the most power due to their association with reproduction, it then becomes the dominant form of sexuality.

The reason that sexuality shifts depending on the context of marginalization is because different forms of power are influencing and being utilized by the sexual actors depending on the context they exist in. Marginalized communities exist in a unique social space in which they are at the edge of a cultural or social system (International Geographical Union (IGU) 2003:2). This position "at the edge" (2) indicates they are often not under the direct, or the mainstream, influence of social power.

In the case of sexuality within prisons, while in non-marginalized Euro-American societies, power is exerted and gained through the reproduction of children in heterosexual relationships, this option does not exist in the marginalized context of women's prisons. Yet this does not mean that sexuality in marginalized communities is free from the presence of power. As Foucault (1976) indicates, power is dynamic and ubiquitous. Sexuality within prisons does not escape social power; rather the marginality changes the way in which sexuality and power collectively function. This dynamic gives the supposedly natural form of sexuality a different context and purpose.

The tension demonstrated by previous ethnographies between prisoners who perceived themselves and others as being either true or situational lesbians can be better understood through this dynamic (Maeve 1999; Morgan 1997; Ward & Kassebaum 1964). Women who perceive themselves as true homosexuals look down upon women who have had their first lesbian experience in prison (Giallombardo 1966, Morgan 1997, Maeve 1999). Prisoners suggest that these women have insincere motivations since in the prison environment, engaging in same-sex activities provides benefits. Women often gain

protection, desirable social standing, kinship, and sometimes monetary gifts from these relationships. These benefits can be understood as economic, symbolic, and social capital, ultimately translating into power (Bourdieu 1989).

While the prisoners are correct to identify power as a factor in the equation of these relationships, this does not necessarily negate the sincerity of the actions. Prisoners exist in a marginalized space, but the very definition of this marginality indicates that they are not completely separated from mainstream society. Even in the case of women who view themselves as true homosexuals, by existing in the non-marginalized society previously, they have internalized and naturalized the idea that heterosexuality is the dominant method of relationships. This naturalization prevents not just the prisoners, but most cultural participants, from being able to see the elements of power and social, symbolic, and economic capital embedded in the dominant form of sexuality as well.

When there is a removal of mainstream social pressures, sexuality is able to flourish in places it is generally unable due to the naturalization effects of culture. As Foucault (1976) is correct to point out, power exists within every relationship. The case of women's prisons demonstrates the heavily guiding force of power within all forms of sexuality, both in marginalized and non-marginalized communities. Since engaging in same-sex relations within prison gains more power than not, the marginalized culture becomes more accepting of homosexuality. The panopticon of sexuality is still at work, but the context causes the pressure to shift from heterosexuality to homosexuality. This process demonstrates that as Foucault (1976) suggests, sexuality is a social construct and it's fluidity is much more pervasive than dominant Euro-American discourse would like to acknowledge.

### **III. Suggestions for Further Research**

Pervasive study on this topic has led to the heightened awareness of both the importance of this subject for many disciplines, but also the dearth that exists in the research base currently. For this reason, suggestions for further research have been discerned based on a backbone of anthropological theory and analysis. The suggested location, methods, and research plan should allow for the analysis of the ways in which marginalization and sexual identity are conflated.

#### Proposed Ethnographic Location

The New Hampshire State Prison for Women has been singled out as a possible site for study as it is one of the few facilities in the country that not only houses

exclusively female inmates, but also contains a mixture of minimum, medium, and maximum-security prisoners (New Hampshire Department of Corrections 2013). The women housed in the facility have all been convicted and sentenced due to felonies. The prison is located in Goffstown, New Hampshire (New Hampshire Department of Corrections 2013). It is a leased facility with a capacity of 150 beds, which as of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 were all filled to capacity. The prison employs 41 staff including 27 Corrections officer and 14 non-uniformed staff. Approximately 75 people from the community volunteer their time to provide/lead self-help groups, a domestic violence group, cognitive problem solving, alternatives to violence, self-esteem groups, AA/NA, Hobbycraft, a softball league, and a women's chorus.

Both the institution and the population it serves make this an ideal ethnographic location. Most prisons are coed facilities with separate male and female quarters (Bureau of Prisons 2013). This prison's exclusively female population truly marginalizes the women, eliminating the possibility for the even symbolic presence of males to influence the data. Further, the fact that the prison houses prisoners of all security levels prevents a distinction from being made based on that factor, although surely an internal comparison of data once collected would be interesting. Finally, the fact that the prison only houses women who have committed felonies assures their marginalization on an individual level because as Moran et al. (2009) indicates, women who commit serious crimes "...not only break the law but also offend against gender role expectations" (701).

#### Suggested Research Design and Hypothesis

It should be the broad hypothesis of the research that marginality provides a social space in which sexuality can become fluid. More specifically, same-sex relationships occur within the marginalized context of women's prisons due to different power dynamics and societal pressures than those that exist in non-marginalized communities.

It has been documented that the marginalized sub-culture of women's prisons undeniably produces sexual behaviors that run counter to Euro-American understandings of sexuality (Kunzel 2002). The women that exist in these marginalized communities, the staff working within the prisons, and the institutions themselves all contribute to the culture and power dynamics in which its participants are subject to. All three groups should be addressed, using individual questions and angles to obtain a holistic understanding.

### The Institutions

The institutions themselves provide a physical and social structure in which these interactions occur. I hypothesize that the representatives of the prisons, i.e. high ranking officers not housed in a specific prison, will regard prison sexuality as a disciplinary infraction in need of control. The institutions are a necessary component of the research, as it would be impossible to understand the ground-level behaviors within prisons without understanding the hierarchal structural influences. Special attention should also be paid to the actual physical structure of the prisons, specifically which aspects may contribute to increased marginalization.

Specific questions that should be sought to answer within the group should include: What is the official policy on sexual activity between inmates? What consequences are there for inmates who do not adhere to these policies? What sexual acts, if any, does the institution believe prisoners engage in during their imprisonment? What precautions does the institution take to prevent sexual activity between inmates? What does the institution perceive as the differences in sexuality inside and outside the prisons? What does the staff perceive as the motivation for women to engage in these illicit relationships?

### The Prison Staff

The prison staff provides a particularly interesting dynamic with the prisoners, as they exist within the marginal space of the prison while working but then are reincorporated into non-marginalized society once their shift ends. For this reason, the prison staff's ideas perception on sexuality in general and within the prison is worth seeking. It would be fair to hypothesize that the prison staff would have a viewpoint on sexuality that coincided more with that of the normative Euro-American discourse, as they do not identify primarily with the marginalized prison environment. Further, the prison staff's likely alignment with the institution of the prison and not the prisoners themselves most likely causes them to view prisoner sexual relations as disciplinary infractions rather than attempts at forming kinships.

Specific questions that should be sought to answer within the group should include: What sexual acts, if any, does the staff believe prisoners engage in during their imprisonment? What protocol does the staff follow in regards to sexual activity amongst inmates? How tightly enforced are these policies? What impacts, positive or negative, does the staff perceive resulting from sexual activity between inmates? How does the

staff sexually identify prisoners who engage in same-sex sexual behavior? What does the staff perceive as the motivation for women to engage in these illicit relationships?

### The Prisoners

It is likely that a large portion of the women are either currently, or have in the past, engaged in a homosexual encounter of some kind while in prison. Coinciding with Koscheski and Hensley's (2001) findings, a strong hypothesis is that it will be the case that prisoner's self-reported sexual identities will not coincide with the normative labels that would be attached to them in non-marginalized society. For example, women who engage in homosexual behavior with other women within the prison will not necessarily identify as either lesbian or bisexual. Further, it is likely that many of these women did not identify with either of those labels prior to incarceration.

Specific questions that should be sought to answer within the group should include: How do the prisoners perceive their overall relationship with the community outside of prison? What sexual acts, if any, do prisoners engage in while imprisoned? How, if at all, do their sexual acts or feelings differ from their behaviors and feelings outside prison? What impacts, positive or negative, has being imprisoned had on their conception of sexuality as a whole? What impacts, positive or negative, has being imprisoned had on their conception of their own sexuality? What impacts, positive or negative, does being involved sexually or emotionally with a fellow prisoner provide?

### Suggested Methodology

The various methodologies utilized should be the largest differing factor between the proposed study and those done in the past. While the research should in fact draw on previous methodologies, to gain a thorough understanding of the processes at work in the prison, various methods should be combined to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data. In order to gain a full scope, researchers should use participant observation, anonymous and non-anonymous surveying, and semi-structured interviews amongst the population of women in the New Hampshire State Prison for Women. Using these methods will allow for the collection of both the qualitative and quantitative data necessary to address the preceding hypotheses. The qualitative data will be collected in the first phase of the study and quantitative data will be collected in the latter half. This will be done in order to utilize the qualitative data to create a truly effective research instrument. Additionally, through the fieldwork process researchers should keep an ethnographic journal to track their personal attitudes and thoughts regarding the

participants and structures in the study. This will act as a measure of any inherent bias present, thus serving as a measure of objectivity for the final product.

### Working with Marginalized Communities

Anthropologists working with marginalized populations have often raised issues of ethics and accountability in concern for protecting the people in these communities from harm related to their research goals (Fluehr-Lobban 1994; Murphy and Johannsen 1990; Waldram 1998). This is primarily due to the fact that marginalized communities, by definition, have a lack of power; this can easily place them at a disadvantage to the anthropological researcher who is outside, or marginal, to the community. Waldram (1998) points out that this is an especially important consideration to take into account with the case of prisoners, who are generally characterized by their official state or federally sanctioned lack of power, autonomy, and freedom.

Since prisoners, as well as other marginalized communities, are under a constant state of panopticism (Foucault 1979), Gounis (1996) points out that ethnography becomes difficult as it may feel to the prisoners a replication of the panopticon in which they constantly find themselves subject to. To remedy this, researchers should follow his suggestion to attempt to undermine the “pervasive presence of the third party” (116), keeping the presence as separate from the ethnographer as possible. As Waldram (1998) points out, this can be accomplished by attempting to empower the marginalized community in whichever ways are appropriate and applicable to the project.

### Obtaining Consent

The process of obtaining consent within prison systems is complicated due to factors related to their marginality and the often-sensitive nature of the topics being discussed (Gounis 1996; Roberts and Indermaur 2003; Waldram 1998). Many prison researchers struggled with the issue of negotiating consent with prisoners when they realized that inmates technically exist in a legal state of limbo. Since prison systems are responsible for the care and custody of inmates, the state is legally empowered to make decisions on the behalf of the prisoners (Waldram 1998; Moran et al. 2009). In response to this, Waldram (1998) asserts that, “A correctional system that insists on maintaining absolute control over inmate participation in research, to the exclusion of the inmates’ own wishes, is not a healthy place for ethical social science” (6).

Another issue to take into consideration regarding consent for prisoners is whether written consent is the correct choice. Dixon (1997) notes that the use of written



consent forms is not always appropriate in criminological research. This is due largely in part to research participants' negative reactions to references of legal liability, but also to the researchers role of protecting topic-sensitive information from the wrong parties. Participants are expected to be especially hesitant in signing consent forms when the information will act as a direct link between their person and the self-reporting of illegal or illicit activities (Roberts and Indermaur 2003). Both Indermaur (1995) and Waldram (1998) noted that some prisoners did in fact decline to participate in their research after it was requested that they sign written consent forms, most likely due to fear that it would harm confidentiality and become a liability for them.

With these concerns in mind, and with the AAA statement indicating that oral consent is an acceptable means of obtaining consent, written consent should not be used with prisoners in the study. The only instances written consent could be obtained without jeopardizing the integrity of the research would be from staff members during semi-structured interviewing. Instead the information about the study should be communicated, either through writing or verbally, participants should orally acknowledge that they comprehend the situation, and researchers should indicate that they are free to discontinue their participation at any point.

#### Participant Observation Within the Prisons

To obtain a fuller understanding of the embodied experience of a prisoner, researchers should engage in participant observation (DeWalt and DeWalt 1998), shadowing prisoner's daily activities such as leisure and mealtimes. Participant observation should also be utilized to examine the dynamics within the prison staff as well, although limitedly. Instances that should be observed include any contexts in which social identity is being negotiated, either by prisoners or staff. Participant observation amongst prisoners has many benefits including gaining the trust of informants, establishing a researcher presence for the later distribution of surveys (Blackburn et al. 2011), and gaining a qualitative understanding of daily prison life. As Sanjek (1990) suggests, all observations should be recorded at the end of each day as detailed field notes.

#### Non-Anonymous Surveying

Arguments have been made against the lack of anonymity in regards to surveying (Struckman-Johnson et al. 1996), however, there stands a powerful counterargument that post-survey follow up interviews resulting from this method could provide extremely valuable information. For this reason, non-anonymous surveys should

be utilized to obtain quantitative data that can be engaged with in follow-up interviews. The surveys should be created using qualitative data obtained in the participant observation phase of the project. Furthermore, these non-anonymous surveys can provide an interesting point of comparison for anonymous surveys distributed later in the research. Two sets of non-anonymous surveys should be distributed to both the prisoner population as well as the staff population. Survey recipients should have the option of indicating whether they wish to participate in a follow-up interview.

### Semi-Structures Interviews

In order to obtain answers to specific questions and engage in an ensured dialogue, researchers should conduct semi-structured interviews (Weller 1998). These interviews should be conducted primarily with prisoners, but also with staff and high-ranking prison officials. A separate interview instrument will be created for each population. The interviews should be audio-recorded for reference purposes whenever researchers are able to obtain consent (Gordon 2000). The limiting factors of prison interviewing, such as a lack of a sense of privacy, have been noted by many researchers (e.g. See Waldram 1998), so all considerations to ensure comfort for informants should be taken.

### Anonymous Surveying

Anonymous surveying should be the final component of the research project. At this point, researchers will have established a presence with prisoners to eliminate any potential fears about the true source of the survey (Struckman-Johnson et al. 1996). Additionally, at this point in the research, enough qualitative data should have been collected through participant observation, non-anonymous surveying, and semi-structured interviews to create a succinct research tool. The survey's anonymity should ensure truthful reporting on sensitive topics (Struckman-Johnson et al. 1996) and will provide a useful point of comparison for previously collected data.

### Significance

This research project, if undertaken properly, could extend itself to many disciplines. As sexuality is an expansive topic, affecting many areas of life, so too is the examination of sexuality within marginalized communities. On a directly applied level, this work will influence the criminal justice and penology communities by providing a thorough and realistic view of the sexuality within prison systems. This could lead to

policy reforms and improved treatment of prisoners. This work would also be beneficial for the anthropological community, as it would add to the base of anthropological research regarding sexuality in specific cultures as well as examine and provide insight into the workings of a marginalized community. Most pervasive, however, is the affect the findings this research could have for sexuality, gender studies, and feminism. By demonstrating the fluidity of sexuality in marginalized cultures as not an oppositional or abnormal process, but rather a similar process to sexuality in non-marginalized communities, the overall conception of sexuality could be altered. This is a liberating concept that could bring about tremendous and positive social change for people who are constantly marginalized and mistreated by Euro-American society due to their in adherence to gender roles, specifically regarding their sexual preferences.

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## **Section III: Critical Essays**





# **The “Truly American College”: Establishing a Civic and Democratic Mission at Wagner College and Spelman College in the Interwar Era**

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This research paper explores the evolution of the American liberal arts college, with particular attention to the interwar period. The integration of women, immigrants, and minorities, the fight for democracy around the world, financial hardships during the Great Depression, and competition with research universities triggered shifts in the liberal arts college’s curriculum and structure. From a mere 2% of eligible youth, enrollment rose to 10%, and of these, 40% were women. In a rapidly changing world, the liberal arts colleges sought to create intimate settings to promote democratic thinking, individualism, and moral integrity while preparing students for the world beyond college. Two case studies of specific liberal arts colleges, Wagner College now located in Staten Island, New York and Spelman College located in Atlanta, Georgia, both founded in the 1880s as seminaries, illuminate the role colleges played in serving the needs of their immediate community. Their transformation by the 1930s allowed for a more religiously and ethnically diverse faculty and student bodies, and positioned them to attain prominence as twenty first century models of civic learning.

## **I. Introduction**

In 1819, an alumnus of Dartmouth College, Daniel Webster, offered a passionate plea for advancements of the liberal arts college before the United States Supreme Court. “This sir, is my case! It is the case not merely of that humble institution, it is the case of every college in our land! It is sir, as I have said, a small college...and yet there are those of us who love it.”<sup>2</sup> His passion for the private liberal arts college, including its smaller class, close rapport among faculty and staff, and separation from the

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<sup>1</sup> Written under the direction of Dr. Lori Weintrob in partial fulfillment of the Senior Program requirements.

<sup>2</sup> John R Thelin, “Small by Design: Resilience in an Era of Mass Higher Education” in *Meeting the Challenge: America’s Independent Colleges and Universities since 1956*. (United States of America: Council of Independent Colleges, 2006): 3

state, resonated with the judiciary. The landmark case successfully prevented state control of private colleges. This was a “victory for *all* colleges and universities, whether they are what we would call today ‘private’ or ‘public’” due to the strong powers it outlined for academic corporations of all sizes.<sup>3</sup> Yet, over the next two centuries, the American Liberal Arts College prospered despite many hurdles, including the rise of the large research university, the Great Depression, World Wars and evolving demands of the global economy. In the rapidly changing world of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, faced with fascism and communism abroad and mass immigration at home, liberal arts colleges found it necessary to teach democratic thinking and to prepare students for the world beyond college.

During the interwar era, from 1918 to 1939, private liberal arts colleges shifted to a more progressive approach. They began to open access to women and to a multi-denominational student and faculty. A focus on ethical and moral education for democracy, rather than specific religious dogma, emerged, laying the groundwork for a new vigorous civic mission. National imperatives, such as military needs abroad and the assimilation of new immigrant groups at home, necessitated a shift to teaching new languages such as German. The American Association of Colleges identified this new role of colleges in their 1932 report as “progressive” in contrast to their prior role as bearers of tradition.<sup>4</sup>

By the 1930s, the definition of a liberal arts education, involving general education and specialized major, had been solidified. “Liberal education is a sustained and open minded examination of the deepest questions of human existence, an examination that is meant to free us of our prejudices in such matters.”<sup>5</sup> A liberal arts education promoted open-mindedness, individual growth and tolerance of others, essential to the modern world. Ultimately, “by 1940, private institutions enrolled a majority of college undergraduates, despite the relative growth of public higher education.”<sup>6</sup> College enrollment of those between the ages of 18 and 24 jumped from 2% in 1900 to 9% by 1940, of which 40% were women. Although this trend accelerated after the war with the G.I. bill, climbing to 15% in 1949 (then 24%, in 1959 and 35% in

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<sup>3</sup> John R Thelin. *A History of American Higher Education*. (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 2004): 72

<sup>4</sup> John R Thelin. *A History of American Higher Education*. (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 2004): 72

<sup>5</sup> Malcolmson. *Liberal Education...* 5

<sup>6</sup> Thelin. *A History of...*252

1969), the path had been established.<sup>7</sup> Liberal arts colleges were by 1939 educational centers that addressed a multicultural, multilingual, and multid denominational audience and whose curriculum balanced individual growth and the needs of the community.

Wagner College, now located in Staten Island, New York and Spelman College located in Atlanta, Georgia are two private liberal arts colleges that thrived in the face of these challenges. Beginning as seminaries in the 1880s, both experienced major transformations from 1917 to 1932, as they took new names, moved to new locations, and dramatically transformed their curriculum. Wagner College became, in the words of its President, “a truly American College,” leaving behind the “gymnasium model” and teaching in German only to young aspiring Protestant male ministers to, in his words, “meet the needs of the community.” By the 1940s, Wagner had female professors and a nursing program. Spelman College diversified its faculty with positions for African-Americans, and placed new emphasis on promoting careers for women, including in child psychology. They adapted the vision of their founders, both philanthropists, and responded to student voices, economic opportunities and political imperatives, to integrate democratic principals with pre-professional goals for the future.

## **II. The Classics at the Traditional Liberal Arts College: 1776-1917**

Based on the Oxford and Cambridge models, colonial colleges emphasized religion and the classical arts. Victory in the American Revolution did not generate an alternative to the English model. Instead colleges,

“...maintained the residential character, the classical curriculum, and control over student life, and acted within the traditions of the ancient liberal arts preparatory schools. This four-year free-standing residential college with the arts curriculum and baccalaureate degree dominated the American ‘system’ of higher learning from 1640, the year of the reopening of Harvard College, into the 1800s, nearly two hundred years later.”<sup>8</sup>

They tried to “avoid social disruption by encouraging denominational tolerance”<sup>9</sup>, however the various Protestant religious groups clashed. This “laid the groundwork for

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<sup>7</sup> United States Department of Education. *120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait* (Washington D.C.: National Center for Educational Statistics. January 1993): 73

<sup>8</sup> Allan O Pfnister. “The Role of the Liberal Arts College: A Historical Overview of the Debates.” *The Journal of Higher Education* 55, no. 2 (March 1, 1984): 148

<sup>9</sup> Thelin. *A History of...* 15

the nineteenth century trend in which each religious group would seek to found its own colleges.”<sup>10</sup> In addition, these colleges often had strong connections to religious philanthropies. They sought endowments, initially from donors in England and later the United States, who wanted higher education institutions dedicated to their respective religion. These donors thought that small colleges were the most appropriate forums to donate to in order to carry out this religious and charitable goal.<sup>11</sup>

In 1828, a Yale Committee report sought to defend the reputation of the liberal arts college. This report has “been referred to as ‘probably the most influential publication in the whole history of American higher education between the Revolution and Civil War’ and as a classic restatement of the place of liberal education.”<sup>12</sup> The report argued for a more traditional curriculum focused on classical languages, science, and mathematics, as well as building character. This conservative position “stopped some of the most exciting possibilities for reform in higher education in the nineteenth century”<sup>13</sup> across the nation. Although this report helped reaffirm the identity of the liberal arts college, it argued strongly for a continuation of early educational habits rather than reform and innovation.

Yet by the mid-nineteenth century, new forces emerged and with them a desire to craft colleges into learning centers with a distinct American sense of nationalism. New centers of commerce due to Westward expansion necessitated amenities, such as a hotel, newspaper, and a college. “No community seemed to be without a college, and as a community-established and community-oriented institution, a college was under pressure to offer courses considered important to the citizens of the community.”<sup>14</sup> The explosion of urban centers, as the agrarian economy declined, and new waves of immigration, also played a role.

Interestingly, the diversity of American communities led to a plethora of institutional types of higher education, public and private, four-year and two-year. Private academies, seminaries for theological instruction, and normal schools for training teachers emerged. In addition, the German educational model known as the *gymnasium* spread across the United States. Massive German immigration in the United States, particularly during the 1850s to the 1880s, enhanced its popularity. Wagner College is

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<sup>10</sup> Thelin. *A History of...* 15

<sup>11</sup> Thelin. *A History of...* 15

<sup>12</sup> Pfnister. “The Role of the...151

<sup>13</sup> Pfnister. “The Role of the...151

<sup>14</sup> Pfnister. “The Role of the...150

one of many examples of institutions that employed this gymnasium model during its early years. “In Germany, by this time, the preparatory arts sequence had been relegated to the secondary schools, and lectures and research were becoming the major activities of the university.”<sup>15</sup> This essentially left the liberal arts college’s role in society undefined as many began to ponder whether this German model should be adopted in the United States. A major debate was ignited across the nation regarding what the exact purpose of the liberal arts college truly was in American society.

The 1862 Morrill Land-Grant Act presented a challenge to private liberal arts college by expanding public colleges and universities that often prioritized practical and pre-professional goals. The Act distributed over 30,000 acres of land to each state to be used to create and expand state colleges. This act has been described as “an influential piece of federal legislation that fostered access to useful public higher education. Some historians have hailed this legislation as the genesis of ‘democracy’s college’—source of affordable, practical higher education offered by state colleges and universities.”<sup>16</sup> The federal policy provided the land grant colleges with funding to develop specific academic programs. This includes programs

“...where the leading objects shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies...to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts...in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life.”<sup>17</sup>

While this act clearly defined the role of the state college and university, it generated confusion regarding the role of the private liberal arts college.

As a result, many people felt that the liberal arts college would cease to exist as time went on due to the clear identity of these new land grant state schools.

“Washington, D.C. 2 July 1862. The American Liberal Arts College died today after a prolonged illness. It was 226 years old...the college was unable to overcome its aristocratic origins and contracted the disease that eventually led to its demise—arteriosclerosis...today, after a recent cardiac arrest, its heart

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<sup>15</sup> Pfnister. “The Role of the...151

<sup>16</sup> Thelin. *A History of...* 75

<sup>17</sup> “Act Donating Lands for Colleges of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts.” The Morrill Act of 1862

stopped on the floor of the House of Representatives, just as the roll call for Justin Morrill's Land Grant Act had ended. The vote was 90-25"<sup>18</sup>

These reports have labeled the private liberal arts college as undemocratic and unnecessary.

Not long after, the 1890 Morrill Land Grant Act offered cash to many southern states for college endowments. It also stated that race could not be used as a factor for admission, but this was largely ignored in the South. If a state did seek to create a colored school they had to apply for a separate land grant act.<sup>19</sup> This was often mandatory to the "separate but equal" verdict of the famous court case *Plessey v. Ferguson (1896)*, which required blacks to be educated in a different setting than whites but the school itself had to be of equal to that of the whites. However, this was never truly enforced, although Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have helped to assist African Americans and other minorities gain a fair education, including Spelman College.

By the post-civil war era, Americans realized that they needed these institutions to teach young adults the skills to function in our new urban metropolitan areas, as well as in agricultural areas, and to educate the masses about the democratic framework of our nation.

### **III. Wagner and Spelman: From Seminary Schools to "Truly American Colleges"**

Wagner College and Spelman College exemplify institutions whose strong religious foundations guided their mission of community engagement. Both experienced dramatic transformations during the World War I era in their mission, including the inclusion of more diverse faculty and students.

Under the shade of an apple tree in Rochester, New York, as the legend goes, two ministers George Gomph and Alexander Richter set up the a school to train German-speaking Lutheran ministers. Nearly 1.5 million German immigrants arrived in the United States in the 1880s, joining a German-speaking community already over 1.5 million strong. These two leaders identified a need for German speaking ministers who

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<sup>18</sup> James Axtell. *The Death of the Liberal Arts College*. *History of Education Quarterly*. 11. 4. (Winter, 1971): 339

<sup>19</sup> Travis J. Albritton,. "Educating Our Own: The Historical Legacy of HBCUs and Their Relevance for Educating a New Generation of Leaders." *The Urban Review* 44, no. 3 (September 2012): 315

could assist immigrants who spoke another language in adjusting to their new world. As stated in the constitutional by-laws for the Lutheran Proseminary of Rochester:

“From every direction comes an urgent demand for German speaking ministers. Not only on the broad expanse of the German home mission, not only in the far West among those who have recently immigrated and who are like sheep without a shepherd, but also in the East, which has been settled for so long a time...”<sup>20</sup>

The proseminary, founded in 1883, functioned as a German gymnasium that enrolled students for six years as high school and college combined. Students studied religion, German, Latin, English, world history, geography, natural history, arithmetic, penmanship, drawing and singing during their first few years. They then shifted into learning the same subjects at an advanced level in addition to natural philosophy, Greek and American history, Hebrew, and chemistry.<sup>21</sup> Significantly, “all instruction was given in German, with the exception of English and mathematics.”<sup>22</sup> Students also were required to attend chapel on Saturdays and Sunday school. The rules were strict: students had to be in by 10pm, had to maintain the furnace and work in the dining room, and were even regulated to bathe once a week. The tuition was divided into three different segments: “The students paid \$13 for the fall term, \$10.50 for the winter term, and \$8.50 for the spring, a total of \$32. In addition, each student paid \$2 per week for room and board for 40 weeks, and \$10 per year for heat.”<sup>23</sup> An unmarried professor lived in the dormitory with the boys and would oversee and supervise them.

Renamed the Wagner Memorial Lutheran College in 1886, the new name paid homage to the faith of a philanthropist in its mission. John G. Wagner’s gift of twelve thousand dollars, in memory of his son George, enabled the purchase of a new campus on Oregon Street in Rochester.<sup>24</sup> The school overcame a legal challenge due to its use of the word college in its title, which violated an 1892 law that all colleges had to have a \$500,000 endowment.<sup>25</sup> By 1914, Rochester had become a bustling urban city with

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<sup>20</sup> Walter T. Schoen Jr. *Wagner College: Four Histories* (Staten Island, New York: Wagner College, 2008): 24

<sup>21</sup> Schoen. *Wagner College: Four Histories*...29

<sup>22</sup> Schoen. *Wagner College: Four Histories*...34

<sup>23</sup> Schoen. *Wagner College: Four Histories*...32

<sup>24</sup> Rowen, Willian Albert. *The Emerging Identity of Wagner College* (Indiana: Indiana University, 1972): 24 Walter T. Schoen Jr. *Wagner College: Four Histories*...33

buildings and factories that were no longer seemed conducive to training ministers. The New York Ministerium, a Lutheran church organization in control of Wagner since 1888 felt that a change was needed. Pastor Frederic Sutter, an early graduate who had his own ministry on Staten Island, led the efforts to move to this more remote and pastoral area.

As World War I came to an end, the challenges facing private colleges were changing. One of the key leaders in Wagner College's history, Pastor Sutter took the 1917 relocation as an opportunity to redefine its mission, to make it less rigid and more responsive to the needs of this borough of New York City. Sutter writes,

“...When Wagner settled on Staten Island, we knew we had to remodel the gymnasium study program to make Wagner a truly American college. I asked some of the professors if they wanted to continue on Staten Island. Most asked if the college would have the same purpose—that is, to prepare boys to be German-English speaking ministers. When I told them it would not have this purpose...everything was changed: the need for a bilingual clergy was becoming less, because increasing numbers of young people in the congregations were turning to English services. The rigidity of the gymnasium curriculum was outmoded, and to truly become a part of Staten Island, as the boroughs first college, Wagner would have to assume an important role in the Island's needs. We didn't really have to modify our purpose, and the Island accepted it: to educate young people to have a Christian outlook, to mold people who will constantly demonstrate what it means to be Christian.”<sup>26</sup>

Wagner began its transition to a liberal arts college seeking to meet the needs of its new Staten Island community while also maintaining its faith-based, ethical roots.

Two years before the founding of the all male Lutheran Proseminary in Rochester, the Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary was founded. Two teachers, Sophia B. Packard and Harriet Giles of Massachusetts, were anxious to bring education and Christianity, as well as a safe haven, to African-American women. They possessed strong New England viewpoints and fought for rights for African-American women to pursue higher education at a difficult moment:

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<sup>25</sup> Schoen. *Wagner College: Four Histories*...39

<sup>26</sup> Frederic Sutter with Brian Morris. *Wagner College: Four Histories* (Staten Island, New York: Wagner College, 2008): 48-49



“The South that Packard and Giles encountered in the 1880s had been devastated by the Civil War, embittered by the demands of Reconstruction, and plagued by the fate of four million ex-slaves still in their midst. The obstacles facing blacks only twenty years out of bondage, were tremendous, for the majority were impoverished, landless, and ill-literate.”<sup>27</sup>

With a \$100 donation from the First Baptist Church of Medford, Massachusetts, they created a school to “to train the intellect, to store the mind with desire for general information, to inspire a love for the true and the beautiful, to prepare the pupils for the practical duties of life—the hallmark of a liberal education.”<sup>28</sup> The school had a normal department for teacher training and academic department, which began with 11 students but quickly grew to 600 students.

“Given the realities of the educational deficiencies of their students, Packard and Gillard realized the need for basic courses in reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, geography, writing, grammar, and history. But that same 1881 circular listed the courses they planned for the Academic Department: algebra, physiology, essays, Latin, rhetoric, geometry, political economy, metal philosophy (psychology), chemistry, botany, Constitution of the United States, astronomy, zoology, geology, moral philosophy and evidences of Christianity.”<sup>29</sup>

They also added in an Industrial Department for printing, sewing and other domestic arts. Students worked in the laundry room, garden and nurse’s ward.

In 1884, the school name was changed to Spelman Seminary, in honor of John D. Rockefeller’s wife, Laura Spelman and her parents Lucy Spelman and Harvey Buel. The founders had raised over \$7,000 from local black churches, but still had another \$7,000 outstanding for their campus. After an initial \$250 gift, John D. Rockefeller “promised to continue his support if the women were serious about sticking to their mission.”<sup>30</sup> He later visited the campus with his family ultimately learning “of the serious financial handicap, and donated the remaining balance, thereby insuring the schools

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<sup>27</sup> Guy-Sheftall, Beverly, and Jo Moore Stewart. *Spelman: A Centennial Celebration, 1881-1981*. (Atlanta, GA: Spelman College, 1981): 11

<sup>28</sup> Sheftall. *Spelman: A Centennial ...*43

<sup>29</sup> Harry G Lefever. “The Early Origins of Spelman College.” *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* no. 47 (April 1, 2005): 60

<sup>30</sup> Sheftall. *Spelman: A Centennial ...*22

continued existence as a separate school for girls.”<sup>31</sup> Foundations such as the General Education Board, Anna T. Jeans Fund, and more “broadened the base of support to southern black education. This period was indeed an age of philanthropy without which the growth of black education in the South would have been virtually impossible.”<sup>32</sup> As endowments increased, the founders were able to expand their campus and building.

At Spelman Seminary, African American women had the opportunity to learn their political, social, and legal rights, and to prepare them to triumph, despite the segregated and racist world that was codified by the *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) court case. “As the school continued to grow, its mission changed from a normal school, with a primary mission of training teachers, to a school that offered courses constituent with the liberal arts.”<sup>33</sup> The school expanded its faculty, student body, class offerings, programs, and reputation. Dr. Morehouse’s 1902 speech best epitomizes the growth of this institution and pride in its endowment:

“What contrasts between twenty years ago and now! Then two teachers, now forty-two; then eleven pupils, now seven hundred; then, tabernacling as a beneficiary in a church basement, now the occupant of this spacious and cheery campus...then not a dollar, now holdings valued at \$350,00; then a miscellaneous company of all ages in the school, now orderly and classified studies, then an experiment, now an acknowledged success...”<sup>34</sup>

There were literacy courses for high school students, college preparatory students, Christian workers, teachers, and Bachelor of Arts students. There were nursing training programs, printing, dressmaking, cooking and domestic arts, and laundry work courses. There were also vocal and instrumental courses, taught by the majority white faculty.

In order to solidify its purpose, Spelman Seminary was renamed Spelman College. Spelman had been offering college courses, but the majority of them were being completed at Morehouse College. Only 40% of students were receiving college degrees, rather than high school degrees. New buildings and facilities as well as more elementary and high school students were present on the campus. Yet, ensuring that Christian values were still embedded in the school and its female students remained the major mission of the institution.

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<sup>31</sup> Sheftall. *Spelman: A Centennial* ...24

<sup>32</sup> Sheftall. *Spelman: A Centennial* ...21

<sup>33</sup> Lefever. “The Early Origins...”62

<sup>34</sup> Sheftall. *Spelman: A Centennial* ...38

#### **IV. The Interwar Period: Establishing a New Democratic Identity**

From 1918-1939, higher education faced some new challenges that drastically impacted and altered the role of liberal arts colleges in American society. These schools had to adapt to a new era of uncertainty, of competition and of a great need for democracy. Despite all odds, as discussed by three historians below, the liberal arts college thrived.

The many struggles of the nineteenth century had historians suspecting that the liberal arts college would eventually become extinct; however by the twentieth century it became clear that this was quite the opposite. In 1971, James Axtell writes that in the post Civil War era, “according to which history you read, the new universities either ‘absorbed’, ‘replaced’, ‘modified’, ‘invaded’, or ‘profoundly altered the content of ‘the colleges’<sup>35</sup>. However, Axtell argues that the liberal arts college continued to thrive by carrying “on their activities of units of, or in competition with, the larger many-sided universities...they had to adjust to a new frame of reference.”<sup>36</sup> He calls for historians to integrate women’s history into the history of education, and encourages historians to assess changes between the “old time college (singular) with its old time presidents (fossilized) or of new universities (plural) with their empire building presidents (dynamic)...”<sup>37</sup> Allan Pfnister introduces historical context at moments of transition in higher education. At each turning point, “the colleges argued that the response was not to retreat but to identify the place of the college in the evolving system, holding fast to the heritage of the past.”<sup>38</sup> Major curriculum changes are one example of their successful adaptation. Finally, John Thelin’s chapter, “Success and Excess”, in his book, *A History of American Higher Education*, looks at “social, political and economic factors that have shaped the structure and life of higher education facilities.”<sup>39</sup> These include the effect of World War and the Great Depression, new sports programs, use of media and propaganda, and the rise of women’s and African American colleges. Yet, Thelin argues: “The single most important change in American higher education at the end of the nineteenth century was that college-going became fashionable and prestigious.”<sup>40</sup> All

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<sup>35</sup> Axtell. *The Death...*340

<sup>36</sup> Axtell. *The Death...*340

<sup>37</sup> Axtell. *The Death...*342

<sup>38</sup> Pfnister. “The Role of the...158

<sup>39</sup> Thelin. *A History of American...*11

<sup>40</sup> Thelin. *A History of American ...*156

three historians discuss the struggles in trying to identify the liberal arts college's changing purpose in twentieth century society versus its more definitive purpose in the nineteenth century.

The rise of the university brought a new emphasis on combining professional programs and liberal arts. John Hopkins University, Cornell University, Harvard University, Yale University, Columbia University, among others, developed schools with research and graduate study opportunities. They focused on more specialized studies and often could afford more professional faculties and laboratories. There was major debate regarding the structure that the university should adopt. Some argued for the German gymnasium model, others the structure similar to the four-year liberal arts colleges. In the early 1900s, the newly formed Association of American Universities (AAU) met to discuss the impact of the university:

“Liberal education could not exist by itself, and professional studies made the collegiate studies meaningful. There were others who argued for a clean break between the college and university, reserving for the university the professional and advanced work and for the college the preparatory work...the American university developed, an institution that combined the older collegiate ideals of liberal education with professional training in the advanced faculties; but in so doing, it was also saying, in effect that the independent or free-standing liberal arts college was no longer needed.”<sup>41</sup>

Universities had essentially swallowed whole the liberal arts college, in some interpretations. The university also offered things that colleges could not compete with. “What the old college used to do in four years...is now being done in part by the new college and in part by the secondary school.”<sup>42</sup> It was perceived that public high schools were better preparing students for higher education and the universities provided students with more opportunities and tools. Many felt that the colleges should shift to a shorter period of enrollment time in order to compete with the universities and more extensive high schools, which were thought to be now “the peoples college in that ‘much of the work formerly done by the college is now being done by the high schools’.”<sup>43</sup>

In 1915, the Association of American Colleges (AAC) was brought together 190 freestanding colleges and sought to map out their new identity and future in order to

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<sup>41</sup> Pfnister. “The Role of the...156

<sup>42</sup> Pfnister. “The Role of the...157

<sup>43</sup> Pfnister. “The Role of the...158

compete with high schools and universities for enrollment, nationally recognized programs, endowments and more. By 1932, a study was conducted of 315 liberal arts colleges across the nation to highlight the vast changes:

“Among the conclusions was the observation that the four-year colleges had undertaken more change and experimentation in the five years preceding the study than in the twenty-five years prior to it: changes in ‘care and direction of students, curriculum and instruction, and organization and administration.’ New services for students had been introduced; new programs such as honors sequences had been added. From the director’s perspective, the colleges had become more of a ‘progressive agency in society, not merely a bearer of tradition.’ Introduction of new programs had not been without a price, however, for the colleges were coming into conflict with other institutions and were creating new sets of problems that would require ‘unusual wisdom and skill’ in effective solutions.”<sup>44</sup>

The progressive nature of the liberal arts colleges allowed them to continue to remain true to their origins and initial traditions, while also adapting to the demands of the day and offer students more opportunities to think in new ways that correlated directly to the need for more democratic thinkers across the nation. Additionally, college “enrollment rose by 68 percent, and between 1919–20 and 1929–30, enrollment rose by 84 percent. During these 30 years, the ratio of college students to 18- to 24-year-olds rose from 2 to 7 per 100.”<sup>45</sup> This growth showcased how the colleges were able to thrive alongside the larger universities.

In regards to financial limitations during the Great Depression, philanthropies and donations were key in allowing liberal arts colleges to function. As public high schools expanded, more students sought to attend college. “Predictably, the increased number of high school graduates created a new large pool of college aspirants. The result was that between World War I and World War II, enrollment in colleges and universities increased more than fivefold, from 250,000 to 1.3 million.”<sup>46</sup> These small colleges began to slowly take in more students and resourcefully relied on fundraisers, community work and alumni networking to increase their endowments. “While the large universities

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<sup>44</sup> Pfnister. “The Role of the...161

<sup>45</sup> United States Department of Education. *120 Years of American Education...*73

<sup>46</sup> Thelin. *History of American...*205

gained resources and publicity, the small private liberal arts colleges not only survived but thrived on their ability to provide affordable, high quality undergraduate education to new generations of American students.”<sup>47</sup> Despite emotional stress and the financial constraints from the Great Depression, these colleges were able to work and collaborate with local companies and industrial businesses in their immediate community that made contributions to the schools.

Churches and their members often donated to the schools such as at Wagner College, as they had since colonial times. Nearly every *Daily Bulletin* noted the various donations the school received from community partners. One article from the February 1922 states ten reasons why

“...every congregation should contribute liberally to our ‘Wagner College New Dormitory Fund’”, which includes “1-As sincere Christians we are interested in the progress and welfare of our beloved Lutheran church. 5-You as a member of our New York Ministerium are a part owner of Wagner College. 7-Only when every member does his or her part can the necessary aid be secured. The need is great. Our duty is clear.”<sup>48</sup>

It is clear that many colleges, similar to Wagner, reached out to the community for donations and sought to showcase the importance of why their respective institution was worthy of these funds. Additionally, new sources of funding came from businesses, sports programs and foundations.

“The most far-reaching plans to reform the structure of American higher education percolated from the private sector of organized American philanthropy. Between 1920 and 1940 a coalition of major foundations accelerated their effort to bring both standards and standardization to American higher education, an initiative started in the early 1890s. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Rockefeller Foundation’s General Education Board worked in tandem with the United States Bureau of Education to collect and analyze data, toward the common goal of rationalizing colleges and universities into effective systems.”<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Thelin. “Small by Design...8

<sup>48</sup> Wagner College. “Bulletin”. February 1922.

<sup>49</sup> Thelin. “*History of American* ...238

These foundations changed the role and strategies of philanthropy through trying to reshape the entire governance of campuses and academic boards through implementing a corporate model. Although this was considered controversial because it restructured these universities into managerial departments, it did seek to create a national system for the resources for higher education.

In addition, prices of tuition began to change during this time.

“One national survey indicated that tuition fees went from an average of \$70 in 1920 to \$133 in 1940. A 1939 survey for the General Education Board showed that 42 percent of American colleges and universities charged more than \$200 in tuition fees in 1936-37, whereas in 1928-29 only 37 percent had charged fees at that level.”<sup>50</sup>

This tuition increase was a result of the earned income decline, effects of unemployment and bank closures of the Great Depression. This directly impacted enrollment numbers as “the depression of the 1930s may have contributed to slower growth in college enrollment and participation” however “by the end of the decade, college enrollment had reached 1.5 million with 9 college students per 100 18- to 24-year-olds.”<sup>51</sup>

There was also no national financial aid program at the time and scholarships were extremely difficult to earn. This made it difficult for lower class families to send their children to college. However, more middle class students were enrolling in college compared to earlier years when it was mainly the upper elite. Many students sought to offset their college expenses by cutting “room-and-board expenses by seeking out cooperative living arrangements, by renting rooms in cheap boardinghouses, or by living at home.”<sup>52</sup> A Federal Employment Relief Act was enacted that sought to employ undergraduates and some colleges were assisted by the short term Works Progress Administration and Public Works Administration. However students still faced a limited job market upon their graduation and were often unemployed or underemployed.

As the build up for World War II increased, many colleges began to cooperate with the war effort by “reconstituting itself to provide a hospitable setting for a variety of intense military training programs”<sup>53</sup> further helping to increase nationalism across the country. American higher education was used as a key resource in the war effort by

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<sup>50</sup> Thelin. *History of American ...*251

<sup>51</sup> United States Department of Education. *120 Years of American Education...* 73

<sup>52</sup> Thelin. *History of American ...*251

<sup>53</sup> Thelin. *History of American ...*257

spreading the win the war spirit and drafting athletes. Additionally, academic collaboration at colleges helped aid the war effort. Language professors taught students previously understudied languages such as Japanese, Italian, and Russian and history professors taught students about foreign cultures, geography, and politics of often forgotten countries. The science department also conducted research related to nuclear weapons like the atom and hydrogen bombs, which would lead to future partnerships between the federal governments and higher education institutions.

Many liberal arts colleges also sought to get involved in their immediate community's needs during the interwar period. They identified the importance of teaching students about ethics and morals, which became to translate into a larger civic mission. In a Wagner College Bulletin printed in February 1922, Dr. W.A. McKeever writes about picking a college and what types of things to look for. He states there are four types of colleges: the smaller church college, the larger church schools, the larger non-sectarian colleges, and the big, state-supported, school. Dr. McKeever writes the three curative college motives are moral direction, religious integrity, and spiritual democracy. He states,

“without our moral education the individual becomes selfish and grasping; without religious practice he becomes cynical and pessimistic; without democratic training he becomes mean and intolerant. Heaven helps us all to educate and guide our children toward a return to the type of moral and spiritualized democracy.”<sup>54</sup>

This message clearly highlights the importance of morals and democracy in the college structure as a tool in creating thoughtful leaders prepared to face a world of war and genocide.

#### **V. Access and Equity: Multicultural, Multidenominational, and Multilingual Institutions**

During the interwar period, many changes also occurred in the college and university structure, including more access and equity for women and minorities. In the early 1940s, the number of males dropped significantly at colleges as many went to fight in World War II. However, from 1943–44, women quickly enrolled in college and represented half the number of students; enrollment immediately surged.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Wagner College. “Bulletin”. February 1922.

<sup>55</sup> United States Department of Education. *120 Years of American Education... 73*



“Women had a strong numerical presence in higher education between the world wars, constituting about 40 percent of the undergraduate enrollment in 1940—a substantial increase, considering that sixty years earlier, few women had even been permitted to work toward a bachelor’s degree. This dramatic gain was due in large measure to the appeal of the new women’s colleges as well as the policies of coeducation at many institutions.”<sup>56</sup>

The interwar period proved to be a time of true access to higher education for women. Some liberal arts institutions, such as Wagner College, became co-educational and allowed women to enroll in their schools versus other larger schools such as Dartmouth College and Yale University which didn’t accept women into their institutions until the later 1960s. In the February 1933 Wagner College Bulletin, it is noted that the college’s trustees had successfully voted to admit women into their institution by that following September, however “there will be no residence provided on campus for the women students.”<sup>57</sup> However, this suddenly changed when in the March 1933 bulletin an article was posted entitled “Wagner Becomes Co-Ed Ahead of Schedule” when the first female student, Evelyn Agnes Pedersen of Grymes Hill, “applied for immediate admission and her request was granted.”<sup>58</sup> Additionally, by June 1933, Wagner had begun providing housing for women away from campus that would be closely supervised as described in the college bulletin. The women would be charged the same rate charged as the school for room and board. Wagner College gradually became a school accepting of women and saw their potential for becoming civic leaders in the world. Administration was aware of the financial benefits the school would have if they allowed women to enroll.

This was a pattern viewed across the nation as “the number of women undergraduates increased from about three hundred thousand just prior to World War I to about six hundred thousand on the eve of World War II.”<sup>59</sup> However, one major drawback of this was that although women were being given more educational opportunities, the curriculum and school dynamics did not always address discrimination issues related to class, ethnicity, or race. Women were often encouraged to enroll in certain professions and academic programs and often faced difficulty in extracurricular life. “Although women enjoyed numerous, diverse opportunities within campus life, they

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<sup>56</sup> Thelin. *A History of American...*226

<sup>57</sup> Wagner College. “Bulletin”. February 1933.

<sup>58</sup> Wagner College. “Bulletin”. March 1933.

<sup>59</sup> Thelin. *A History of American...*226

were unlikely to attain positions of leadership such as editor of the student newspaper or president of the student body.”<sup>60</sup> Despite these challenges, women were provided more access to education and therefore gradually expanded their roles in society.

African Americans still faced much inequity due to racism. Across the nation, many colleges still excluded African Americans on the basis of “separate but equal”. “Enrollment prospects for black students remained limited, not only in the segregated states but nationwide.”<sup>61</sup> This was directly reflected in nationwide enrollment statistics that “just prior to World War II a white between the ages of eighteen and twenty was four times more likely than a black of the same age group to enroll in college.”<sup>62</sup> However, undergraduate education exclusion as a result of segregation often led to more graduate education access for African Americans in the North. This came as a direct result of scholarship funds granted through Southern states for African Americans to study and attend graduate studies programs outside the state, predominately in the North.<sup>63</sup> Ultimately, racial segregation in higher education did impact the access that African Americans had to schooling, however Historically Black Colleges and Universities, such as Spelman University, did help to address the needs of the black community at this time.

“The HBCU history is deeply rooted in the Black community’s commitment to racial uplift and community empowerment. This commitment has been particularly meaningful given the sociopolitical policies and practices that deemed Black men and women incapable of succeeding as learners because of the unfounded belief that their race made them inferior and unable to appreciate the benefits of post- secondary education.”<sup>64</sup>

Additionally, there was a major growth in blacks as faculty members at Spelman College. Before the 1920s, the majority of the teaching staff was white with a few African Americans that that graduated from the college. After the 1920s and 1930s, the African American staff grew immensely and by 1937, African Americans were twice the number of white staff members. Additionally, there were no male faculty members prior to 1926 but by 1927, one had joined full time and the other part time. One quote from a

<sup>60</sup> Thelin. *A History of American...*228

<sup>61</sup> Thelin. *A History of American...*232

<sup>62</sup> Thelin. *A History of American...*232

<sup>63</sup> Thelin. *A History of American...*232

<sup>64</sup> Albritton. “Educating Our Own...” 311

Spelman student so eager to have an African American professor said, "...Wasn't any there but Miss Jane Anna Granderson—was the only black teacher on that campus. And if ever saw anybody sophisticated! Jane Anna Granderson was something to look at. She'd just inspire you—just looking at her..."<sup>65</sup> At Wagner, the first female faculty member was Marion R. Bartlett who taught Psychology in 1937 and Rev. Dr. Samuel Lewis and Rev. Llewellyn Williams were the first African American graduates in 1939.

## **VI. Curriculum and Civic Advancements in the Age of Reform**

By 1932, Wagner Memorial Lutheran College began to make the transition to a liberal arts college by redefining its mission statement and goals. Although they still sought to serve Lutheran ministers, their new collegiate purposes began to address the needs present in the twentieth century.

"We Are: A Church related school of the United Lutheran Synod of New York.  
We Are: On the approved list of the Association of American Colleges of the Middle States and Maryland.

We Are: A liberal arts college with a definite purpose of developing appreciation and creativeness in conformity with the best educational principles.

We Are: A school with high traditions in honor and morality."<sup>66</sup>

Wagner's mission statement showcases their desire to remain dedicated to their traditions while at the same time beginning to expand their educational goals and have the school accredited. They sought to infuse the practical liberal arts with their religious traditions and beliefs of cultivating the creative, ethical lifelong learner.

Wagner's President Clarence C. Stoughton, who served from 1935-1945, identified many characteristics that allowed the college to thrive in his Inaugural Address of November 1, 1935.

"Growth and flexibility of curriculum, first of all. I should like always to have Wagner keep abreast the needs of the church she serves and the community she serves, and to have the good sense and the ability to change her program to fit those needs....Wagner shall continue to reverence personality as she has in the past, that she will continue to put her emphasis upon individuality, that she will never cease remembering that a college ought to be run in the interest of the

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<sup>65</sup> Sheftall *Spelman: A Centennial*...68

<sup>66</sup> Wagner College. "Bulletin". April 1932

students...It follows from this that it is not our hope to built a great university. We are blessed, in this metropolis, with some of the great universities of the world. It would seem to me, this dream of another in this territory would have many of the elements of a pipe dream. But while we do not need more universities, we do need small liberal arts colleges, where personality remains sacred, where the student is always an individual, where his individuality is developed and emphasized.”<sup>67</sup>

Stoughton proclaimed when, how and why it is vital to make changes to curriculum and infrastructure in order to remain a successful institution. Stoughton recognizes how imperative it is to remain true to what the school’s original mission was but at the same time to adapt to the needs of the community and larger student body. His rhetoric and emphasis on nurturing the student in mind, body and spirit showcases the dedication Wagner has to fostering a liberal education. Further, Stoughton guided the school through a significant evolution. He outlined his vision for the building of a chemistry and biology building, the preparation of pre-medical, pre-dental, and pre-nursing students. He “readied the school for the wave of students who were to swell its full time enrollment from 250 in 1944 to 1,000 in 1948”<sup>68</sup>. He announced his dream of one day creating a library building, increasing the school’s endowment, and “that it is our plan and purpose that Wagner shall not only set in seal upon the diploma of its graduates, but upon each life as well.”<sup>69</sup> The emphasis on nurturing individuality shows the uniqueness of the liberal arts education in contrast to larger universities. Stoughton also discussed Wagner College’s desire to respect all religious denominations and differences by stating that “Wagner will continue to aim to make better Lutherans from those who are Lutherans, better Catholics from those who are Catholics, better Jews from its Jewish students, better Protestants, better men and women.”<sup>70</sup> This desire to create a multidominational institution to serve all the community’s needs and expand access to more individuals, including women and immigrates, highlights the growing civic mission of the school and the changing needs of the community and country.

His dreams for the future of the institution are clear and directly relate to the academic changes occurring on the campus including the creation of nursing program,

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<sup>67</sup> Stoughton, Clarence C. “Inaugural Address”. Wagner College. November 1, 1935: 8

<sup>68</sup> Rowen. *The Emerging Identity...27*

<sup>69</sup> Stoughton. “Inaugural Address...9

<sup>70</sup> Stoughton. “Inaugural Address... 9

the one-unit program, evening sessions, an on campus high school, the transition from teaching in German to English and an increased staff with stronger credentials.

The introduction of a nursing program occurred during the 1943-1944 school year that Stoughton believed addressed the importance of a humanitarian profession and the role the liberal arts education could have on that. Although many felt that a nursing program had no place at a liberal arts college, he strongly felt that “the human individual in the tradition and contents of arts and sciences can honestly be emphasized in education and training for the calling of nursing.”<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, a one-unit plan was established and implemented from 1943 to 1946 that allowed students to complete one course in a one month. This was typically three to four academic hours of work a week and was essential to those being drafted into or volunteering for World War II. Typically, draftees had a month’s notice prior to having to be inducted into the army. This program allowed them to complete as many courses as possible without having to drop out before the end of the semester and receive incompletes. “The course a month calendar permitted students the opportunity to complete a course and not have to lose most of a conventional semester. It appears that the nation’s need for nurses and health care professionals during the war may have also made the unit plan a viable educational response to care for human suffering and aid the survival of the country. The format of the unit plan enabled nursing students to complete a diploma course in just three years.” The first graduating class of nursing students, mainly women, consisted of forty-one students and was in 1946.

Additionally, the faculty grew in size from the 1930s to 1940s with many earning their doctorates and “evening session enrollment expanded from twenty in 1944 to three hundred and ninety in 1946...”<sup>72</sup> The evening session course offerings had started in 1933 to “serve the needs of community residents who could not attend the day session. The additional students...gave strength to the school financially and helped publicize it in Staten Island.”<sup>73</sup> Also summer sessions began in 1935 to help the school financially. This showcases how the institution truly addressed the students’ needs and sought to increase their endowment. Lastly, layman, including Clarence Stoughton, Walter Langsam, and David Delo, who had typically provided ministerial training for the students, also began to assume administrative roles by 1936 and oversee the institutional goals, finances, academics, and record the school’s history. <sup>74</sup> Another innovative and

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<sup>71</sup> Rowen. *The Emerging Identity*...27

<sup>72</sup> Rowen. *The Emerging Identity*...31

<sup>73</sup> Hillila. *Wagner College Policy*...80-81

unique curriculum change as described in a June 1933 Wagner College Bulletin was college seniors majoring in education learning how to teach at Curtis High School on Staten Island. These students practiced their teaching styles by teaching the high school students and were exposed to an early form of experiential learning that provided them with a hands-on example.

A final curriculum change for Wagner College was the transition from German to English. Originally, Wagner sought to educate and train German-speaking students to become Lutheran ministers. However by the 1930s, their mission had changed. “As the constituency itself changed, the needs of that constituency evolved into different patterns. Wagner gradually became a bi-lingual institution, with English on an equal footing with German. Finally, English became the only language of instruction, with German taught simply as one of the foreign language subjects.”<sup>75</sup> It also has been noted by Hillila that a group of English speaking churches left the German speaking New York Ministerium and formed their own synod. However, after the language change at Wagner to English, this new synod began financially supporting the college, which showcases one benefit from the language change. Additionally, after fighting World War I against Germany, “the climate of opinion was much more favorable for giving up the German pattern of educational organization as well as the German language.”<sup>76</sup> This shows the shift of Wagner into a truly American college. There was also no longer a great need for German speaking ministers in the community by 1918 so to address the larger English speaking Wagner student body, faculty relaxed the language requirements in the curriculum.

Spelman College also had some major academic shifts in the interwar years that highlight this school’s new identity in society. Under the leadership of President Florence M. Read from 1927 to 1953, Spelman began to redefine its previous focus on vocational training through the Home Economics, the Normal Department for teacher preparation, and Nursing Department to a stronger emphasis on the liberal arts. Read once said

“in planning curriculum, it is possible to emphasize features that relate to the general principles and conditions and also specifically to the life of women...much attention is given to manners and much attend is given to character in the women’s colleges...community and church work come more easily to them afterward if they have a background of teamwork with other

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<sup>74</sup> Hillila. *Wagner College Policy*...80

<sup>75</sup> Hillila. *Wagner College Policy*...76

<sup>76</sup> Hillila. *Wagner College Policy*...78

women in the college...the women's college is fitted by tradition and by circumstances to accomplish this highly complicated task of developing the well-rounded person...the traditional women's college is a place where culture and all that it implies are an inherent part of the educational process.”<sup>77</sup>

It is evident that Read saw the importance and great potential of women's colleges in providing females with a sound education that taught them the skills, dispositions, and intellect needed to live and work in the world. To further expand the schools liberal arts mission, the Nursing Program and the local elementary school on campus were discontinued in 1927. This may have been to encourage female African American students to enroll in vocations like teaching that would secure them with better jobs versus nursing where they often would be forced to work in unsanitary hospitals and would easily get sick. By 1930, the high school was also discontinued. All discontinued programs were due to low enrollment, financial difficulties and inadequate space and facilities. “...the aim of Spelman College was to provide a first-rate liberal arts education to a small number of students that would be equal to that available elsewhere. To achieve this goal, additional college courses in the humanities, fine arts, social sciences, and natural sciences were established and the college faculty increased.”<sup>78</sup> From 1901 to 1927, Spelman only granted 62 bachelors degrees, which the administration sought to change.<sup>79</sup> They began to focus on the quality of the liberal arts and added courses in history, philosophy and mathematics to their academic catalogue.

“Lectures, addresses and chapel talks brought Spelman students and teachers mental stimulus and made connections with the world at large.”<sup>80</sup> This was perhaps Florence Read's greatest contribution to the school by the legacy she left behind of wonderful guests that she had come speak and motivate her students. “These were scholars...scientists and explorers...lecturers and authors...and musicians. She was indeed wise because she not bid us enter the house of her wisdom, but rather led us to the threshold of our own minds.”<sup>81</sup> This often helped to bridge the gap between the school setting and real world and helped students expand their horizons. In addition, a student

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<sup>77</sup> Sheftall. *Spelman: A Centennial*...48-49

<sup>78</sup> Sheftall. *Spelman: A Centennial*...51

<sup>79</sup> Read, Florence Matilda. *The Story of Spelman College*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961): 210

<sup>80</sup> Read. *The Story of Spelman*...223

<sup>81</sup> Sheftall *Spelman: A Centennial*...68

publication called the Campus Mirror started in 1924 that helped students voice their concerns about the school.

Additionally, Spelman began to collaborate with Morehouse College, which allowed faculty and the teaching staff to strengthen and increase.

“In 1928-29, three members of the faculty were employed jointly by the two colleges. There were additional exchanges of teachers. Courses at Spelman College opened to election by Morehouse juniors and seniors and courses at Morehouse College opened to election by Spelman juniors and seniors enriched the offerings of both colleges. Thoroughness in academic work was emphasized throughout. The Summer School was operated jointly by Morehouse and Spelman, with Atlanta University affiliated.”<sup>82</sup>

This partnership eventually evolved into a higher education consortium between Spelman College, Morehouse College, and Atlanta University for African American students. In addition, Clark University and Morris Brown University were later accepted into the affiliation, which was renamed the Atlanta University Charter. The schools sought to educate African Americans and struggled to raise funds for operation and endowments. They sought to become an affiliate through the university plan where Spelman and Morehouse would “retain their own boards of trustees and offers and managements”<sup>83</sup> and Atlanta University would be reorganized to include three faculty members from both Spelman and Morehouse. These schools effectively worked together and began to again redefine their purposes: “Spelman retained its identity as a liberal arts college for women, Morehouse continued as a liberal arts college for men, and Atlanta University dropped its undergraduate courses and concentrated its efforts on developing its graduate and professional departments.”<sup>84</sup>

Another major curriculum change during the interwar period was the creation of a Nursery School at Spelman in 1930. Administration saw the need for a school for women that specifically trained and prepared them for motherhood. “...it had the distinction of being the first school of its kind established at a black or women’s college.”<sup>85</sup> Child development, caring for and teaching elementary children, and other skills were taught in the school. Most importantly, “the school served as a training center for parents;

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<sup>82</sup> Read. *The Story of Spelman...* 219

<sup>83</sup> Read. *The Story of Spelman...* 233

<sup>84</sup> Guy-Sheftall, Beverly. *Spelman: A Centennial Celebration...* 51

<sup>85</sup> Sheftall *Spelman: A Centennial...* 53



a practice field for college students interested in professions dealing with young children; a research site for graduate students in education, home economics, and psychology; and an observation center for those interested in the care and training of young children.”<sup>86</sup> The school was used as a federal model for its innovative approach to teaching students about pre-school education and helped expand knowledge about child psychology and child development.

A final particularly important change after the interwar period is the GI Bill of 1944 that granted World War II veteran’s benefits for higher education. By 1950, there were massive increases in the number of students attending public colleges where enrollment was split evenly between public and private institutions.<sup>87</sup> The interwar period helped to lay the foundation for this boom as it set in motion the civic and democratic mission for many liberal arts colleges.

## **VII. Conclusion**

Today both Wagner College and Spelman College have expanded their missions of leadership, civic engagement, the importance of tradition and culture, as well as their willingness to always redesign and redefine the school and curriculum to the needs of their twenty first century students and the world at large. The Wagner College Plan for the Practical Liberal Arts and Center for Leadership and Engagement, including their IMPACT Scholars Program, have encouraged students to learn by doing and become civically engaged agents of change in their communities. The Spelman College Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement or LEADS Program, which stands for leadership, economic empowerment, advocacy in the arts, dialogue across differences and service learning, have helped generate open minded and empathetic students ready to be part of their global world. Lastly, both schools are part of the prestigious Bonner Networks that encourage students to complete hundreds of hours of community service and evolve into professional experts on various fields of community work that can ultimately advocate for change and on the behalf of those who are often not heard. These examples showcase how both of these schools have adapted their missions even further to address our need today for strong leaders willing to face the difficult issues in our world that are often ignored and assist the people in our society that are often forgotten.

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<sup>86</sup> Sheftall *Spelman: A Centennial*...53

<sup>87</sup> Thelin. “*History of American* ...322

Through exploring the rise of the liberal arts college, it is clear that these institutions started with an uncertain purpose and place in American society, especially as the United States became a more democratic nation and had to redefine what it expected of its youth. As the nineteenth century progressed, the Civil War, Reconstruction era, and massive immigration again redefined the purpose of our colleges as church schools that sought to preserve tradition and maintain religious integrity associated with each college’s respective denominations. By the twentieth century, colleges began to expand and adapt their mission statements to fit the pressing needs in American society and face the struggles of competing with the new university structure. During the interwar period, a variety of factors led to a rethinking mission and curriculum of liberal arts colleges. The most important of these factors were: economic hardships from the Great Depression, new sources of philanthropy, wartime drafts and increasing demand for higher education, and what some saw as the looming threat of communism.

Ultimately, these institutions of higher education effectively modified their curriculum, mission statements, structure, and expectations to connect with what American society needed its students to evolve into—democratically oriented, politically consciously morally motivated, and intellectually curious agents of change able to give back to their community and lead. Wagner College and Spelman College stood out as two private four-year liberal arts colleges that have been able to flourish despite these many challenges and emerge as stronger institutions with a more defined purpose and better able to meet the demands of an increasingly democratic and global world.

This is the true purpose of our education: learning how to break down our own psychological barriers and really examine our ignorance. As Socrates once said, “the unexamined life is not worth living.” We must learn how to grow from our biases and develop a new type of knowledge from it. We must examine our opinions to understand how they form the basis for the way in which we live. Through truly examining these things, we are able to grow as leaders ready to make a change in society and be part of the global world. By taking action in our learning pursuits and constantly reflecting on our thoughts, we are able to evolve into noble individuals seeking our own unique definition of happiness.

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## **Sin, Shame, and Maidenhead: Analysis of John Donne's "The Flea"**

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John Donne has created ingenious wit tangled with blatant sexual connotations and other double meanings in his eloquent poem, "The Flea." Donne never directly mentions sex, but employs erotic language and persuasive thoughts all while discussing a simple bug: the flea. The speaker poses a clever argument in an attempt to seduce the idealized woman. The rhyme scheme "aabbccddd" is carried through three stanzas, where Donne not only utilizes his words to portray the story, but also the blank space between each stanza. Through the combination between the use of the white space and Petrarchan conventions—that are skillfully reconstructed—Donne creates a satirical seduction poem. Through the Petrarchan conventions such as military imagery, an unwilling woman, her beauty, and the conflict of love, he further constructs the ultimate purpose of the poem: the man's pitiful attempt at using a flea to convince a woman to have sex with him. Donne demonstrates the man's dedication to seduce an unwilling woman while demeaning her values of Christianity and chastity. A thorough analysis of the poem yields an understanding of the woman's gestures and the importance of her role which contextualizes the Petrarchan attitudes and conventions in "The Flea."

The poem opens with the speaker acknowledging the flea that will carry the argument he plans to make in order to seduce the woman. The speaker states, "Mark but this flea, and mark in this/ How little that which though deniest me" (1-2) to have her not only acknowledge the flea's presence, but also to acknowledge her lack of attention to the speaker. The second line "immediately establishes the woman's refusal to grant the man's wishes to fulfill his sexual desires" which thoroughly disappoints the speaker (Adney 3). Her lack of concern for his feeling of deprivation makes the speaker feel as though he must seize the opportunity that the flea has presented. "It sucked me first, and now sucks thee" (3) explains the speaker, "And in this flea, our two bloods mingled be" (4) so therefore, we might as well have sex. In modern society, this makes little sense. However, in Renaissance times, it was believed that blood was mixed during sexual intercourse (Perrine 5). Thus, because their blood is already mixed inside the flea, the

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<sup>1</sup> Written under the direction of Dr. Ann Hurley for EN304: *Early Modern Literature*.

speaker feels that they should consecrate it with the physical act. Furthermore, this line repeats the word “suck” twice, drawing attention toward the sexual word. The speaker uses this language of pleasure to remind the woman of exactly what he is seeking, but in the following line he is aware of her apprehension about acting out sinfully. The woman’s only desire is in her need to uphold her power and keep her virginity—not quite the desire the speaker seeks.

As the speaker notices her continued resistance, he attempts to persuade her in line six by stating that this sexual act would not be “A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead” and hopes to reassure her with such a convincing remark. The speaker “indicates that she is a virgin and wishes to preserve her virginity until she can surrender it without sin” (Perrine 5). The woman plans to defend her honor and in doing so, she will not have sex until she is in wedlock. The speaker’s reassurance that this act would not be a sin is not the least bit of interest to her since she is aware of his ploy to seduce her. It is also noteworthy that the speaker intentionally uses the word “nor” to imply that it is not either of the three, when in fact, it would be sin, shame *and* maidenhead if she were to have sex with him. She maintains her power and ignores his pleas while he complains that the flea has enjoyed more of her than he has. The flea has sucked both his blood and her blood and enjoyed the sucking, while the speaker wishes he could suck her himself. As the speaker contemplates his jealousy in all the sucking the flea enjoys, he realizes that the flea’s enjoyment in sucking was unwarranted, “before it woo” (7). Between his jealousy and the sexual language of sucking, the poem takes a further turn toward the physical. The sexual language escalates from sucking into words such as “pampered” and “swells” in line eight. Because it “swells with one blood made of two,” the speaker may be implying a pregnancy, or more obviously, an erect penis. Assuming that the swelling refers to the speaker’s erection, he complains in line nine that “this, alas, is more than we would do” and begins to realize his argument is not strong enough.

To strengthen his argument and hope that they do “more,” he interprets the swelling as a pregnancy in the first line of the second stanza. The speaker reiterates the concept of “three lives in one” (10). Not only is he asking for the three lives to “stay” as she moves to crush the flea, but he also recognizes the three lives at risk and their relationship. As the speaker realizes the concept of three lives meaning pregnancy, he chooses to expand on this seemingly brilliant idea by stating that they are essentially already married within the flea (11). In the following lines, the flea becomes a symbol for their marriage as he explains “this flea is you and I, and this/ Our marriage, and marriage temples is” (12-13). He assumes marriage because their blood has already “mingled” and

things are beginning to “swell,” so marriage is the logical next step. The speaker also assumes that if he can convince the lady that they are married within the flea, she may be more likely to submit to his desires, give up her virginity, and not feel such guilt from what she perceives as sin. However, her actions must imply she is not buying into his analogy because the speaker then states, “Though parents grudge, and you, w’are met,/And cloistered in these living walls of jet” (14-15). He addresses the concern that though her parents may resent this idea, along with her, their blood has “mingled” and they have been united inside this flea. The imagery in line fifteen is dark. The concept of living inside the dark, living body of a flea, is far from the romance that should be implied with a marriage. It is also far from the analogy needed to persuade her or her parents. In the lines that follow, the speaker addresses his concern that she still wants to kill the flea. As a result, he attempts to persuade her not to kill the flea because, he argues, it represents three lives. He acknowledges that although she wishes to kill him, if she does so, she is also killing herself in the flea, because their blood is mixed (16-17). As if she were not convinced by the idea of murder and suicide in killing the flea, the speaker informs her that it would also be “sacrilege, three sins in killing three” (18). The third sin is sacrilege because the “three in one” that has been carried throughout the stanza is also symbolic of the trinity. Her desire to squish and kill the trinity would indeed be “sacrilege.” By the end of the second stanza, the speaker has tried everything he could in his attempt to seduce her. He thus concludes the stanza by informing her that killing the flea would result in three deaths placing three sins on her hands and conscience.

To his dismay, the woman acts regardless of his warnings, and squishes the flea between the second and third stanzas. “The flea and the argument are both pests...and she moves to crush them” in that white space (DiPasquale 177). In killing the flea, she also kills his argument which makes this action that much more defeating for the speaker. He immediately calls out to her, “Cruel and sudden, hast thou since/Purpled thy nail, in blood of innocence” (19-20). He cannot understand how quickly her actions have turned “cruel” and how she could possibly have killed such an innocent flea. Not only did she kill an innocent bug, but it is implied that she also crushed their innocent love that was contained within that flea. Their love is so innocent because he had not succeeded in seducing her and taking her virginity. In the next line, the speaker questions how the flea could have possibly deserved such a death. He explains that the flea’s only guilt is “in that drop, which is sucked from thee” when the flea first bit her (22).

The speaker questions why the woman seems perfectly content with her actions and sees no wrong in killing it. He also points out that she does not feel any “weaker” now that she has crushed the flea and his argument, so he begins to question his own feelings. They are no more worse off than they had been prior to her “purpling” her nail. When the speaker realizes her reaction and the lack of remorse she feels for killing the innocent flea, he refuses to show his own affliction. Rather, he pretends that he never truly cared to seduce her and was in no way affected by her actions and refusal. With his last lines, “’Tis true; then learn how false, fears be; / Just so much honor, when thou yield’st to me, / Will waste, as this flea’s death took life from thee” (25-27), he attempts to make her refusal seem trivial. He acknowledges that his worries were “false” because he is not truly affected by any of this, nor is she, and thus, attempts to deflect her triumph. Instead, he chooses to tell her that he was honored to have met her, but unfortunately when she killed the flea, she killed the desire he had to seduce her. Unlike a typical Petrarchan lyric where either the female submits to the male lover or the male lover walks away broken hearted, Donne’s poem leaves the woman in power without having said a word, and leaves the man claiming to be unfazed by the actions that took place—very unconventional.

The power of the woman without words is a critical aspect of this poem. Donne utilizes her lack of words to allow reading between the lines, literally, and the chance to interpret what happens in the white spaces between the stanzas. Many critics have construed Donne’s use of this wordless woman as misogynistic. However, “a closer reading of this poem also yields readers with the possibility that through the monologue, Donne is actually flattering women” (Adney 3). By allowing a woman with no words to outsmart a man’s attempt to seduce her, Donne is complimenting the power and intelligence of women. His use of this atypical demonstration shows that he believes that women do not need words in order to maintain power and have their “voice” heard. Although the woman in “The Flea” was not given words of her own, she has a strong presence in the poem. In many of Donne’s poems, “the women steer the action of the poems—they have power—and this power was assigned them by [Donne]” (Adney 9). This reiterates the conclusion that Donne thought a woman to be sufficiently intelligent, not only to outsmart the typical male seducer, but also to stand her ground and maintain power. He realized that the woman does not need words to have such a strong role in the poem, and ultimately has more power with single gestures that are found between the stanzas. Theresa DiPasquale addresses this white space by explaining that Donne “assigns a given set of responses to the lady in the white spaces between the stanzas



and—in doing so—sets up the shifting strategies the speaker makes in response to ‘her’” (DiPasquale 175). Between the second and third stanza of the poem, Donne not only makes a shift in tone and plot, but he also implements the use of the “interruptive gesture” (Hurley 78). This gesture is used by the woman between the stanzas, in the white space, to interrupt the man’s attempt to seduce her and shut down his argument.

The woman’s gesture to shut down his seduction attempt does not stop the speaker. The male continues his endeavor to persuade through the second stanza and then “with one quick stroke of her finger she has indeed thoroughly discredited the young man’s ‘logic’” (Perrine 6). When the woman crushes the flea with her finger nail, she is also crushing his argument. Donne uses this to show that the woman does not even need a single word in order to shut down the man’s request for sex. In squishing the flea, she kills any hope the speaker had in persuading her. Furthermore, by killing the flea “she establishes herself as a worthy adversary, not simply a passive recipient” (Hurley 78). Up until this point, the woman has listened to the speaker, but without her words, one can only guess her actions based on the speaker’s words. In between the first and second stanza, she does seem to make an attempt to kill the flea because from there, the speaker strengthens his persuasion by explaining the “three lives in one.” By the time the speaker completes the second stanza, the woman has had quite enough and in addition to crushing the flea and his argument, she also establishes a position of power. She challenges the man by squishing the flea and causes the third stanza to differ greatly from the prior two. Now that the woman has deemed herself successful in shutting down the speaker’s argument, he attempts to turn the situation around and act as though he does not care. The combination between the power of the woman without words and the actions of the speaker following the gesture help Donne’s “The Flea” differ from that of other Petrarchan poets like Sir Philip Sidney and Sir Thomas Wyatt.

The power of the woman without words and her use of the gesture are unlike the typical Petrarchan woman. “Donne’s lady in ‘The Flea’ signals by her gesture that she was never the decorously Petrarchan ‘lady’ but someone clever enough to see where the argument was headed and to give a witty twist to it by joining in” (Hurley 79). Many literary critics agree that the woman is not the typical Petrarchan woman because of her actions in the white spaces between the stanzas. Her ability to control the argument, end the argument, with one flick of her nail, steers the direction of the poem and places the power in her hands—the antithesis of Petrarchan convention. Petrarchan women were usually the passive recipients of the male’s words and tended to submit to the ploy for sex near the end. However, Donne’s women take part in the construction of witty sexual

humor. According to Helen Gardner, Donne “remained a Petrarchist to some extent, this due to the fact that, no matter how strong one’s personal reaction is, one cannot avoid belonging to a definite historical climate” (Gardner 71). Although John Donne breaks the mold of the typical Petrarchan poem, he still wrote his poems during the time of other Petrarchists. Therefore, his poems still follow some of the Petrarchan ideal, but with a “Donne twist.”

Upon first glance, Donne’s poem mimics some Petrarchan conventions; however, when reading more closely, one may find the poem more anti-Petrarchan. Donne takes Petrarchan conventions and adapts them to suit his poems, and many times completely inverts the ideas of Petrarch, like in the role of the woman. Although the woman in this poem is unwilling to consummate the relationship, as in other Petrarchan works, the fact that this unwilling woman remains an unwilling woman makes her anti-Petrarchan. Even without speaking a word throughout the poem, she maintains her superior power and virginity till the final line and never gives in to the speaker’s attempt at sexual love. The combination of this anti-Petrarchan lady, the unusual metaphor, and the other Petrarchan conventions that Donne has masterfully warped, portrays the wordless woman’s ultimate refusal to forfeit her virginity to the male seducer which poses the idea that John Donne’s “The Flea” is both witty and seducing, as well as anti-Petrarchan.

Donne objected to some Petrarchan conventions, so even though he wrote within their time period, he chose to make his works more anti-Petrarchan. In order to understand Donne's take on Petrarchan love poetry and his wit in presenting it, it is necessary to understand the concepts that Petrarch used. “Donne expects his reader to be familiar with some of the stock imagery of Petrarchan love poetry and to be struck by the novelty in his treatment of the standard poetic propositions that a love affair is war” (Clements 203). In the love poetry, the love affair presented always appears as “war” in the sense that they are on a battle field where the male is fighting for the woman’s attention or acceptance to his proposal. In addition to the subject of love, Donne borrows his themes from Petrarch before making his own twist and creating an anti-Petrarchan poem. For example, the theme of the unwilling woman is used by Donne; rather than having the woman giving in or feeling sorrow at the end, he creates a woman who has just as much wit as the speaker. Likewise, rather than the speaker feeling sorrow about the rejection, he attempts to flip the argument and appear unfazed by her refusal. Donald Guss reiterates this notion and explains that many of Donne’s poems share the belief that “Petrarchan love is the least efficient manner in which to win a woman; that love exists

only where it is returned” (Guss 50). Donne enjoys mocking the concept of unrequited love by having the speaker use a flea to symbolize love and using the flea bite as an expressway to sex. Rather than using flowers or a spring day, Donne uses an extremely unconventional approach and chooses a bug that sucks blood.

Aside from this 'super romantic' concept, Donne uses his wit to twist Petrarchan conventions. “Donne uses an accepted Petrarchan ideal as a springboard for his own witty exploration of its significance” and in turn creates many poems that can be interpreted as anti-Petrarchan (Ruffo-Fiore 401). Uniquely, Donne not only uses the pieces of Petrarch that he is historically stuck in and that have value, but also uses a witty satirical approach to set himself apart from the Petrarchan poets of his time. The idea of using Petrarchan conventions as a “springboard” for Donne is ultimately what makes his work so witty and entertaining. He uses the springboard, and in making his jump, flips many of Petrarch’s ideas making “The Flea” more of an anti-Petrarchan poem. DiPasquale comments that this is only one way in which to read the poem: “The first is an anti-Petrarchan, libertine reading, based upon the principles of radical iconoclasm; the second is a response rooted in an English Protestant semiotic, and finds in the speaker’s signs and gestures an invitation to genuine erotic communion” (DiPasquale 176). Having each of these “readings” within the same poem causes them to overlap, but it is clear that there is a level of indulgence in Donne’s work as well as the obvious religious symbolism. The libertine reading is anti-Petrarchan, but Donne broke from Petrarch because he disagreed with his take on religion, making the second reading also anti-Petrarchan. Although on the surface Donne seems to adopt some Petrarchan ideas such as subject of love and the theme of the unwilling woman, many literary critics agree that Donne has transformed Petrarchan conventions with his wit to create an innovative poem in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

One of the most unconventional concepts within “The Flea” is the flea itself. The fact that Donne has the speaker use a flea in an attempt to seduce the woman sets Donne’s poem in an entirely different category, which has been argued, is anti-Petrarchan. In *Desiring Donne*, Ben Saunders explains that the internal logic of “The Flea” implies that “bullshit is the *only* thing that will persuade, where other more sincere forms of argument, exhortation, and protestation have failed” (Saunders 150). He also believes that Donne was successful because readers actually enjoy “bullshit.” Saunders is referring to the concept of the flea, and that because it is so outlandish it appears as “bullshit.” This plays on the idea that Petrarch tried to use the other forms such as a sincere argument in his poems, and that approach proved unsuccessful. As a result, Donne chose to mock that and use a flea to seduce a woman, and this has been interpreted

as enjoyable “bullshit.” Saunders believe that readers enjoy this explains why Donne has reached such popularity. With his ingenious wit interweaving through sexual connotations, Donne portrays a skillfully written anti- Petrarchan poem that gives power to the woman without words. He helps the speaker to pose a clever argument centered around a simple flea in order to persuade her to have sex. Without any words, the woman utilizes the blank space between stanzas to implement the “interruptive gesture” and crush the speaker’s hope within that flea. Donne’s brilliance in never actually mentioning sex allows his readers to enjoy reading his poem with many interpretations. Whether some read and see the Petrarchan surface, or read between the lines—literally—they will find a skillfully reconstructed seduction poem filled with wit and double meanings.

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## **Inventing Asexuality: Building Visibility for the “Fourth Orientation”**

Carly Schmidt (Art and Art History)<sup>1</sup>

The first thing people always ask when I tell them I’m asexual is whether or not I bud. If they cut off my arm, could they grow another me? Once they are assured that I am, in fact, human their next question is some variation of “I’ve never heard of that, what is it?” Asexuality means different things to different people, but the most general definition is a sexual orientation wherein the individual does not experience sexual attraction to anyone regardless of gender (Brotto et al., 2010). One of the most well-known studies of asexuality, done by Anthony Bogaert (2004), suggests that about one percent of the population is asexual. Despite this fact, asexual visibility is not just low, it is practically non-existent. The appalling lack of recognition within popular media and society demands an increase in visibility for those who identify as asexual. It has become necessary for members of the asexual community to take it upon themselves to invent their identity.

One of the most important things to keep in mind when defining asexuality is the distinction between asexuality and celibacy. Celibacy, unlike asexuality, is a choice. Someone who is celibate has chosen not to engage in sexual activity for whatever reason, but this does not mean that he or she does not have any sexual desire (Scherrer, 2008). In addition, not all asexuals are celibate. There are a wide variety of reasons that asexuals may engage in sexual activity. Many asexuals have sex before coming to terms with their identity in an attempt to “fix” themselves or because they think their disinterest in sex stems from a lack of experience. Others are in romantic relationships with non-asexuals and have sex as a compromise or to please their partner (Bogaert, 2004). Still more engage frequently in masturbation. In fact, Brotto et al. (2010) found that 80 percent of male participants and 77 percent of female participants had masturbated. While this may be surprising to some unfamiliar with asexuality, it is important to remember that asexuals are as diverse as any other group of people.

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<sup>1</sup> Written under the direction of Drs. Eshleman and Ruff for the team-taught Intermediate Learning Community *Inventing Homosexuality*.

Another important variation among asexuals is their romantic orientation, a factor that is not often taken into account. Most people assume that all asexuals are also aromantic, or not interested in a romantic relationship. However, romantic relationships are not defined entirely by sex. Many asexuals are interested in platonic romantic relationships. They are either heteroromantic, homoromantic, or bi- or panromantic. These relationships include varying degrees of intimacy ranging from simple handholding or cuddling, all the way to intimate kissing or, in cases where the partner is not asexual, even sex on occasion. Because there is such variation here, it is difficult to come up with exact definitions for romantic orientations. What one person calls romance, another might call friendship (Scherrer, 2010). Bogaert (2004) found that 44 percent of asexual participants were currently in, or had at one time been in, long-term relationships or marriages.

Anthony Bogaert (2004) analyzed data from a national probability sample of British residents that was initially used to study sexually transmitted diseases. In a sample of 18,876 participants (7,989 males and 10,632 females) between the ages of 16 and 59, 57 males and 138 females responded that they had “never felt sexually attracted to anyone at all” (p. 281). Bogaert took the responses of these specific participants and collected them together in an attempt to learn more about the demographics of the asexual community. Asexuals were more likely to be female than male, and older relative to sexual people. The asexual participants in this survey were more likely to be from a lower economic background, non-White individuals, and less well-educated relative to sexual participants. They were also more likely to have health issues, be shorter, weigh less, and be more religious relative to non-asexuals. As important as this study was, there has been so little research on the subject of asexuality that this study is often cited as definitive. In reality, we cannot know for sure the exact percentage of asexuals in society or whether these demographics trend to the asexual community beyond this sample. More studies are critically needed.

Many non-asexuals may hear the number of one percent and not think much of it. Surely one percent of the population is so insignificant a number that asexual visibility is neither necessary nor important. However, if we assume that the population of the Earth is about seven billion people, the estimated number of asexuals would still be a staggering 70 million people. This is hardly insignificant. In fact, out of the over 18,000 participants in the data set Bogaert (2004) analyzed, there were almost as many asexual people as homosexual and bisexual people combined. Although there were more gay and bisexual men than asexual men, there were more asexual women than gay and bisexual

women. So, while the asexual community may be somewhat small in comparison to certain groups, it is still significant and even larger than some, more well-known minority groups.

In another important survey, Kristen S. Scherrer (2008) drew upon one of the most important resources for the asexual community, the Asexual Visibility and Education Network (AVEN). AVEN was founded in 2001 by asexual David Jay. It has since become the largest online community for asexuals and is often the first website asexuals find when questioning their sexuality. Scherrer posted her survey on the AVEN forums in the hopes of reaching as many asexuals as possible. The survey employed open-ended questions and collected information about demographics, asexual identity, relationship status, physical health, and mental health. Asking what being asexual means to them, Scherrer received as many definitions as there were participants. One thing that carried over through every participant's answers, however, was the importance of the sense of community that places like AVEN give to asexuals. Scherrer found that most participants knew their entire lives that they were asexual, but until they stumbled across sites like AVEN, not only did they not know what to call themselves, they did not even know other asexuals existed. To these participants, discovering an asexual identity was an essential part of not feeling alone.

This issue of isolation is one of the most important facing questioning asexuals. Up to this point, the vast majority of research on low sexual desire has focused on hormone disorders or psychological issues such as such as Sexual Aversion Disorder and Hyposexual Desire Disorder. This can lead many questioning asexuals to believe that there is something wrong with them or that they are sick. Asexuality is becoming more and more accepted in the psychological community, but still lacks the acceptance afforded to more common sexual minorities such as homosexuals and bisexuals (Scherrer, 2008). As such, questioning asexuals who see therapists in an effort to find out why they don't feel sexual attraction are often told that they are simply undeveloped. Perhaps they just have not had enough experience. Maybe they have had too much experience! Certainly the patient must be repressing memories of past sexual abuse. There can of course be no other explanation! In a world where sexuality is assumed, it is no wonder that asexuals feel isolated or sick or somehow wrong (Bridgeman, 2007; Cerankowski & Milks, 2010).

Asexuals face more problems than just isolation and low visibility. Even when visibility is high, they must still face a great deal of negativity and discrimination. A shocking study recently found that heterosexual people were more likely to have a

negative opinion of asexuals, wanted less contact with them, and were even less likely to hire or rent an apartment to an asexual person, relative to other heterosexuals or even homosexuals. This same study found that asexuals were often described as “machine-like” or “animal-like” (Hodson, 2012). Asexuals are often bullied over their orientation, either for being a supposed prude or over the false assumption that because they are not attracted to the opposite sex, they must then be gay. In extreme cases, asexual women in particular are threatened or raped in an attempt to “fix” them or somehow change their mind about being asexual (Absolon & Dore, 2011).

This may not be surprising to some. For those heterosexuals who are already homophobic, it is not a far leap to be prejudiced against asexuals as well. If one is already going to hate one group for being different, one might as well hate them all (Hodson, 2012). Far more upsetting is the fact that many members of LGBTQ groups are also prejudiced against asexuals. In 2012 The Trevor Project, a prominent LGBTQ support community, added asexuality to its training materials for its suicide hotline. Unbelievably, there were many in the LGBTQ community who reacted negatively to this addition. Reactions ranged from thinking that asexuality was not a legitimate sexual orientation, to assuming that asexuality is just repressed homosexuality, to accusing asexuals of being homophobes. This post from a Tumblr user sums up some of the most horrifying accusations:

You think that girl is cute, but deep down, you can't imagine having sex with her? Well, it could be related to deeply ingrained social messages about how Gay sex is wrong, but let's just say you're Asexual instead! Here, you can platonically cuddle with this straight girl who doesn't like it when she's touched nonconsensually. What? What's “rape culture”? That's not a thing! There are plenty of bitches who love being randomly groped, TV told me so! See ya later, kids! Don't kill yourselves. (Landis, 2012)

Not only does this post ignore aromantic or heteroromantic asexuals, it actually goes so far as to assume that any asexual interested in platonic, non-sexual touching would be doing so without the consent of his or her partner! This type of thinking is not only wrong and prejudiced, but it is dangerous in that it could prevent suicidal asexuals from getting the help they need.

Obviously the only way to prevent isolation, prejudice, and misunderstanding within the asexual community is increased visibility. This means spreading the word to psychologists and medical professionals not to dismiss someone's identification as asexual just because there's a chance disinterest in sex could come from somewhere else.



It also means reaching out to media outlets and encouraging them to portray asexuals in popular movies and television not as a joke but as human beings. Communities like AVEN are attempting to spread the word through merchandise, pamphlets, marching in Pride parades, and having people like David Jay appear on talk shows and radio programs, but these steps are not enough (Cerankowski & Milks, 2010). We must all be more committed to spreading awareness about asexuality. There is no excuse for anyone to have to feel alone.

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# Those Who Never Retreated before the Clash of Spears: Motivations for Enlistment in the Irish Brigade in the United States Civil War

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The Irish Brigade suffered the third most casualties of any brigade in the Union Army during the Civil War. It did this while playing a vital role in several of the Union's most pivotal victories and suffered greatly during several of the worst defeats of the war. Why did so many of New York's Irish, who had been so ill treated by their neighbors, forced to take the worst of work and so generally distrusted that an entire political party

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<sup>1</sup> Written under the direction of Dr. Alison Smith for HI297: *The Historian as Detective: Exploring the City*.

had been formed to combat their influence, decide to enlist in such numbers? What drove them when “the leading Republican newspaper in the city at the time, had linked Catholicism... with slavery as two institutions incompatible with the spirit of the age, and liberty and civilization<sup>2</sup>”? There were five major reasons that men enlisted in the war. Proceeding from the most to the least idealistic they were: first, the desire to preserve the Union in order to fulfill a variety of other goals, second, to train the American Irish population to form the core of a future Irish Rebellion, third, to emulate the example of the European Irish Brigades under foreign service and the possible effects of an American Irish Brigade, fourth, to weaken the United Kingdom by destroying their ally in the Confederacy, and fifth because enlistment in the Union army allowed the Irish population to support their families in a manner that civilian life could not. Overall, they enlisted because enlistment was in their best interest, either because the aims of the war were beneficial to them or because of other incentives to enlist.

Sparked largely by the Irish Potato famine, the late 1840's and 1850's saw a massive influx of new Irish immigrants to America. There had been a large number of Irish immigrants early in the history of the American nation and in the colonial era. These early immigrants had almost exclusively been Scotch-Irish, that is to say Scottish farmers, originally transplanted into what would become Northern Ireland in order to pacify the region. They later emigrated to the American colonies, particularly the Appalachian region, due a poor economy in Ireland and discrimination based on their non- Anglican faiths in Ireland. They did see themselves as being, to an extent, Irish. Indeed, George McClellan, commander of the Army of the Potomac, on two separate occasions self-identified as Irish and was beloved of the Irish population but was of Scotch-Irish decent.

The new Irish immigrants in the 1840's were overwhelmingly poor, Catholic, and from rural areas, lacking in marketable skills. Additionally, unlike any group of immigrants who had come to America before them, these new Irish maintained strong emotional and political ties to their homeland. They perceived America as a haven but harbored hopes and dreams of returning home. Both the new immigrants' religion and their ties to their homeland unsettled the greater American population, with many Americans seeing Catholicism as incompatible with the ideals of the Republic. Americans viewed with distrust the Irish communities' ties to their homeland as a sign

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<sup>2</sup> Thomas J Carughwell, *The Greatest Brigade: How the Irish Brigade cleared the way to victory in the American Civil War* (Beverly Ma: Fair Winds Press, 2011), 23

that they would not or could not truly assimilate into American society. “Already facing ‘universal hostility’ and occasional violence from the native working class with whom they competed for jobs, the Irish found a more formidable enemy in the American Party or Know Nothings--a political movement of the 1850s that fed on Protestant America's fear of immigrants and foreign influence.<sup>3</sup>” The Know Nothing party competed with the Republican Party to fill the void left by the Whig party’s collapse. The party grew to great power in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, forcing the dissolution of Irish militia regiments in those states. Even after the Republican Party’s rise to power was completed, the nativist movement did not die. Many former Know- Nothing’s joined the Republican Party, leading to widespread distrust of that party by the Irish population.

The most powerful motivation for the new Irish to enlist at the outbreak of hostilities was the desire to preserve the Union for a variety of reasons. To the common Irishman, America represented hope for a better future. Ireland, as much as they loved it, was a hard land during the best of times, and the conditions during this period were far from ideal. The native population had been decimated by the Great Hunger and those who remained lived in abject poverty. America had taken them in when they were penniless and had allowed them to make new lives that, hard as they were, were far superior to what their lives would have been had they remained home. America represented the hope that their families back home could live comfortably, and could withstand poor harvests without the fear of losing all. Additionally, particularly for those Irishmen who advocated rebellion in Ireland, America was an example that they wished to emulate, a colony of Britain that had thrown off the foreign yoke and established a prosperous Republic. In 1847, the Irish political movement met to debate whether to renounce the use of violence to achieve their aims. Thomas Francis Meagher who would be the driving force behind the creation of the Irish Brigade as well as its commander for much of its history, evoked America in his ringing defense of the use of force. “Abhor the Sword? Stigmatize the sword? No, my lord, for at its blow, and in the quivering of its crimson light a giant nation sprang up from the waters of the Atlantic, and by its redeeming magic the fettered colony became a daring, free Republic.<sup>4</sup>” America was not only the example that men like Meagher wanted their native land to emulate, it was a

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<sup>3</sup> Craig A. Warren, *"Oh, God, What a Pity!": The Irish Brigade at Fredericksburg and the Creation of Myth*, In *The Irish Sword: The Journal of the Military History Society of Ireland*, 197

<sup>4</sup> Carughwell, 28

potential source of aid, but only once this crisis was over and her existence was assured. They felt that they:

“Could not hope to succeed in our effort to make Ireland a Republic without the moral and material aid of the liberty-loving citizens of these United States. That aid we might rely upon receiving at the proper time. But now, when all the thoughts, energies, and resources of this noble people are needed to preserve their own institutions from destruction—they cannot spare either sympathy, arms, or men, for any other cause.<sup>5</sup>”

To those men who greatly desired to see Ireland free, and there were many such men, the maintenance of the Union was of paramount importance. This was one of the primary motivations for enlistment both in the early days of the war and in the latter years of the war, as the casualty rates mounted and the support for the war waned.

Many of the members of the Fenian Brotherhood, a secret revolutionary organization founded in 1858 dedicated to the overthrow of British rule in Ireland and the establishment of a Republican government there, saw an opportunity in the early days of the war. When the war was only expected to last weeks or months at most, many of the Fenians hoped to use Irish combat veterans to remedy a major reason that prior Irish rebellions had failed, the lack of experienced men to form the core of a rebellion. Although there had been many Irishmen fighting in foreign Irish Brigades, they had never been used as part of a rebellion, that is to say that by the time news of an uprising reached the Continent it had usually already been crushed. The Fenian Brotherhood in America, now the only active Irish Republican organization, hoped to use the experience of war to create a core of battle-hardened men who could be of use to Ireland in a future insurrection. Given the future activities of the Fenian brotherhood, which included not only two separate attempts to invade Canada in order to trade it for Ireland’s freedom but also the first bombing campaign on British soil until the 1970’s, it seems likely that the Fenians themselves would be the ones provoking the insurrection. Ensuring that the Fenian veterans of the war would be able to take part. This motivation’s efficacy can be seen in the vast number of Fenians who enlisted in the Brigade, men who had dedicated themselves to attempting to overthrow the British rule in Ireland. “Some fifty Fenian circles or branches ceased to exist when all their members donned the blue<sup>6</sup>” in early

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<sup>5</sup> Michael Cavanaugh, *The Memoirs of General Thomas Francis Meagher* (Ireland, Messenger Press, 1892) 369 cited in Susannah Ural Bruce, ““Remember Your Country and Keep Up Its Credit”: Irish Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861-1865” *The Journal of Military History*, Vol 69

1861, when Britain's entry into the war seemed likely. Indeed, General Meagher himself held this view, going so far as to say "It is a moral certainty that many of our countrymen who enlist in this struggle for the maintenance of the Union will fall in the contest. . . . But, even so; I hold that if only one in ten of us come back when this war is over, the military experience gained by that one will be of more service in the fight for Ireland's freedom than would that of the entire ten as they are now."<sup>6</sup> However, this motivation waned more quickly than any other. Early on in the war there was overwhelming support among the Fenians of New York, but as the war dragged on and Irish casualties began to mount, splits in the movement began to emerge. Michael Corcoran, a devoted Union officer and leader of the Fenian Brotherhood, counseled his fellows that had not yet enlisted to not enlist as the casualties began to mount. For he feared that the war would destroy the brotherhood and leave them dead on southern fields. Following Corcoran's death in a riding accident, the movement's anti-war wing came to prominence, leading to a decline in Fenian support for the war.

A major reason that men enlisted in the Union Irish brigade was the tradition of the Wild Geese, Irishmen primarily from the western province of Connacht who had enlisted in foreign armies, in regiments and brigades that were fully Irish and under Irish officers. This tradition had begun following the Glorious Revolution, when James II of England was deposed by his son in law William of Orange. James's army surrendered in the city of Limerick. A provision in the Treaty of Limerick that ended the conflict stated, that anyone in James's army who wished to follow him into exile in France, as well as their dependents "shall have free leave to embark themselves wherever the ships are that are appointed to transport them"<sup>8</sup> as well as stating "The Roman Catholics of this kingdom [Ireland] shall enjoy such privileges in the exercise of their religion as are consistent with the laws of Ireland, or as they did enjoy in the reign of king Charles the second"<sup>9</sup> a provision that was broken shortly after the wars end. Many of the members of Charles's army took advantage of this article, creating a brigade in the French army that was made up solely of Irishmen. "The separate Irish Brigade remained in French service until it was disbanded in 1792 along with the French monarchy. Up to that time, the brigade fought in all of France's wars and, garbed in distinctive red coats, achieved

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<sup>6</sup> Joseph G Bilby, *Remember Fonetnoy!; the 69<sup>th</sup> New York and the Irish Brigade in the Civil War* (Hightstown NJ: Longstreet House, 1995), 29

<sup>7</sup> Cavanaugh, 369

<sup>8</sup> Treaty of Limerick <http://www.ucc.ie/celt/published/E703001-010/index.html>

<sup>9</sup> Treaty of Limerick

distinction on many fields.<sup>10</sup> Their example was emulated by Irish regiments in Spain, Austria and Russia, creating a tradition of men who would live in Europe but would often have wives and children back in Ireland. “More than mere mercenaries, these... Irishmen took the only opportunity afforded them out of grinding poverty and political and religious oppression. As elite troops in foreign lands they garnered more than their share of what passed for glory and what was indeed tragedy.<sup>11</sup>” Many of the recruiting posters for the regiments within the American Irish brigade referenced this tradition, often mentioning the Treaty of Limerick that had created the first Irish Brigade and the subsequent breaking of that treaty by the British. Many prominent figures in the Irish-American community, most prominently Meagher himself, felt that by creating an Irish Brigade, and through that brigade’s service and sacrifice the Union government would maintain that brigade following the war. Allowing the Irish back in Ireland the opportunity to enlist in the forces of a republic rather than in the service the British crown<sup>12</sup>. It was this desire that prompted Meagher to tender his resignation as commander of the brigade in 1863 when his requests for either the brigade or himself to be given leave to return to New York to recruit were denied. At this point the brigade was far understrength for one regiment, let alone five, “down to only a few hundred men<sup>13</sup>” in a brigade that should have been five thousand strong. During the Civil War the policy of the Union government was to fight out regiments and replace them with new ones raised at home, while Meagher wanted the Brigade to survive the war and hopefully be kept on in peacetime. Ultimately the Irish brigade, was temporarily dissolved in July of 1864, but by early 1865 sufficient replacements had been secured that the brigade could be reformed

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<sup>10</sup> Bilby, 145

<sup>11</sup> Bilby, 146

<sup>12</sup> By the 1860’s the Continental Irish Brigades had largely collapsed. The increased enforcement of laws preventing British citizens from enlisting and the repeal of laws preventing Catholics from taking up arms simultaneously made it more difficult for Irishmen to enlist in Foreign brigades and allowed for Catholics to enlist in the British army and take advantage of the economic benefits that enlistment offered. As a result, the stream of new recruits largely dried up by the 1740’s, although many of the units, notably the French brigade, had built up an expatriate community around them, allowing for the perpetuation of the unit through the children of its members. However, political changes in France and heavy casualties during the Napoleonic wars led to the dissolution of the Irish units in France and Spain, although Irish officers continued to serve in the armies of many Continental nations.

<sup>13</sup> Craughwell, 142

and take part in all of the battles in 1865, up to and including the surrender of Lee's army at Appomattox courthouse.

The desire to weaken England by removing a potential ally and by the same token punish the South for seceding, was a persistent motivation for Irish enlistment, particularly early in the war. The Southern Cotton industry was of great importance to England's textile industry which was central to the economy of the United Kingdom, although as the war went on cotton grown in Britain's colonies alleviated the loss of the southern crop. Should the Confederacy have prevailed and gained independence, it would have been almost solely dependent on Britain economically. The Confederacy grew cotton, but did not weave it, that was done in Northern or British factories. Following a Confederate victory, the northern factories would presumably be closed to southern cotton, giving Britain a great deal of influence over Southern policy. This would effectively grant them another colony to the south of the Union, allowing them a great deal of influence in North American affairs. Caught between two British-dominated lands, the Union would be vulnerable to British machinations, most pressingly to many Irish, the Union would be unable to aid Irish revolutionaries for fear of British reprisals, thus making a successful revolution even more difficult.

In the early years of the war, the UK acted in a manner more like an ally of the Confederacy than a neutral country. The main point of collaboration between the British and the Confederacy was the building of Confederate warships in British shipyards. The most famous example of such a ship was the CSS Alabama, built in a British shipyard in 1862 for an initial price of "£29,500<sup>14</sup>" followed by installment payments totaling £38,000. She sailed from Liverpool as a civilian vessel, headed for the Caribbean where "She took her armament and crew and most of her officers on board near Terceira, Western Islands<sup>15</sup>". In the Western Islands, she was commissioned as the Alabama and proceeded to raid Union shipping until her sinking off the coast of France in 1864. The willingness of the British to allow such construction was contrary to international law, resulting in a payment of over 15 million pounds from Britain to the United States in 1871 as recompense for damage caused by the Alabama and other British-built privateers. Additionally, following an American raid of the British mail steamer Trent in order to capture Confederate officials, the UK sent reinforcements to Canada, and drew

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<sup>14</sup> "C.S.S Alabama *A Virtual Exhibit*", Marshall University, accessed 4/15/2013  
[http://www.marshall.edu/library/speccoll/virtual\\_museum/css\\_alabama/#](http://www.marshall.edu/library/speccoll/virtual_museum/css_alabama/#)

<sup>15</sup> C.S.S Alabama *A Virtual Exhibit*



up plans to invade the US should war be declared. Around this time, recruiting posters issued by the 69<sup>th</sup> New York stated that “the cotton-lords and traitor-allies of England must be put down!”<sup>16</sup> Ultimately, cooler heads prevailed and war between Britain and the Union was averted. Following the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation, the threat of British involvement in the war on the side of the Confederacy was greatly lessened due to the staunchly abolitionist nature of British society at the time. This made entering the war on the side of the Confederacy politically dangerous to the ruling party. However, prior to the issuing of the Proclamation, a combination of British clandestine aid to the Confederacy, the close business ties between the Southern cotton industry and the British textile industry and Irish distrust of Britain- for at this point in history the Irish diaspora population could be relied upon to oppose anything that the British government was doing- served to drive enlistment into the Brigade.

All of these previous motivations, desire to preserve the Union, training for war with Britain, the Tradition of the Wild Geese and the desire to prevent Britain from gaining a southern ally, were strong, and some of them, particularly the desire to preserve the Union, persisted through the war. However, as the war dragged on, Irish support for the war declined. As early as 1862, recruitment for the Irish brigade waned now that “the public was now fully aware of the ghastly nature of the war, the civilian job market had improved and the minimal bounties offered recruits in the late summer of 1862 were not enough to tempt many men to risk their lives”<sup>17</sup> The battle of Antietam in late 1862 did not help matters, for in that battle “the Irish Brigade suffered five hundred and forty casualties, most during its frontal assault on the infamous Bloody Lane. The 63rd and 69th New York absorbed sixty percent casualties”<sup>18</sup> and their fellow regiments suffered similarly. Following the battle, General McClellan was relieved of his command, an unpopular move with the Irish community given his heritage and his reputation as a general who did not needlessly risk the lives of his men. He was replaced by General Ambrose Burnside, a non-Irish general, who proceeded to lead his army into a battle that would also heavily damage Irish support for the war, the Battle of Fredericksburg. In that battle, Burnside’s right flank was ordered to assault a Confederate position behind a stone wall. The result was a slaughter as the protected Confederate Left was able to fire without

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.historicalimagebank.com/gallery/main.php/v/album02/album22/album107/CWx17ds+-+69th+New+York+Regiment+Irish+Recruiting+Poster+copy.jpg.html>

<sup>17</sup> Bilby, 50

<sup>18</sup> Warren, 198-199

fear on the advancing Union forces, including the Irish brigade. The vast number of the dead and wounded was a major deterrent to enlistment to an Irish population that was beginning to attribute “the high volume of Irish casualties to nativist generals and politicians who viewed recent immigrants as ready-made cannon fodder<sup>19</sup>” before the battle of Antietam. The events of that battle and particularly the battle of Fredericksburg seemed proof of that view.

The last straw for mainstream Irish Catholic support for the war was the Emancipation Proclamation, provisionally issued by President Lincoln in the days following the battle of Antietam, taking effect on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1863. This fundamentally transformed the war, changing it from a war to preserve the Union into a war to free the slaves, a goal that a large portion of the Northern population and nearly all of the Irish community did not support. “Irishmen envisioned millions of former slaves rushing north to take unskilled labor opportunities from them. Under the Republicans, the Democratic Chicago Times warned, African Americans would ‘take the place of white laboring men<sup>20</sup>’”. Following the issuing of the Emancipation proclamation, Union victory would mean Irish defeat. In New York in 1855, a strike prompted by the lowering of the average wage of a longshoreman- a profession that was almost entirely Irish- from \$1.75 to \$1.50 per day was broken through the use of colored labor. Violence ensued but the city’s police intervened to protect the black workers. Eventually the strike was broken and the whites returned to work and in time most of the blacks were discharged, kept on only by those few employers taking the lead in lowering wages. In 1863, a strike was called in late January in response to the news that wages would be again cut, this time to \$1.12 per day. This, coupled with wartime price increases was too much for the longshoremen to bear. Again, members of the city’s free black community were called in to break the strike, this time protected by federal troops to ensure the continued flow of needed war material. The Irish population of New York in particular and of the North as a whole feared that this would be their future, exploitation at the hands of wealthy business men who could use the freedmen to break any strike the Irish called, thus permanently preventing them from bettering themselves. The Irish Catholic population lived on the razor’s edge, any negative event could well destroy them and the possible emancipation

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<sup>19</sup> Warren, 198

<sup>20</sup> Susannah Ural Bruce, *"Remember Your Country and Keep Up Its Credit": Irish Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861-1865*, In *The Journal of Military History*, Vol 69 343

of the slaves filled them with fear for their and their family's futures. They would still fight, but they no longer looked forward to victory as fervently as they once had.

Bounties had almost always been a part of recruitment into the Union, and to a lesser extent Confederate, armies. As the war dragged on, those bounties rose as it became more difficult to convince Northerners of all stripes to enlist voluntarily. In late 1862, bounties of between 120 and 170 dollars were being offered to men enlisting in either the Irish brigade, or its rival Irish brigade, Corcoran's Irish legion<sup>21</sup>, often with the first month's pay being offered up front. Although the wage for an enlisted man in the Union army was only 13 dollars per month, a slight pay decrease from what one could earn in the civilian job market back home, the stability of that pay coupled with the fact that the major expenses of life, food, shelter and clothing were provided by the military, added to the economic allure of enlistment. By late 1863, those bounties had been raised in some regiments by private citizens to up to 700 dollars.

However, despite these inducements, enlistment was not proceeding at a sufficient rate to replace those being killed or whose terms of enlistment were coming up. As a result, President Lincoln introduced the Conscription Act in order to ensure sufficient forces for the prosecution of the war. This bill was poorly received by the Northern population, as it would force men who did not support the war to fight in it. Additionally, a man could be paid 300 dollars if he were to enlist in the place of another. This exempted both men from being drafted, removed the risk to the poor man of being drafted and deprived of the bounties offered for enlistment, as well as of his choice of regiment. While this latter method did embitter some who saw the war as a rich man's war and a poor man's fight, it was never the less a sizable amount of money for men who often toiled for little more than a dollar per day. Even as the war became less and less popular among the Irish, the funds offered remained tempting, a way for a working man to provide for his family in a manner that he otherwise could not. Additionally, a combination of poor harvests and news of a growing Northern wartime economy had prompted many Irish to immigrate to New York, some specifically to enlist in the brigade, many doing so when they realized how difficult life in America actually was. For Irishmen newly arrived, even the modest bounties of 1862 would have been an unimaginable wealth. The bounties being offered at this later stage were massive, up to

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<sup>21</sup> Corcoran's Irish Legion Recruiting Poster <http://irishfest.com/Irish-Fest/Music-Archives/Exhibits/When-Johnny-Comes-Marching-Hom/CorcoransIrishLegion-Sarsfield.gif>

ten years wages back home. Additionally, the monthly pay of a Union soldier exceeded what they could have hoped to earn back home, providing further inducement to enlist. There was precedent for Irishmen to enlist in armies that were politically against their interests. Every province of Ireland had at least one regiment raised from it, with most of the provinces having several regiments that would have been almost wholly formed out of Irish Catholics. The Irish may have despised the British, but the fiscal benefits that enlistment offered and to an extent the reputation that the regiments gained through decades of service made enlistment a viable alternative to civilian life. A similar dynamic was in place in New York, the Irish population may have not agreed with the war's new aims or its prosecution, but the sheer amount of money offered made it difficult for many men to not enlist, particularly those at the very bottom of the social ladder, men whose ranks had been swelled by new Irish emigrants.

Additionally, the Irish Brigade, and in particular the 69<sup>th</sup> New York had gained a reputation for bravery that made enlistment a more attractive proposition. The 69<sup>th</sup> New York had such a reputation for valor that following General Lee's surrender at Appomattox, he remarked on the regiment's valor, referring to them as the Fighting 69<sup>th</sup>. Other elements of the Union army also respected the Irish Brigades reputation. "General George Armstrong Custer heard an Irish soldier singing Garryowen<sup>22</sup> and liked the galloping rhythm of the tune so much that after the war he made it the official song of the 7th Calvary<sup>23</sup>", supposedly his troops were singing Garryowen as they rode into history at Little Big Horn. Custer would not have made Garryowen the marching song of his command prior to the war, as the Irish were held in too low esteem. But, after serving with the Irish Brigade, Custer had a new appreciation for the Irish population allowing for him to appropriate their song for his own command.

The service of the Irish brigade had a major impact not only on the outcome of the war but on how their people were received by their fellow Americans in the post-war world. Prior to the war the Irish Catholic population was a marginalized population that was almost on the bottom of the social ladder with no real prospects for advancement. However, "the courage and sacrifice of the Irish Brigade during the Civil War helped diminish prevalent anti- Irish prejudice in America<sup>24</sup>". Just as General Custer held the Irish in higher esteem at the end of the war, to the point where he was able to take their

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<sup>22</sup> An Irish drinking song that had become the anthem of Irish regiments both in the British army and of the Irish Brigade as a whole

<sup>23</sup> Craughwell, 85

<sup>24</sup> Craughwell, 212

anthem for his own command following the war, so too did the population of the Union begin to respect the Irish Brigade for its valor, and by extension the population that the Brigade was drawn from. The Brigade was able to fight from the beginning to end of the war despite sustaining massive casualty rates because they were able to recruit successfully even during the darkest days of the war. The valor of the Brigade and the population that supported it finally convinced the American population that the Irish could be trusted, that they could in fact fully integrate into American society. The blood of the fallen paved the way for their fellows to rise above their menial state and take a full and active role in American society.

“Perhaps no class of our fellow citizens has carried this prejudice against color to a point more extreme and dangerous than have our Catholic Irish fellow citizens, and yet no people on the face of the earth have been more relentlessly persecuted and oppressed on account of race and religion, than the Irish people.<sup>25</sup>” This quote by Frederick Douglass perfectly describes the state of the Irish people before and indeed during, the Civil war. Almost universally they were opposed to black emancipation, opposed to the very cause that would come to define the war. At the same time that they so vehemently opposed black emancipation, they themselves were distrusted, disliked and despised by their neighbors in the North solely on the basis of their ethnicity and their religion. Despite this, they enlisted in droves to fight, keeping the Irish brigade alive until the end of the war in the face of casualty rates that were the third worst of any Brigade in the Union army. Ultimately, the Irish enlisted because of motivations “based fundamentally on what was most important to them and to their families, as both Irishmen and Americans... When the cause of Union complemented the desires and aspirations of the Irish American community, they supported the Northern war effort. When the interests of Irish America clashed with these goals, however, many Irishmen abandoned that cause.<sup>26</sup>” Throughout the war, those Irish who enlisted did so because they felt that doing so would advance whatever cause they felt most passionate about. Those who had dedicated their lives to the overthrow of English dominion in Ireland, like General Meagher, enlisted because they felt that by doing so would advance that aim. Either by preserving America as an example and ally, by depriving England of an ally in North America or by training men to fight so that they could be of use to Ireland. The

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<sup>25</sup> Frederick Douglass October 22, 1883 Speech at the Civil Rights Mass-Meeting Held at Lincoln Hall, <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=774>, Accessed 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2013

<sup>26</sup> Bruce, 359

common men fought out of gratitude to the Union for sheltering them but mainly, and nearly exclusively after the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation, because by fighting they could better their lives and those of their kin. Their valor on the battlefield is not diminished by the inglorious reasons for which they fought. These men fought, and fought well because they were not fighting for ideals but for people. Even the most idealistic of men fought for their kin, either in America or in Ireland. They fought to free their people, to better their lives and to make a place for themselves in a New World. For that cause, and for no other, they fought and far too often died.

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## Language Learning in *Room*

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Language is the most important aspect in the life of all sentient beings. Language is used to express inner thoughts and emotions, make sense of complex and abstract thought, communicate with others, and establish rules. The acquisition of language is what differentiates *Homo Sapiens* from all other species and makes them so advanced (Berger 129). Emma Donoghue’s remarkable novel, *Room*, is narrated by a 5-year-old boy named Jack who lives in a single 11-by-11 foot room and who has never been to the outside world (Bender 2010). Due to being held in captivity by Old Nick for years, along with his mother, one might think that Jack would suffer linguistically from lack of exposure to language. Because of his mother’s education, however, and the word games she invents for him, that is not the case.

On the very first page, the book opens up with Jack questioning his mother on his fifth birthday to see if he was minus numbers before he was born. Through the conversation that Jack has with his Ma about himself before birth, it becomes apparent that Jack is a curious kid who likes to learn and has quite a bit of knowledge, since he knows that he came from his mother’s egg and has heard about Heaven (3). Jack’s intellect is further displayed in the novel when he mentions the name of all 5 paintings on the walls of Room: “Great Masterpieces of Western Art No. 3: The Virgin and Child with St. Anne and St. John the Baptist... “Great Masterpieces of Western Art No. 11: Guernica” (5). He not only knows the names of these paintings, but also has a lot of knowledge about them. Jack briefly speaks about the scene of the horse from the painting “Guernica” while he is searching for a candle for his birthday cake (21). He seems to know many details about the paintings, which is important because it informs the reader that Jack is a smart, intellectual kid. This is especially important once the audience becomes aware of the fact that Jack has never been in contact with the outside world, and has been confined to a single room with only his mother for contact throughout his life. It is astonishing to see that regardless of the situation, Jack knows how to communicate

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<sup>1</sup> Written under the direction of Dr. Marilyn Kiss and Dr. Carolyn Oglio for the team-taught Intermediate Learning Community *Children: Psychology, Film and Literature*.



very efficiently and knows names of things such as the paintings, and is also capable of describing them.

Since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, there has always been an interest in cases of children reared in environments of extreme social isolation. In previous real-life scenarios involving the children, Genie and Victor, who were both feral children isolated from people, it was discovered that both these kids had not acquired their first language. This was an important finding for the psychologists, linguists, and other scientists who then worked with these children in separate eras to gain further insight into the processes controlling language acquisition skills and linguistic development. When the researchers worked with Genie, they determined that Genie had not yet acquired language and was thus faced with the task of first-language acquisition that is normally completed before age five. The researchers tried different techniques such as reading Genie a story, using tests and games, using non-language cues and speaking directly to her to try to establish Genie's comprehension of language and increase her linguistic abilities (Curtis et al., 1974). Thus, it was surprising to see that although Jack was also victim of extreme social isolation, he was able to acquire his first language before the age of five. The main reason why Jack was so advanced and had good language skills, even though he was also socially deprived from the outside world, was that Jack was still in contact with his mother, an educated adult.

Throughout the novel, the many techniques that Jack's mom uses to reinforce Jack's language comprehension and language production are repeatedly shown. While Jack eats with his mother, he and his mother "hum" nursery rhymes and songs and then guess what the song is (6). This "Hum" game that Jack plays with his mother is something that has been consistent throughout his life since he is able to guess the songs right away: "I guess right away it's *Let it Snow*" (8). Another tactic related to this is the "Orchestra" game that Jack and his Ma play, where they both run around the room and see what noises they can bang out of things (16). Both humming and banging things to produce noises are non-speech sound stimuli that Jack becomes aware of at a young age and is able to distinguish, which helps improve his linguistic skills. A study done by Merzenich along with his team of researchers showed that children with language-based learning impairments (LLI) have major deficits when it comes to recognizing successive phonetic elements and non-speech sound stimuli. The research suggests that phonological processing deficits may be at the heart of language-learning impairments, and thus the researchers trained the children with LLI using computer games, audiotapes and educational CD-ROMs that were designed to increase the language comprehension

abilities of LLI children by emphasizing and extending the critical cues within the context of the speech. At the end of the study, it was concluded that there were significant improvements in the language comprehension abilities by the two independent groups of LLI children (Merzenich et al. 2007). This study is important because it relates to Jack's language development in that Jack's repeated exposure to "humming" songs and banging objects to see what sounds they make introduced Jack to the concept of non-speech sounds. During the study, when the LLI children were exposed to different techniques that allowed them to become more familiar to non-speech sounds and phonetic elements, the children demonstrated significant improvements in speech discrimination and language comprehension (Merzenich et al. 2007). When an infant is between 3-6 months old, this is when he or she begins to use new sounds such as squeals, growls, trills and vowel sounds to communicate. It is not until the baby turns a year old that it can finally use spoken words of the native language to communicate, so sounds play a huge role in language development (Berger 142). Phonology is the ability to produce and discriminate the specific sounds of a given language and this is something that the LLI children had trouble doing which made it difficult for them to comprehend language (Busari & Weggelaar). Since Jack's mother followed the routine of humming songs and making Jack aware of sounds by banging objects, he did not go through that problem and was able to efficiently learn language.

Another important aspect of language learning is the ability to pronounce words correctly. When Jack repeated the words while playing the game Parrot, Ma said "Good pronunciation... *Poignant*..." (34). It was important for Jack's mom to interrupt Jack while he was repeating the words to tell him to pronounce them correctly because this way Jack was able to improve his language skills and most likely not make the same error the second time. Throughout the entire book, it is shown that Jack's linguistic ability is enhanced due to the questions that he asks his mother about words and other objects that he is unaware of. Jack is often shown asking his mom to explain the definition of words that she uses. For instance, when Jack's mother says "That's normal" Jack replies saying "What's normal?" or when Jack's mother informs him about "the Spring equinox," Jack asks her what "equinox" is, and then he is even shown attempting to use the word "equinox" later on (24). This communication between Jack and his mother was important since it enhanced Jack's vocabulary range.

Research done by Anne Fernald, a psychologist at Stanford University, showed that at 18 months, children from wealthier families were able to identify pictures of simple words they knew much faster than children from low-income families. The study

showed that by age 2, the children from the wealthy family were able to learn 30 percent more words than the children from low-income homes. This finding supported the findings of earlier research that showed that children from wealthier families learn many more words because their parents speak so much more to their children. The children of these professional parents hear 30 million more words by age 3, as stated by the early literacy experts (Rich 2013). Although in this case, the comparison of low income and high income families on language development cannot be done, the finding that parents who speak more to their children causes the children to learn more words can be related to Jack and his mother. One reason that the children from the wealthier families knew more words such as a dog or a ball is because those children most likely owned both a dog and a ball, or owned books which showed pictures of them. Wealthier families own more stuff than the low-income family, causing their children to be exposed to more material and thus the children become aware of more things and learn the names. Another key factor noted in this research was that the communication between the parents and the children was key for efficient language development. Although Jack and his mother did not have many resources, they were both always with each other, and thus, Jack is advanced because the only person he spoke to was an educated adult. Another finding that was displayed in the research done by Anne Fernald was that disadvantaged children were not that efficient with their language abilities because oral language and vocabulary are connected to reading comprehension. The low-income families that had a median income of \$23,900 were most likely not able to provide their children with as many reading sources, if any, as the wealthy parents (Rich 2013). However, it is apparent throughout the novel, that although Jack's mother doesn't have access to all the material that she wishes she could provide for her son, she still thinks of many clever ways to make sure that her son is able to learn language as efficiently as possible. When Jack tells his mother "Look how big my muscles are," Jack's mom replies saying "vast" and then Jack continues by saying "Gigantic" and so on. Jack then says the word "hugeormous" and says "that's word sandwich when we squish two together" (13). By using this technique of saying different synonyms for a word, and using "word sandwiches," Jack is able to learn a lot of new vocabulary, which enhances his language development, since he is learning many new words.

On page 16-17 of *Room*, the readers become aware of the fact that Jack not only knows the title of the nine books he has, which he names, but he also knows what all the books are about. Jack's mother reads the books out loud to Jack with a pitch and proper tone to keep Jack interested. This is exhibited when Jack's mother reads the book *Dylan*

*the Digger*: “Heeeeeeeeeere’s Dylan” (17). By reading the books to Jack in such a manner, Jack’s mom keeps him interested in hearing stories. Almost every night before Jack goes to sleep, he requests that his mom read a book and sing a song to him. Jack is also able to identify various objects in the pictures of the book and then is capable of describing them: “There’s a cat in the second picture, in the third it’s on a pile of rocks. Rocks are stones...cats fall down, but cats have nine lives not like me and Mama with just one each” (17). It is astonishing to see that Jack is able to determine what the objects are in the picture, and to describe details about them such as the cats having nine lives. Jack’s mother spent time explaining unfamiliar words to Jack from the books. Jack has such a huge interest in reading stories that sometimes before he fell asleep in the wardrobe he would lie down there and replay the stories in his head, such as when he thought about Old Nick and then remembered the story about Jack and the Giant (27). Jack’s mother provides Jack with interesting, knowledgeable information and books such as “*How the Berlin Wall Fell Down*” (71). Since Jack’s mother reads educational books to Jack that a typical five year old wouldn’t normally read, one could propose that Jack most likely is more advanced in his linguistic abilities than other kids his age. Further on in the book, Jack mentions that “I read the five books all myself only just bits of Alice,” which shows that over time Jack’s vocabulary and language development had increased so much due to word games and other techniques used by his mother that he was able to read some of the books on his own (62). Other word games that Jack’s mother played with him were finding difficult words from the milk carton “like nutritional and pasteurized” and testing Jack to see if he knows about them (33). Jack was so advanced when it came to vocabulary and language development that he knew the meaning of difficult words such as “pasteurized” which is something that a normal five year old would most likely not know. Another reason behind Jack’s advanced vocabulary and language abilities was the use of the TV by Jack’s mom to further increase the range of Jack’s vocabulary. Jack’s mother would put on the television, allow Jack to listen to what’s being said, and then eventually mute the TV. She then said “Parrot” and Jack would repeat whatever he heard. What was interesting was that Jack’s mother would switch over to an educational channel where the usage of language was quite complex. Regardless of that, Jack was able to repeat the complex language with good pronunciation (34). When Jack repeated the words, he also made sure that he questioned his mom about any word that he was unaware of. For instance. “I want to ask what a cornices is...” (42). Thus, through this game, Jack not only learned how to properly

pronounce words, but also learned new words, which further enhanced his linguistic abilities.

Literacy experts have documented that there is a connection between a child's early vocabulary and later successes in reading comprehension. There was actually a study done by an education professor at Harvard University that tracked children from age 3 through middle school and showed that a child's score on a vocabulary test in kindergarten could predict the reading comprehension scores of the child in later grades (Rich 2013). This was an interesting finding and can be compared to all the techniques that were used by Jack's mother to make sure that Jack has advanced linguistic abilities to when Jack enters the outside world. When Jack and his mother leave the Room, they are sent to stay at the clinic where they meet Dr. Clay. Jack is able to pinpoint various things that his mother and Dr. Clay discuss such as "*depersonalization, jamais vu and cognitive distortions.*" It is interesting that Jack is able to pick out words like this as a five year old, but it is also expected since this is something that he was used to doing through the word games that he played with his mother. When Jack finds a newspaper with a picture of his mother and him, he is able to make out the words "Hope for Bonsai Boy" (215).

Jack's ability of being able to interact with other people in the "outside world" and being able to identify difficult words during speech is due to the foundation that his mother set up for him. Literacy experts emphasize the importance of natural conversations with children, asking questions while reading books, and helping the children identify words during playtime. Through studies, it has been shown that parents who speak to their children more frequently can enhance the vocabulary of their children. The reason behind this is because children who hear more words are able to understand the words more quickly and have larger vocabularies. Experts have suggested that parents engage verbally with their kids so their kids can become more proficient in language development (Rich 2013). Jack's mother was successful in making Jack advanced by using methods which helped provide Jack with a huge range of vocabulary and quick, proficient language development. By using techniques such as humming, creating word sandwiches, reading books, saying rhymes before sleeping, singing while bathing, explaining the definition of words, testing difficult words, playing Parrot, and repeating voices while playing "Telephone," regardless of the situation that Jack was placed in, Jack's mother was able to make Jack a linguistically advanced child in spite of his many deprivations.

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# Helen Keller's Political and Social Activism

Julia Loria <sup>1</sup>

Helen Keller was one of the first well-known disabled persons in the world to “speak out” and act politically (Quicke 1). She is mostly known as the deaf-blind girl who was taught to communicate by Anne Sullivan Macy and whose biography is portrayed in the movie *The Miracle Worker* (Quicke 1). The media, however, has underemphasized her political career as a radical and a socialist.

## Keller's Fight for Disability Rights

Keller's life was influenced and shaped by her relationship with her teacher Anne Sullivan Macy, as she is the one who helped her learn how to speak. After her teacher passed away, Keller carried on advocating rights for people with disabilities. Keller is an inspiration to so many people as she accomplished what was considered impossible at her time: being deaf and blind and learning how to speak. In her lifetime Keller, “visited Japan three times, and many of the blind children there call[ed] her Mother” (Keller 127). This demonstrates how much of an impact she had on blind children, and how she influenced a movement that sparked disabled people to advocate for rights they deserved.

Keller believed that the blind should not be characterized as one people; they are all different individuals and should not be stereotyped. According to Keller, the “public thought and still thinks of the blind as one class. As a matter a fact no two blind individuals are alike any more than the seeing are alike; they need as many different kinds of help as there are blind people,” (Keller 149). This demonstrates how Keller tried to fight for equal rights for blind people.

Many asked Keller for advice on what the best way to help the blind would be. She told them the best way they could help was by reading industrial economics. Quicke argues that by this Keller meant, “that ‘the way to help the blind or any other defective class is to understand, correct, remove the incapacities and inequalities of our entire civilization,’” (Quicke 2).

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### Keller Considered a Threat and a Traitor

Keller was seen as dangerous, both abroad and in the United States. In 1936, her book of political essays, *Out of the Dark* was “thrown on the bonfire by the Nazis” (Quicke 2). In America, Keller was considered a traitorous influence. Her socialist writings, speeches and activities made the FBI open an investigation into her works. Additionally, people tried to keep her silent. Keller scared the government, as she was a left wing extremist and a popular figure who lived a handicapped person’s version of the American dream (Quicke 2). Quicke also points out the following: “Once she had started to ‘speak out’ her political development was rapid,” (2). She wrote an article for a magazine called *The Ladies Home Journal* in 1907, in which she stated that blindness was preventable. Keller knew that blindness was caused, in part, by sexually transmitted diseases however she chose not to include this information, as it would scandalize readers. Later she wrote in again, discussing the same topic, this time using the euphemism “bitter harvest of wild oats” as it was still taboo (Quicke 2). In addition, she claimed, “the causes of blindness are ignorance, poverty and the unconscious cruelty of our commercial society,” (Quicke 2). These ideas were considered to be revolutionary during that time period, which is why she got so much attention and why people began to consider her a threat to their society.

Keller was subscribed to a German socialist newspaper, which made her familiar with the political convictions of Libknecht, Lenin and Trotsky. A few months after the Nazis had burned her book, the publisher of her autobiography *Midstream* recommended that she take out all the references she made to Lenin. This frustrated Keller, not for selfish reasons, but because of her political views as a socialist (Quicke 1).

### Keller, an Example of the “Strenuous Life”

According to reviewers of Keller’s book *Story of My Life*, “she assumes different identities that challenge social conventions,” (Montgomery 39). At times, she represents herself as an example of the strenuous life. According to Theodore Roosevelt, the “strenuous life” is the idea that strenuous effort and overcoming hardship should be embraced by Americans in order to attain an improved nation (Montgomery 39). As President of the United States, “such a life offered the requisite discipline and training for social and political leadership” for Roosevelt (Montgomery 39). Keller is an example of that lifestyle, as she practiced and practiced, and had to repeat words and sentences for hours in order to learn how to speak. This proves Keller’s determination and drive, thus illustrating how she lived a strenuous life. Although Roosevelt portrayed the strenuous life



as the ideal way to live a life, Keller was punished for leading one. This is an example of a double standard as Roosevelt was glorified for that idea, however when Keller followed it she was not regarded with the same respect.

### Keller's Political Activism

Even though the American Foundation of the Blind forced her to be discrete, Keller remained a socialist and spoke publically on platforms about politics. She opposed Hitler, Mussolini and the fascist ideals, and continued to admire Lenin.

Article 18 of the International Bill of Rights states “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers,” (International Bill of rights 3 ) This signifies that everyone should have the right to speak freely. Keller, however, was not really free to speak out. The government tried to keep her silent, and tried to hide her political opinions.

Gaining the ability to speak was a life changing moment for Keller. She stated “with the acquisition of speech I moved from the baby phase of my mental growth to my identity as a separate, conscious, and to a degree, self-determining ego” (Keller 63). This led to Keller giving powerful and effective public speeches. Prior to World War I, Keller spoke at socialist conferences about anti-preparedness and anti-war. Keller believed that war and violence were unjustifiable; she was a pacifist.

Furthermore, she was an opponent to Woodrow Wilson and World War I. Keller referred to World War I as the “capitalistic war” because J.P Morgan and other financiers supported the movement of national defense in the country, for their own selfish interests. (Giffin 27). She stated, “Woodrow Wilson is the greatest individual disappointment the world has ever known,” (Loewen 31). She encouraged people to fight for justice and not war. In *Strike Against War*, she stated, “Be heroes in the army of construction”(Quicke 3).

In 1944 she campaigned for Roosevelt. “She became one of the many radicals, progressives, socialists, communists and others who belonged to the Independent Voters Committee of the Arts and Sciences for Roosevelt” (Quicke 3). When Roosevelt died, however, Keller was in favor of Henry Wallace because of his opinion towards international issues and how he was against the war. She campaigned for civilian power over atomic energy and supported the Committee of One Thousand against the House of Un-American activities.

As Keller shifted towards a radical and socialist position, it caused her extreme political principles to be overlooked by commentators (Quicke 1). From 1909 until 1921 Keller was part of the American radical movement (Giffin 27). Her radical view consisted of being devoted to humanity and believing that “the brotherhood of man has no room for cave-man ethics” (Giffin 27). Her radicalism was shown in her fight against World War I. Keller also joined the Socialist party of America and was an active member who spoke on their behalf. She was an idealist who felt compelled to right existing wrongs. Additionally, Keller also supported the labor force. In 1915, she spoke at a Labor Forum to protest against war. She believed workers had nothing to gain from the war (Griffin 28). She supported the Industrial Workers of the world also known as “The Wobblies” (Quicke 3).

Keller’s “accomplishments led Mark Twain to characterize her as ‘the greatest woman since Joan Arc,’” demonstrating that not everyone opposed and she did have some popular support, (Giffin 27). Although Keller’s political convictions and activities were a big part of her life they are not mentioned in many articles written about her. Most of the articles that have been written about her focus on “her religion, her basic education, her communication skills and her psychological attributes,” (Quicke 4). According to Quicke, this is “because of the threat she posed to the establishment and the dominant ideology,” (Quicke 4).

A lot of reports in newspaper articles said that Keller became a socialist because she was “indoctrinated” by her teacher Anne and Anne’s husband, John Macy (Quicke 4). Anne and John were an influence for Helen, and they helped her write her books and articles. Nevertheless, her articles and books are her own works. In an article called “How I Became a Socialist,” Keller justified that although Anne did spark her interest in socialism by introducing her to H.G. Wells’ *New Worlds for Old*, She became a socialist before Anne (Quicke 4). In addition she explained how John Macy did not talk about socialism as much as she would have liked.

### The Comparison and Contrast Between Helen Keller and Other Peace Activists

Even though Helen Keller and Sophie Scholl are from different times and different countries they have a lot in common. Keller and Scholl were both women, who advocated for human rights, and they both fought for equality amongst all humans. Similarly, they protested against cruel stereotypes. They did not let anything get in their way and nothing stopped them no matter the consequences. Scholl and Keller both spoke

out when they were told to be silent. Additionally, they were both pacifists who advocated peace for all individuals.

Although they have a lot in common, Scholl was considered a privileged woman, as she was white, Christian and a college scholar. When she was put in prison for passing out anti-Nazi leaflets, she was given multiple chances to deny her involvement with the White Rose, but she declined the opportunities and was decapitated. According to Griffin, Keller, on the other hand, was actually “treated rather gently compared to many other peace advocates,” (Griffin 28). They were both treated unfairly because they were both women who were not afraid to speak up about political issues and were considered crazy for doing so.

As a nursing student, Scholl was also struck and affected by the injustice towards disabled people. In the biographical movie of her life, Scholl is portrayed as someone who stands up for human rights in the face of injustice and oppression. When the mentally disabled children were taken out of the hospital and placed into vans and never came back, the other children asked where they had gone. The nurses had to tell the kids they went to a happy place but in reality the mentally disabled children were sent to gas chambers because of their mental disabilities.

Keller and Scholl both had very strong convictions regarding human rights, they believed everyone was entitled to just, equal rights; that no one should be treated differently, inferiorly, superiorly because of their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or political views.

One also sees similarities between Helen Keller and Martin Luther King Jr. King and Keller both fought for equal rights for minority groups. Similarly, Keller and King were both pacifists. King believed a non-violent campaign would help obtain equal rights and justice, and Keller fought against war and violence. In addition, they were both determined and strong willed. King died fighting for justice, and Keller never stopped practicing until she was able to speak (King 5).

### Keller’s Feminism

Furthermore, Keller was a feminist. She joined the National Women’s Party and advocated the right for women to be able to vote. She published an article on the need for women’s suffrage in the *New York Call*, which had the thesis “if women could vote the cruel suffering of the war would soon be over,” (Griffin 27). She stated that states managed by men stimulate and promote rebellious public opinions that make war always possible. Keller was disheartened by the fact that people’s love for their country turned

into patriotism supporting the war: “It suggests drums, flags and young men eager to give their lives to the rulers of the nation,” (Griffin 28). According to Keller this would not happen if women could vote as they knew the price of suffering and sacrifice in a way that men could never understand. Women would use their ability to vote to stop all ideas of war.

As men would not listen, Keller took things to another level: in 1915 she wrote a letter to president Woodrow Wilson. On the behalf of Jane Adams and other female leaders of peace, Keller sent Wilson a telegram. The telegram asked Wilson to help promote the movement for a conference of neutral nations, which aimed to find a just resolution to the war, (Griffin 28). In addition, she supported birth control, which was considered radical and scandalous at that time. She also admired Margaret Sanger, who was the inventor of birth control (Dreier 3).

When Keller helped with social service and blind people, she was complimented, praised and referred to as “‘wonder woman’ and a ‘modern miracle’” (Dreier 1). When she talked about poverty, however, and how America was following the wrong economic principles by supporting the industrial system, it was a different story (Dreier 1). In a letter Keller wrote to Senator Robert La Follette in 1924, she sarcastically stated, “‘to advocate that all human beings should have leisure and comfort, the decencies and refinements of life, is a Utopian dream, and one who seriously contemplates its realization indeed must be deaf, dumb, and blind’” (Dreier 1). This emphasizes how Keller had to fight to be heard in order to share her political views.

#### Keller, an “Unsung Hero”

Howard Zinn argues that society should recognize Keller’s political activism: “Should we not bring forward as a national hero Emma Goldman, one of those Wilson sent to prison, or Helen Keller, who fearlessly spoke out against the war?” (59). Keller is an “unsung hero,” as most people do not even know about her political involvement (Zinn 59).

Furthermore, Zinn strongly argues how “Our country is full of heroic people who are not presidents or military leaders or Wall Street Wizards, but who are doing something to keep alive the spirit of resistance to injustice and war” (58). Some people are not necessarily recognized for their actions that make an impact. Helen Keller is known for fighting for disability rights, however most people do not know how she made an impact with her involvement in political activities. The fact that Keller’s political actions are undermined, demonstrates how society should be more attentive, appreciative

and recognize everyone's actions that contribute to making our world a better one. In addition, it shows that we should make our own judgments and opinions, and we should keep in mind that the media does not always tell the whole truth and we should be more open minded. As stated by Zinn, it is important to remember all heroes: "To ward off alienation and gloom, it is only necessary to remember the unremembered heroes of the past and to look around us for the unnoticed heroes of the present," (61).

In the final years of her life, Keller was still politically active. Even though she had to depend on others she obtained an independent political career (Quicke 1). Her campaigns were successful: "Many of her appeals to state legislatures resulted in measures to help the blind and she saw herself as spearheading the demand for state intervention," (Quicke 3). She was indeed one of the first deaf and blind people who learned how to read and write and who wrote a book. She did much more than that, however; she led a movement that advocated for disability rights. In addition to her feminist views, her political and radical activities contributed to the evolved world in which we live today.

Although Keller did great work, disabled people are still experiencing oppression and discrimination today. Disabled people as a minority group still feel stereotyped and stigmatized (Quicke 1). Recently, disabled people have felt a deficiency of real change. Disabled people have taken more and more of a stand to speak for themselves. They are very determined to control their own lives and organizations. As Quicke compellingly states, "They are becoming more assertive and more political," (1). It is very important to remember Keller for her courage and determination, and not just her disability. Her political activism was a great part of her life and unfortunately it is largely ignored. Without Keller's dedication, the suffragist movement would not have been the same, disabled people would not have been given a voice and people might not have even known it was possible for a blind and deaf person to learn how to speak. Not only did she learn how to speak, but also she learned how to speak out against injustice. If people today were better educated about Keller's ideals and her philosophy there might not be as much discrimination towards disabled people.

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## Music as a Unifying Art Form in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*

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Throughout all of human history, music has been used as a means of communication, expression and unification. In Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's novel *Half of a Yellow Sun*, these themes can be traced with a precise exactness. Adichie's language works to convey exactly how people are able to use music to connect to one another on both individual and national levels.

Adichie's understanding of human nature, coupled with her eloquent portrayal of a country fighting a bitter civil war, works to illustrate the various ways in which music affects daily life. In the beginning of the novel, for example, when Ugwu is first introducing himself to Odenigbo, the man for whom he will be working as a servant, he is intensely questioned about the status of his education, before being asked to break into song: "Sing me a song. What songs do you know? Sing!" Master pulled his glasses off. His eyebrows were furrowed, serious. Ugwu began to sing an old song he had learned on his father's farm. His heart hit his chest painfully. '*Nzogo nzogbu enyimba enyi...*' (Adichie 14). A translation reveals that the lyrics actually mean "Stomp down your feet and kill whoever is there, we are a mighty nation we are" (Ugochukwu 6). Ugwu picks this song seemingly at random, but its status as a traditional war chant of the Igbo people wins him the approval of his master after his singing voice grows into a powerful shout (Ukiwo 23). Ugwu has passed the outwardly simplistic test without really knowing that his knowledge of the simple tune has actually helped to bring him closer to his Master, unifying them as Igbo people.

Ugwu is not the only character in the novel to feel specifically targeted through the use of music. Another instance of such manipulation occurs when Olanna is working together with the family's new neighbor, an American woman by the name of Edna Whaler. Though friendly with Edna, Olanna does not share much of her personal life with her until one day when a Billie Holiday song prompts an intimate conversation between the two women. Holiday's "My Man" is about a woman who stays with a physically

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abusive man out of love, in spite of the physical trauma as well as the fact that he is cheating on her. While singing along with the tune during work one day, Edna asks Olanna, “‘Why do you love [Odenigbo]?’...Edna raised her eyebrows, mouthing but not singing Billie Holiday’s words” (Adichie 286). The question, coupled with the song, stirs up a lot of emotions in Olanna. She begins to have a negative reaction to the song; “Billie Holiday’s plaintively scratchy voice had begun to irritate her.” She is trying, for the first time, to deal with the fact that Odenigbo was unfaithful to their relationship (Adichie 287). In this case, music acts a catalyst for an emotional revelation, and the eventual reconciliation between Odenigbo and Olanna.

In addition to being an extremely personal experience, music also provides the soundtrack and sets the tone for countless social gatherings, rallies and protests throughout the course of the novel. One of the most important songs detailed in the novel is the Biafran National Anthem, seeing as it, like most national anthems, inspires hope for its people. When it is played on the radio, in fact, both Olanna and Ugwu stop what they are doing: “...the...national anthem burst out and filled the silence. *Land of the rising sun, we love and cherish, Beloved homeland of our brave... But if the price is death for all we hold dear, Then let us die without a shred of fear...* They listened until it ended” (Adichie 348). The song commands their attention, and for a moment they pause, unified by a sense of pride for Biafra. It demands reverence, given that it “[re]presents the country, as well as the nation’s hope and sombre determination,” especially during the height of the Nigerian civil war (Ugochukwu 2).

As with any group of people struggling with the horrors and turmoil of war, the Biafran people turned to music for a sense of inspiration and unification. At the beginning of the war, Olanna and Odenigbo bring Ugwu and Baby to a rally held by students and lecturers in Freedom Square. They burst into song, joyously proclaiming “*We shall not, we shall never move, Just like a tree that’s planted by the water, We shall not be moved...*” (Adichie 204). Not only are they singing together as one with each other, but also one with nature: “They swayed as they sang, and Olanna imagined that the mango and *gmelina* trees swayed too, in agreement, in one fluid arc” (Adichie 204). The sense of togetherness is overpoweringly hopeful in this scene, and it illustrates the way in which music can be uplifting, even in times of pain and suffering.

Wartime songs contain powerful imagery that unites people not only physically, when they gather to sing, but also lyrically, with content that provides a sense of strength and power. Such imagery “personally encourages individuals to join the group, presented as an alternative family, a source of strength and protection; it builds a relationship with



the audience with the constant use of the ‘we’ pronoun and words like ‘commando’, ‘group’ or ‘solidarity’” (Ugochukwu 9). Indeed, Adichie proves the definition correct when she includes a scene in which Ugwu sings along with a crowd of Biafrans: “*Solidarity forever! So-lidarity forever! Our republic shall vanquish!*” (248). While repeating these words with the rest of the crowd, Ugwu realizes his yearning to join the Biafran army, to help lead his country to victory. In this sense, the musical propaganda has achieved above and beyond what it set out to do; not only are the Biafran people inspired to help their country, but are also prepared to lay down their very own lives to help the cause.

Accompanying the progression of the war is, understandably, the sowing of the seeds of doubt in the minds of Biafra’s people. Olanna in particular represents such a change in the morale of Biafra. Though she proudly sang her country’s praises at the beginning of the war, as it continues to rage and take its toll on her daily life, Olanna cannot join Special Julius and Odenigbo when they sing “*Biafra win the war. Armored car, shelling machine, Fighter and bomber, Ha enweghi ike imeri Biafra!*” (Adichie 345). While “Odenigbo sang lustily... she tried to sing too, but the words lay stale on her tongue,” so she returns to the house with Baby (Adichie 345). At this point in the novel, Olanna has been plagued by bombings and horrific scenes of death and violence; she can no longer be bothered to support the war that is destroying her life. Indeed, Ugwu notices the change in her as well, when he notes that she will sing “*Caritas, thank you, Caritas si anyi taba okporoko, na kwashiorkor ga-ana*” when she returns from the relief center, but that “she did not sing on the days she came back with nothing” (Adichie 356). While Olanna still hopes to one day see Biafra become a free nation, the war has had a deep, emotional effect on Olanna, and her relationship with music illustrates this fact.

Music, in addition to connecting and inspiring people in a single, specific, country, works to unite people around the world as it provides an escape from the events occurring in a particular area<sup>2</sup>. Kainene’s relationship to music in *Half of a Yellow Sun* is perhaps the most exemplary of this type of reaction, as she repeatedly uses popular music to mentally escape from the war-torn Biafra. Initially, in fact, it appears as though she uses music to escape from reality altogether: “She was scanning a newspaper and

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<sup>2</sup> Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie has adamantly spoken out against the dangers of perpetuating the notion of a “single story” in regards to African countries: “The consequence of the single story is this: it robs people of dignity. It makes our recognition of our equal humanity difficult. It emphasizes how we are different, rather than how we are similar,” (TEDGlobal).

nodding her head to the Beatles on the stereo, and she made it seem normal, that war was the inevitable outcome of events..." (Adichie 226). Notably, in this particular scene, Richard, a foreigner to Nigeria, is vastly more concerned about the country than is his girlfriend, Kainene, who was born and raised there.

It is no coincidence, then, that when Kainene's sister Olanna is approached by Odenigbo, requesting her permission to join the Biafran army, that "she kept her gaze averted and got up and turned on the radio and increased the volume, filling the room with the sound of a Beatles song; she would no longer discuss this desire to the army" (Adichie 416). The fact that both sisters use internationally popular music, specifically that of The Beatles, to momentarily escape the oppressive forces invading their lives in Biafra is representative of their desire to put the war behind them. The twins are well-educated, and this could also contribute to their knowledge of intercultural popular music, such as The Beatles: "The music studied in the [Nigerian] classroom is not the music that moves and develops the economy. One finds mainly Western popular music and non-traditional popular music which are very important in the society and in the economy" (Okafor 64). While it is never expressly stated that either Kainene or Olanna studied music while in school, it can be assumed that they have a much more intimate understanding of popular Western music than most other native Nigerians do.

The fact that both examples of internationally popular music include references to The Beatles is significant in many ways. For one, the band is British, like the colonizers of Nigeria. In the United States, they sparked the playfully named British Invasion, and yet, as a darkly ironic twist, in Nigeria the violence associated with such a term was all too real. It could be argued, then, that not only are Olanna and Kainene attempting to escape to a different location through the use of music, but also into the past -- or anywhere that will remove them from the brutal war that is occurring around them. There is, however, a complex irony being represented here: The fact that these are the only points in the novel wherein the music being referenced is British, as opposed to Biafran, illustrates how easily a hegemonically oppressed people can revert back to their oppressors in a time of need. These scenes work to convey how difficult it is for the colonized citizens of a country to fully extract themselves from the influence of their colonizers.

Finally, it is important to realize that, although both the Beatles and Biafra are relics of the same decade, The Beatles have had a much more significant impact on pop culture, and made a more lasting impression in the minds of 1960s teenagers than the short-lived country of Biafra did. Few people know the details of the Nigerian Civil War,

or that one even took place, while the legacy of Beatles music continues, to this day, to impact listeners young and old. In choosing to have her characters listen to The Beatles, Adichie makes a bold statement about society's erasure of Biafran history. One can almost immediately conjure a series of images based around the sheer mention of The Beatles, and yet at the same time an entire novel must be read and analyzed in order to grasp the events that were taking place in Nigeria during the height of the Beatles's popularity.

Whether it is made expressly obvious or left to a reader's interpretation, it is inarguable that the musical references in *Half of a Yellow Sun* are important to understanding not only the text, but also the Biafran culture. The music that works to unify individual characters, as well as large groups of hopeful citizens, also works to illustrate the separation and depression that war causes, the mental and physical tolls that it takes. Through song, people can express themselves, either by singing along with the crowd or by listening and allowing the music to say what they are unable to communicate on their own. The examples of music in this particular text are rich with cultural imagery, and provide a great deal of insight to the characters, based on their reactions to them. Humanizing, unifying or comforting, music plays an important role in daily life, and Adichie's complex representation of this allows her novel, the characters and the history it contains, to seem much more realistic and relatable.

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