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Letter from the editors

Dear Reader,

Thank you for selecting Volume 6 of *Inter-Text: An Undergraduate Journal for the Social Sciences and Humanities*. As we reflect on the 2024-2025 academic year we acknowledge that the series of events which occurred during this period were historically unprecedented. It was a year of political transitions and transformations, effects of which were felt at home and abroad. In light of both domestic and international de-stabilization and ongoing humanitarian crises the future appears increasingly despairing.

Amidst this backdrop, *Inter-Text* has attempted to serve as a place of solace by providing a platform for students of Lake Forest College to advocate for issues dear to them. The journal grants students an opportunity to increase awareness for their cause, and ultimately build a collective which can be a force of change for the better.

As we reflect on our sixth publication our deepest gratitude is held for the students of Lake Forest College; Volume 6 could not have been possible without their continued support. This year, the journal received nearly 60 submissions from a multitude of Social Science and Humanities Departments. The peer review process was especially competitive, as the editorial board assessed submissions according to the following criteria: clarity of argument, use of evidence, structure, and language and grammar. After thoughtful consideration and an intensive editing process, thirteen articles have been selected to be published in this year's volume of *Inter-Text*.

We are especially thankful to our selected authors who diligently collaborated with our team of editors to elevate their work to the highest academic standard. We recognize the dedication required to create a final product far above normative undergraduate writing. The publication process was undeniably demanding; your achievement reflects your commitment to academia, your values, and your community.

We hope you enjoy the collection of scholarly work we have compiled. Lake Forest College and by extension, *Inter-Text*, serves as a platform for the exchange of diverse ideas. We hope this arrangement of writing both resonates with and challenges you, and ultimately creates a more informed student body.

Thank you again for your support and we are proud to present Volume 6.

Sincerely,
The Editors

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Crimes in Crimea

[LORENZO ANAGNOST]

In February and March of 2014, Russia invaded the Crimean Peninsula of Ukraine and annexed it. The acquisition of Crimea by Russia was facilitated by an ongoing power vacuum in Ukraine following the Revolution of Dignity; this act by Russia marked the beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian War. I argue that the annexation of Crimea by Russia was in violation of international law. However, prior to examining the illegality of this issue, and proving my claim, it is important to provide a historical background on what led up to this annexation so that a comprehensive understanding of the situation is held.

Mark Kramer, director of Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University identifies the genesis of this issue and its development. Let us go all the way back to the year 1783; this year marks the Tsarist Empire's (Russia) annexation of Crimea one decade after defeating Ottoman forces in the Battle of Kozludzha.[1] Crimea was considered part of Russian territory up until 1954 when Crimea was transferred from the Russian Soviet Federation of Socialist Republics (RSFSR) to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (UkrSSR).[2] It is crucial to analyze why Russia transferred Crimea to Ukraine during this period and whether this action was grounded in legal principles. In late February 1954, the Soviet press announced the transfer of Crimea to Ukraine eight days following the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet who adopted a resolution authorizing the move earlier that month.[3] Interestingly, only the text of the resolution and some

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1   Mark Kramer, "Why Did Russia Give Away Crimea Sixty Years Ago?" *Wilson Center*, March 19, 2014, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/why-did-russia-give-away-crimea-sixty-years-ago.
2   Kramer, "Why Did Russia Give Away Crimea Sixty Years Ago?"
3   Kramer, "Why Did Russia Give Away Crimea Sixty Years Ago?"

innocuous excerpts from the proceedings were published in tandem with a brief announcement.[4] No further information regarding the transfer was published during the Soviet era. It was only until 1992, shortly after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, that new material regarding this transfer emerged.[5] A historical archival journey named *Istoricheskii Arkhiv* resurfaced in 1992 with declassified documents regarding the transfer of Crimea containing two official rationales that were published way back in 1954: (1) the purpose of the secession of Crimea was to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the reunification of Ukraine with Russia (this was in reference to the Treaty of Pereyaslav signed in 1654 by representatives of the Ukrainian Cossack Hetmanate and Tsar Aleksei I of Muscovy) and to express the love and earnestness that Russians feel towards Ukrainians, and (2) the transfer was the result of Ukraine's territorial proximity to Russia, their similar economic structures, their essentially identical agricultural methods, and the strong cultural nexus between the Crimean oblast and the UkrsSSS.[6]

While this is helpful, these reasons are normative and devoid of legal justification and furthermore, the apparent reasons provided by the Soviet Union seem dubious. This is because no strong connection exists between the Treaty of Pereyaslav and Crimea; to elucidate this point, Crimea came under Russian control 130 years after its signing.[7] Furthermore, in the 1950s, the population of Crimea was largely Russian and as a result many of its regions participated in Russian culture; this renders the claim by the Soviet Union that Crimea and Ukraine were essentially homogeneous into question. Crimea did have the economic and agricultural ties to Ukraine that the Soviet Union claimed they did. However, these ties existed with the Soviet Union as well. Furthermore, Crimea served as a quasi-militaristic stronghold for the Soviet Union.[8] Again, these ostensible justifications do not hold under strict scrutiny. What is more likely the case is that Nikita Khrushchev, the former Prime Minister of the Soviet Union, used the transfer of Crimea to gain the favor of Ukrainian elites to consolidate power against his political rival Georgii Malenkov, the then prime minister of the Soviet Union.[9] Furthermore, Khrushchev was aware of the large ethnographic makeup of Crimea, and saw the transfer as a means of strengthening Soviet control over Ukraine as around 900,000 Russians –from Crimea– would be joining the already existing Russian presence in Ukraine; this approach of "Russianization" can be identified in other Baltic republics, those being Latvia and Estonia.[10]

Moving forward, the aforementioned archival journal *Istoricheskii Arkhiv* makes it clear that Crimea's transfer from the RSFSR to the UkrSSR was done

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4   Kramer, "Why Did Russia Give Away Crimea Sixty Years Ago?"
5   Kramer, "Why Did Russia Give Away Crimea Sixty Years Ago?"
6   Kramer, "Why Did Russia Give Away Crimea Sixty Years Ago?"
7   Kramer, "Why Did Russia Give Away Crimea Sixty Years Ago?"
8   Kramer, "Why Did Russia Give Away Crimea Sixty Years Ago?"
9   Kramer, "Why Did Russia Give Away Crimea Sixty Years Ago?"
10 Kramer, "Why Did Russia Give Away Crimea Sixty Years Ago?"

properly and in accordance with the Soviet Constitution of 1936. Article 18 of this constitution stipulates that "the territory of a Union Republic may not be altered without its consent."[11] This is relevant as the documentation from the proceedings of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium assembly strongly suggests that both the RSFSR and the UkrSS gave consent to the transfer of Crimea via their parliaments.[12] Therefore, it would be erroneous to assert that the transfer of Crimea occurred illegally or unconstitutionally as it was done in accordance with the rules in effect at that time. Furthermore, Russia accepted Ukraine's possession of Crimea when the Russian Federation acknowledged Ukraine's borders both in the December 1991 Belovezhskaya Pushcha accords (the agreements that precipitated and codified the dissolution of the Soviet Union) and in the December 1994 Budapest Memorandum that finalized Ukraine's status as a non-nuclear weapons state.[13] The point in all this discussion is to highlight that while Russia may have had more nefarious intentions when transferring Crimea to Ukraine than initially professed, this transfer was nonetheless done in accordance with legal principles and was consented to by both parties. The legal legitimacy of this transfer is bolstered by Russia's continued acknowledgement of Ukrainian territory in 1991 and again in 1994. Therefore, it would be problematic for Russia to argue –as has been done– that this transfer was some unscrupulous and clandestine act on behalf of the Ukrainian government as Russia was the driving force behind this transfer.

Now that it has been established that Crimea was lawfully given to Ukraine, we shall examine the exact circumstances leading up to its annexation. Luckily, an article by the *Kyiv Post*, titled "Euromaidan Rallies in Ukraine," explicates this situation. On November 26, 2013, the president of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovych made a sudden decision to not sign the European Union and Ukraine Association Agreement, instead choosing to join the Eurasian Economic Union and bolster ties with Russia; this was much to the dismay of the Ukrainian people.[14] Not only were the people of Ukraine in favor of joining the European Union, but Ukraine's own parliament had overwhelmingly supported the decision as well.[15] This action by Yanukovych galvanized thousands of Ukrainians to protest in which they called for the resignation of Yanukovych and his government.[16] Much of the rhetoric surrounding the protesters revolved around claims of corruption, violation of human rights, and blatant collusion with Russia.[17] These pro-

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11   *Istoricheskii Arkhiv*, Soviet Constitution, art. 18 (1936).

12   Kramer, "Why Did Russia Give Away Crimea Sixty Years Ago?"

13   Kramer, "Why Did Russia Give Away Crimea Sixty Years Ago?"

14   "Euromaidan Rallies in Ukraine – Nov. 21-23 Coverage." *Kyiv Post: Ukraine's Global Voice*, November 25, 2013, https://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/euromaidan/euromaidan-rallies-in-ukraine-nov-21-23-coverage-332423.html.

15   "Euromaidan Rallies," *Kyiv Post.*

16   "Euromaidan Rallies," *Kyiv Post.*

17   "Euromaidan Rallies," *Kyiv Post.*

tests, given the moniker of Euromaidan, were non-stop and were so large in fact, that it was the largest democratic protest in Europe since 1989.[18] The Ukrainian government attempted to "resolve" these protests through the use of force; this exacerbated the ferocity of the movement.[19] For example, protesters established a massive protest camp in Independence Square in Kyiv which was subsequently invaded by Ukrainian police.[20] This was the final provocation; protesters began occupying government buildings all throughout Ukraine wreaking havoc across the country. In an attempt to alleviate this worsening situation, Yanukovych and his parliamentary opposition signed the Agreement on the Settlement of the Political Crisis in Ukraine on the 21st of February 2014, to bring about an interim government, constitutional reforms, and early elections; this was unsuccessful as Euromaidan had reached its apex thus igniting the Revolution of Dignity. Police abandoned central Kyiv while Yanukovych and other government ministers fled the city. The next day, February 22nd, the parliament officially removed Yanukovych from office and installed their own interim government officially sparking the Russo-Ukraine war.

In the midst of the ongoing political turmoil in Ukraine, Russia would capitalize on this power vacuum. In an article published by Britannica, "Crisis in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine," author Oleksa Zasenko, inter alia, provides crucial detail on how Russia went about annexing Crimea. On the 27th of February, groups of armed men wearing uniforms lacking any clear identifying marks or symbols began entering Crimea surrounding airports in Simferopol and Sevastopol.[21] These "little green men" as they are often referred to began capturing key infrastructure and government buildings throughout Crimea.[22] These unrevealed gunmen began to occupy the Crimean parliament building and subsequently raised a Russian flag.[23] This action was followed by pro-Russian lawmakers who –with the aid of the newly arrived masked gunmen– dismissed the sitting government and appointed Sergey Aksyonov, the leader of the Russian Unity Party, as Crimea's prime minister.[24] First, Crimean authorities declared their independence. Second, the newly altered parliament announced the Crimean status referendum of 2014. This referendum asked the following: whether Crimea wanted to rejoin Russia as an oblast, or if Crimea wished to remain part of Ukraine. The now Autonomous Republic of Crimea reported a whopping 97 percent vote in favor of integration into the Russian Federation. On March 18, 2014, Russia happily

18   "Euromaidan Rallies," *Kyiv Post.*
19   "Euromaidan Rallies," *Kyiv Post.*
20   "Euromaidan Rallies," *Kyiv Post.*
21   Oleksa Zasenko et al., "The Crisis in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, inc., December 8, 2024, www.britannica.com/place/Ukraine/The-crisis-in-Crimea-and-eastern Ukraine.
22   Zasenko et al., "The Crisis in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine."
23   Zasenko et al., "The Crisis in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine."
24   Zasenko et al., "The Crisis in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine."

accepted Crimea's request and officially incorporated the Republic of Crimea into their Federation. It is important to mention that when the referendum occurred, onlookers claim that certain "anomalous" events occurred. These events being: soldiers stationed at practically every polling location, militaristic demonstrations throughout the streets in advocacy of Russia, and the use of force to encourage individuals to favor the referendum. On March 21, Putin signed a law formally integrating Crimea into Russia.[25]

Now the following has been established: (1) Crimea was lawfully given to Ukraine by Russia in 1954, (2) Russia continuously recognized Crimea as under Ukrainian hegemony, (3) the circumstances leading up to the annexation of Crimea by Russia, and (4) that Russia captured Crimea by force. It is important to remind the reader that at the beginning of this paper, I asserted that the Russian annexation of Crimea was a violation of international law. Therefore, it is important to first establish what constitutes a violation of international law or rather, what can be considered an intentionally wrongful act. I happily point towards the International Law Commission (ILC) of the United Nations and their 2001 Draft Articles on the Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts. According to Article 2 of the document, there are two elements that must both apply in the determination of an internationally wrongful: "(a) is attributable to the State under international law; and (b) constitutes a breach of an international obligation of the State."[26] Therefore, if these terms are met in the case of the Russian annexation of Crimea, Russia can be considered in violation of international law.

It would now be logical to highlight how the annexation of Crimea is attributable to Russia under international law. While this may seem like a simple endeavor, it is somewhat complicated by the fact that the soldiers who oversaw and participated in the forceful annexation bore no symbols by which one could simply identify as Russian. Furthermore, the difficulty in attribution is exacerbated by the fact that many of Putin's and other top Russian officials' statements regarding the annexation are occasionally nebulous. But no more, I am not dismayed by this seemingly difficult task, let us begin! In his article "From Not Us To Why Hide It?," award winning journalist Carl Schreck elaborates on the annexation and highlights how it is clearly attributable to the Russian state. Many experts agree that the operation involved the use of Russian military personnel, equipment, vehicles and President Vladimir Putin himself confirmed this in 2014.[27] Furthermore, Russian officials had direct involvement with militias and

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25   Zasenko et al., "The Crisis in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine."

26   International Law Commission, *Draft Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts*, (United Nations, 2001).

27   Carl Schreck, "From 'Not Us' to 'Why Hide It?': How Russia Denied Its Crimea Invasion, Then Admitted It," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty,* February 26, 2019, https://www.rferl.org/a/from-not-us-to-why-hide-it-how-russia-denied-its-crimea-invasion-then-admitted-it/29791806.html.

pro-Russian groups operating in Crimea.[28] While these groups were not formal state organs, they functioned because of Russian direction, control, coordination, and logistical support which satisfies Article 8 of the Draft Articles concerning attribution as the conduct was directed and controlled by Russia.[29] Moving on, Russia explicitly recognized and happily adopted the conduct which led to the annexation of Crimea.[30] The annexation was officialized through legislative acts, public declarations, and the ratification of treaties.[31] This satisfied Article 11, where an action is attributable to a state if said state acknowledges the action and embraces it as its own. Russia's annexation of Crimea inarguably meets the attribution requirement for determining an international wrongful act as: (1) The acts were carried out by components of the Russian state, that being military forces, (2) Russia explicitly exercised direction and control over local proxies, and (3) Russia officially acknowledged and accepted the actions in the annexation of Crimea.

It is apparent from the above that the annexation of Russia is clearly attributable to the Russian Federation and therefore we shall transition to the other element of the two pronged test in determining an internationally wrongful act: that is, breach. For one, the annexation of Crimea by Russia is clearly in violation of the UN Charter. Article 2(1) of the Charter establishes that all member states be treated equally in their sovereignty.[32] Obviously, Ukraine is a recognized sovereign state and by extension their territory is protected under international law; clearly, Russia's annexation of Crimea violates this stipulation. This is because Russia invaded Crimea –which is Ukrainian territory– thereby violating Ukrainian hegemony. Furthermore, Article 2(4) of the Charter plainly disallows the use of force by one state directed towards another except in the case of self-defense or if authorization has been granted by the UN Security council; neither of these exceptions apply.[33] Russia's forceful and largely militaristic annexation of Crimea is a blatant violation of this principle. Additionally, Article 2(7) of the Charter advocates against intentional interference in the internal affairs of another state.[34] Russia's continued political, military, economic, and even cyber interference in Ukraine runs directly antithesis to this principle. Quite unsurprisingly, the United Nations General Assembly has publicly and officially condemned Russia's actions. The United Nations passed the UNGA Resolution 68/262 in 2014 following the annexation of Crimea to condemn and repudiate the act. This nonbinding resolution was supported by 100 UN member states and emphasized the invalidity of the referendum held in Crimea.

Obviously, my arguments may seem quite strong since they stand unop-

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28   Schreck, "From 'Not Us' to 'Why Hide It?'"
29   Schreck, "From 'Not Us' to 'Why Hide It?'"
30   Schreck, "From 'Not Us' to 'Why Hide It?'"
31   Schreck, "From 'Not Us' to 'Why Hide It?'"
32   Charter of the United Nations, art. 2, para. 1.
33   UN Charter, art. 2, para. 4.
34   UN Charter, art. 2, para. 7.

posed; therefore, to be charitable, I will admit arguments that the Russian Federation has made to legally justify their annexation of Crimea. Nigel Walker, a journalist for the UK Parliament, provides insight into some of the justifications given by Russia to avoid legal prosecution. One of the most common justifications from the Kremlin is that Crimea's annexation was simply an answer to the call of self-determination by the Crimean people.[35] Russia claims that the referendum held in Crimea was absent from their involvement and that the people of Crimea were sick of Ukrainian hegemony and therefore en masse supported secession.[36] Despite this claim by the Russian Federation, the principle of self-determination does not extend to secession unless the people within said state are subject to unimaginable horrors which would justify or necessitate secession; this is clearly not the case in Crimea, that is, there were no observable human rights abuses. Furthermore, the 1970 UN Declaration on Friendly Relations clearly established that self-determination should not infringe upon the territorial borders of existing states. Additionally, it is ridiculous of the Russian government to assert that the referendum held in Crimea was impartial. This referendum occurred through the use of militaristic intimidation tactics, lacked any international oversight, and the Ukrainian constitution specifically disallows unilateral secession without the entire nation's consent. This first argument from the Russian government can be dismissed, it does not hold under strict scrutiny and is disjunctive from valid legal provisions.

Walker continues elaborating on the arguments provided by Russia in justifying their annexation. Russia made the claim that its involvement in Crimea was necessary to defend the large ethnic presence of Russians in Crimea.[37] Supposedly, this was due to the "transition of power" that occurred during Euromaidan and the Revolution of Dignity which, according to Russia, jeopardized the lives of ethnic Russians.[38] While defending one's people is certainly a noble cause, the use of military force to protect ethnic Russians again violates Article 2(4) of the UN Charter. This is not to say that a state protecting their citizens abroad is always in violation of international law but rather, Russia failed in proving identifiable threats against the ethnic Russians of Crimea. Finally, Walker contends that Russia argued that its presence in Crimea was within their rights as a state due to Crimea's de facto authorities inviting Russian forces.[39] That is, Russia asserts that the newly and temporarily established Autonomous Republic of Crimea requested Russian assistance to stabilize and alleviate their ongoing political calamity

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35   Nigel Walker, "Ukraine Crisis: A Timeline (2014 – Present) – House of Commons Library," *Conflict in Ukraine: A Timeline (2014 – Eve of 2022 Invasion),* UK Parliament, August 23, 2023, https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9476/.

36   Walker, "Ukraine Crisis: A Timeline."

37   Walker, "Ukraine Crisis: A Timeline."

38   Walker, "Ukraine Crisis: A Timeline."

39   Walker, "Ukraine Crisis: A Timeline."

and to facilitate the completion of the referendum.[40] While Russia can certainly make the claim that they were lawfully invited to Crimea, the Crimean officials who requested the arrival of Russian military forces lacked the legitimacy to invite a foreign military power. This is because, among other reasons, Ukrainian law demands that regional officials confirm with the central government before the invitation of a foreign military presence. This argument by Russia is thereby invalidated.

   Ultimately, I can firmly say that Russia breached countless treaties, transgressed international obligations, was ostracized and repudiated by the international community, has openly admitted and endorsed every step leading up to the annexation of Crimea, and therefore it is legally indisputable that Russia has committed an internationally wrongful act and thus violated international law. I have argued that the annexation of Crimea by Russia was in violation of international law and have shown that (1) Crimea was lawfully given to Ukraine by Russia in 1954, (2) Russia continuously recognized Crimea as under Ukrainian hegemony, (3) the circumstances leading up to the annexation of Crimea by Russia, and (4) that Russia captured Crimea by force. It is curious why more was not done by the international community upon Russia's forceful annexation of Crimea. A blatant violation of a country's sovereignty is not to be taken lightly; perhaps, if this blatantly illegal move at the hands of the Russian government was taken more seriously, millions of Russian and Ukrainian citizens would not be engulfed in a seemingly endless war where countless innocents are dying as I type these very words.

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40   Walker, "Ukraine Crisis: A Timeline."

Zoning in Milwaukee

Growing MKE

[Kieran Artley]

The city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, recently proposed a plan to change zoning laws in the city titled Growing Milwaukee, or Growing MKE. Conceived in 2023 as a response to low availability of housing (both rental and nonrental) on top of a projected increase in population, the project aims to increase the density of multi-family housing near transit corridors, increase the supply of housing by changing zoning to allow more residential use types, such as townhomes and other "missing middle" forms of housing, and easing land use restrictions.[1] However, the project faces some hurdles to clear. In this paper, I will first cover what the plan is and does, then its shortcomings, then finally possible solutions. While Growing MKE makes a good start, the program needs to put more focus on amenities not directly involved in housing, avoid the use of tax-increment financing, and engage with and assist vulnerable communities directly to accomplish the goals laid out.

Broadly, Growing MKE is a rezoning plan. The project website lists two phases; updating the Housing and Neighborhoods section of the Citywide Policy Plan, and future updates to the zoning code to encourage housing growth and choice in Milwaukee.[2] The primary mechanism they plan to use is rezoning, with new tax-increment financing districts created to provide up-front funds to incentivize development in the newly rezoned areas. Tax-increment financing refers to a system that uses tax increases in a defined area to subsidize development in a different area; however, such a system has multiple issues that will be covered later. The plan seems similar in many aspects to the plan Kathleen McCormick describes working in Minneapolis; it aims to broaden zoning to allow multi-family

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1   "Growing Mke Template," Engage MKE, https://engage.milwaukee.gov/growingmke.
2   "Proposed Growing MKE Final Draft Plan" Engage MKE, 2024, 6. https://engage.milwaukee.gov/GrowingMKE/Growing-MKE-Draft-Plan.

housing, especially townhomes and other "missing middle" or medium-density options such as multiplexes, courtyard buildings, triplexes or fourplexes, and other housing structures between single-family and high-rise buildings.[3] There are five goals listed; increasing housing quality and choice, fiscal sustainability and economic development, fostering walkable neighborhoods, supporting communities, and making the city more sustainable.[4]

The first of these goals and the first policy recommendation is to increase housing quality and access. Growing MKE wants to expand the options people have for housing; according to the project, 40% of residentially zoned parcels only allow a single housing unit, including accessory dwelling units, restricting access to housing beyond single-family homes, spreading out neighborhoods, and increasing infrastructure requirements.[5] The project plans to allow small multi-family dwellings "in appropriate locations within residential neighborhoods", including corner lots, "uniquely configured streets," and lots near transit or walkable commercial corridors provided this development does not interfere with the neighborhood's housing goals.[6] There are also plans to streamline the process of modifying developments, reduce the cost and time required for approval, and make the zoning document easier to parse for applicants to ensure equitable access.[7] In terms of quality, this policy also covers affordable housing options for people of all income levels; the stated goals include housing for populations prone to housing insecurity, calling out the formerly incarcerated as an example, alongside the creation of publicly subsidized housing across the city, prioritizing areas currently lacking such units. McCormick's work indicates that this type of project works and can accomplish these goals; expanding access to the "missing middle" of housing increases population density (and thus tax base) without noticeably impacting neighborhood character or stressing the city's infrastructure.

This policy comes about from this shortage in available housing for the uses people have. In particular, 59% of households in the city are renters compared to 41% who own their homes, with the vacancy rate of property falling below a healthy rate (8% healthy compared to Milwaukee's 6.2%), which means there are less units available and creating higher demand and higher prices.[8] The increased housing density and development championed by Growing MKE would allow renters more choice in both where they want to live and how they want to

3   Kathleen McCormick, "Influential Minneapolis Policy Shift Links Affordability, Equity," *Lincoln Institute of Land Policy*, April 16, 2024, https://www.lincolninst.edu/publications/articles/2020-01-rezoning-history-minneapolis-policy-shift-links-affordability-equity/, 9; "Proposed Growing MKE Final Draft Plan," 19.
4   "Proposed Growing MKE Final Draft Plan," 9.
5   "Growing MKE Template," slide 18.
6   "Proposed Growing MKE Final Draft Plan," 31.
7   "Proposed Growing MKE Final Draft Plan," 32.
8   "Proposed Growing MKE Final Draft Plan," 24.

live, alongside the higher supply potentially helping push rent down. Chakraborty et al corroborates this, with their results demonstrating that zoning "impedes the development of multifamily housing in suburbs across the country" and that zoning restricts the supply of housing in general.[9] This policy is also the project's strongest suit, and where it is likely to do the best if successful.

While still helpful, the second policy of the project, social connections and health, is slightly weaker than the first. This includes infrastructure investment, increasing the safety and cleanliness of neighborhoods, and increasing access to credit and capital for developmental uses that "promote the long-term economic and social viability of the community."[10] Removing health hazards in buildings, including lead pipes which are still used in parts of the city, plays a role in this, however the project does not include any investment in such endeavors. It does seek to incrementally improve neighborhoods to try and maintain or increase their quality and stability through investing in infrastructure projects, geographically clustering investments to encourage additional neighborhood development, and encourage community organizations.[11] This runs into the problem of spillovers (side effects which "spill over" into other regions than the one affected) Fennell and González-Pampillón discussed; Growing MKE focuses almost entirely on zoning as a way to fix the problems it wants to address, but it doesn't include provisions for the amenities that both these authors see as essential to people's choice of housing. Without paying attention to this, the actual increase in quality of neighborhoods may be lower than expected by the project since they are only looking at housing quality.

Moving on from housing quality, the third and fourth policy goals of the project both tie into neighborhood development. This includes removing minimum lot size area per dwelling unit restrictions in favor of a limit on the number of dwelling units, increasing housing density near transit corridors to reduce travel time and cost along with taking better advantage of existing infrastructure, and creating walkable neighborhoods for similar reasons.[12] Pulling again from McCormick, these should provide solid progress towards the project's goals by allowing more dense housing construction; however, there are concerns from affected neighborhoods that the project may still need to alleviate. In particular, there are concerns that these developments will not benefit marginalized communities, since it is less profitable for development there and those communities lack amenities that would make housing attractive. González-Pampillón's paper indicates that increased supply does not automatically benefit these groups in absence of rules targeting the developments to the vulnerable or marginalized

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9   Arnab Chakraborty et al., "The Effects of High-Density Zoning on Multifamily Housing Construction in the Suburbs of Six US Metropolitan Areas," *Urban Studies* 47, no. 2 (October 27, 2009): 437–51, https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098009348325, 447.

10   "Proposed Growing MKE Final Draft Plan," 35.

11   "Proposed Growing MKE Final Draft Plan," 35.

12   "Proposed Growing MKE Final Draft Plan," 37.

group, instead striking a trade-off between affordable housing and rapid urban revitalization.[13] The project seems to be going for a more incremental approach, similar to the one called for by McCormick, with its new housing goals extending out to 2040; this means that it does not need to prioritize rapidity over affordability, and can lay out its recommendations as such.

The project lays out four policy recommendations to achieve its goals, with each recommendation affecting part of the zoning code. The first of these four is to allow more neighborhood-scale housing in more neighborhoods, in other words removing areas zoned exclusively for single-family homes and allowing accessory dwelling units, townhouses, duplex/triplexes, or cottage court construction in areas previously closed off to them.[14] In the areas where multi-family housing was already permitted, this recommendation also includes the addition of fourplexes to the zoning. This recommendation increases the density of housing and thus the tax base the city can draw from in order to make improvements to amenities and infrastructure. However, they currently plan to use TIF districts to fund these development projects. This is unlikely to succeed; implementing a TIF district puts higher strain on local schools and households by increasing their property taxes, meaning that the already inadequate amenities in some communities will be further harmed and more difficult to maintain. As the value of the areas Growing MKE seeks to benefit rises, TIF districts will pull more money from it, potentially reducing the income of homes in the area since an increase in home value does not directly translate to an increase in income and harming the strength of this recommendation.

The second of the policy's recommendations is to amend the zoning code to allow and encourage more housing in multi-family or commercially zoned districts. In particular, they want to move away from zoning based on equations and instead use height limits, setback requirements, and design standards to control housing supply. This includes loosening restrictions on live-work developments, or residential buildings that double as the owner's place of work. Chakraborty et al covers how suburban areas zoned for more multifamily housing or other high-density development have greater increases in the stock of housing than comparable areas zoned for less multifamily housing.[15] This matches up with what Growing MKE is trying to do in many ways; increase the amount of people living in the city and increase the number of taxpayers by changing zoning restrictions. Once again, though, this plan runs into some difficulties with TIF districts and spillover effects. While the planned higher density construction puts people closer to transit corridors and commercial districts where much of the traffic flows, people make choices on other factors as well, including local amenities, taxes, and

13   Nicolás González-Pampillón, "Spillover effects from new housing supply." *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 92 (2022), 33.
14   "Proposed Growing MKE Final Draft Plan," 45.
15   Chakraborty, "High-Density Zoning," 446.

the baggage a particular location may carry.[16] Even with the reduction in transit costs offered by living closer, it may be more economical for people to live further from the city and simply commute to it if the city does not offer enough incentive to live within it. Some neighborhoods lack green spaces or safe recreational areas, which zoning for more housing will not alleviate.

The third policy recommendation of the paper works to address some of this by changing building design codes, specifically regarding facades, windows, and composition. The fourth, lumped in seemingly as an afterthought, comes as a response to criticism regarding parking, particularly reducing parking minimums. Combined, these two recommendations focus on improving the walkability of the city and general pedestrian-friendliness, alongside a reduction in wasted parking spaces allowing more space for other uses. While not a complete solution by any means, it represents a step towards alleviating the concerns of residents that housing development is being prioritized over development of amenities the community wants.

On that note, the policy has many shortcomings. The use of TIF districts has already been touched on, alongside the lack of attention to anything other than housing, but there is also a lack of attention paid to issues of racial equity in the policy. This is one of the most consistent criticisms of Growing MKE; despite their claim that they are doing all of this to help the black and Latino communities in Milwaukee, neither were consulted at all about the plans to change their neighborhoods, nor were they asked what they thought was necessary.[17] This is a colossal failure of the policy. Even if there is somehow no malicious intent behind it, the effect of this has been to put the black community in staunch opposition to the program; the poorest neighborhoods in Milwaukee include Metcalfe Park, a predominantly black neighborhood which will likely be affected by the changing policies without having had a chance to ask for what they feel they actually need. Alderman Russell Stamper II, the representative of the area much of the renovations are planned for and a predominantly black community, put out a press release ahead of a hearing about the plan in July of 2024, decrying it and stating that his objections are a "I don't want to be told by someone not of my community what's best for my community" issue.[18] Growing MKE's development plan focuses on areas people want to move in to; "blighted" areas like Metcalfe Park are unlikely to see benefit from the new TIF districts, draining resources from other parts of the city fruitlessly while the people the policy is intended to help feel left

16   Lee Anne Fennell, "Exclusion's Attraction: Land Use Controls in Tieboutian Perspective," *University of Chicago Law School*, November 2, 2023, https://www.law.uchicago.edu/node/29056.

17   Jeramey Jannene, "City Hall: Growing Mke Plan Suffers Sudden Growing Pains," *Urban Milwaukee*, https://urbanmilwaukee.com/2024/07/30/city-hall-growing-mke-plan-suffers-sudden-growing-pains/.

18   Russell Stamper, "Our Voices Will Not Be Silenced This Time – Lessons from MKE's 'Growth' of the Past," *Urban Milwaukee*, https://urbanmilwaukee.com/pressrelease/our-voices-will-not-be-silenced-this-time-lessons-from-mkes-growth-of-the-past/.

behind and see no benefit. There are also further gaps in racial equity not covered by housing choice, such as family wealth, marriage, educational opportunities, income, and homeownership, with zoning directly helping none of these and the plan providing no recourse beyond the city's existing Anti Displacement Plan.[19]

On its own, rezoning also gives no incentive to develop, it just allows that development to take place. All of the plan's benefits hinge on people moving into new housing; the way the city currently plans to incentivize that move is by setting up TIF districts to raise more funds, creating adverse effects for the policy. Growing MKE also plans to make these changes citywide, which likely means the benefits will concentrate in districts that are already attractive to live in since it is easier to develop there and make profit, rather than helping groups that need the assistance more. In areas around the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, increased access to affordable rental units has also raised concerns about an influx of college students renting, potentially disrupting neighborhoods.

Fixing the policy requires multiple steps. First of all, a focus on improving outcomes across races should be incredibly important. Diversity and racial equity is one of the goals emphasized by the project, so it should do more to engage the black community and bring them into the decision-making process, allowing their voices to be heard and their choices to be respected. Gentrification and absentee landlords are a difficulty that has been brought up; ensuring that policies are targeted such that affordable housing goes to those that need it most is imperative, rather than incentivizing housing to be built in areas that have good quality homes already. In order to combat gentrification, the city needs to stick to its Anti Displacement Plan and ensure that African-American communities are not being price crept out of existence and removed from the city. There is nothing in the plan that addresses the issues this community actually faces, such as widespread poverty and low levels of homeownership. Listening to them and working with them to develop their communities in ways that actually help them is more important than rapid urban renewal.

Second, I would suggest dropping the new TIF districts and incentivizing developers by changing spending in other fields. One of the benefits of increasing population density in the way Growing MKE plans to is that the tax base expands, which should provide municipalities with the funds to maintain and expand access to amenities such as green spaces, parks, and more without needing to add TIF districts. Ensuring that there are ways to reduce the cost of living beyond new construction is also important, since new construction tends to be more expensive. Looking into the other factors affecting housing prices beyond zoning would be a good starting point for other areas the project can put focus into.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that the introduction of different

19   Salim Furth and MaryJo Webster, "Single-Family Zoning and Race: Evidence from the Twin Cities," *Housing Policy Debate* 33, no. 4 (March 20, 2023): 41, https://doi.org/10.1080/10511482.2023.2186750.

and new housing has the potential to disrupt neighborhoods. Managing spill-over effects from the planned influx of new residents to prevent people from being pushed from their homes is important. In the same way that gentrification of black neighborhoods is harmful, gentrification of other areas creates similar problems. The spillover effects of housing need to be taken into account more than they currently are in the plan, since people do not select where to live only based on the house itself, but consider surrounding infrastructure and amenities as well. Increased population density means that existing infrastructure can serve more people, but also means that it will need more upkeep to ensure that everywhere has access to the infrastructure.

Overall, Growing MKE makes a solid start towards its goal of increased housing quality and choice, but falls short on non-housing amenities, racial equity and outcomes, and financing for the project. The project is likely to succeed in improving housing, but lacks in ensuring that that support goes to communities that need it the most, instead favoring improving the best districts in the city. Engaging with and listening to the African-American community in Milwaukee is an important step to take to ensure that the project's equity goals are met, rather than simply making changes from on high. Similarly, improving access to amenities such as green spaces, better roads, or public transport and infrastructure would be an excellent addition to the current plan, since it currently lacks on that front. Finally, with concerns about potential neighborhood disruptions from new developments, managing spillover effects and preventing gentrification should be a higher priority for the project.

Boundary Comission Work in the Eritrea-Ethiopia Border Dispute

[Anna Blazkova]

Between the years 1998 and 2000, the Horn of Africa, already a relatively politically tumultuous region, experienced an escalation of violence as a border war erupted between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The conflict, with its symbolic center at the Badme village, was primarily caused by the lack of effective demarcation of the border between the two countries on the ground. Following the war and the 2000 Algiers peace agreement, the ICJ established a Boundary Commission, whose mission was to definitively delimit and subsequently demarcate the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea.[1] In this paper, I will cover the process of creating a border in general terms, followed by an exploration of how the Eritrea-Ethiopia Border Commission specifically conducted its work of delimitation demarcation. I will also include the factors guiding its decisions, as well as the reactions of the two involved countries to the Commission's final decision. I argue that the Border Commission's work was significantly constrained by the lack of accurate maps for the guiding colonial treaties, the difficulties with inconsistent nomenclature across time and languages, the lack of field reconnaissance, as well as the limited timeframe in which the decision was produced. The reactions of Ethiopia and Eritrea to the decision were, then, impacted by the Commission's omission of Badme from the final report, the countries' hyper-nationalist regimes' unwillingness to compromise, as well as the international community's lack of attention after the Algiers Agreement.

Firstly, to better understand the process of the Border Commission, let us start with an overview of key concepts relevant to this topic. A border dispute is a situation in which two states clash over where the border should be drawn, and wherein, unlike in a territorial dispute, the impacted zone isn't legally consti-

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1   Terrence Lyons, *The Ethiopian-Eritrean Border Crisis: Avoiding Conflict in the Horn of Africa* (Council on Foreign Relations, 2006), 6-10. http://www.jstor.com/stable/resrep05734.8.

tuted territory of its own.[2] Border disputes can be of two types – the first is a definitional border dispute, which arises at the stage of defining a border, for example in cases where a border river changes its course over time.[3] The second type, under which the Eritrea-Ethiopia border dispute falls, is a locational dispute. This dispute arises when there is a discrepancy between the border's definition in text and its delimitation in maps or demarcation on the ground.[4] Here, the process itself of creating a border is relevant. It consists of four main steps – First, the border's definition is created, describing in text, often in treaties, the terrain through which the border runs, ideally in as much detail as possible to prevent future friction. Secondly, the border is delimited, wherein cartographers plot the border as exactly as possible on large-scale maps or satellite images. Thirdly, the border is marked on the ground with a variety of methods, from stones and poles to walls or fences in areas prone to conflict – this stage is called demarcation. Finally, the border and its markers are maintained, often by assigned government agencies of each state, or by joint commissions – this last stage is called administration.[5]

The Eritrea-Ethiopia Border Commission was concerned primarily with delimitation of the border between the two countries, but was subsequently also tasked with the border's demarcation. The importance of detailed and accurate definition and delimitation can also be demonstrated in this border dispute case, as it was primarily caused by the vagueness of the colonial treaties concerning the border from the beginning of the 20th century, as well as the inaccuracy or complete lack of attached maps.

The latest stage of the conflict at the border of Ethiopia and Eritrea broke out in 1998, but this wasn't the beginning of the two countries' complex intertwined history. Relevant to this discussion is also the colonization of Eritrea by Italy, which lasted for approximately 60 years in the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century.[6] Italy set up treaties with the Ethiopian emperor in 1900, 1902 and 1908 concerning the boundary between the two territories, however, these were to serve only as a provisional line.[7] Ethiopia and Eritrea were then federated in 1952, and ten years later in 1962, Ethiopia fully annexed Eritrea,[8] making the border delineated in the Italian colonial treaties only an internal administrative line, and functionally a relic boundary.[9] This boundary was reactivated as an international border after Ethiopia's independence in 1993, according to the

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2   Martin Ira Glassner and Chuck Fahrer, *Political Geography* (John Wiley and Sons, 2003), 84.

3   Glassner and Fahrer, *Political Geography,* 75.

4   Glassner and Fahrer, *Political Geography,* 75.

5   Glassner and Fahrer, *Political Geography,* 76.

6   Farah Arbab, "Grappling for Peace: Border Conflict Between Ethiopia and Eritrea," *Strategic* 24, no. 2 (2004): 162–93, https://www.jstor.org/stable/45242529.

7   Arbab, "Grappling for Peace," 165.

8   Arbab, "Grappling for Peace," 165.

9   Jon Abbink, "Briefing: The Eritrean-Ethiopian Border Dispute," *African Affairs* 97, no. 389 (1998): 551–65, https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.afraf.a007970, 555.

customary African principle of respecting colonial boundaries.[10] Following Eritrea's independence, both countries performed provocative military maneuvers on their respective sides of the border, until Eritrean troops entered and occupied the village of Badme in May 1998,[11] resulting in the border war in the following two years. A peace agreement was reached in Algiers in December 2000, where the two countries also bound themselves to resolve the border dispute through the arbitration of a neutral boundary commission.[12] The Eritrea-Ethiopian Boundary Commission (EEBC) was then established and delivered its final verdict in April 2002.[13]

The Commission's work was, as Pratt notes in his work, as much that of an arbitration tribunal as it was that of a traditional boundary commission.[14] The Commission itself consisted of five members from parties not involved in the conflict, two each selected by Eritrea and two by Ethiopia, who then selected the fifth member – the president of the Commission. The EEBC's mission was, according to Article Four of the Algiers Agreement, "to delimit and demarcate the colonial treaty border"[15] on the basis of the pertinent colonial treaties between Ethiopia and Italy from 1900, 1902 and 1908, as well as the relevant international law and the 1964 declaration of the Organization for African Unity, which ruled that borders existing at independence will be respected, thus rendering any shifts in borders through military action after 1993 irrelevant.[16] The mandate of the Boundary Commission was thus fairly narrow, limited to only clarifying the alignment of the existing colonial boundary.[17] The Commission had no jurisdiction to adjust the border between Eritrea and Ethiopia according to considerations of any current human geography, and was particularly discouraged from making its decisions on the principle of equity of considerations.[18] It is also important to note, in regards to the Algiers Agreement, that both Ethiopia and Eritrea agreed by their signing to consider the decision of the Border Commission as binding and final.[19]

There were more constraints to the Commission's work than just the structural considerations of the Algiers Agreement, perhaps the biggest of which

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10   Abbink, "Briefing," 555.

11   Lyons, *The Ethiopian-Eritrean Border Crisis,* 8.

12   Arbab, "Grappling for Peace," 179.

13   Arbab, "Grappling for Peace," 180.

14   Martin Pratt, "A Terminal Crisis? Examining the Breakdown of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Dispute Resolution Process," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 23, no. 4 (September 2006): 329–41, https://doi.org/10.1080/07388940600972669, 330.

15   Lyons, *The Ethiopian-Eritrean Border Crisis,* 7.

16   Philip White, "The Eritrea-Ethiopia Border Arbitration," Review of African Political Economy 29, no. 92 (June 1, 2002): 345–56, https://doi.org/10.1080/03056240208704619.

17   Pratt, "A Terminal Crisis," 334.

18   Terrence Lyons, "The Ethiopia–Eritrea Conflict and the Search for Peace in the Horn of Africa," *Review of African Political Economy* 36, no. 120 (June 1, 2009): 167–80, https://doi.org/10.1080/03056240903068053.

19   Arbab, "Grappling for Peace," 180.

were the main source materials for the border itself – the Italian colonial treaties and their maps. These posed several separate issues, the first of which being the fundamental differences in the ideas around the definition and function of a border at the time of the treaties' signing and today.[20] At the time of the treaties' signing, the areas of the border were uninhabited, therefore not necessitating a very precise delineation and demarcation to administer any populations surrounding the border. The demarcation on the ground thus never happened,[21] and furthermore, the line was considered provisional, and Italy encroached upon this boundary in later years with unilateral maps.[22] Some parts of the border lacked not just demarcation, but the Eastern sector of the border defined in the 1908 treaty was never even properly delineated.[23] The maps that accompanied the treaties, when there were any, were small-scale and largely inaccurate, serving more as rough and unclear sketches of the provisional line between Ethiopia and Italian colonial Eritrea.[24]

Furthermore, the treaties posed the problem of inconsistent nomenclature. The names of geographical landmarks, such as rivers or settlements, didn't just change over time from the early 1900s to the present day, but also varied across the languages of the treaties, with the Amharic version often showing different place names than the English version.[25] One of the largest differences in name interpretations between the two sides lies in the Western sector of the border. Here, up to 80 kilometers lie between the two rivers that Eritrea and Ethiopia respectively identified as the Maieteb from the colonial treaty.[26] Furthermore, what the English version of the treaty calls the "Maieteb" river, its Amharic counterpart identifies as the "Mai Ten", adding to the confusion.[27] On some Italian maps from the time, Maieteb, as a name for a geographical feature in the region, appears even two or three times for separate streams and rivers.[28]

The divergence of place names didn't affect just waterways around the border, but also arguably the most significant and symbolic place for this whole dispute – the Badme village. In most maps, the name Badme doesn't appear in connection with a village at all, only referring to the larger plains area around the settlement. Most maps list a village in a similar location to Badme as a settlement with the name Yirga, although Ethiopian state records list no settlement

20   Jon Abbink, "Badme and the Ethio-Eritrean Border: The Challenge of Demarcation in the Post-War Period," *Africa: Rivista Trimestrale Di Studi e Documentazione Dell'Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente* 58, no. 2 (2003): 219–31, https://www.jstor.org/stable/40761693.
21   Abbink, "Badme and the Ethio-Eritrean Border," 226.
22   Abbink, "Badme and the Ethio-Eritrean Border," 224.
23   White, "The Eritrea-Ethiopia Border," 347.
24   Abbink, "Badme and the Ethio-Eritrean Border," 224
25   White, "The Eritrea-Ethiopia Border," 347.
26   Leenco Lata, "The Ethiopia-Eritrea War," *Review of African Political Economy* 30, no. 97 (2003): 158–84, https://doi.org/10.1080/03056240903068053.
27   White, "The Eritrea-Ethiopia Border," 352.
28   Abbink, "Badme and the Ethio-Eritrean Border," 226.

of such name, only Badme.[29] Abbink posits that perhaps for this reason of name confusion, and because they couldn't with absolute certainty precisely locate the Badme village, the final decision of the EEBC didn't include any mention of Badme by name, despite its symbolic value for the conflict.[30]

Additionally, the Commission's work was significantly bound by time constraints. In the initial Algiers Agreement, the two parties allowed themselves only 45 days to gather evidence and submit their claims to the EEBC, after which the Commission was expected to submit its final decision no later than 6 months after its first meeting.[31] At the time of arbitration, due to the limited time allowed for delimitation, the Commission had yet to acquire large-scale accurate mapping of the border regions, which also contributed to the difficulty of the Commission's work.[32] Aerial photos acquired after the Commission's decision was published revealed that small sections of the border in the central sector would be "manifestly impracticable"[33] and would thus have to be adjusted during the demarcation process. Furthermore, the time constraints didn't allow for the EEBC members' field reconnaissance, which although initially planned, didn't happen due to logistical difficulties.[34]

Finally, while the Commission consisted of lawyers with extensive experience as arbitrators and advocates, and received assistance from the UN cartographer, no geographers served on the Commission.[35] While the Commission was thus well equipped to deal with treaties and international law, it didn't have extensive expertise in map interpretation or in methodologies for the construction of the border itself.[36] Pratt also argues that the absence of a geographer deprived the EEBC of a variety in perspectives.[37]

The constraints and obstacles notwithstanding, the Border Commission presented its final decision on April 13, 2002. It was immediately accepted by both sides and seen as a victory by both Ethiopia and Eritrea.[38] Although both countries lost and gained territory in different sectors in regards to their initial claims, the celebration of victory by both governments happened due to the confusion over which side of the border the Badme village itself fell upon.[39] Immediately after the decision's publishing, both countries interpreted the decision as ruling with Badme on their side. Only after Ethiopia catalogued Badme as its own, officials from the Tigray region, under whose administration Badme would fall,

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29   Abbink, "Badme and the Ethio-Eritrean Border," 222.
30   Abbink, "Badme and the Ethio-Eritrean Border." 226.
31   Pratt, "A Terminal Crisis," 335.
32   Pratt, "A Terminal Crisis," 336.
33   Pratt, "A Terminal Crisis," 336.
34   Pratt, "A Terminal Crisis," 337.
35   Pratt, "A Terminal Crisis," 336.
36   Pratt, "A Terminal Crisis," 337.
37   Pratt, "A Terminal Crisis," 337.
38   Arbab, "Grappling for Peace," 180.
39   Arbab, "Grappling for Peace," 336.

asked the Commission for clarification,[40] and received on March 28, 2003, the statement that while most of the plains area known as Badme fell under Ethiopian rule, the village itself was narrowly on the Eritrean side of the border.[41]

In the meantime, the two sides, led by highly nationalistic and increasingly authoritarian regimes, waged a propaganda battle, attempting to assert themselves as the one who claims the highly symbolic prize of Badme and thus becomes the ultimate winner of the conflict.[42]

Ethiopia then made an appeal to the EEBC asking for considerations for community living during demarcation, but this request was rejected on the grounds that the Commission's decision was final, and the countries were bound by the Algiers Agreement to the decision's full implementation.[43] Ethiopia's prime minister then also sent a letter to the UN Secretary-General, calling for an alternative mechanism of resolution, and issued a five-point peace initiative, as a part of which Ethiopia would accept the EEBC's decision, while also calling for simultaneous peace-building dialogue.[44] This was largely regarded as a means of stalling the demarcation process, as Ethiopia still had de facto military control over Badme village at the time and thus was not opposed to creating a stalemate situation.[45]

As Ethiopia was trying to appeal to the EEBC and the UN, Eritrea unequivocally accepted the Boundary Commission's report and pushed for swift border demarcation, while criticizing Ethiopia for its steps.[46] Although Eritrea lost some ground it previously claimed along the central and eastern sections of the border, the regime considered itself victorious, as the Badme village fell on its side of the boundary line.[47] Although Ethiopia eventually allowed pillar placement in the Eastern sector of the border, Eritrea insisted that no demarcation will take place at all, unless it is guaranteed that all three sectors are simultaneously demarcated in accordance with the EEBC's 2002 decision.

Ethiopia's rejection of the EEBC's decision made it the first country to openly refuse a third-party boundary resolution, as no state had previously challenged a border decided through independent adjudication.[48] This refusal then led to a lengthy stalemate, fueled also by the countries' radically nationalist leaderships, which viewed politics as a zero-sum game and refused any compromise.[49] To this stalemate was also added the inconsistent international attention, under which the countries initially might've felt pressured to sign the Algiers Agree-

40   Lata, "The Ethiopia-Eritrea War," 384.
41   Arbab, "Grappling for Peace," 181.
42   Abbink, "Badme and the Ethio-Eritrean Border," 220.
43   Arbab, "Grappling for Peace," 181.
44   Lyons, "The Ethiopia–Eritrea Conflict," 169.
45   Lyons, "The Ethiopia–Eritrea Conflict," 181.
46   Arbab, "Grappling for Peace," 181.
47   Lyons, "The Ethiopia–Eritrea Conflict," 220.
48   Pratt, "A Terminal Crisis," 333.
49   Lyons, "The Ethiopia–Eritrea Conflict," 169.

ment, but which then quickly disappeared and was merely replaced by the US's allyship with Ethiopia in the region as a part of its War on Terror international policy.[50] The tension between the countries then also manifested through proxy wars in the region, such as in Somalia,[51] and was only resolved a few years ago, in 2018, when an agreement on border demarcation and normalization of diplomatic relations was signed.[52]

All in all, this border dispute shows the potential difficulties which can arise in the border-making process, especially if one of the steps in the process is initially managed poorly and with lackluster accuracy. The working process of the Boundary Commission illustrates the array of issues from unclear nomenclature to insufficient maps, and the reactions of Eritrea and Ethiopia to the Commission's decision showcase how the process of establishing a border can easily end in a stalemate even after a boundary line is clearly defined. It also touches upon the complex legacy of colonial-era policies on postcolonial states, and the international politics and geography of entire regions.

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50   Lyons, "The Ethiopia–Eritrea Conflict," 175.
51   Lyons, "The Ethiopia–Eritrea Conflict," 173-74.
52   Michael Asiedu, "Diplomacy, the Eritrea-Ethiopia Peace Deal and Its Implications," *Global Political Trends Center* (2019), 1–10, https://doi.org/http://www.jstor.com/stable/resrep19344.

HIV Response

Institutional to Governmental Policy

[Drew Carlson]

When it comes to the policies surrounding the security of communities, nations, and individuals, said policies often "perpetuate misconceptions" for the populations most vulnerable.[1] Policy is often a difficult concept for people to comprehend, as it frequently seems to be a thought that has little concrete value. Policies aren't created overnight and usually have to jump through many hoops to have a chance of occurring. However, this process can be sped up by outside pressure, namely a global pandemic that is killing hundreds of thousands of people a year. Another way to cut down the length of the process is to transfer policy from one institution to the next and adapt it to the new environment rather than begin from nothing. Within this paper, I will craft a case study centered around institution and government policies as they relate to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, stemming from the Papers of Michael Stuart Gottlieb collection. I will first articulate security policies and issues as a whole, the ethics and troubles behind them. Then, I will examine the responses of the United States to the HIV/AIDS pandemic through the lenses of institution, race, and morality. Finally, I will spend the bulk of this exercise deconstructing the global responses to the pandemic and comparing these responses to Western ideals. To round out the essay, I will take the time to summarize my findings.

Before beginning, there should be some clarification about the pandemic that swept through nations across the globe. The HIV/AIDS pandemic brought forth "new responsibilities" for higher institutions, such as universities and research laboratories, as well as national governments to address with their grow-

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1   Feki, Shereen El, Tenu Avafia, Tania Martins Fidalgo, Vivek Divan, Charles Chauvel, Mandeep Dhaliwal, and Clifton Cortez, "The Global Commission on HIV and the Law: Recommendations for Legal Reform to Promote Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights," *Reproductive Health Matters* 22, no. 44 (2014): 125–36, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43288371, 127.

ing wealth of knowledge.[2] In 1981, the first case of what would come to be known as HIV/AIDS was reported. Between 1981 and 1995, the pandemic rose to its peak with 3.3 million individuals infected per year. As of 2023, that number has decreased to 1.3 million newly infected individuals per year. Furthermore, 39.9 million people are currently living with HIV, with 38.6 million being 15 years old or older and 1.4 million being under 14 years old. However, the number of new infections has decreased by 60% since its peak.[3] With such a far-reaching pandemic, it would make sense that policy and security have evolved since 1981. Moreover, it would stand to reason that different communities and countries are affected by certain policies in vastly divergent ways. Ergo, a case study surrounding a singular nation or portion of the world, would be of no use to determining the connection between institutional and governmental policies.

First and foremost, security policies have a distinct ethical issue behind them when in conjunction with the humanitarian perspective of a pandemic. To elaborate a bit more, the HIV/AIDS pandemic is close to falling into the category of biosecurity, however the length of time between infection and emergence of symptoms is not considered rapid enough for a biosecurity threat. Yet, the pandemic still needs to be problematized, meaning it needs to be labeled as an issue for the government.[4] The need for problematization stems from the idea of quick and succinct action by governments, something that does not always occur when a disease is not labeled as a biosecurity threat. Ergo, the pandemic was first conceived as a human rights issue before it was recategorized as a security threat. The ethical dilemma comes to the forefront of the conversation when one recognizes that securitizing the disease could lead to political, social, and economic benefits for millions of people. On the other hand, this could also push responses both nationally and internationally toward state institutions rather than civil society.[5] The disease has turned from a public health and development standpoint to a security issue at the behest of the United States and the UN Security Council in response to the pandemic's foothold in Africa.[6] The concern with this push is that labeling HIV/AIDS as a security threat will actually cause people in Western countries to become less interested in helping Africa as it will seem to be more

2   AIDS Policy Recommendations. 1986, MSS 2019-34, carton 1, folder 32, Gottlieb (Michael S.) Papers, UC San Francisco Library: Special Collections. University of California San Francisco, https://calisphere.org/item/9294f0ca-9caf-40f3-b117-46104fdd279a/, 1.
3   "Global HIV & AIDS Statistics - Fact Sheet," *UNAIDS*, 2024, https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/fact-sheet.
4   Ingram, Alan, "Biosecurity and the International Response to HIV/AIDS: Governmentality, Globalisation and Security," *Area* 42, no. 3 (2010): 293–301, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40890883, 296.
5   Elbe, Stefan, "Should HIV/AIDS Be Securitized? The Ethical Dilemmas of Linking HIV/AIDS and Security," *International Studies Quarterly* 50, no. 1 (2006): 119–44, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3693554, 120.
6   Elbe, "Should HIV/AIDS Be Securitized?" 121.

of an occupation than moral assistance.[7] The language of security carries with it the idea or threat and defense, which influences the public to think about a social topic in a certain way. Following this logic, there have been arguments made by military forces that they should have first access to medicine and healthcare given their defense against the threat of AIDS puts them in closer contact to HIV.[8] However, marketing the pandemic as a security issue might cause the rich to get richer, wherein the military officers and elites who already have access to medicine will continue to be the only ones with access rather than those who need it the most.[9] In response to this concept to security, HIV/AIDS should instead be moved into the political sphere of government as many nations have refused to politicize the disease. The crucial difference to articulate when discussing the securitization of HIV/AIDS is that the people affected by the virus are not a security threat, the disease itself is the security concern.[10]

        Furthermore, policy from different institutions in the United States affect one another and change based on extenuating circumstances. Regarding higher institutions, such as universities, the University of California can provide a baseline for the average HIV/AIDS guidelines. According to the policy recommendations set forth by the AIDS Policy Steering Committee, the University is expected to maintain and apply all policies in a "nondiscriminatory manner" to students and faculty under the thumb of any applicable laws.[11] Perhaps of a greater note, the University of California has moral and legal obligations to disseminate all information they have on the spread of HIV and to give a formal notice if they choose to forgo their moral obligations.[12] This recommendation of transparency is not exclusive to higher education, as governments are also expected to maintain an amount of transparency when it comes to the implementation and enforcement of policies. Two of the most concerning policies provided pertain to student housing and staff performance as neither of them mentions a need for consent before disclosing a diagnosis. The University maintains that students living with AIDS may still live on campus with roommates under the agreement of the medical staff, but their roommates must be informed of the student's positive diagnosis without mention of consent. Along the same vein, medical information of a staff member cannot be disclosed to the public but can be shared without the consent of the individual to other staff members if the employee does not meet performance standards.[13] The Committee makes it clear that the health and safety of all

7   Elbe, "Should HIV/AIDS Be Securitized?" 122.
8   Elbe, "Should HIV/AIDS Be Securitized?" 127-129.
9   Elbe, "Should HIV/AIDS Be Securitized?" 130.
10   Elbe, "Should HIV/AIDS Be Securitized?" 132 and 137.
11   AIDS Policy Recommendations, 1986, MSS 2019-34, carton 1, folder 32, Gottlieb (Michael S.) Papers, UC San Francisco Library: Special Collections, University of California San Francisco. https://calisphere.org/item/9294f0ca-9caf-40f3-b117-46104fdd279a/, 1 and 7.
12   AIDS Policy Recommendations, Gottlieb (Michael S.) Papers, 1.
13   AIDS Policy Recommendations, Gottlieb (Michael S.) Papers, 6 and 8.

individuals, with or without a positive test, should be of the utmost importance.[14] Although the University of California appears to adhere to this language of all individuals, it is clear that the U.S. government did not have as much of an interest in this assurance. After the focus groups of HIV/AIDS started to become apparent, there was a notable delay in funding for mostly white gay men and other minorities. These initial years of underfunding allowed the rate of HIV/AIDS to expand exponentially for said minorities.[15] The language behind testing and funding was a difficult hurdle for those looking to receive assistance as only certain groups were eligible for full services (homosexual men, intravenous drug users, women, and men recently in prison). This is coupled by the fact that not all men who had sex with other men considered themselves homosexual, meaning there would be no reason to get checked out. Moreover, there is a disproportionate number of African American men in prison, meaning they are at a greater likelihood than their White counterparts to contract AIDS. This all creates an even larger web of stigma as they are shunned for their diagnosis and imprisonment. As well, AIDS has been associated with queer men since the beginning and that makes it even more stigmatized in the African American community because that diagnosis serves as evidence that the community is pulling away from their African roots and being integrated into White culture immorally.[16] Along the exploration of race and ethnicity, different communities had divergent responses to the help they were offered no matter how little that help was. African Americans in New York, California, Florida, and Texas are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS as those living with the disease are greater than the number of African Americans in the population. Decreases in non-Latino white cases coincide with an increase of African American cases of HIV.[17] This can all be tied to the social barriers that hider individuals from receiving Medicare or AIDS Drug Assistance Program, including misinformation, refusal of testing, "distrust of government", and stigma.[18] Though, all of this isn't to say that the U.S. government failed to develop policies to benefit those living with HIV/AIDS. The Health and Human Services Department developed a list of core indicators for the disease and put together a complex way to monitor treatment of individuals even if they went to differently funded insti-

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14   AIDS Policy Recommendations, Gottlieb (Michael S.) Papers, 10.

15   Collins O. Airhihenbuwa, J. DeWitt Webster, Titilayo Oladosu Okoror, Randy Shine, and Neena Smith-Bankhead, "HIV/AIDS and the African-American Community: Disparities of Policy and Identity," *Phylon* (1960-) 50, no. 1/2 (2002): 23–46, https://doi.org/10.2307/4150000, 27-28.

16   Collins et al, "HIV/AIDS and the African-American Community," 28-29 and 31-32.

17   Morin, Stephen F., Sohini Sengupta, Myrna Cozen, T. Anne Richards, Michael D. Shriver, Herminia Palacio, and James G. Kahn, "Responding to Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Use of HIV Drugs: Analysis of State Policies," *Public Health Reports* (1974-) 117, no. 3 (2002): 263–72, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4598748, 266.

18   Morin et al, "Responding to Racial and Ethnic Disparities," 267.

tutions as all of these businesses reported back to the HHS.[19] But throughout it all, Americans still found it onerous to support homosexuals on any grounds other than civil rights. The HIV/AIDS pandemic did not assist the queer community in finding moral ground to stand on within the country.[20]

Moreover, the global responses to the HIV/AIDS pandemic have been a vast array of rankings for the most important aspect of the pandemic to address. In the broadest sense, the United Nations fashioned the Global Commission on HIV and the Law to review laws and policies that "criminalize" people living with the disease, allow or reprehend violence and discrimination, assist or hamper access to treatment, and pertain to young people in regards to HIV.[21] The Commission found that countries that counteracted HIV/AIDS with education and health systems saw better outcomes than those who focused on anti-HIV responses with regard to the criminal justice system. As well, the Commission emphasized that merely reforming policies on paper was not enough, and policy practices also needed to be changed.[22] The biggest point of contention from the Commission's report appears to be about the recommendation for the decriminalization of consensual adult sex work, although the UN made it clear that this did not extend to human trafficking.[23] The decriminalization of sex work has been particularly vital to Zambia as authorities began to blame sex workers in 2004 for the spread of HIV/AIDS on the national level. This has marked a change between arguing prostitution causes the spread of HIV/AIDS to prostitution being a disease itself.[24] The Zambian government has set curfew legislation into action that is said to apply to all citizens, though it affects people based on race, gender, and class differently. Under these curfew laws, police officers threaten detention in order to "extort and sexually coerce" women.[25] The United States' negative position on sex work can be named one of the main reasons behind Zambia's violent response to prostitution as the United States has been particularly vocal in the Commission about

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19   Valdiserri, Ronald O., Andrew D. Forsyth, Vera Yakovchenko, and Howard K. Koh, "Measuring What Matters: Development of Standard HIV Core Indicators Across the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services," *Public Health Reports* (1974-) 128, no. 5 (2013): 354–59, http://www.jstor.org/stable/23646554, 357.

20   Ruel, Erin, and Richard T. Campbell, "Homophobia and HIV/AIDS: Attitude Change in the Face of an Epidemic," *Social Forces* 84, no. 4 (2006): 2167–78, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3844494, 2168 and 2175.

21   Feki, Shereen El, Tenu Avafia, Tania Martins Fidalgo, Vivek Divan, Charles Chauvel, Mandeep Dhaliwal, and Clifton Cortez, "The Global Commission on HIV and the Law: Recommendations for Legal Reform to Promote Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights," *Reproductive Health Matters* 22, no. 44 (2014): 125–36, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43288371, 126.

22   Feki et al, "The Global Commission on HIV and the Law," 127 and 132.

23   Feki et al, "The Global Commission on HIV and the Law," 129.

24   Crago, Anna-Louise, "'Bitches Killing the Nation': Analyzing the Violent State-Sponsored Repression of Sex Workers in Zambia, 2004–2008," *Signs* 39, no. 2 (2014): 365–81, https://doi.org/10.1086/673087, 367.

25   Crago, "'Bitches Killing the Nation'." 369-370.

the moral ruin of prostitution.[26] India has also invoked a strategy against prostitution under the guise of thwarting the spread of HIV/AIDS. The government has set up funding for prostitutions rather than setting up a system of rehabilitation for them to find other jobs and refuses to acknowledge prostitution as "work" in the eyes of the law.[27] Yet, not all nations are focused on this criminalization of sex work. Cuba has insisted on a top-down approach that begins at government-back medical institutions through education, hospitals, clinics, to the home. This is an extensive geographic approach to "health and social monitoring".[28] In Belize, however, the healthcare system has been unable to separate itself from political philosophies and the political body cannot sunder itself from medical philosophies. This has created an environment where the morality of HIV/AIDS has run rampant.[29] Belize is not the only country that has been pushed to the side for international assistance throughout the pandemic. A sizable portion of Africa has also received a severely delayed effort from the international community. Without this assistance, the disease continues to serve as a vector for stigmatization of marginalized and oppressed populations.[30] The HIV/AIDS pandemic has called into question human rights since its offset. Should hospitals and medical professionals be able to disclose the diagnosis of patients without their consent? To what extent do those with the disease have individual freedom to continue living their lives? These questions are compounded by the disconnect between Western and Sub-Saharan African prevention efforts and community culture.[31] The highly individualized and voluntary version of HIV testing that sprouted in the West is not as easily transferred to sub-Saharan Africa, where caretaking is very community involved, and HIV affects the general public at a greater rate than in the West.[32] In total, the biggest disconnect has been between trying to adhere to humanitarian and moral principles while also attempting to administer proper care and treatment for HIV/AIDS.[33]

To sum, institutional and governmental policies can be articulated from case studies throughout the world with the ways they connect to the larger time period. These policies originate with the morality of categorizing a pandemic as

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26   Crago, "'Bitches Killing the Nation'," 374-375.

27   Chhabra, Rami, "National AIDS Control Programme: A Critique," *Economic and Political Weekly* 42, no. 2 (2007): 103–8, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4419129, 105.

28   Pope, Cynthia, "Therapeutic Imaginaries in the Caribbean: Competing Approaches to HIV/AIDS Policy in Cuba and Belize." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 102, no. 5 (2012): 1157–64, http://www.jstor.org/stable/23275590, 1159.

29   Pope, "Therapeutic Imaginaries in the Caribbean," 1162.

30   Dilger, Hansjörg, "AIDS in Africa: Broadening the Perspectives on Research and Policy-Making," *Africa Spectrum* 36, no. 1 (2001): 5–16, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40174870, 5-6.

31   Dilger, "AIDS in Africa," 7 and 10.

32   Angotti, Nicole, "Testing Differences: The Implementation of Western HIV Testing Norms in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 14, no. 3/4 (2012): 365–78, http://www.jstor.org/stable/23265664, 366.

33   Angotti, "Testing Differences," 369.

a humanitarian or security issue, morality being a force that already diminishes the assistance certain groups receive. Each country had a different stance on HIV/AIDS security and each community experienced these policies through a divergent lens. The racial, ethnic, and moral makeup of marginalized groups compared to those in power distinctly alters the policies that impact each individual, meaning certain procedures are concentrated on groups that may be hindered by these policies.

The Social, Economic, and Political Landscape of Baton Rouge in 1850

[Emilce Fabian]

"Let us foster home enterprise—let us encourage home industry," this call to action echoed through Baton Rouge in 1850, a small yet rapidly developing medium-sized town in Louisiana driven by economic growth, social expansion, and the consolidation of a Southern, slaveholding society.[1] In 1850, Baton Rouge's shifting social landscape reflected a period of intense national turmoil, debate, and division across American politics, society, and economy, influenced by major events like the introduction of the Compromise of 1850, the Nashville Convention of Southern States, and the passing of the Compromise. In this research paper, I will explore the social, economic, and political context of Baton Rouge in 1850, examining how these dynamics positioned the town within the broader transformations unfolding in the United States.

To explore these issues, I will examine evidence from the 1850 census, the slave schedules, the local newspaper Baton Rouge Gazette, and other primary sources from the period. After evaluating my sources, I will first examine the demographic landscape of Baton Rouge in 1850. Next, I will explore the social reality of women in Baton Rouge, analysing their roles within the household and the broader societal expectations of the time. I will then turn to Baton Rouge's economic landscape, focusing on its industrial expansion. This will be followed by a discussion on the local sense of nationalism and the search for economic independence from the North. Finally, I will analyse the institution of slavery, emphasizing Baton Rouge's position within the national debates on slavery.

I first collected data from the 1850 published census, which provided an overview of the demographics of Baton Rouge and the state of Louisiana. Using the manuscript census available on Ancestry.com, I then created a simple random

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1   "The future," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, September 21, 1850, 2.

sample of the Baton Rouge population. I began by locating the manuscript, which listed a total of 523 families, and calculated a sample rate of 20. For my sample of 25 households, I recorded data from the first family number 20 through the last family number 520. This included information about the household head's name, age, sex, race, occupation, real estate value, and place of birth, along with details about the spouse's name, age, occupation, number of children, children's occupations, and household size. Since enslaved individuals were not included in the general census and were recorded separately, I used the Slave Schedules from AncestryLibrary.com. By matching the household head's name and the Baton Rouge location, I reviewed each family in my sample. Only 6 households owned slaves, and I recorded the total number of enslaved individuals along with their ages. For my newspaper research, I selected the Baton Rouge Gazette. Initially, the Baton Rouge Gazette released its first issue in 1819 as a four-page weekly newspaper, with two pages in French and two in English. However, by the 1840s, English had become the established language of publication. The paper contained news related to politics and commerce, along with advertisements for local businesses, schools, and entertainment. Politically, the Gazette was sympathetic to the Whig Party and supported slaveholders, frequently publishing runaway slave notices. In 1856, the Gazette merged with the Baton Rouge Weekly Comet to form the Weekly Gazette and Comet.

In 1850, Baton Rouge was a growing medium-sized town with a complex social structure shaped by its agricultural economy, reliance on enslaved labour, and significant population growth. Situated along the Mississippi River, Baton Rouge, Louisiana was originally inhabited by Native American tribes such as the Houma, Bayougoula, and Acolapissa. It was conquered by French explorers in 1699 and later ceded to England through the Treaty of Paris in 1763. According to the 1850 census, Baton Rouge had a population of around 3,905 people, divided into 2,562 white people and 1,343 Black people, including both free African Americans and slaves.[2] In Baton Rouge, the population was predominantly male, with 1,441 white men and 1,121 white women.[3] The free African American population was relatively small, consisting of 112 men and 139 women.[4] Among the enslaved population, there were approximately 528 male slaves and 564 female slaves.[5] Therefore, Baton Rouge had a predominantly male population among white individuals, while the enslaved population was predominantly female. In a broader context, Baton Rouge reflects the demographics of the state, which at the time had approximately 126,917 white settlers born in Louisiana, 60,641 born

2   United States Census Bureau, "Seventh Census of the United States 1850- Louisiana," (Washington, DC, Public Printer, 1853), https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1853/dec/1850a.html.

3   Seventh Census of the United States 1850, United States Census Bureau, Louisiana.

4   Seventh Census of the United States 1850, United States Census Bureau, Louisiana.

5   Seventh Census of the United States 1850, United States Census Bureau, Louisiana.

outside the state, and 67,308 born in foreign countries.[6] Louisiana experienced significant population growth in the 1850s as is show in figure 1, particularly among white settlers and enslaved individuals. According to the census, Louisiana's white population grew from 34,311 in 1810 to 158,457 in 1840 and reached 255,491 by 1850.[7] This represented a growth of 644.63% from 1810 to 1850, and a 61.24% increase from 1840 to 1850. The enslaved population also grew exponentially, from 34,660 in 1810 to 168,452 in 1840, and 244,809 in 1850.[8] The enslaved population grew by approximately 607.6% from 1810 to 1840 and 45.3% from 1840 to 1850.
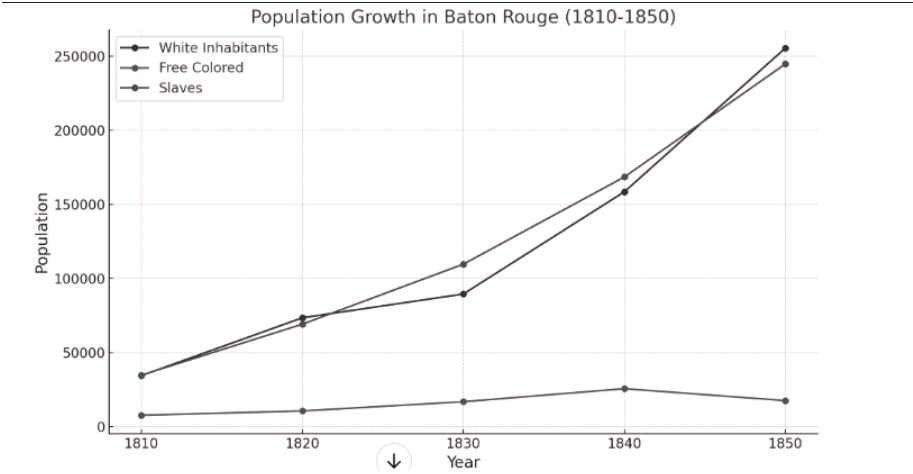
Figure 1. Population Growth in Louisiana (1810-1850). Source: Seventh Census of the United States 1850, United States Census Bureau, Louisiana.[9]

Despite limited newspaper coverage of women's daily lives in Baton Rouge, household data and media references reveal the varied roles and social standings of women, from heads of households to community organizers and participants in local education. The sample of the 25 households shows that 6 of the households were headed by women.[10] These women, typically older and with multiple children, represented different social classes and therefore realities. For example, Eulalia Hende owned $2,000 in real estate and four enslaved individu-

6   Seventh Census of the United States 1850, United States Census Bureau, Louisiana.
7   Seventh Census of the United States 1850, United States Census Bureau, Louisiana.
8   Seventh Census of the United States 1850, United States Census Bureau, Louisiana.
9   Seventh Census of the United States 1850, United States Census Bureau, Louisiana.
10   Ancestry Library, *U.S. Federal Census Collection*, accessed November 12, 2024, https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/records?recordId=2677362&collectionId=8054&tid=&pid=&queryId=5b45bd8d-a98a-4d9e-8470-8d6544f71174&_phsrc=bdN27&_phstart=successSource.

als, while Edg Plunket, a Black woman, owned no real estate and had four young children.[11] The Baton Rouge Gazette provided little local commentary on women's experiences in Baton Rouge but frequently published articles from women's magazines, suggesting that women were an important audience for the paper. These publications typically focused on women's roles within the household and their participation as primary consumers of beauty products. Despite this narrow portrayal, evidence suggests that women were active members of the community within the boundaries of religion and their home. For instance, "the ladies of the Presbyterian Church" were responsible for organizing and raising funds for the construction of a new church, with their efforts described as an "unusual degree of brilliancy."[12] More evidence of social participation comes in the form of multiple advertisements from the Baton Rouge College which offered seminaries for the "education of young Ladies" focusing mainly on different languages and artistic courses.[13] For example, there classes of "French, Latin, German, and Italian," as well as classes of "music, drawing and painting."[14] In summary, women's roles in Baton Rouge were largely constrained by an ideology similar to that advocated by Catharine Beecher, which emphasized women's duty to embody "peace and love" and suggested that "intellectual advantages" should reinforce their prescribed societal roles.[15]

In 1850, Baton Rouge's economic landscape was deeply intertwined with the institution of slavery and marked by ambitions for industrial expansion, infrastructure development, and self-sufficiency. Across Louisiana, the 1850 census recorded a total of 77,168 free employed individuals.[16] In contrast, there were 145,892 enslaved people between the ages of 15 and 60 listed as part of the workforce.[17] In East and West Baton Rouge alone, the enslaved working population within this age range numbered 6,901.[18] The free employed individuals were distributed across various occupations, including the biggest ones: 12,978 laborers, 11,697 farmers, and 6,471 planters.[19] For enslaved people, it is impossible to determine in which area of production they were used, whether as farmers or laborers. The sample of 25 households in Baton Rouge reflects these trends, showing a population of carpenters, clerks, merchants, and farmers, indicative of the region's agricultural and trade-cantered economy.[20] The Baton Rouge Gazette, as

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11   Federal Census Collection.

12   "The Ladies of the Presbyterian Church," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, February 23, 1850, 3.

13   "Baton Rouge College, La," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, June 8, 1850, 4.

14   "Baton Rouge College, La," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, April 6, 1850, 3.

15   Catherine Beecher, Essay, "Duty of American Females" (Philadelphia, 1837), 241, 243.

16   United States Census Bureau, "Seventh Census of the United States 1850- Louisiana" (Washington, DC, Public Printer, 1853), https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1853/dec/1850a.html.

17   Seventh Census of the United States 1850, United States Census Bureau, Louisiana.

18   Seventh Census of the United States 1850, United States Census Bureau, Louisiana.

19   Seventh Census of the United States 1850, United States Census Bureau, Louisiana.

20   Federal Census Collection.

a Whig newspaper, highlighted the town's economic growth and emphasized the importance of "encouraging home enterprise," urging readers to prioritize "home stocks before filling city orders."[21] Advertisements reveal a town that imported many new products yet increasingly focused on supporting local small businesses with offerings in categories such as "elegant and light goods," "heavy goods," and "plantation supplies."[22] Like other Southern cities, Baton Rouge aspired to become "commercially independent," and viewed the Plank Roads project as just the start point for it.[23] In 1850, a group of "many citizens" initiated the construction of the Plank Roads, also known as the "farmer's railroad."[24] This project, led by "public-spirited citizens," promised a "new, cheap, and speedy" way of connecting Baton Rouge to surrounding areas and facilitating communication with the interior.[25] This infrastructure project represented the town's aspirations to be a key link in the South's trade network, aiming to boost cotton production to "fifteen thousand bales of cotton" annually.[26] For a growing Baton Rouge, the Plank Roads were an "incalculable" opportunity to increase their production and the system of slavery, offering the way for increased trade, prosperity, and a step toward the economic self-sufficiency so valued by its citizens.[27] The new roads enabled the efficient movement of "wagons, carts, and all vehicles."[28] Providing a system for transporting cotton and goods and promising a more united, efficient, and "well-managed plantation" that would drive the town's anticipated growth, bringing in "new resources and energies."[29]

Baton Rouge's economic aspirations for local manufacturing in 1850 reflected a deep-rooted desire for Southern independence and resistance to Northern influence, intertwining local industry with Southern identity and nationalist sentiment. In an anonymous local commentary from the Baton Rouge Gazette, a local resident stressed the need to "create a home market" and "manufacture [their] cotton at home" rather than send it to Massachusetts in the north.[30] These economic aspirations were more than just a business goals, they were deeply tied to local pride and Southern identity, as the reliance on Northern markets was seen by the Baton Rouge population as an imbalance that placed local cotton growers at a disadvantage. The growing threat of a "sectional contest" between the North and South heightened this sentiment, with Southern residents urging the South to "resist" Northern influence and seeing dependence on Northern manufactur-

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21   "The Fall Season," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, September 21, 1850, 2.
22   "The Fall Season," 2.
23   "The Future," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, September 21, 1850, 2.
24   "Plank Road meeting," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, August 24, 1850, 2.
25   "Plank Roads- The Advantages," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, June 8, 1850, 2.
26   "The Prank Road Meeting," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, August 24, 1850, 2.
27   "Plank Roads- The Advantages," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, June 8, 1850, 2.
28   "Plank Roads- The Advantages," 2.
29   "Plank Roads- The Advantages," 2.
30   "The Future," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, September 21, 1850, 2.

ers as a severe disadvantage.[31] Support for "the policy of home manufacturing" became part of a broader movement toward Southern economic independence, perceived to shift the "balance of political power" and decrease reliance on Northern markets.[32] Additionally, this strategy was viewed as a way to strengthen the institution of slavery, providing the South with the "enterprise and public spirit" to declare newly acquired Mexican lands as "slave territory."[33] The aim was to establish "Southern manufacturing that should be put in permanent operation" and that could shield the South from instability with the North.[34] However, this is not an outline of the social context of the time, Baton Rouge as a community was trying to create a strong sense of belonging and nationalism. For example, in 1850, the celebration of Washington's birthday was a key and essential date for the community, a way of celebrating a "great and glorious republic" by remembering the founder.[35] They refer to the national reality as a moment in which the "political elements [were] portending" and a moment in which the union was "threatened with disunion," with nationalism as the exclusive solution.[36] Baton Rouge's evolving social, economic, and political landscape in 1850 was deeply connected to broader transformations across the United States. Locally, Baton Rouge's investment in projects like the Plank Roads exemplified a strong drive for infrastructure to support "home industries" and promote Southern manufacturing.[37] The market revolution of the 1840s had intensified national debates, particularly between Jacksonian Democrats and Whigs. The Baton Rouge Gazette, aligned with the Whig Party, echoed the ideas of Alexander Hamilton, who emphasized the "necessity of enlarging" domestic commerce and "encouraging manufactures."[38] Baton Rouge, experiencing a period of rapid growth, saw in Whig principles of economic "freedom and independence" the promise of a "lucrative and prosperous" future.[39] While Hamilton viewed manufacturing as essential for "independence and security" of the entire Union, Southern Whigs—also those in Baton Rouge—advocated manufacturing to protect and "absolutely control" the Southern economy and way of life.[40]

To understand Baton Rouge in 1850, it is essential to recognize how the deeply embedded institution of slavery, the exclusion of free African Americans, and an emerging Southern identity shaped the town's landscape. A closer examination of the household data reveals how slavery operated on a personal, day-to-day

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31   "The Future," 2.
32   "The Future," 2.
33   "The Future," 2.
34   "The Future," 2.
35   "Twenty- Second Day of February," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, February 16, 1850, 2.
36   "Twenty- Second Day of February," 2.
37   "The Future," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, September 21, 1850, 2.
38   Alexander Hamilton, "Report to Congress on the Subject of Manufactures," *Library of Congress*, December 5, 1850, 1.
39   Alexander Hamilton, 4.
40   "The Future," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, September 21, 1850, 2.

level in the town. The sample of 25 households showed that 6 owned slaves, with holdings ranging from 2 to 18 individuals.[41] Most of the enslaved people were young, with the oldest being 51 and the youngest only 2 years old.[42] The majority were women in their twenties, yet 9 enslaved individuals were under the age of 10, indicating a larger, more generalized trend in the enslaved population.[43] Advertisements in the Baton Rouge Gazette from 1850 often listed "negro slaves" for sale, with some properties offered "with or without negroes."[44] In a estate sale in April 1850, multiple enslaved people were sold for "fifty dollars cash on each head," with ages ranging from 5 to 52 years old.[45] The ad referred to them simply as "negro woman," "negro man," "negro girl," or "negro boy," underscoring their commodification.[46] Although enslaved people were not named in the 1850 census, they were given names in advertisements, helping with the sale process.

On the other hand, free Black individuals, despite their presence in society, were viewed with suspicion, referred to as "strange negroes" or "wrongdoers" who warranted the "strict attention" of Baton Rouge's citizens.[47] This attitude reflected the broader Southern perspective, as Manisha Sinha notes in her book, where all free African Americans were regarded as a "potential security risk."[48] Consequently, slavery was not just a political issue; it was an economic and social cornerstone, fuelling intense discussion among the people of Baton Rouge. On June 22, the Baton Rouge Gazette published an open invitation for citizens to address the "slavery question," a national debate that was deemed worthy of the "attention of every patriot."[49] As a slave-holding state, Baton Rouge had much at stake, both to gain and to lose, in this national conflict.

The debates over runaway slaves, the Nashville Convention, and the passage of the Compromise of 1850 illustrate Baton Rouge's clear position within the national debate and conflict over slavery. Publications in the Baton Rouge Gazette reflects a supportive and optimistic approach to the Compromise of 1850, viewing it as a means to "give effect to the constitutional provisions" that the Union originally embodied in relation to the institution of slavery.[50] From their perspective, the compromise would restore the "wisdom" that once united North and South, which they argued had been disrupted by "fanatics of the North," re-

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41   Federal Census Collection.
42   Federal Census Collection.
43   Federal Census Collection.
44   "Valuable Sugar Plantation and Negroes for sale," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, February 16, 1850, 1.
45   "Succession Sale," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, April 13, 1850, 3.
46   "Succession Sale," 3.
47   "Negroes," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, May 4, 1850, 2.
48   Manisha Sinha, "Counterrevolution of Slavery: Politics & Ideology in Antebellum South Carolina," (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), Ch. 1, 15.
49   "The Washington Union," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, June 8, 1850, 2.
50   "The Compromise Committee," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, May 11, 1850, 2.

sponsible for an "anomaly" threatening the Union's harmony.[51] Sinha highlights how the South was forging a "distinct national identity" based on the belief that slavery was the "natural condition of labour," where the "free north was more alien" that any other slave country.[52] The Gazette voices hope for "peace and fraternal concord" and urges Louisiana's senator not to overlook the "obvious sentiments" of his Baton Rouge constituents.[53] Despite the senator's Southern Democratic allegiance, the Gazette's Whig alignment reflects a strong Unionist bias. A local commentary titled The Prophetic Statesman suggests that the acquisition of new territories prompted the South to "calculate the value of the Union," leading to potential harm rather than benefits.[54] The article even describes the new lands as a "Pandora's box of mischief."[55] This indicates that Baton Rouge, or at least the Gazette's target readership, leaned towards Unionism in this debate, referring to radical positions as those of "traitors of the South and the traitors of the North."[56] In analysing the speech given by Louisiana's senator in Baton Rouge, the Gazette underscores the idea that "the North is not the enemy" and that both regions are "fighting battles against the fanatics."[57] In fact, a local news article from September 14 describes the town's celebration of the Compromise's passage with "one hundred guns fired" in support of the Union.[58]

However, the town's position on the Union was highly more complex. While Baton Rouge defended Unionist principles, its citizens were also ready to "defend and protect" the institution of slavery, advising the North to "attend to its own problems" and "draw the line," promising that if the North continued interfering, they would reciprocate.[59] Therefore, the Gazette supported the Nashville Convention, emphasizing the need for a "united and decided stand" by the South defending slavery.[60] However, the Gazette cautioned against organizing themselves as a "Southern Convention" that could deepen divisions with the North.[61] The publication urged delegates not to pursue measures that would generate resentment and disunion. As Sinha argues in The Counterrevolution of Slavery, Southern nationalism was "based on the defence of racial slavery" as a "superior way of ordering society."[62] According to this view, "slaveholders' right to prop-

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51   "Slavery Question- The Union," *Baton-Rouge Gazette,* March 9, 1850, 2.
52   Manisha Sinha, "Counterrevolution of Slavery: Politics & Ideology in Antebellum South Carolina," (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), Ch. 8, 222.
53   "The Compromise," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, May 11, 1850, 2.
54   "The Prophetic Statesman," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, September 7, 1850, 2.
55   "The Prophetic Statesman," 2.
56   "From Washington," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, September 14, 1850, 2.
57   "Speech of Senator Down," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, November 30, 1850, 1.
58   "ONE HUNDRED GUNS! The union now and forever," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, September 14, 1850, 2.
59   "Slavery Question- The Union," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, March 9, 1850, 2.
60   "Nashville Convention," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, May 11, 1850, 2.
61   "The Nashville Convention," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, June 8, 1850, 2.
62   Manisha Sinha, "Counterrevolution of Slavery: Politics & Ideology in Antebellum South Carolina," (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), Ch. 3, 63.

erty" outweighed, the "slaves' right to liberty."[63]This viewpoint was echoed by Louisiana's Democratic senator, who described that the South as being "deprived of much of her property," grieving over the loss property and the "penalty paid" for those attempting to "rescue" their slaves.[64] For this reason, the Baton Rouge Gazette found the Compromise of 1850 compelling, hoping it would provide protections for slaveholders struggling with frequent escapes to the North.[65] By October, the Gazette celebrated the Compromise's "productive results," reporting the recovery of several runaway slaves.[66] Although they acknowledged that some were attempting to flee to Canada, they suggested these individuals would have a "better future" if they resumed their "proper social positions."[67] It's impossible to know exactly what the people of Baton Rouge were thinking at this time, but it is clear that slavery, as a labour system, was deeply embedded in their daily lives and in their visions for the future.

      In examining Baton Rouge's social, economic, and political landscape in 1850, we see a community deeply shaped by the national divisions and challenges that defined the United States at this time. The institution of slavery and the exclusionary social structure underscore the contradictions of a society building toward prosperity while denying freedom and equality to many of its inhabitants. Baton Rouge's evolving role in national debates around slavery, industry, and Southern identity illustrates how even a small, growing town could mirror, and contribute to, the broader tensions threatening the Union. In the end, Baton Rouge's story in 1850 offers a lens into the forces pulling the country both toward prosperity and, ultimately, toward conflict.

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63   Manisha Sinha, Ch. 3, 89.
64   "Speech of Senator Down," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, November 30, 1850, 1.
65   "The Compromise Committee," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, May 11, 1850, 2.
66   "The Compromise Committee," page 2.
67   "Fugitive Slave Law- The Factionists," *Baton-Rouge Gazette*, October 19, 1850, 2.

[Feminist Examinations]

Manipulation, Monstrocities, and the Male Gaze

Christina Ramberg and the Female Form

[BENNETT MCKINNEY]

Christina Ramberg was an influential Chicago painter and a notable figure among the Chicago Imagists, a group of legendary Chicago artists who often exhibited work together and were known for their colorful, comic book-style imagery and the way they toyed with the human form in their work.[1] Like many of her Imagist peers, Ramberg studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, later becoming the first woman to be the chair of the painting department.[2] Most popular are her paintings of "stylized fragments of the female form."[3] Like other Imagist artists, Ramberg's works find "new connotations from the shredded iconography of commercial media and pulp publication" through depicting the human form.[4] In her work and in her life, Ramberg indeed demonstrates a fascination for the human form, especially focused on the female body. She had collections and archives of comic books, magazine clippings, advertisements, medical illustrations, photographs, dolls, and more media often featuring the female body.[5] From her collection, she would fill scrapbooks with images cut and pasted onto the pages, and her sketchbook was rife with repeated sketches exploring the same forms meticulously.[6] This obsession with form dominates her paintings and informs the greater meaning behind them; Ramberg's work asserts that women have been reduced to mere objects that society regards with

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1   Rosie Cooper and Sarah McCrory, *Chicago Imagists. 1960s-1970s* (London: Hayward Gallery Publishing, 2019), 17.

2   The Art Institute of Chicago "Christina Ramberg," 2024, https://www.artic.edu/artists/36316/christina-ramberg.

3   The Art Institute of Chicago, "Christina Ramberg."

4   John Corbett et al., *Private Eye: The Imagist Impulse in Chicago Art* (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields, 2021), 25.

5   Cooper and McCrory, *Chicago Imagists*, 97.

6   Cooper and McCrory, *Chicago Imagists*, 97.

monstrous disgust, restrictive cinches, poking hands, and leering eyes.

Before Ramberg and the Chicago Imagists, came the renowned "Monster Roster." In his essay on this group, John Corbett remarks that "one can find lingering echoes of the Monsters in the work of [the] subsequent" Imagists.[7] Corbett could definitely be referring to Ramberg who possessed a similar fixation for creating monstrosities in her work as well as the same "dedication to the figure" that the Monster Roster came to be known for.[8] Even before the Roster, Chicago art has had a long affinity for the monstrosity that remains connected with Ramberg. Jennifer Jane Marshall discusses the pre-Monster Roster artists in her essay "Routes to Modernism" such as legendary artist Ivan Albright whose work as a war medic informed his noxious rendering of flesh in *Into the World There Came a Soul Called Ida*.[9] This depiction of eerily discolored skin seems to be emulated decades later by Ramberg in works like *Rose's Woe* and *Shadow Panel* in which the flesh is gray or blemished. In her essay "Body Partings," Riva Lehrer notes that Ramberg's figures are not simply human; they seem to be monstrous in configuration. Afterall, her paintings contain disembodied limbs and hands, and the women themselves are often faceless, limbless, and headless.[10] These small abnormalities and deviations in the human form are all it takes for Ramberg's figures to become monstrous. Ramberg herself was unconventionally tall for a woman, standing over six feet in stature, often dealing with stares and offhand remarks about her height from strangers.[11] Lehrer notes that those whose appearances are outside the norm are forced to live with this sort of judgment; their bodies are "split into parts: the lived subjective self, and the self that is mirrored back ... by others."[12] With her strange forms, Ramberg tackles this duality. The women in her paintings are made from groups of body parts connected in a Frankenstein fashion. Ramberg was known to collect images from medical journals, enamored by the disfigured body parts, the sutures, the bandages, the diseased skin, and the way they were drawn "so smoothly [and] caressedly [sic]."[13] These elements can all be observed in Ramberg's work from the detached feet in *Air Flow Pump* to the bandaged body in *Troubled Sleeve*. Along with other pieces from her collection, these works seem to imply that even small imperfections and abnormalities in the female body cause it to be seen as horrific or even monstrous.

7   John Corbett, "Bleak House: Chicago's Monster Artists," in *Monster Roster: Existentialist Art in Postwar Chicago*, ed. John Corbett et al. (The Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago, 2016), 47.

8   Corbett, "Bleak House," 38.

9   Jennifer Jane Marshall, "Routes to Modernism: 1914-1943," in *Art in Chicago: A History from the Fire to Now*, ed. Maggie Taft and Robert Cozzolino (University of Chicago Press, 2018), 82.

10   Riva Lehrer, "Body Partings," in *Christina Ramberg: A Retrospective*, ed. Thea Liberty Nichols and Mark Pascale (The Art Institute of Chicago, 2024), 74. 11. Lehrer, "Body Partings," 75.

11   Lehrer, "Body Partings", 75.

12   Lehrer, "Body Partings," 75-76.

13   "False Image," *Hairy Who & The Chicago Imagists*, directed by Leslie Buchbinder (2014; Pentimenti Productions 2014), https://vimeo.com/groups/238110/videos/78074777.

Ramberg's works are deeply influenced by a childhood experience she had, watching her mother getting ready for special occasions. She was horrified and fascinated by the undergarments her mother wore, especially by how they would contort and compress her mother's body.[14] She remembers thinking "this is what men want women to look like."[15] This sentiment is echoed by Wendy Burns-Ardolino's research in her book *Jiggle: (re)Shaping American Women*. In interviews and surveys, Burns-Ardolino found that women feel obligated to wear such restricting, uncomfortable shapewear to formal events as if there is an unspoken, social dress code.[16] Burns-Ardolino argues that this implicit requirement reduces women to a cinched, curved, thin-waisted, full-chested, "ideal" feminine figure.[17] In other words a woman is nothing more than her body, and this idea is central to Ramberg's work. In fact, the majority, if not the entirety, of her paintings are exploring the manipulation of the female form.[18] She once described the way she represents women's bodies as "constraining, restraining, reforming, hurting, compressing, binding, transforming a lumpy shape into a clean smooth line."[19] Her paintings of waists tightly hugged by corsetry question "how women shape their bodies to achieve a certain look."[20] In her 1968 multi-panel *Hair*, manicured hands touch, caress, and control women's hair from behind. Notably, these are not men's hands but women's, suggesting that women themselves have lost touch with their bodies seeking to conform to patriarchal ideals by treating themselves as an object to be handled and restrained. Ramberg further manipulates form through omission; her works are often focused on a singular part of the body that exists within the frame. In some of Ramberg's paintings from the early 1970's like *Black Widow* or *Delicate Decline*, the aggressively cropped female body becomes an unrecognizable abstraction, a geometrically curved shape before a gray void. These paintings clearly demonstrate the overarching thesis of Ramberg's oeuvre; a woman's body is an object to be shaped and observed.

Clearly, the women in Ramberg's works are less than women in actuality; they are objects. Throughout her career, Ramberg aimed to depict the objectification of women. The absence of faces in her work achieves this end very clearly as it effectively removes any autonomy or individuality from these figures.[21] This forces the viewer to grapple with several, unsettling questions espe-

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14   "False Image," *Hairy Who & The Chicago Imagists*, directed by Leslie Buchbinder.

15   "False Image," *Hairy Who & The Chicago Imagists*, directed by Leslie Buchbinder.

16   Wendy Burns-Ardolino, *Jiggle: (re)Shaping American Women* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books. 2007), 25, EBSCOhost.

17   Burns-Ardolino, *Jiggle*, 26.

18   Cooper and McCrory, *Chicago Imagists*, 27.

19   Kathrin Bentele et al., *The Making of Husbands: Christina Ramberg in Dialogue* (Berlin: KW Institute for Contemporary Art, 2019), 3.

20   Thomas B. Cole, "Parallel Manipulation: Christina Ramberg," *JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association* 310, no. 9 (2013): 884, https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2013.5288.

21   Lehrer, "Body Partings," 76.

cially in paintings like *Probed Cinch* and *Shady Lacy* where protruding hands are prodding, stroking, and holding the faceless, female bodies. The viewer is led to wonder who these women are, if the anonymous hands are the figures' own or if they belong to someone else, and whether or not this touching is welcomed and consensual. With these vague, foreboding depictions, Ramberg instills an uneasiness in the viewer. Another creation of Ramberg's that could produce a similar discomfort was her notorious doll wall: a wall in her living room that was adorned with her collection of vintage dolls.[22] Her fascination with dolls speaks to her greater interest in female objectification. Dolls are literal objects that represent women much like the figures in Ramberg's paintings which have been reduced to simple forms that also represent women. This is especially obvious in her 1971 painting *Black Widow* where the body has been "compartmentalized … into columns, cones, and spheres."[23] This seems to mirror the way in which "women's clothing … divides the body into sections," highlighting the "good" parts and hiding the "bad."[24] There's a complexity to Ramberg's portrayal of feminine clothing. The depiction of lingerie in some of her 1969 triptychs like *Lola La Lure* or *Belle Rêve* shows real, feminine sexuality while also serving as a reminder of female objectification.[25] With this, Ramberg seems to suggest that female sexuality is derived from (male) objectification, and that women themselves have been reduced to the very objects that constitute their daily lives: hair, shoes, lace, and so on.

The term "male gaze" was coined in 1975 by Laura Mulvey in her landmark essay "VisualPleasure and Narrative Cinema." Here, she asserts that Hollywood films are built around looking at women through a male perspective. Though this essay was originally published nearly a decade into Ramberg's career, it seems that Ramberg is remarking on this phenomenon with her art. She too was deeply focused on media such as advertisements and comics and her work appears to mimic the way that "the conventions of mainstream film focus attention on the human form."[26] Indeed, Ramberg was greatly focused on the human form. She spent a significant amount of time collecting and cataloging images and media depicting the human body, especially the female body.[27] And this obsession with women's bodies in media is easily noticeable in her work. A friend of Ramberg's, Lori Gunn Wirsum notes in her essay "Remembering Chris" that Ramberg's works always reminded her strongly of the sales catalogs she

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22   Lori Gunn Wirsum, "Remembering Chris," in *Christina Ramberg: A Retrospective*, ed. Thea Liberty Nichols and Mark Pascale (The Art Institute of Chicago, 2024), 97.
23   Cole, "Parallel Manipulation," 885.
24   Lehrer, "Body Partings," 78.
25   Lehrer, "Body Partings," 79.
26   Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," in *Feminist Film Theory* ed. Sue Thornham (Edinburgh, Scotland: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 61, ProQuest Ebook Central.
27   Thea Liberty Nichols, "Parallel Manipulations: Christina Ramberg's Art and Archive," in *Christina Ramberg: A Retrospective*, ed. Thea Liberty Nichols and Mark Pascale (The Art Institute of Chicago, 2024), 25.

encountered growing up in the 1950's which "featured rows of truncated [female] forms wearing intimate clothing."[28] These advertisements were prominent in Ramberg's scrapbooks and collections along with other feminine media such as romance comic books.[29] Ramberg had an affinity for these texts which were certainly constructed around the male gaze and was especially intrigued by their depictions of women's hair. Her paintings are often noted for their comic book style especially in the way that they present women's hair.[30] This is particularly apparent in her earlier small-scale paintings like *Scarved* and *Bagged* or in her sixteen-panel piece *Hair*. The improbable hairstyles in these paintings twist and flow in ways that seem to defy gravity and are otherwise physically impossible. The glossy highlights and bold lines give the hairstyles a plastic, artificial quality similar to a doll's hair. Ramberg uses these visual cues to comment on the male gaze. With these portraits, she seems to suggest that the perfect male fantasy of a woman does not exist; it's a romanticized, fantastical image that defies the laws of nature and physics. Ramberg's women all do this to some extent. Her figures are objects of desire that have been cut and constructed intentionally to subvert the male gaze, to imply that what men want from women is destructive, dehumanizing, and impossible.

Christina Ramberg's career demonstrates a lifelong commitment to the depiction of the human form. Her art was centered on how society views women's bodies and how women view their own bodies. These compositions are oftentimes humanly impossible and deeply unsettling in result. The monstrosities that she has created illustrate the disconnection women feel towards their own bodies as well as the disgust society observes towards bodies believed to be imperfect. A key influence to Ramberg's work is her memory of her mother using corsets to manipulate and perfect her body. Ramberg's paintings explore how the female body is controlled and touched by corsets, ropes, hands, and so on. Additionally, the women in Ramberg's works are represented so that they become more object and less human by removing their faces and constructing their bodies from simple shapes. In doing so, Ramberg discusses the objectification of women and the trappings of the male gaze. She equates the cultural ideals of female sexuality to objectification and suggests that what men want from women (particularly from their bodies) is an impossibility, nothing but a deeply unrealistic fantasy that conforms and binds women to repressive, societal expectations. The central argument that Ramberg concerns herself with is the purpose of a woman's body. Ramberg observes that the female form is an object that is to be touched, tied up, reshaped, and looked at, and her work remarks on this cold reality.

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28   Wirsum, "Remembering Chris," 96.
29   "False Image," *Hairy Who & The Chicago Imagists*, directed by Leslie Buchbinder.
30   Wirsum, "Remembering Chris," 96.

Lee Krasner and Negotiating a Gendered Public Identity

[AVANEL FORD]

As is often the case with female artists, Lee Krasner's work comes attached to a publicized mythology centered around her male contemporaries. Her marriage to Jackson Pollock, and the abstract expressionist movement they both created in, lead to a diminishing critical response to her work. The way artists have come to understand art as an expression of internal emotions and ideas enables viewers to read femininity into works of pure abstraction. Misogyny in the art world only compounds this issue, narrowing interpretations of her work and shackling conversations about her work to Pollock. In a sense, she was shackled to Pollock herself, keeping up with her husband's titles and buyers while she took years away from painting.[1] Krasner attempts to mitigate sexist interpretations of her work and uphold the ideals of the genre by signing her work as L.K. and obscuring her gender through abstraction.[2] Her struggles come to a head in *Black and White Collage,* where Krasner asserts her artistic identity materially while confronting her unique position as a modern woman artist.

Abstract expressionism is a completely nonobjective genre, rejecting subject matter in favor of using process and materials to express personal meanings. The style emerged in New York City, which had become the new center of the international art scene while World War II ravaged Europe. European artists and thinkers fled to America, bringing with them radical notions about the purpose of art. The destruction of the war drove artists away from narrative and perspectival space and incentivized the use of industrial and mass-produced materials to grapple with the unprecedented devastation. Abstract expressionism builds on cubism in space and surrealism in emotional expression, ruminating on the

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1   Anne M. Wagner, "Lee Krasner as L.K.," *Representations*, no. 25 (1989): 44.
2   Wagner, "Lee Krasner as L.K.," 48.

constraints of its medium by embracing the flatness of canvas and unique marks of paint rather than attempting to create a convincing illusion. Mark making is considered evidence of an artist's presence, revealing their subconscious inner emotions when they apply paint to canvas. Abstract expressionism is a reaction to massive political and social change, resulting in works of total abstraction that invite viewers to invent meaning based on visual qualities alone.

Jackson Pollock is one of the biggest names in abstract expressionism, famous for using drip and pour techniques to apply paint to massive canvases. Pollock works in gestural abstraction, emphasizing the energetic and sponta-neous nature of physical artistic process. Committed to the ideals of abstract expressionism, Pollock named his canvases by chronological number. However, followers of his work read subjects and scenes into Pollock's paintings regardless. *Number 1 (Lavender Mist)* barely deserves its title, made up of industrial black, white, and lavender-gray flicks on a tan background. A neutral palette may seem masculine to some viewers, but potential assumptions of masculinity are moreso derived from the idea that creation itself is a masculine act. Pollock's splattered paint is meant to implicate the unique touch of the creator rather than create an illusion of form. It is up to the viewer to determine what they are looking at. Some see landscapes or weather, while others embrace the inscrutable nature of paint on canvas. While reaction to his works was mixed, supporters of abstract expressionism uphold him as an innovator, his work an example of raw intellect and simple masculine genius.

As his wife and female contemporary, Lee Krasner faced constant accu-sations that her work was derivative of Pollock's. When their work was exhibited together, she was criticized for cleaning up his style, sanding down something raw and unrestrained. Her work was evidence for a larger trend of abstractionist wives dulling great work, creating and existing secondary to the unfettered ge-nius of their husbands.[3] Willem de Kooning's wife, Elaine de Kooning, fell victim to the same rhetoric, particularly because her work was more figural. Krasner's and Pollock's paintings are made in the same nonobjective style, suggesting these accusations come from viewer interpretation rather than artistic intention or quality. Considering *The Springs,* her strokes are fuller and shorter, without drip-ping. The features it shares with Pollock's *Number 1,* namely a gestural quality and color palette, are both influenced by themes of subconscious and industry central to abstract expressionism, not each other. Part of the reason her work was undermined in comparison to his was that it was considered an expression of her femininity, justified through minute details and a similar tendency of in-terpretation that created the title *Lavender Mist.* Viewers crave meaning, and the meaning they extrapolate from abstraction is influenced by social bias. Krasner more often includes color in her work, which reads more feminine and therefore less intellectual and contemplative. Without splattering, her strokes are rounder,

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3   Wagner, "Lee Krasner as L.K," 45.

energetic but lacking Pollock's active violence. Krasner titles her works, guiding interpretation though she is unable to control where viewers take that interpretation, potentially undermining the genre. Spring is associated with fertility, provoking viewers to combine her feminine identity with her artistic one. Pairing feminine associations with accusations of unoriginality, especially in copying her husband's work, created a critical attitude that devalued her work based on gendered social bias.

In "Lee Krasner as L.K." Anne M. Wagner asserts that for many reasons, Krasner refused to produce a self in her paintings.[4] In order to deter misogynist devaluing of her work based on her identity, Krasner began signing with her initials so that viewers would not know she was a woman before crafting their evaluation. Even in going by Lee, rather than Lenore, she could not bypass social conditioning to recognize gender. On a few occasions, she refused to sign her works at all.[5] Her artistic education trained her that the logic of art was a genderless pursuit, but to be recognized, she had to obscure her womanhood and "paint like a man."[6] Her critics posit that she fails to disguise her femininity, citing formal elements to justify their reading as innate gender expression. In *Gender Trouble,* Judith Butler explains that woman is not one subject, not an exhaustive term, and presuming it as such does not help women more than it undermines them.[7] Krasner does not intend to represent femininity, inadvertently revealing gender as a social construction through outsider interpretation.[8] If abstract expressionism is a genre aiming to express inner emotions and identify through total abstraction, the only way to read gender is through social bias. If women are defined by the absence of masculinity, the definition of the term becomes extremely variable with no specific or inherent traits uniting women under one label.[9] Expressions of femininity are alien to male viewers, unable to relate and therefore unable to see depth where they could with male artists' work. Essentializing gender hinders artistic expression and evaluation. After all, subjects cannot paint.

Black and White Collage is Krasner's artistic response to reductive perceptions throughout her career, working through her identity as an artist in a scene that consistently qualifies her work in the context of her gender. It is incredibly difficult to justify an essentialist interpretation using criteria from her other works. Her color palette is neutral and limited, littered with harsh contrasts and sharp edges. The materiality and violence of collage fill in for soft brushstrokes, an unrefined and candid exploration of paint and paper. To craft this work, Krasner ripped scraps of paper Pollock had painted, painting over them herself on

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4   Wagner, "Lee Krasner as L.K," 51.
5   Wagner, "Lee Krasner as L.K," 48.
6   Wagner, "Lee Krasner as L.K," 48.
7   Judith Butler, "Subjects of Gender/Sex/Desire," in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity,* 1-34.
8   Butler, "Subjects of Gender/Sex/Desire," 7.
9   Butler, "Subjects of Gender/Sex/Desire," 13.

a new backing. Not only does she use collage to set herself apart from Pollock and other abstract impressionists, but her technique obscures which pieces were originally painted by his hand. Like many works of abstraction in the genre, Krasner creates a balanced composition, leaving no standout features to extrapolate gendered meaning. In the end, it does not matter which pieces Pollock originally painted, because Krasner has torn up, rearranged, and painted over those pieces herself. Her agency and knowledge of her medium is on display, unavoidable despite the work's connection to Pollock. If the art world wants from her insight into her husband, she will give it to them, if only so they will surrender the notion that that is all she has to offer. *Black and White Collage* was finished only a few years before Pollock died, while *The Springs* was painted almost a decade later. Both works were created after her first independent show in 1951, after which she destroyed or reused most of her canvases.[10] His death may have only complicated her relationship to her craft, but as she experiments her works become a synthesis of professional, and personal identities. Krasner struggled with establishing otherness to Pollock without the otherness of being a woman, navigating gender essentialism and misogyny to achieve recognition and creative freedom.

Wagner asserts that showcasing to the public means losing control of one's identity, even when Krasner tried so hard to control her image (or lack thereof). However she attempts to assert herself, making statements about art and identity in the collage, perception is infinitely difficult to shape. Whether she succeeded in carving out an identity for herself in her art is less relevant than examining the struggle itself, and debating may even feed into the reductive mythologization of her story. Central themes of abstract expressionism and cultural conceptions of gender contributed to a Pollock-centered attitude towards Krasner's work that classifies her art as shallow and feminine. *Black and White Collage* actualizes the conversation around her clashing identities as a woman and artist in the public eye.

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10   Wagner, "Lee Krasner as L.K," 51.

"This Mania of Hers for Marriage"

Nonromantic Connection in Virginia Woolf's *To The Lighthouse*

[Cara Goldstone]

Virginia Woolf's modernist masterpiece *To The Lighthouse* is perhaps best known in contemporary circles as a sapphic tragedy—about what it means to be a woman and to love another woman in a society where heterosexual marriage and homemaking are seen as the only purposes of a woman's life. Certainly, heterosexual marriage and homemaking are presented as the societal norm for English women in the book, and the two female protagonists are forced to grapple with the implications of that norm throughout the novel. But the moral of the story is not as clear cut, or as tragic, as one might assume.

To The Lighthouse is, first and foremost, an expression of grief. Published in 1927, the novel is a direct response to the outbreak of World War One, much like many of Virginia Woolf's other works. It is a character-driven piece with little emphasis on action; it shines in its omniscient depictions of relationships between the many characters who populate its plot. The dual protagonists of the novel are Mrs. Ramsay, a beleaguered but patient housewife, and Lily Briscoe, a soul-searching, independent family friend. *To The Lighthouse* emphasizes the pressure placed upon women to marry and the damage that expectation does to the self-image of the women in the text, as well as their personal relationships—with their husbands and otherwise. Through her depiction of the emotional contrast between married Mrs. Ramsay and unmarried Lily Briscoe, Woolf highlights the issue with setting marriage as the primary goal of a person's life; she argues that in a misogynist world, nonromantic connection is the most direct path to self-fulfillment, which should be one's ultimate telos in life.

To evaluate the extent to which Woolf presents an anti-romantic moral in *To The Lighthouse,* this essay will first discuss Mrs. Ramsay's role as matriarch in the novel as compared to the men around her—namely Mr. Ramsay, who is

privileged to busy himself with far-off metaphysical concerns rather than the emotional labor required of his wife. Further, it will examine the negative impact these romantic expectations have on both women and men; to do this, it will break down the poisonous details of Mrs. Ramsay's mindset as she casts it upon others, such as the young lovers Paul Rayley and Minta Doyle, the course of whose lives are set into action by Mrs. Ramsay's urging them to marry, and her own daughters Rose and Prue Ramsay. This will culminate in an examination of Mrs. Ramsay's death and how it conclusively shows Woolf's intentions with her character through the novel.

Once it has been established that Mrs. Ramsay's embodiment of domestic motherhood and wifehood is not an aspirational example on behalf of Woolf, this essay will pivot to a discussion of Lily Briscoe and how she acts as a foil to Mrs. Ramsay. It will examine her internal monologue and her reactions to other characters both before and after the decade gap in the middle of the novel in order to evaluate the influence of Mrs. Ramsay's friendship—and mindset—on her character development. Finally it will present Lily Briscoe's platonic relationship with William Bankes, and thus Woolf's attitude towards friendship as opposed to romance, as the ultimate foil to Mrs. Ramsay's difficult marriage with Mr. Ramsay. In so doing, this essay will establish that Woolf's thematic statement in *To The Lighthouse* is that, so long as society unfairly mandates romance as necessary to the fulfillment of a woman's life, misperception of the self is inevitable in every relationship; only by breaking the bounds of society's romance-centering expectations, like Lily Briscoe, can one lead a fully actualized existence.

The very first impression of Mrs. Ramsay that Woolf allows the audience to have is one of her status as a wife and mother; this categorization defines her mindset through the course of the novel, literally ruling her life until its end. It is disturbing, then, that Mrs. Ramsay's introduction is contextualized by her husband overruling her input to her son James. Just as soon as Mrs. Ramsay soothes the boy in telling him they will all make a trip to the lighthouse the next day "if it's fine tomorrow," Mr. Ramsay denies the placation: "But… it won't be fine."[1] Here, Woolf introduces the primary thread of conflict on Mrs. Ramsay's path to self-fulfillment: she views herself as a wife before a person, and as such, the traditional roles of marriage she has internalized deem her as a subjugated part of a larger whole rather than an individual person on her own. She cannot break past this internalization, no matter how much suffering it causes her; she is greatly pained by "the inadequacy of human relationships… and could not bear the examination which, loving her husband, with her instinct for truth, she turned upon it…"[2] This feeling of inadequacy stems from the way marital expectations minimize her in relation to Mr. Ramsay, which here she recognizes to an extent but does not how to act upon or change.

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1   Virginia Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, Wordsworth Editions Ltd. 2013, 1.
2   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 29.

Such an existence requires a huge amount of emotional labor from Mrs. Ramsay that goes largely unnoticed by her family—while reading to her son as her mind wanders towards thoughts of her husband, she gets a sense that her life is incommunicable to her family: "A sort of transaction went on between them, in which she was on one side and life was on another, and she was always trying to get the better of it…"[3] It is the inequal nature of her own life—the subjugation she experiences within the bounds of the traditional wifely role—that prevents Mrs. Ramsay from labelling her experiences. She does not share these "private"[4] musings on the transactionality of her existence because she *can't*; she is not permitted the space to within the role society has set out for her. She must spend her time planning parties and expressing sympathy and rearing her children, not philosophizing or engaging in introspection. Mrs. Ramsay is permitted to exist only as a function of Mr. Ramsay, and until her death much later in the text, he does not recognize how much he relies on her work to feel valuable as a human being.

The social rule that women must marry at any cost deeply scars Mrs. Ramsay's ability to foster genuine connection outside of her marriage—and, crucially, to recognize the value of nonromantic connection at all. For instance, in chapter ten of the novel's first section, Mrs. Ramsay's attempt simply to read a book aloud to her son James is thwarted by her concern for the whereabouts of the young lovers Paul Rayley and Minta Doyle; her thoughts run wild with questions of how Minta could "say now that she would not have [Paul]"[5] even as she is actively trying to engage with her son. Woolf breaks from Mrs. Ramsay's internal monologue to return to the narration of her reading with the conjunction "But" before "she read," suggesting that Mrs. Ramsay's preoccupation with the marital status of Minta and Paul is actually her primary focus here rather than bonding with her son. This behavior is subconscious to Mrs. Ramsay, a muscle-memory type reaction; because marriage is, in her view, the primary goal of one's being, it is instinctual to her to regard any romantic relationship over which she feels she has influence with higher priority than other relationships, including the familial relationship she has with her own son. Tragically, Mrs. Ramsay can on occasion see through the veil of internalized sexism—she herself is haunted by the possibility "it were an escape for her too, to say that people must marry"[6] as she continues reading to James. She knows her power as the matriarch of the Ramsay family is overwhelming to the young lovers and doubts her own instinctual wielding of it to ensure their marriage. But just as soon as this doubt enters her mind, it shifts away. She notices night falling outside and returns to her preoccupation with Minta and Paul's whereabouts in the darkness. Self-awareness, Woolf suggests, is a privilege; when burdened so completely by the expectations of married life as a

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3 Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 43.
4 Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 43.
5 Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 40.
6 Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 44.

woman, any glimpses of introspection on internalized misogyny are transient. To be a wife is, necessarily, to be bound by the chains of these expectations.

Woolf is, however, nuanced in her beliefs about womanhood and wifehood in the context of child-rearing. In her 1985 review-essay "Virginia Woolf and her Critics: 'On the Discrimination of Feminisms,'" literary scholar Lydia Blanchard claims that Woolf's work, with all its complexity and tension and multitudes, "shows that it was possible to encompass [many different feminisms.]"[7] *To The Lighthouse's* depiction of generational misogyny is similarly nuanced, particularly in the different approaches Woolf takes to describe the Ramsay daughters. Mrs. Ramsay seems to find genuine joy and fulfilment in some of the traditional expectations for mothers even as they play into the misogyny that agonizes her; for instance, before her dinner party, she delights in allowing her daughter Rose to choose her jewelry. Her internal monologue is loving and wistful: "…this little ceremony of choosing jewels, which was gone through every night, was what Rose liked best, she knew."[8] And when her older daughter Prue expresses a kind of vicarious interest in Paul and Minta's romance, Woolf's narrative voice moves away from one of criticism and towards genuine motherly affection; Mrs. Ramsay looks fondly upon her daughter, thinking to herself, "You will be so happy as she is one of these days. You will be much happier… because you are my daughter."[9] Blanchard's argument that "Like all great writers, she shut off no part of humanity"[10] holds true in this context—while overall critical of the institution of marriage and its impacts on women's well-being, Woolf does not deny that authentic value can be found within it and within its relation to child-rearing.

Ultimately, though, Woolf uses *To The Lighthouse* to emphasize that patriarchal, role-based expectations for women do far more harm than good. This is perhaps most evident in the immediate reversal of the joy just discussed. All of Mrs. Ramsay's musings on her daughters' happiness are underscored by melancholia; even as she joyfully deliberates over her mother's jewelry, Mrs. Ramsay is burdened with the knowledge that "Rose would grow up; and Rose would suffer… Rose, as she was the lady, should carry her handkerchief… Rose, who was bound to suffer so."[11] In this sense, womanhood and the expectations that come along with it—which Mrs. Ramsay knows well involve a wife's subjugation at the hands of her husband—overpower the enjoyment derived from aspects of it, however genuine. Woolf emphasizes this point further in the transitional mid-section of the novel, "Time Passes": as ten years go by after the night of the dinner party described in the first section, the vacation house is left to wait out the war with no occupants, and Woolf dedicates paragraphs upon paragraphs of description

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7   Lydia Blanchard, "Virginia Woolf and her Critics: 'On the Discrimination of Feminisms,'" *Studies in the Novel* 17, no. 1 (1985): 103, http://www.jstor.org/stable/29532328.

8   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 59.

9   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 79.

10   Blanchard, "Discrimination of Feminisms," 103.

11   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 59.

to this end. Prue, however, is addressed only in a bracketed aside between paragraphs: the news of her marriage, and then the news of her death to "some illness connected with childbirth, which was indeed a tragedy, people said. They said no one deserved happiness more."[12] Here, Woolf evokes a mocking sense of irony—in equating *happiness* with *married life,* the audience is left to steep in the unfairness of such high regard for Prue being offered only after her death, not to mention the juxtaposition of such grand sentiments presented in a brief aside between other details. Woolf is again highlighting how the saintly idealization of wifehood neglects to view women themselves as people; Prue's death is a tragedy only because marriage and childbirth are seen as the only path to happiness for a woman. The same can be said of Mrs. Ramsay's death, placed casually in another bracketed aside: "Mr Ramsay stumbling along a passage stretched his arms out one dark morning, but, Mrs Ramsay having died rather suddenly the night before, he stretched his arms out. They remained empty."[13] After a hard life of emotional labor and toil after her husband, Mrs. Ramsay is denied the right of being the syntactical subject of her own death. Woolf is clear in her intentions here: in a world of oppressive expectations for women to be married and thus made into counterparts of their husbands, any joy derived from womanhood is futile and transient at best.

With Mrs. Ramsay dead and her innermost thoughts on her identity left unacknowledged and unsaid, the last section of the novel, "The Lighthouse," begins quite listlessly. Literary scholar Sally Minogue uses excerpts from Virginia Woolf's diary to explain this sense of vacuity as an output of the novel's structure. A figurative reoccurrence in Woolf's diary—and as such, her literature—is the use of bathos, and further, the use of expectation subversions and contradiction. "Woolf's sense of the existential abyss"[14] results in a fixation on bleak isolation in *To The Lighthouse*, especially in relation to mortality's overwhelming presence around human relationships. Mrs. Ramsay's death is placed as it is in the novel with an eye for the bathos of a sudden absence, combined with the existential horror of such a quickly put-out flame as hers; Woolf uses curt language and a bracketed aside so as not to linger on the death itself, leaving the audience to fill in the gaps with their own imagination and thus forcing them to contend with their own mortality, Minogue concludes. Mrs. Ramsay's death is a warning in regards to the brevity of human life and the importance of communication of the self while one is alive; tragically, Mrs. Ramsay is hampered in her self-expression by misogynistic standards expected of her and as such, her attempts to voice her internal life fall flat. These standards do not disappear with Mrs. Ramsay's death—the rest of the women in the novel still must contend with them. But rather than simply affirming the cycle, Woolf uses the last portion of the novel to highlight a different

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12   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 98.
13   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 95.
14   Sally Minogue, "Was It a Vision? Structuring Emptiness in 'To the Lighthouse,'" *Journal of Modern Literature* 21, no. 2 (1997): 284, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3831464.

avenue to human connection under the tyranny of sexism: art.

Lily Briscoe, a quietly rebellious young woman who counts Mrs. Ramsay among her closest friends, is the moral hero of *To The Lighthouse.* She acts as a thread of hope for human connection, rejecting societal standards of womanhood and romance in pursuit of authenticity, no matter the cost. Her primary form of expression to this end is painting, which Woolf presents as an alternative to the sexism-based impossibility of connection through language. In her 1990 essay "'The Difficult Business of Intimacy': Friendship and Writing in Virginia Woolf's 'The Waves,'" literary scholar Laurie F. Leach argues that for Woolf, language and human relationships are allegorically intertwined—and yet, as has been established by Mrs. Ramsay's unspoken life and quiet death under the stifling force of misogyny, societal norms around womanhood prevent women from interpreting and communicating their inner lives with words. Ergo to engage in authentic human relationships, women must find alternative methods of connection—methods which evade the limits imposed upon them by patriarchal standards of communication. In *To The Lighthouse*, Leach says, "Lily hopes to transcend the limits of human vision [with her art]... she imagines a communication beyond words,"[15] suggesting that with all the misperception and confusion inherent to language in the context of the patriarchy, Woolf aims to present Lily and her art as guidelines for authenticity—especially that found in nonromantic relationships.

Leach proclaims that in Woolf narratives, friendship and writing "[fulfil] the same two functions."[16] It makes sense, then, that Mrs. Ramsay, who fails every attempt to use language as a form of genuine self-expression, cannot fathom the idea of friendship as a priority in life. It is primarily in this way that Lily acts as a foil to Mrs. Ramsay: while Lily is content never to marry and to find joy in her friendships and painting, Mrs. Ramsay has internalized the misogynist expectations placed upon her such that she sees both these goals as erroneous for a woman. For example, at the very beginning of the novel, when Lily begins the painting which she will develop through the rest of the story, Mrs. Ramsay thinks, "Lily's picture! Mrs Ramsay smiled. With her little Chinese eyes and her puckered-up face she would never marry; one could not take her painting very seriously; but she was an independent little creature, Mrs Ramsay liked her for it..."[17] Lily's independence, just like her painting, is to Mrs. Ramsay a novelty: inherently unfeminine, immature, and without foresight for her future, charming though it may be as a distraction. Mr. Tansley, another family friend infamous among the Ramsay party for his obtrusive arrogance and desperate desire for pity, echoes Mrs. Ramsay's sentiment. He insists to Lily over and over that "women can't paint, [and] women can't write"[18] until the sentiment is carved into her memory; she

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15   Laurie F. Leach, "'The Difficult Business of Intimacy': Friendship and Writing in Virginia Woolf's 'The Waves,'" *South Central Review* 7, no. 4 (1990): 55. https://doi.org/10.2307/3189094.

16   Leach, "Friendship and Writing," 60.

17   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 12-13.

18   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 35.

thinks about him every time she picks up her brush. If Lily's art is an attempt to share her worldview as an alternative to linguistic communication, then Mr. Tansley's condemnation of it suggests on a deeper level that he thinks women simply cannot have worldviews worth sharing; that Mr. Tansley adopts this belief in conjunction with his idealizing obsession with Mrs. Ramsay is particularly telling. The deeper issue here is not art itself—it is women's independence. In that sense, Mr. Tansley's insistence that women can't paint is, effectively, the same statement as Mrs. Ramsay's insistence that women must marry.

Woolf's use of dramatic irony, particularly as she evokes it through the juxtaposition between Lily's internal monologue and Mrs. Ramsay's, highlights how intensely she condemns this patriarchy-based pressure for women to prioritize romance above all else. Lily Briscoe's friendship with William Bankes, an older, widowed, scientific man also invited to the Ramsays' dinner party, is established very early on in the novel, just following the moment wherein Mrs. Ramsay, looking at Lily's painting, discounts her independent personhood as a novelty. Woolf shifts from Mrs. Ramsay's perspective to Lily's; Lily agonizes over the prospect of anyone watching her paint over her shoulder when she senses another person walking her way, before she "somehow divined, from the footfall, William Bankes, so that though her brush quivered, she did not, as she would have done had it been… anybody else, turn her canvas upon the grass, but let it stand."[19] From this thinking, two important aspects of Lily's relationship with William are clear: first that she knows him deeply, well enough to recognize him by the sound of his footsteps without looking, and second that she does not fear judgment from him as she might face from Mr. Tansley or Mrs. Ramsay. These aspects are key to defining Lily as a foil to Mrs. Ramsay—Mrs. Ramsay cannot, because of her entrenchment in social convention, form close nonromantic bonds with other people, and because she has no unconventional social bonds, she cannot fathom the kind of nonjudgmental attitude Lily finds in William.

Woolf sharpens the dramatic irony to an even more direct point as she goes on to emphasize that, as long as the expectations upon women demand them to be subjugated in marriage, the qualities which allow William and Lily to connect so deeply—genuine mutual respect and understanding—can *only* arise in a nonromantic context. She describes William through Lily's eyes: "…you are the finest human being that I know; you have neither wife nor child (without any sexual feeling, she longed to cherish that loneliness)…"[20] Here, Woolf tells the audience directly that the nonromantic nature of Lily and William's relationship is crucial to its flourishing. If William were married—if he did not have his *loneliness*, as Woolf puts it—Lily would, by necessity of social convention, be deprioritized in his life. Societal expectations in *To The Lighthouse* are such that when a person is married, their other relationships shall not matter to them, because

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19   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 13.
20   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 18.

marriage is the ultimate telos of one's life; to hold onto nonromantic relation-ships is to delay that telos. Mrs. Ramsay's social deterioration arises from this standard. Her betrothal to her husband has pulled her from the world of authen-ticity and placed her into one of convention; the fatigue that wears constantly on her mind when she attempts any introspection is proof of how crucial nonroman-tic relationships are to maintaining one's wellbeing. Yet just after Lily and Wil-liam have this moment of connection, Woolf spins back into Mrs. Ramsay's point of view as she is "Smiling, for an admirable idea had flashed upon her this very second—William and Lily should marry…"[21] With this ironic flip of the audience's perspective, Woolf seals the tragedy of misperception into Mrs. Ramsay character and firmly places Lily as her narrative foil. If Mrs. Ramsay is the ideal of misogy-nist expectations for women's lives, Lily is the opposite: an independent thinker forging her own path forward, unconcerned with marriage.

Lily pushes at the bounds of social conventions throughout the novel, beginning to end—but the vast majority of her success in defining her own role in life happens in the wake of Mrs. Ramsay's death, an indication that Woolf recog-nizes the active harm women can do to others when they internalize pernicious standards as deeply as Mrs. Ramsay does. Woolf scholar Dr. Brenda R. Silver sees Lily as a daughter figure to Mrs. Ramsay; in her 2009 essay "Mothers, Daughters, Mrs. Ramsay: Reflections," she discusses matrophobia, the fear a woman may ex-hibit in regards to becoming alike her own mother, as a reason for Lily's rebellion. In the first act of *To The Lighthouse,* it is certainly true that Lily is "the daughter who wants what she cannot have";[22] her rebellion is overwhelmed by Mrs. Ram-say's matriarchal power. At the dinner party, for example, long before the death of the Ramsay matriarch, Lily watches Mr. Tansley beg for sympathy and muses about social convention:

> There is a code of behaviour she knew… it behoves the woman, whatever her own occupation may be, to go to the help of the young man opposite so that he may expose and relieve the thigh bones, the ribs, of his vanity, of his urgent desire to assert himself; as indeed it is their duty… to help us [in an emergency]… But how would it be, she thought, if neither of us did either of these things?[23]

Immediately, though, Lily is faced with the power of Mrs. Ramsay's conformity to social law; she feels Mrs. Ramsay's expectations upon her so pressingly that "for the hundred and fiftieth time Lily Briscoe had to renounce the experiment—what happens if one is not nice to that young man there—and be nice."[24] In this passage, Woolf highlights the contagious nature of adherence to social rules, sug-

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21   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 19.
22   Brenda R. Silver, "Mothers, Daughters, Mrs. Ramsay: Reflections," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 37, no. 3/4 (2009): 265. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27740593.
23   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 66.
24   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 66.

gesting that Mrs. Ramsay is a kind of unintentional perpetrator as well as victim of sexism. Internalizing these standards radiates their damage outward just as much as it does inward—thus the cycle continues.

Mrs. Ramsay's death, then, acts as the catalyst for Lily's self-actualization. The time between the beginning of the novel and its end allows Lily space for retrospection *without* Mrs. Ramsay's overbearing presence looming at the edges of her thoughts. Mr. Ramsay's increasingly pathetic actions without his wife constantly managing his ego have rendered him, to Lily, "a king in exile"[25]—she can see clearly just how crucial Mrs. Ramsay's emotional labor was to maintaining the patriarchal structure of the Ramsay family, the very same structure whose standards have imposed upon Lily's independence her whole life. "Giving, giving, giving, she had died," Lily thinks of Mrs. Ramsay, "and had left all this."[26] Beyond the simple tragedy of Mrs. Ramsay's death, though, Woolf points the audience to the freeing effect her absence has on Lily's self-perception. As she tries to complete her painting, Lily wonders, "What was this mania of hers for marriage?"[27] Only now, in the context of Mrs. Ramsay's death and the ensuing lack of social pressure upon her, is Lily confident in the value of the nonromantic relationship that has brought her so much joy: her friendship with William Bankes.

Lily addresses directly how ridiculous an idea it is to her that she should ever marry, rejecting Mrs. Ramsay's dominance over her mindset; considering the Rayleys, she thinks, "They're happy like that; I'm happy like this,"[28] and goes on to ponder her relationship with William in greater detail while she paints. A decade ago, the night of the dinner party, he had looked at her unfinished painting of the island landscape and questioned Lily's portrayal of Mrs. Ramsay's figure in the window—insignificant, not a focal point. Woolf writes, "But William, she remembered, had listened to her with his wise child's eyes when she explained how it was not irreverence: how a light there needed a shadow there and so on... One could talk of painting then seriously to a man."[29] This is a perfect reversal of Mr. Tansley's earlier insistence upon the inability of women to paint, and the implications his view casts upon Mrs. Ramsay, unfortunate partner in his sexism: not only does William believe women's worldviews are valuable, he appreciates Lily's *for* its unconventionality. He takes Lily's art for what she wants it to be, however tradition-defying, and embraces it *because* it is an expression of her being—he sees her as a person before a woman, before a wife. Their rejection of romance is what allows William and Lily's friendship to work so well, Woolf indicates. When Woolf writes conclusively that "She loved William Bankes,"[30] she is referring to love *in defiance* of romantic expectations, which speaks volumes to the corro-

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25   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 111.
26   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 112.
27   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 131.
28   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 130.
29   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 131.
30   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 131.

sive nature of the so-called love Mrs. Ramsay believes she holds for her husband. Lily proves that Woolf sees friendship just as she sees art: endlessly valuable and transcendent in its ability to connect individuals, especially when its presence and prioritization goes against the expectations by which it is surrounded.

In her 1971 article "Lily Briscoe's Painting: A Key to Personal Relationships in 'To The Lighthouse,'" literary scholar Sharon Wood Proudfit contextualizes Lily's painting within the English Post-Impressionist movement, whose paintings emphasize "the arrangement of the scene, its formal relations and [the painter's] vision of them..."[31] to translate the emotions wrought by aesthetic harmony through the artist. Proudfit argues that this painting style is reflective of the complexity of Lily's own relationships, the very ones which have rendered her painting so difficult to complete over the years. Woolf's conclusion to *To The Lighthouse* is, for the emotional and relational vastness of the text, surprisingly simple; Mr. Ramsay and his children dock at the lighthouse while Lily, finishing her painting, and aging poet Augustus Carmichael watch them do so from across the ocean.

Critically, though, neither Mr. Carmichael nor Lily actually witnesses the landing of Mr. Ramsay's boat—they just so happen to understand simultaneously that the boat has been docked and that the Ramsays have completed their journey. Woolf specifies that, in Lily and Mr. Carmichael's acknowledgement of the boat's landing, "They had not needed to speak. They had been thinking the same things and he had answered her without her asking him anything."[32] Here, Proudfit's argument about Lily's art as the physical manifestation of her perspective on the world—a perspective which she has battled so hard to communicate to others throughout the text—rings true. Earlier, while musing about her relationship with William, Lily thinks, "Many things were left unsaid."[33] Their connection and mutual respect allows them to communicate without words. With the completion of Lily's painting, and according to Proudfit, her ultimate transcending and transforming of the oppressive, patriarchal expectations set forth by Mrs. Ramsay, she has discovered her full potential as an independent woman—and this is proved by her newfound ability to wordlessly understand Mr. Carmichael, with whom she has never had this kind of connection. By releasing her from the overbearing romantic expectations of wifehood that haunted her relationship with William Bankes, the death of Mrs. Ramsay has granted Lily Briscoe the agency to fully realize her independence: to paint a new kind of womanhood, one where marital subjugation is cast away in favor of genuine expression and connection.

To The Lighthouse is, overall, a condemnation by Virginia Woolf of the restrictive ways society regulates women's relationships, and thus their capacity for self-expression. She creates the parallel characters Mrs. Ramsay and Lily

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31   Sharon Wood Proudfit, "Lily Briscoe's Painting: A Key to Personal Relationships in 'To the Lighthouse,'" *Criticism* 13, no. 1 (1971): http://www.jstor.org/stable/23098980, 28.
32   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 154.
33   Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 131.

Briscoe to portray the effects of romantic expectations when internalized and when defied; Mrs. Ramsay spends her life desperately trying to follow the rules of social convention and it destroys her, while Lily faces the world with an eye for authenticity even in the most difficult times. Mrs. Ramsay's impact is tragically corrosive to the people around her, feeding into their own sexist tendencies and issues with misperception. Lily, however, does the opposite—she finds genuine human connection in the form of her best friend William Bankes and allows their relationship to flourish without romance taking dominion over either of their individual lives. Mrs. Ramsay is half of a human, the counterpart to her husband and nothing more; Lily transcends the singularity of individualized personhood with her art, communicating without words the deepest truths of the human condition. Ultimately, Woolf sees the sexist centering of romance above all else and the subjugation of women it necessarily entails as a misstep at best and a death sentence at worst—and she believes it the duty of womankind to pursue authenticity even in the face of such oppression, through art, friendship, or otherwise.

"Studies in Perception 1" and the Objectified Female Nude

[Gloria Nakafu]

Studies in Perception 1, a 1967 silkscreen print, was the result of an experiment by Leon Harmon and Ken Knowlton to create computational art. The piece depicts a female nude through the arrangement of computer symbols, and perpetuates traditional art historical patterns of objectifying the female body. An exploration of the artists' choices of medium and spatial composition, as well as the print's contextual placement in the MCA Chicago's exhibition "The Living End" on technology and the reinvention of painting practices, reveals the ways in which the figure is objectified. The piece exemplifies how new technologies and methods of art production can continue to reinforce established conventions of representing the female body and traditional ideas surrounding the value of women in society, contributing to the female nude as a historically misogynistic subject and proving that technological advances do not always equate to more progressive understandings and representations of women. Further, the choice of a classical, humanist subject negates any posthumanist ideas the work may inspire. Thus, despite its groundbreaking use of computational methods, this work promotes the objectification of women in the art historical canon.

Harmon and Knowlton's choice of medium creates the sense of objectification present in this piece. Form is created not through the use of line, but rather through the multiple small computer symbols that are overlapped on top of each other to create differences in light and dark, thus using tone to reveal the form of the figure. The use of computational data makes for a strange texture, as it imprints on the figure a pattern that highly abstracts her in an unsettling way, removing her connection to humanity by making her body appear visually different from what is typically expected. The uniformity of the texture throughout the entire print results in the figure's body, and especially her upper arm, blending into the chair that she lays on. This merging of the two into one continuous

form furthers her representation as an object. Through the pattern created by the piece's texture, she is absorbed into a material, functional thing.

The technological components of the piece further posit the figure's objectification. The color scheme of the print is black, white, and grey, because of the limitations in color technology during the late 1960s, but it serves to further the dehumanisation of the figure. There is no sense of the tactility, warmth, or softness of flesh; rather the image feels cold and impersonal, detached from corporeal human experience. The wall text describing the piece states that Harmon worked as a cognitive neuroscience researcher and Knowlton was an artist and an engineer in the Bell Labs of AT&T, so their choice of experimenting with computer art makes sense, and their considerable achievements in their experimentation are worthy of recognition and esteem. However, the medium of computational data results in the upholding of objectification and sexualization in representations of the female body.

The space and scale of the work also play a role in the figure's sexualization and objectification. Space in this image is very cramped, and the figure is pushed to the front of the picture plane such that the only elements in the image are the lying figure and the chair behind her, ensuring that the viewer cannot look anywhere else but at her. Her head is tilted backwards and her legs are out of the frame, so all focus is directed to her torso. The print is quite large, with the figure being a little over lifesize, and is placed slightly lower than eye level, so the viewer is encouraged to examine all of its intricate details. One can easily scrutinize every aspect of the figure's body without shame or fear of retaliation, as she does not confront them with her gaze. Her lack of agency is reminiscent of Tintoretto's Susanna, as depicted in his 1556 painting Susanna and the Elders. Before Susanna sees the elders, she bathes in blissful ignorance of her assaulters, and by extension the viewer of the piece, watching her. The viewer's spatial position over the figure is one of power, which contributes to her depiction as a sexualised and objectified being.

The figure's objectification is reinforced through an understanding of the context of the exhibition. Studies in Perception 1 is part of a wider exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago entitled "The Living End: Painting and Other Technologies, 1970-2020," which examines the reinvention and redefinition of painting as an artistic medium by numerous artists over the past 50-60 years.[1] The exhibition's aim is to reconsider painting through exploring the impact that new technologies, from the earliest computers to social media, have had on the medium and practice, in which case Harmon and Knowlton's work is a useful example. However, the exhibition states that all of the artists whose work is represented have subverted the traditional ideals and mythologies asso-

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1   Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, "The Living End: Painting and Other Technologies, 1970–2020 - MCA Chicago," *Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago*, October 14, 2024, https://visit.mcachicago.org/exhibitions/the-living-end-painting-and-other-technologies-1970-2020/.

ciated with painting, which this specific work fundamentally fails to do.[2] Female nudes have long been a staple subject in the history of painting, especially those that function as sexualised and objectified images of unwilling women available for consumption primarily by male artists and patrons. This print firmly follows in this tradition, and thus refutes the very purpose of the exhibition through its upholding of the dated ideals of this form of representation regardless of its new and subversive medium.

The female nude as an intentional choice of subject also contributes to the piece's inherent objectification, which can be understood through a history of this specific subject matter. In her seminal 1971 article "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists," Linda Nochlin writes that proponents of traditional styles of painting believed representations of the nude, and especially of the female nude, to be the most essential elements of great painting, as clothing impaired the "universality and idealization" of great art.[3] For artists, mastering depictions of the nude figure was key to achieving the status of history painter, an honor that very few women artists attained because of their lack of access to nude models to learn from.[4] The fact that for most of history, only male artists could work from the nude consequently resulted in the genre of history painting, and the subject of the nude, becoming an inherently male sphere. This is exemplified in Alexandre Cabanel's 1863 painting The Birth of Venus, which depicts the moment that Venus is born from seafoam. As the main figure in the composition, Venus's dominance of the picture plane and the limited background force the viewer to focus on her. Venus' eyes, though not quite closed, do not directly address the viewer. Rather, her position opens her up completely for the viewer's satisfaction, and her pale skin contrasts with the blue surrounding to highlight her supple flesh. She is, before the artist and viewer, rendered completely exposed and completely powerless.[5]

Harmon and Knowlton's figure lies in a position similar to Cabanel's Venus, and her head is tilted even further backwards, which completely takes away the viewer's access to her identity as a person and makes her body the centre of the image. Her chest is accentuated through the curve of her arm, and emphasis is drawn to her pubic area, as it is the darkest part of the composition, with the triangle of deep black functioning almost as a covering to preserve the figure's modesty while still retaining an element of mystery and sexuality. Both of these areas face the viewer directly, and because her personhood is completely erased, the figure is, as Whitney Chadwick writes, transformed into a sexual object organ-

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2   Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, "The Living End."

3   Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" *ARTnews* vol. 37, (January 1971), 12.

4   Nochlin, "No Great Women Artists," 12.

5   Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art, and Society*, 6th ed. (London: Thames & Hudson, 2020), 293.

ised for the (male) audience's viewing pleasure.[6] If Cabanel's Venus was a manifestation of the Renaissance humanist exercise of portraying the human body as a means of reflecting on the divine's perfect and heavenly beauty, then perhaps this nude figure fulfils a similar purpose. In Harmon and Knowlton's case, the divine is switched out for technological innovation, but the form of worship remains the same. The female body is still dehumanized and objectified, reduced to a vessel through which human adoration is expressed.

The objectification and abstraction of the nude in Studies in Perception 1 exemplifies the persistence of a sexualising way of seeing even in a new technological medium. The computer processing involved in this piece greatly constrains and objectifies the female form. The figure's lack of identity universalizes her as a figure representing all women, and Harmon and Knowlton enforce gender essentialism in this image through the idea of a female "central core."[7] As has been stated, the viewer's attention is pulled toward the figure's pubic area because it is the darkest section of the picture plane, simultaneously highlighting and mystifying her sexual and reproductive qualities, and suggesting that these qualities and the experiences related to them are the singular factor uniting all women. Because this area is centred and put on display while the figure's face remains hidden, there is a suggestion that her sexuality and procreative capabilities are all that matter about her.

Amelia Jones, in her article "Essentialism, Feminism, and Art," discusses the concept of woman "oozing away," which involves the ideas that female identity resists any form of fixed or archetypal representation, and that non-traditional portrayals of women complicate societal understandings of "woman" by either enforcing or dismantling essentialist gender ideologies.[8] Harmon and Knwolton reinforce essentialist ideas with their nude through its medium, as the reduction of the woman into discrete data points while retaining her sexuality and feminine coding acts as a visualization of female representation "oozing away." The nude still reads as a woman, and carries with it all of the conventional notions associated with female nudes, even though its medium is novel. This is not new, as the development of new art movements, as Chadwick writes, often relied on erotically based assaults on female form for their formal and stylistic innovations.[9] Willem de Kooning's 1952 painting Woman I epitomizes this, as he represents a woman so incredibly abstracted and sexualised that it reads as cruel caricature rather than a genuine exploration of female form. Through different methods, Harmon and Knowlton's nude fragments and distorts the female body in a similar way to de Kooning; essentializing them until they become degraded concepts of "woman" and mere visual and sexual objects.

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6   Chadwick, *Women*, 293.
7   Amelia Jones, "Essentialism, Feminism, and Art: Spaces Where Woman 'Oozes Away,'" in *A Companion to Feminist Art* (Newark: John Wiley and Sons, Incorporated, 2019), 161.
8   Jones, "Essentialism, Feminism, and Art," 174.
9   Chadwick, *Women*, 292.

The exploration of technological art in the print further serves to objectify the figure, as it lacks a feminist, posthumanist lens. Maria Fernandez, writing specifically through the lens of technology and the integration of humans and machines in her article "Reading Posthumanism in Feminist New Media Art", states that through the theory of posthumanism, subjects of art enact "ethics of relationality" by connecting humans and nonhumans.[10] This connection appears to be present in Studies in Perception 1, as the human subject matter depicted through non-human technology could make for a posthumanist approach to art production. However, if posthumanism, according to Katherine Hayles as quoted by Fernandez, is defined as the deconstruction of the classic humanist subject and its associations, then one cannot claim this print to be a posthumanist piece.[11] As has already been discussed, Harmon and Knwolton present a traditional nude, in which the figure is afforded neither self-determination nor free will, but rather is forced to remain an object of visual pleasure for the viewer.

Fernandez discusses the work of Lynn Hershman Leeson as an example of a truly posthuman approach to art, which requires the development of a new kind of subjectivity in which human bodies and nonhuman objects are united through a feminist lens.[12] Leeson's 1988 photographic series Phantom Limb, which depicts woman-machine hybrids posed in a variety of seductive ways, explores the ways that women's bodies are impacted by media and technology. Female identity and form transcend the boundaries of the human body to become united with machines, prompting the viewer to consider the distortion of the female body and female identity by technology and media. Leeson's photographs imitate traditional depictions of the female form to criticize female objectification, but her figures retain their humanity. This contrasts with Harmon and Knowlton's print, where the figure is stripped of her humanity and objectified through her computerization.

Studies in Perception 1, completed just before the surge of feminist dialogue in artistic, art historical, and gender studies spaces in the 1970s, demonstrates how the advent of technological and social innovation does not always result in more progressive representations of women. Examining the print's medium, spatial composition, and exhibition context reveals the persistence of female objectification by male artists. Although the piece does merge human and nonhuman form through technology, the sustenance of the classical humanist subject refutes any claims to posthumanism that the piece may present. Thus, although they pioneered a new art style, Harmon and Knowlton upheld traditional forms of representing the female nude, serving as a reminder to maintain critical analysis of the ways in which new art mediums may support old art ideas.

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10   Maria Fernandez, "Reading Posthumanism in Feminist New Media Art," in *A Companion to Feminist Art* (Newark: John Wiley and Sons, Incorporated, 2019), 300.
11   Fernandez, "Reading Posthumanism," 299.
12   Fernandez, "Reading Posthumanism," 303.
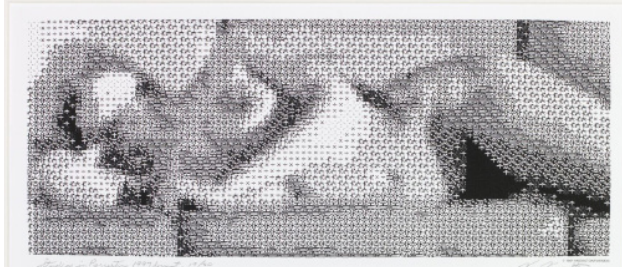
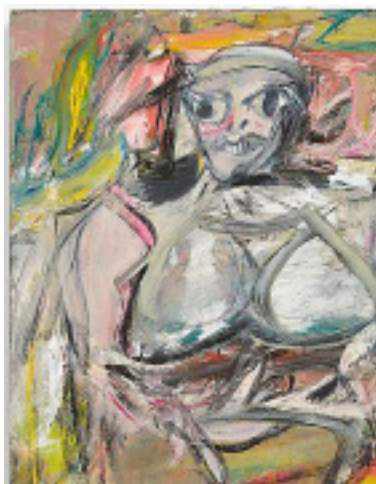Studies in Perception 1, Leon Harmon and Ken Knowlton,
American, silkscreen print, 1967, 34" x 72".

Susanna and the Elders, Tintoretto,
Italian, oil on canvas, 1555-56, 57" x 76.2".

The Birth of Venus, Alexandre Cabanel,
French, oil on canvas, 1863, 59" x 98".

Woman I, Willem de Kooning, American,
oil and metallic paint on canvas, 1950-52, 75.8" x 58".

[Perspectives on Culture & Media]

Creepypastas

The Evolution of Folklore in the Internet Age

[Sawyer Kuzma]

For millennia, stories of monsters lurking in the shadows have haunted the imaginations of people around the world. For as long as they have been around, monsters have acted as guides for cultural fears and anxieties, allowing a space for uncertainty about change to be expressed and validated. In the modern day, this phenomenon of creating beasts as an outlet for our cultural anxieties has not halted; rather, the internet has created a space that allows for rapid communication across wide distances, enabling stories of monsters to be created by and spread to millions of people. Creepypasta, a term for the genre of internet-based horror stories that have emerged in the past eighteen years, leads the charge of digital horror. The genre is defined by its audience participation, wherein large communities of people come together to express new cultural fears created by the rapid technological growth experienced from the 1990s to the present day. The emergence of creepypastas as an internet-based form of horror writing is a result of the increasing anxiety surrounding new technology and the dangers such technologies pose, especially to children. As outlets for the collective fears of their readers, creepypastas follow the trends of folklore in their conception and distribution. The stories "Candle Cove" and those about the character Slenderman are examples of creepypastas that not only relay cultural fears but represent the collaborative nature of creepypastas as a genre.

Elements of Creepypastas

As new horror stories are created and refined, so too is the terminology used to discuss them. The term "creepypasta" is coined from the word "copypas-

ta," a portmanteau, or combination, of the words "copy" and "paste."[1] Copypastas are memes that are, as the name suggests, copied and pasted across platforms. Similarly, creepypastas are short stories that are copied across the internet. However, creepypastas are differentiated from copypastas by their status as horror stories rather than inside jokes.

Folklore, a concept often applied to creepypastas by scholars, is a complex social mechanism that has garnered many different definitions and implications in the nearly two centuries since its conception. McMahon credits the creation of this phrase to William Thoms who first used the term in a letter to *The Athenaeum* in 1846.[2] Folklore is loosely defined by McMahon as, "an umbrella term for stories that are transmitted from one person to another. Examples include conspiracy theories, fairy tales and ghost stories."[3] Today, the transmission of folk narratives throughout communities, which was traditionally done through oral communication, has become extraordinarily efficient as the internet allows for the anonymous and speedy sharing of ideas.[4] Related to folklore, memorates, or personal narratives that relay one's firsthand experience of a "supranormal event," are the building blocks with which folk narratives and legends are built.[5] These narratives then have the potential to be retold, built upon, and potentially become legends over time.[6] Creepypastas imitate this process of legend-making as the horror stories undergo constant revision and reimagining by their audiences.

Collaboration is a necessary part of legend-making. As Boyer writes, legends must be a "communal event" where the audience has as much of a role as the narrator.[7] In the case of creepypastas, their development is always communal as the genre is defined by "the traditional roles of the addresser and addressee [being] broken – the text becomes the object of collective creativity because […] commenters contribute to the final story."[8] Each different user's version of the story

1   Jessica Balanzategui, "Creepypasta, 'Candle Cove', and the Digital Gothic," *Journal of Visual Culture* 18, no. 2 (14 August 2019), 187–208, https://doi.org/10.1177/1470412919841018, 188.

2   James McMahon, "The Internet Myth That Nearly Led to Murder - and Changed Folklore Forever," *Prospect Magazine*, (18 July 2018), https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/culture/41479/the-internet-myth-that-nearly-led-to-murderand-changed-folklore-forever.

3   McMahon, "The Internet Myth."

4   Balanzategui, "Creepypastas," 187.

5   William J. Dewan, "'A Saucerful of Secrets': An Interdisciplinary Analysis of UFO Experiences," *Journal of American Folklore* 119, no. 472 (2006), 184-202. https://doi.org/10.1353/jaf.2006.0020.

6   Dewan, "Saucerful," 187.

7   Tina M. Boyer, "The Anatomy of a Monster: The Case of Slender Man," *Preternature: Critical and Historical Studies on the Preternatural* 2, no. 2 (2013), 240–261. https://doi.org/https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/preternature.2.2.0240, 244.

8   Anton Chornobylskyi, Oksana Kyrylova, Oleksandr Krupskyi, and Liudmyla Khotiun. "Social Sharing of Emotions in Social Media System on the Example of Creepypasta on Reddit," *Information & Media* 96, (2023), 65–79. https://doi.org/10.15388/Im.2023.96.66, 72.

– memorates, perhaps – builds upon the base narrative, eventually amounting to a "legend" known by millions of internet users even years after its first creation.[9] In an age of never-ending sharing and collaboration on the internet, creepypastas are a representation of the creative spirit that fuels the online world.

As for the origins of these internet-based tales, creepypastas are unique to many other forms of literature in that they are seldom published professionally and rely heavily on community interaction to be fully developed. Because of these traits, creepypastas are often born on forum websites such as Reddit, 4chan, or more obscure sites like the Something Awful forum and Creepypasta.org.[10] Forum-based sites such as these allow readers to assume a much more active role in storytelling than other forms of media.

The presence of such an active audience spawns from the origins of the genre. Creepypastas first emerged on the internet in 2007 on the anonymous forum website 4chan.[11] The forums and chat boards of 4chan had a great influence on the collaborative nature of creepypastas as users were easily able to add to, comment on, or dispute details in a given story. As Balanzategui writes, "4chan's ephemeral dynamics are well suited to the folkloric cycles of production that underpin Creepypasta, as a tale's origins are anonymous and often quickly erased or obscured, extending the practices of oral folk culture into the digital age."[12] Not only is the role of the audience important in creepypastas, but some argue that it is, in fact, a necessary element of the genre. As Boyer claims, the role of the audience in the creation of creepypastas is integral to which stories perform well and are spread to other sites, similar to the traditional process of folk narratives and the formation of legends, which require sharing amongst a community.[13]

Creepypastas have far surpassed the original stories written on forums in the 2000s due to the enormous audience surrounding the genre. Fan communities have spawned additional theories, narratives, and characters that expand past the confines of written works. Visual media, from YouTube videos to elaborate fan art, are largely responsible for this growth and are at the helm of much of the community-based narrative building that occurs within creepypastas. Through these mediums, communities are able to push forward the narrative themes and devices that they find the most compelling. In doing so, creepypasta fans have shaped the genre, proving the importance of the audience in digital horror.

Part of what makes creepypastas so captivating to their audiences is the way they play with the boundaries of reality. While creepypastas are fictional stories, the genre is noted for its loyalty to cultivating a sense of reality in its

9   Jay Bird, "A Look Back at Old CREEPYPASTAS (Retrospective)" [Video], *YouTube*, 30 April 2023, https://youtu.be/hdudFFzCMOI?si=1BXbChFodxop9rFQ, 21:52.
10   Chornobylskyi, "Social Sharing".
11   Balanzategui, "Creepypastas," 188.
12   Balanzategui, "Creepypastas," 189.
13   Boyer, "Slender Man," 244.

narratives. Stories are based in plausible events, only asking the reader to partially suspend belief in order for the tales to have an impact. Creepypastas are characterized by "attempts to depict the experiences they describe as plausible and are invested in establishing [...] an 'atmosphere of belief' – 'a context in which tellers and audiences of supernatural narratives may be open to the possibility that a supernatural narrative is real.'"[14] Because of this toying with reality and the first-person point of view that is often utilized in creepypastas, readers are more easily able to place themselves in the shoes of the character. The game of jump-rope with reality that creepypastas play is not meant to trick audiences, but rather invite them to engage with alternative ideas about the world. Henriksen writes about this trend: "Most creepypastas' claims to authenticity, however, are tongue-in-cheek [...] This playful engagement with authenticity claims and hoaxes may be why creepypastas have become increasingly popular in the twenty-first century."[15] One of the core tenets of creepypastas, created by the Reddit forum r/nosleep, puts it best: "Everything is true here, even if it's not."[16]

Cultural Anxieties Portrayed by Creepypastas: Slenderman and Candle Cove

Creepypastas, just like any other form of horror content, are reflective of cultural anxieties and fears. The fears portrayed in many creepypastas are centered around the dangers of technology and the corruption of childhood innocence. As Izzzyzzz (2023) writes of internet horror in the late 2000s and early 2010s, "In these early stages [the 2000s], internet horror was niche and hard to stumble upon [...] The fact that this content was difficult to find and not well known made it all the more scarier as one felt the sense that they had walked in on something they were not meant to see."[17] Combined with cultural anxieties about technology, this secretive nature made creepypastas uniquely horrifying, especially considering the semi-realism that the stories portray.

One story that captivated the masses and expressed cultural fears perhaps more than any other creepypasta was that of Slenderman, a character who served as the motivation in the attempted murder of a twelve-year-old girl. Slenderman originates from the Something Awful forum, which held a Photoshop contest on June 10, 2009 for the "scariest paranormal image."[18] The character,

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14   Amy Pattee, "'[A] story about a child is scarier than one about an adult roughly 80% of the time': Creepypasta, Children's Media, and the Child in Media Discourse," Childhood 29, no. 2 (21 April 2022), 204–218. https://doi.org/10.1177/09075682221093843, 206.

15   Line Henriksen, "'Spread the Word': Creepypasta, Hauntology, and an Ethics of the Curse," University of Toronto Quarterly 87, no. 1 (2018), 266–280. https://doi.org/10.3138/utq.87.1.266, 267.

16   r/nosleep. Reddit. (n.d.). https://www.reddit.com/r/nosleep/.

17   Izzzyzzz, "The Nostalgia Of Old YouTube Horror" [Video], *YouTube*, 28 April 2023, https://youtu.be/sd6uB3OWVv0?si=pj82WKPKKJK3FYLy, 2:35-4:50.

18   Boyer, "Slender Man," 243.

created by user "Victor Surge" and submitted to the contest, appears as an abnormally tall and skinny man in a black suit, his face pure white and void of any defining features. Surge's original images of Slenderman, which depicted the creature watching children play from afar, included captions that implied the monster had killed the children by luring them towards him.[19] This portrayal of a paranormal monster that stalks its victims from the shadows and/or seeks to harm children is common in many creepypastas, including well-known stories such as "Jeff the Killer" and "Laughing Jack," which feature monsters that specifically hunt children, especially at night.[20] Slenderman's preference for stalking children is, due to his status as a monster, a reflection of the cultural anxieties of the time. Boyer writes of the themes that made Slenderman's character so alluring to audiences, stating, "Slender Man's physiognomy and uncanny behavior aside, the narratives that were inspired by his existence shared similar themes, predominantly amnesia, paranoia, insomnia, lack of control, and inability to make sense of the world."[21] These fears, as will be discussed later, were common in the world at the time, causing Slenderman to become a particularly horrifying and gripping narrative for many. The corruption of children via the expanding unknowns of the internet terrified many, and this is seen in countless creepypastas.

In the case of Slenderman, however, fears about the corruption of childhood innocence were not entirely unfounded. In 2014, then twelve-year-old Morgan Geyser and Anissa Weier attempted to murder their classmate Payton Leutner by repeatedly stabbing her as a sacrifice to Slenderman.[22] As Pattee writes, "Geyser and Weier were convinced that Slender Man was not only real but also that he represented a threat to their friends and family," and that the only way to appease him was to bring him an offering in the form of their friend.[23] Although Payton survived the attack and made a full recovery, the story sparked outrage across the United States as parents called for the forum to be "taken down or blocked […] although the site itself has long urged parents to monitor how their children use the site."[24] While many reacted to the contents of creepypastas with intrigue and excitement, the popular cultural response to Leutner's attempted murder displays the anger that can result from these narratives. Such anger proves how deeply themes of childhood innocence and corruption resonate within our culture.

The social outrage that resulted from the Slenderman stabbing was not a surprising outcome for many. The "Subverted Kids Shows," or SKS sub-genre

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19   Boyer, "Slender Man," 243.
20   Jay Bird, "A Look Back."
21   Boyer, "Slender Man," 256.
22   Pattee, "Children's Media," 204.
23   Pattee, "Children's Media," 205.
24   Farhad Manjoo, "Urban Legends Told Online," *The New York Times*, (9 July 2014), https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/10/technology/personaltech/slender-man-story-and-the-new-urban-legends.html.

of creepypastas has long played on this cultural fear of childhood corruption, as seen in "Candle Cove," a creepypasta written in 2009 by Kris Straub.[25] This sub-genre, Pattee writes, portrays disturbing perversions of kids shows and resembles "'media panic' – 'highly emotionally charged and morally polarized' public debates about the effects of new media and technology on the populace in general and on young people more specifically."[26] "Candle Cove" tells the story of internet users coming together on the fictional "Net Nostalgia Forum," a parody of real-life websites that feature nostalgic content.[27] It is on this forum that a group of adults recount the events of *Candle Cove*, a television show that they recall watching as children. As the story progresses, the remembered details of the show grow darker and darker until it is eventually revealed via the mother of a forum member that the show had never existed; the children were simply watching static on their televisions and making up stories about a so-called "Candle Cove."[28] The horror of this story is built in the shared hallucination between the users who were strangers until they encountered one another on the forum. This short story not only challenges the popular idea of nostalgia by warping supposedly happy memories into horrifying hallucinations but also opposes the notion that children are innocent and lacking in agency. As Pattee writes (in the aptly named article "A story about a child is scarier than one about an adult"), the SKS genre "affects a critique of the constructed and constructive child typically constituted in discussions of children and their engagement with mass media that both disputes and secures the figure of the innocent child implied by both discourses."[29] Following the "stranger danger" panic of the 1990s, it is no wonder that society was so concerned with the safety of children, especially in the unfamiliar environment of the internet. However, "Candle Cove" takes this anxiety and turns it around, claiming that children are not nearly as vulnerable as many believe.

Pattee's critique of "childhood innocence" can also easily be applied to the situation surrounding Slenderman and the subsequent 2014 stabbing as adults around the world called for the protection of children without acknowledging the fact that their children had been the ones to seek out these stories in the first place. The agency of children is a topic that is extremely controversial and has an impact on almost every political issue. Creepypastas are able to take this complex topic and incorporate it in stories that express these fears without placing blame on the internet as a medium. Rather, harm in these stories is caused by an unknown otherworldly entity that has invaded spaces believed to be safe. By incorporating fear in such a way, creepypastas not only express cultural anxieties and allow readers to work through them but also provide their audiences with an alternative viewpoint that challenges common beliefs about the internet

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25   Pattee, "Children's Media," 207.
26   Pattee, "Children's Media," 211.
27   Balanzategui, "Creepypastas," 197.
28   Kris Straub, "Candle Cove," *Ichor Falls*, 2009, http://ichorfalls.chainsawsuit.com/.
29   Pattee, 207.

and children. In doing so, the genre fulfills its duty as an extension of folklore.

Popular Media: The Response to Internet Horror

As a result of their relevance to societal concerns and application to the real world, creepypastas have gained the attention of not only millions of readers but also movie studios and news outlets. A testament to the popularity of creepypastas and other internet horror stories, r/nosleep, which is home to many such stories, has gained 18 million members as of January 2025, up from the 15 million that Chornobylskyi et al. observed in 2023.[30] The genre's history has also gained the attention of multiple YouTubers, such as Izzzyzzz and Jay Bird, who have compiled multiple videos each about the origins and evolution of creepypastas. While Jay Bird discusses the various popular creepypastas and how they influence each other, Izzzyzzz speaks to the artistic side of the genre and its perception today, giving the example of the short horror video "Salad Fingers" to say:

> "'Salad Fingers' had started as more of a joke, creepy, weird, gross-out video to show friends at school, but over time it developed into so much more. Viewers went from brushing it off as a simple goofy animation to taking it seriously as a piece of art, weaving the tale together, connecting the dots, and spending hours collaborating with others to put the story together. Which is something that I really appreciate about the horror climate today. The genre is taken a lot more seriously."[31]

Izzzyzzz claims that the early days of YouTube horror, alongside written horror stories such as "Jeff the Killer," "Eyeless Jack," and "Laughing Jack," as described by Jay Bird, has had an enormous impact on current-day internet horror.[32] Not only that, but creepypastas have slowly become a respected art genre on many sites as famous stories become classics, even achieving "legend" status for internet users.

Despite the acceptance of creepypastas by much of the online community, as described by Izzzyzzz, the genre, like many other internet phenomena, is often not taken seriously by the popular press. In an article about the genre, Roy highlights the "weird" nature of creepypastas and describes the evolution of the medium as such: "First they were called chain emails, and they were sent by people like your weird aunt who always wore a Big Dog t-shirt."[33] Roy also commented on the username of a Creepypasta.com admin, derpbutt, saying "Yep, that's the name he uses," after introducing the user as a source.[34] This attitude, coming from

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30   Chornobylskyi, "Social Sharing," 71.
31   Izzzyzzz, "Nostalgia," 31:57.
32   Izzzyzzz, "Nostalgia."
33   Jessica Roy, "Behind Creepypasta, the Internet Community That Allegedly Spread a Killer Meme," *Time*, (3 June 2014), https://time.com/2818192/creepypasta-copypasta-slenderman/.
34   Roy, "Internet Community."

an author of a prominent magazine such as *Time*, reveals the incredulousness with which general audiences viewed creepypastas at the height of their popularity. Similarly, in an article described by Roy as the point at which "creepypasta hit peak popularity,"[35] Considine describes creepypastas as "bite-sized bits of scariness that have joined the unending list of things-to-do-when-you're-bored-at-work."[36] While Considine's article allows more credit to the genre than Roy's and spends time considering what makes the stories so compelling, it still carries an air of criticism and implies that creepypastas are not a "serious" form of literature. This idea is contested by an admin of the Creepypasta Wiki who, when questioned about the potential negative impact of the stories on children, said "We are a literature site, not a crazy satanic cult."[37] Clearly, in the eyes of creepypasta authors and readers, the genre is something they take seriously.

The Folkloric Nature of Creepypastas

As conduits for cultural anxieties and concerns, creepypastas are inherently social creations. Many scholars, such as Balanzategui, Boyer, Chornobylskyi et al., and Cooly and Milligan, believe that, because of this social nature, creepypastas are an evolved form of folklore that has been adapted for the internet era. Balanzategui writes that creepypastas are a "folkloric type of storytelling" that aligns with traditional ghost stories and urban legends.[38] The communal nature of the genre, as described above, also builds the argument that creepypastas are related to folklore and legends as a social pattern.

The process of folkloric categorization explained by Balanzategui falls in line with the rules of r/nosleep. Founded in 2010, r/nosleep played a fundamental role in the development of the creepypasta genre as the rules of the subreddit defined how stories were told; Chornobylskyi et al. describe this process: "The main stylistic feature of the creepypastas on NoSleep is that they should be positioned as personal experience of a narrator, and thus the story will be conducted from the first person [...] An important requirement of the stories is their plausibility."[39] These rules have shaped the narrative style that creepypastas have become known for and the nearly realistic air that they utilize. Folklore is often told in the form of personal accounts, much like creepypastas. Additionally, the rules of r/nosleep, and therefore the stylistic traits of creepypastas, fall in line with the definition of folklore as many scholars have defined it. Boyer explains this link:

> "In terms of legend making and oral tradition, social networks have become a focal point of sharing traditional folklore and myth patterns. The shift from

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35   Roy, "Internet Community."

36   Austin Considine, "Bored at Work? Try Creepypasta, or Web Scares," *The New York Times*, (10 November 2010), https://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/14/fashion/14noticed.html?_r=0.

37   Manjoo, "Urban Legends."

38   Balanzategui, "Creepypastas," 187.

39   Chornobylskyi, "Social Sharing," 68.

oral storytelling to the Internet forms of writing, blogging, and videotaping is intriguing because it shows no difference in dynamic. The creation of Slender Man demonstrates that legend making and telling – even without the direct oral link – obeys the same rules of performativity, critique, embellishment, and progression as it does in the oral telling of a story. The audience and the primary story creator share the legend as a performance to stage their ideas of reality and normative social expectations within a construct of bizarre and preternatural circumstances."[40]

It is only natural, Boyer claims, that folklore has adapted to the presence of the internet and online interactions. By viewing the development of folkloric narratives on the internet, in fact, we can better understand how this process works in real-time, as well as how individuals react to the process.

One notable example of the online community influencing the elements of a creepypasta in a manner similar to the folkloric process comes in the form of *Marble Hornets* (2009-2014). *Marble Hornets* was a YouTube web series created by Troy Wagner and Joseph DeLage that featured the antagonist "The Operator," a character based heavily on Slenderman. The first episode of *Marble Hornets* was posted exactly ten days after user "Victor Surge" published the first images of Slenderman on the Something Awful forum.[41] Elements of Slenderman's iconic character that appear in multiple Slenderman-oriented games, movies, and online shows – such as the popular video game *Slender: The Eight Pages* (2012) and the movie *Slender Man* (2018) – originated in *Marble Hornets*. In a 2019 live stream, Joseph DeLage spoke about the impact of *Marble Hornets* on Slenderman's lore, saying, "And by this time, other than 'faceless guy with long arms that was tall,' [if] you think of all the iconic things that are associated with Slenderman – teleportation, static, memory loss, things like that – it all comes from Marble Hornets. It was never part of the Something Awful thread."[42]

The impact of *Marble Hornets* on Slenderman's lore is also emphasized by TikTok user IconicallyJules, who posted a video claiming that DeLage and Wagner were the true creators of Slenderman.[43] IconicallyJules' point is backed up by multiple comments, such as that from user Jorden_does.stuff, who writes, "Many general concepts of slenderman came from marble hornets. Their first vid-

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40   Boyer, "Slender Man," 240.
41   Boyer, "Slender Man," 251.
42   Joseph DeLage [@GeauxJoe], "We're Back Baybeee Marble Hornets 10 Year Anniversary Stream," [Livestream] *Twitch*, (2019), Accessed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-6KFleUWAk, 36:17.
43   IconicallyJules [@iconicallyjules], "They did it best... I know that mh is the operator but slenderman probably wouldntve been as popular if it werent for them!! #marblehornets #joesphdelage #troywagner #creepypasta #slenderman" [Video], *TikTok*, (1 April 2024), https://www.tiktok.com/@iconicallyjules/photo/7353029123272494379?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc.

eo was made 8 days after slenderman was very first created."[44] Additionally, user toasty_toby writes of *Marble Hornets*, "They literally set the concepts that would echo in pop culture forever."[45] However, one commenter, Zuzumafoo, leaves room to give credit to the community effort behind Slenderman's story, saying, "I love [Marble Hornets] but respect on Victor Surge for giving us Slenderman in the first place ☺ It takes a village."[46] Zuzumafoo's comment correctly emphasizes the folkloric nature of creepypasta narratives, which requires audience feedback and interaction to become established as a legend.

Counterarguments

Although the genre aligns with the tenets of folkloric storytelling, as seen in the formation of Slenderman by the online community, creepypastas differ from being truly classified as folklore due to their "level of self-reflexivity and a troubled relationship with authenticity," meaning that they are less oriented around telling one's experience in full truth and more focused on constructing a narrative that plays on cultural fears while toeing the line between reality and unreality.[47] Still, creepypastas do participate in many folkloric traditions as they utilize "'communicative behaviour whose primary characteristics … are that it doesn't 'belong' to an individual or group [… and is] transmitted spontaneously, from one individual to another, frequently without regard for remuneration or return benefit.'"[48] The lack of cultural boundaries in the sharing and creating of creepypastas, as well as the immediacy of the transfer between parties separates creepypastas from being true examples of folklore. Dewan describes the process of folklore and how legends are created, pointing out the importance of firsthand narratives in the creation of folklore.[49] Further, folkloric categorization includes the genre of "personal experience narratives defined as 'a prose narrative relating a personal experience; it is usually told in the first person, and its content is non-traditional.'"[50] While creepypastas match this definition in practice, they are not technically representations of real, lived experiences, and, as such, do not fit the definition of folklore presented by Dewan and Balanzategui.

Some authors go beyond denying creepypastas a place among tradition-al folklore. For example, Fedina et al. claim that creepypastas create new fears rather than portray them, which contradicts the function of folklore in society as

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44   IconicallyJules, "They did it."
45   IconicallyJules, "They did it."
46   IconicallyJules, "They did it."
47   Balanzategui, "Creepypastas," 187.
48   Balanzategui, "Creepypastas," 191.
49   Dewan, "Saucerful," 187.
50   Dewan, "Saucerful," 187.

described by Balanzategui (2019).[51] Therefore, by the standards of Fedina et al., creepypastas cannot be a "true" form of folklore in any way. The main argument put forth by Fedina et al. involves the format with which creepypastas are created and shared, stating that the genre's departure from oral storytelling separates it from traditional folklore.[52] Additionally, Fedina et al. state, "The technological factor is of fundamental importance, since any 'creepypasta' message would lose its potential for direct impact on a person if it were presented outside of a digital medium."[53] While many scholars agree with the argument that creepypastas are not "true" folklore, Fedina et al. depart from the majority of academic articles in claiming that creepypastas lose their impact in the real world. Apart from the fact that creepypastas are frequently shared orally in an offline context, especially among elementary and middle school-aged children, and therefore must have some emotional impact on their audiences, the stories can and do have a very tangible impact in the "real world." This impact is easily seen in the attempted murder of Payton Leutner, whose attackers feared the consequences they may face if they did not please Slenderman. While the digital environment is an integral part of creepypasta as a genre, this fact does not negate the impact that the stories have in the real world. Rather, creepypastas are adaptable enough to reach past the realm of their creation and into the lives of millions around the world.

Conclusion

While creepypastas may not be traditional examples of folklore, they nevertheless carry the key tenets of folkloric narratives in their sharing of cultural anxieties, communal storytelling, and the process of development. The nature of the websites on which creepypastas were first created, such as 4chan, Reddit, and other chat boards, has led to the massive community effort that goes into these stories today. Readers have since built a mutualistic relationship with authors as stories are passed between tellers and audiences in equal measure and narrative decisions are made as a community rather than by an individual. By viewing examples of specific creepypastas such as "Candle Cove" and stories about Slenderman, it is possible to examine the fears that are at the forefront of internet users in the current age of online interactions. By knowing these fears, we can better explain the concerns that trouble populations today and how these populations are dealing with such anxieties.

Today, internet horror has expanded into the territories of the uncanny valley, skinwalkers, and the "backrooms," all of which display a fear of unreality and the unknown. These concerns may be tied to the recent rise of artificial in-

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51   Olga V. Fedina, Sergey A. Malenko, and Andrey G. Nekita, "'Creepypasta': Images Of Waiting For Death And Danger In The Online Space," *Perishable And Eternal: Mythologies and Social Technologies of Digital Civilization* 120, (2021), 667-673. https://doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2021.12.03.89.

52   Fedina, "Waiting For Death."

53   Fedina, "Waiting For Death," 672.

telligence and political uncertainty that many are experiencing, continuing the trend of internet horror reflecting our real lives.

Horror is an integral part of society, and analyzing the phenomena we deem to be "horrific" can aid in understanding the issues that plague cultures. Creepypastas are just one example of internet-based horror stories, but they have caught the attention of countless users and challenge the ideals we hold dear. Folklore, a central part of human societies for thousands of years, has adapted to the digital age in the form of online horror content. This horror reflects fears involving technology and the innocence of children, which have become increasingly relevant in the real world. By analyzing the stories shared online via the creepypasta genre, it is possible to better understand the common anxieties of our time, as well as the popular reaction to them. Horror is at the center of our societies; as much as we fear it, horror defines who we are. Creepypastas and other forms of internet horror are the latest step in this millennia-long journey of expressing ourselves and our fears.

Invisible Ink

Towards an Understanding of Epistemic Injustice in the Realm of Male Rape

[ISAIAH J. MOONLIGHT]

Content Warning
This paper contains depictions of [rape/sexual assault/gender violence] that may be upsetting or triggering for some readers. Please proceed with caution.

The antirape movement started gaining ground with the grassroots consciousness-raising groups of the late 1960s through efforts to bring attention to the pervasive gender violence that women face. The last several decades have seen incredible progress, from redefining the boundaries of rape to drastically increasing awareness and resources for women. Despite these efforts, there remains a gendered landscape within rape recognition that has relegated the experiences of male victims to the sidelines, excluding them from developed resources. In an effort to bring attention to the issue of male rape, I aim to investigate the epistemic harms male victims face in mainstream society in order to paint a clearer picture of their struggle. I argue that the dominant power structure upholds a conception of rape that is socially biased as a means of maintaining hegemonic ideals of masculinity and the dominant power structure; by doing so, male rape victims face converging epistemic injustices—preventing them from receiving proper validation, intelligibly communicating their experiences, and utilizing collective resources developed by communities of marginalized knowers.

Epistemic injustice as a term was coined by Miranda Fricker, in her 2007 book "Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing", and it denoted injustice toward knowers in their very capacity as such. In it, she describes two distinct types of injustice: testimonial, relating to the credibility of a speaker, and hermeneutical, relating to the linguistic tools used to conceptualize and commu-

nicate experiences. Fricker's work is foundational in describing the way that complex power dynamics affect knowers and knowledge production. However, she has faced critique by scholars who claim her concepts are conceptually closed off, preventing a broader account of epistemic injustice that could also recognize how power can operate on even dominant members. One such critic, Kristie Dotson, in her article "A Cautionary Tale: On Limiting Epistemic Oppression", developed the term contributory injustice in conversation with Gaile Pohlhaus Jr's concept of willful hermeneutical ignorance. Contributory injustice aims to bring attention to how dominantly situated knowers may contribute to the oppression of knowledge and knowers by being willfully ignorant of the situated resources developed by marginalized communities. Armed with a cash of terms that address a wider array of epistemic injustices, scholars such as Debra Jackson have begun to explore the way in which systems of power use situated ignorance to oppress certain members of the dominant identity as a means of maintaining control over the whole.

The experience of a male rape victim is often one of distortion and dismissal due, in part, to the way that legal definitions and collective understanding have not allowed space for males to be victims. Commonly held myths about male rape include "men are too strong to be raped"; "men are less affected by rape"; "men can only be raped in prison" or "men can only be raped by other men"; and even "men can't be raped" often because "if they have an erection, it means they want it."[1] While the prevalence of male rape myths is hard to track, some studies have suggested that upward of 33% of the population believe that men cannot be raped by women and even that men cannot be raped at all.[2] These myths are widespread in part due to the legal lexicon's longstanding failure to classify men as vulnerable to such attacks. In fact, until 2013, the Uniform Crime Report's definition of rape only included "forcible male penile penetration of the female vagina."[3] This definition not only reduced rape down to only vaginal penetration, it also entirely omitted the possibility of men as victims, making male rape a categorical impossibility, not even recognized under the legislation. It painted a clear picture of men as perpetrators and women as victims. This does not mean that the rape of men did not occur, simply that it did not "count." It is largely due to feminist antirape efforts that the definition was amended to "the penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim."[4] This amended definition allowed for the possibility that men could be victims. However, without sufficient legal or social backing, it is unlikely that a man's experience be informally recognized by others as rape. The adjusted definition was

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1   Scott M. Walfield, "'Men Cannot Be Raped': Correlates of Male Rape Myth Acceptance," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 36, no. 13–14 (December 17, 2018), 5.
2   Walfield, "Myth Acceptance," 14.
3   U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), "An Updated Definition of Rape," modified April 7, 2017.
4   DOJ, "An Updated Definition of Rape."

a necessary change if men were to be recognized as victims, but it was not sufficient to change widespread social preconceptions. Even the adjusted definition requires an act of penetration, "a behavior in which men are expected to engage but women are not."[5] Changing the legal definition did broaden the space enough that rape was no longer only vaginal and thus men being raped is now able to be recognized as a possibility. Still, it largely forces men into the role of the perpetrator. While it is true that the majority of rapes are carried out by men, both the legal definition and the social construction perpetuate a gendered conception of rape where men are always the aggressors. The inherently biased definitions, combined with the prevalence of myths about male rape, creates an epistemic minefield for male victims attempting to seek recognition for their experiences.

   The most immediately apparent form of epistemic injustice indicated by the prevalence of male rape myths is testimonial injustice. Fricker defines testimonial injustice as a credibility deficit caused by an identity prejudice in the listener, "leading to a wrongful undermining of the speaker as a knower."[6] In other words, when listeners fail to properly validate speakers, due to some prejudice or preconception about a given identity such as gender, the one attempting to give testimony is harmed. This harm amounts to a denial of the speaker's self-knowledge and expression, resulting in victims who not only fail to find external validation but may even begin questioning their own experiences.[7] In the case of rape survivors, this can generate a bifurcated consciousness of sorts. Preconceived notions about what it means to be a man or what it is to be raped are in direct opposition to the lived experiences of a male rape victim. Notions of rape are inherently gendered and when that bias is applied to male testimony it results in listeners being prevented from giving proper credibility to the speaker. The male victim must contend with his own perception of events as well as the counter-narrative that discredits him. This can result in self-criticism and questioning one's own validity of the events as they occurred, at a time when self-agency has already been violated. Unfortunately, according to Fricker's account, the lack of credibility male victims face would not constitute an injustice but rather an incidental moment of epistemic "bad luck." This is because testimonial injustice, as it is originally defined, requires an operation of identity power that results in one identity effectively controlling another, "preventing them, for instance, from conveying knowledge—in a way that depends upon collective conceptions of the social identities in play."[8] The issue here is that Fricker's account leaves no room for dominant identities to face in-group oppression. Because the perceived identity of a man is in a position of epistemic power there can be no operation of identity

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  5 Debra L. Jackson, "Male Sexual Victimisation, Failures of Recognition, and Epistemic Injustice," *Epistemic Injustice and the Philosophy of Recognition* (June 16, 2022), 290.

  6 Miranda Fricker, *Epistemic injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 17.

  7 Jackson, "Victimisation," 288.

  8 Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 28.

power against them. Thus, the harms faced by male victims occur "not because of, but rather in spite of, the social type he is", suggesting incidental "bad luck" rather than a pattern of control operating on a collective conception of identity.[9] While traditional methods fail to classify the lack of credibility male rape victims face in their testimony as an injustice, I believe this to be a gross misstep. I argue that there is an active operation of social power at play due to the way that systematically upheld beliefs of masculinity paint an inaccurate picture in the minds of listeners and therefore control what is thought possible for men. Regardless, the classical case of testimonial injustice does not apply to the epistemic injustice male rape victims face and so we must look elsewhere. Perhaps it is an issue of intelligibility rather than one of dis-credibility.

It is entirely possible, as suggested by the changing definition of rape, that a root cause of the epistemic harm male rape victims face is linguistic. Fricker identifies "the injustice of having some significant area of one's social experience obscured from collective understanding owing to a structural identity prejudice in the collective hermeneutical resource"[10] as hermeneutical injustice. The classic case of hermeneutical injustice outlined by Fricker is built on the story of Wendy Stanford and the creation of the term "sexual harassment" by consciousness-raising groups in the 70's. The story reveals how Wendy was unable to articulate the unwanted and persistent sexual advances made toward her by male coworkers until a group of women facing similar harms were able to get together, recognize the pattern, and generate a term that conveyed their marginalized experiences — sexual harassment. It was not just the absence of the term, the hermeneutical lacuna, that made Wendy's experience an injustice; it's the fact that the gap had a disproportionately negative impact on one group, women, over and above others effectively discriminating against them and their experiences.[11] The apparent hermeneutical inequality that existed in Wendy's situation was essentially dormant, only coming to light as an injustice when her "attempt at intelligibility [was] handicapped."[12] A similar story of dormancy appears when we look at the report rates before and after the definition of rape was changed. The UCR indicated a 10% increase in reported incidents when using the adjusted definition, not because there were more cases of male rape, but because more incidents were recognized as rape under the new definition that had previously gone unrecognized.[13] This reveals that to some extent there was a gap where existing language failed to capture the experiences of male victims and their attempts to communicate what had happened to him were negatively impacted because of it. However, even operating under the adjusted definition of rape, dismissal and distortion remain prevalent. Therefore, there must be some form of intersectional injustice

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9   Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice* 158.
10   Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice,*155.
11   Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice,* 162.
12   Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice,* 159.
13   Jackson, "Victimisation," 284.

occurring in the case of male rape victims.

Engagement with Fricker's arguably robust definitions for testimonial and hermeneutical injustice has found that her terms rely on assumptions about the role of power and the availability of resources. These assumptions exclude certain identities, especially dominant identities, from being considered vulnerable to epistemic injustice. In an attempt to expand epistemic injustice to include the way that systems of power discursively act against their own dominant members, Dotson coined the term contributory injustice; she defined it as "an epistemic agent's willful hermeneutical ignorance in maintaining and utilizing structurally prejudiced hermeneutical resources."[14] This form of injustice relies upon the notion of willful hermeneutical ignorance, which occurs when "dominantly situated knowers refuse to acknowledge epistemic tools developed from the experienced world of those situated marginally."[15] Both terms rely upon the idea that epistemic resources are socially situated and thus there is not a single set of available resources but rather a multitude that come from the socially positioned experiences of the marginally situated.[16] Given how relevant a knower's social position is, as it both informs her resources and directs her attention, it is not surprising that marginally situated knowers struggle to have their resources considered by dominant knowers who fail to give attention to the experiences of those oppressed, because those resources are not immediately useful or apparent to those within the dominant identity.[17] This can be seen in the case of 'sexual harassment'. The term had to be generated by a marginalized community and was only recognized by the dominant with considerable efforts. In contributory injustice the issue is not a lack of terminology, nor does it come from agents withholding credibility; rather it's the refusal by dominantly situated knowers to accept and use the terms created by oppressed people, even when interacting with them. Taken together, contributory injustice indicates the convergence of oppressive systems where structural prejudice meets biased hermeneutics, generating a form of epistemic oppression that operates through individual agents as well as on a systemic level.

Considering the critical addition of contributory injustice, dominant identities can now be said to be affected by epistemic injustices when those identities themselves are marginalized by their experiences and subsequently prevented from speaking intelligibly and receiving credibility. While the identity of "man" is seen as socially dominant, rightly so, the identity of "victim" is not. This is an important distinction to make in our case. When victims disclose their experiences of rape, the listener becomes the dominantly situated knower because

14   Kristie Dotson, "A Cautionary Tale: On Limiting Epistemic Oppression," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 33, no. 1 (2012), 32.

15   Gaile Pohlhaus, "Relational Knowing and Epistemic Injustice: Toward a Theory of Willful Hermeneutical Ignorance," *Hypatia Journal of Feminist Philosophy* 27, no. 4 (2012), 715.

16   Dotson, "Epistemic Oppression," 31.

17   Pohlhaus, "Relational Knowing," 721.

they are in a position to provide or deny recognition, while the victim becomes marginalized by virtue of their vulnerability.[18] Male victims, now in a place the subordinate, must contend with the fractious epistemic landscape of seeking validation and communicating their experiences. They are harmed by the convergence of testimonial and hermeneutical injustice that manifests through willful ignorance on the part of their listeners. Dominant knowers, despite being aware of the available resources, are instead clinging to socially biased conceptions of what "rape" means. The great harm in willful ignorance is not simply an inability to see those precious resources developed by marginalized knowers, but a "coordinated misinterpretation of the world… presenting instead a distorted picture resulting from faulty epistemic resources."[19] The failure is that the conceptual framework that listeners are using does not allow for men to be victims or does not allow rape to apply to men. This injustice is not due to a gap, as I have already demonstrated the terms exist, "but rather to an ambiguity or conflict among the collective interpretive resources resulting from an ongoing controversy over the meaning of the concept."[20] Therefore, it cannot be said that men face a hermeneutical gap in the same sense that Fricker means. However, it can be argued that they face a unique "artificial lacuna". Despite the terms existing and being readily available, victims and listeners alike fail to appropriately apply them. This leaves male victims confused and lost, often without an anchor to explain and understand what happened to them. This obfuscation is not accidental. The subjugation of male rape victims to the sidelines of sexual assault is more or less a deliberate action against those men by the very power structure which upholds male dominance.

As with all oppressive systems, preventing male rape victims from recognition is an act of social control by those in power. Willful ignorance allows there to be a lack of appropriate conceptual frameworks with which to deal with cases that do not fit the dominant narrative.[21] Dominant groups have no interest in "proper interpretation" but do have an active interest in "extant misinterpretation" because that misinterpretation benefits the power structure.[22] The architects of oppression are actively interested in keeping surviving misinterpretation alive, encouraging further division through the oversaturation of terms, and diluting the contributions of marginalized communities. All of this is done with the goal of preserving the fragile facade of the dominant. Hence why men who, by being a victim, do not fit into the collective conception of what it means to be a man are able to be discredited. The harms perpetrated against a specific portion of the male population – victims of rape – amount to dismissal, distortion, and erasure, all as a means of preserving the "social dominance of men as

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18   Jackson, "Victimisation," 292.
19   Pohlhaus, "Relational Knowing," 731.
20   Jackson, "Victimisation," 286.
21   Dotson, "Epistemic Oppression," 39.
22   Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice,* 152.

a group."[23] By preserving a false narrative of the dominant group, such as "men are strong, not weak", architects of oppression are able to hide the corrosive nature of the system that effectively harms members of its own dominant group. By adjusting definitions and accepting marginalized resources, the dominant group would be acknowledging how its system perpetuates oppression through division and pitting marginalized communities against one another. Epistemic equity is against the interests of those dominantly situated precisely because doing so would move "epistemic power away from dominant situatedness and can make clearer the injustices that maintain dominant privilege."[24] Such is the case with male rape victims. By preventing the transmission and expansion of terms, those in power drive a wedge between rape survivors of different genders and identities which makes unification and the transmission of knowledge more difficult. The structure of power depends upon controlling the distribution of knowledge in this case. If dominantly situated knowers were to allow for the proliferation of hermeneutical resources from marginalized communities, it would only work to highlight how systems of injustice are used to prop up the privileged. This is certainly the case for male rape survivors, whose stories reveal the flaws in the dominantly constructed narrative of patriarchal strength and supremacy. This interwoven net of epistemic injustice reveals the depth of control by the dominant, where dis-credibility and unintelligibility are kept hidden by the willful ignorance of those who have the privilege to look away.

Rape is one of the most horrific acts someone can carry out against another human. Its violation robs victims of agency in the moment of its occurrence and endures through deep emotional and psychological wounds. These experiences are only further compounded by the difficulties many face when attempting to seek justice or even recognition. Despite being members of the dominant group, men who have been raped face an axis of injustice when attempting to communicate any shred of their experience. Not only are their stories frequently dismissed as an "impossibility", but a discursive web of injustice means that others fail to utilize existing resources when dealing with victims while at the same time victims fail to claim agency over resources developed by marginalized communities who have long suffered under these oppressive systems. Male victims must contend with converging injustices. They face a combination of the testimonial failure to credit their experiences, an artificial hermeneutical gap produced by biased heuristics that obscure and distort their lived experiences, and the inability of the hegemony to recognize and utilize marginalized resources. All done in an attempt to further support an oppressive system that subjugates members of its own dominant class as a means of maintaining authority, sowing discourse, and perpetuating oppression against marginalized communities.

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23   Dotson, "Epistemic Oppression," 33; Jackson, "Victimisation," 292.
24   Pohlhaus, "Relational Knowing," 721.

Humour, Humours, and Horror

Adapting the Violence of
Richard III

[Trinity Look]

There exists a cut piece of dialogue hiding within the files and trailers for the game *Bloodborne*: "blood makes us human. Makes us more than human. Makes us human no more."[1] I lament this change somewhat. It so closely reflects the latent and often unspoken fascination we have with blood. It is one thing to have it– to *be* alive, and therefore: people– but it is in losing it that it captivates one's attention. In the context of art and depending upon its genre, seeing it can be terrible, cathartic, or even funny. Its presence can evoke a myriad of contradictory feelings, but one thing is certain: they are strong. Thus, it is of great importance that bloodloss (and by extension: violence) within a narrative be presented with clear intent. The 2024 Chicago Shakespeare Theatre's production of *Richard III* directed by Edward Hall prescribes unto its characters morbid fates of all kinds: often bloody, brutal, and medical, to both provide insight into Richard's psyche and create a dialogue between violence and similar types of systemic tyranny; each method of character death symbolically aligns with the victim's relationship to Richard and contributes to a wider commentary on the corruption of medical institutions and the exploitation of its patients set in the backdrop of the early 20th century.

Richard III's original text is William Shakespeare's adaptation of Richard of Gloucester's ascent to the throne and ensuing reign before being overthrown by Henry Tudor of Richmond. This artistic perspective on Richard's reign spends its first half focusing on his schemes to dispose of other prospective heirs to the crown, which includes no shortage of murder, manipulation, and most famous of

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1   Miyazaki, Hidetaka, "Bloodborne: Complete Edition," Computer software, San Mateo, CA: Sony Computer Entertainment America LLC, 2015.

all: the imprisonment and (what Shakespeare presumes to be) killing of Edward V and his brother, the "princes in the tower" whose fates remain a popular mystery of British history to this day. The second half revolves around Richard's rule, which is characterized as tyrannical as his mental state declines. This culminates in an uprising led by the Tudors, and Richard is summarily deposed in battle by the Earl of Richmond. While there is no question that Richard is a villainous figure, Shakespeare takes care to also throw into relief Richard's complexities, making note of his disability referred to as "deformed" and gesturing towards social and systemic factors that might have motivated his desire for power.[2] As such, this particular production has taken care to centre both the violence of the text and a dichotomy of the abled and disabled, the living, and the dead.

It is difficult to bridge the gap between 15th century English monarchy and the modern day, so another institution was imposed on top of it to add an extra dimension and set the stage for the degree of brutality that would occur. The grand drapes traded in velvet for semi-clear plastic, thrones and beds were made into operating tables, walls were medical office partitions, and perhaps most strikingly: the ensemble was dressed in white lab coats and their faces were obscured with *Silent Hill*-esque bandage masks.[3] The hospital-themed set dominates the production and hangs over the audience and juxtaposes life and healing with the pungent odor of death, which both can be unsettling *or* comedic in its irony.

Being in a hospital also puts the representation of disability at the forefront. While Richard exploits the institution (be it the hierarchical structure of the monarchy *or* this representation of a hospital) for his own tyrannical means, it is also simultaneously the cause of his grief: opening up no space to him in the aftermath of battling against the Lancasters.[4] This draws a parallel between the usage of healthcare systems in the early 1920s (in which this production likely takes place) to silence or otherwise treat with indifference its marginalized patients and the similar flaws within the English governmental system as it stood contemporary to the 1480s.

Richard sees himself above the Duke of Clarence– his brother and first victim– for falling for his duplicity while also being caught up in the glee of knowing about his oncoming demise.[5] Clarence's death at the hands of the murderers Richard hires takes on a very comedic tone in this adaptation. The two are dressed up as mafia men, partaking in hijinks and slapstick shenanigans as they reconsider whether or not it would be wise to kill him while drenched in warm, bright light. It is in this setup and their delivery of such lines as "where is thy conscience now? / In the Duke of Cloucester's purse / So when he opens his purse to

    2   Shakespeare, William, "Richard III," Essay, In *The Norton Shakespeare*, 3rd ed., 555–648, New York City, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2015.
    3   Shakespeare, William, "Richard III," February 21, 2024.
    4   Shakespeare, "Richard III," 1.1.10-14.
    5   Shakespeare, "Richard III," 1.1.118-120.

give us our reward, thy conscience flies out" as witty banter that all prior serious-ness has been thrown out.[6] This staging also juxtaposes itself against Clarence's monologue to Tower of London constable Sir Brackenbury, which is performed in extremely limited sterile light that highlights (literally) his sickness from worry. The levity presented by the murderers captures Richard's excitement at his bid for the crown and allows for an opportunity for the audience to join in on his schemes– laughing along at what is to come and completely disregarding the de-spair that occurred just prior to it.

Clarence's method of death being restrained, lobotomized, and drowned is significant in maintaining the theme of similarity in violence throughout differ-ent institutions. His restraint by the orderlies exemplifies how Richard utilized the system within which he operates (in this case, the institution of medicine standing in for the institution of the English bureaucracy) to effectively eliminate his brother. Clarence being sent into isolation and its consequential paranoia be-ing met with indifference (and later death) from the professional meant to take care of him parallels the way in which mental health treatment often historically functioned throughout the early 20th century. The framing of his monologue as a talk-therapy session and his lobotomy solidifies this, recontextualizing his terror surrounding a system that treats his struggle with apathy as judicial *and* patho-logical at the same time.

Richard's interaction with the two young princes– the direct heirs for the throne after Clarence– is veiled in kindness as he attempts to gain their trust through his rank and prescribed responsibility to watch over them. He appeals to them by positioning himself as someone bestowing advice, claiming that "those uncles which you want were dangerous / Your grace attended to their sugared words / But looked not on the poison of their hearts."[7] Of course, this is all a ruse to keep up appearances and sow seeds of distrust within them towards their oth-er relatives. With regard to their deaths, in the text, their murderer: James Tyrrel, gets a monologue wherein he recounts the method by which the Princes were killed to Richard, stating that "when Dighton thus told on – 'We smotherèd / The most replenishèd sweet work of nature / That from the prime creation e'er she framed.'"[8] But all his dialogue is conspicuously missing from the Chicago produc-tion. Despite its absence, the methodology of murder remains true, and the lack of voice lent to the experience of the Princes contributes to their characterization as silent mouthpieces.

The Princes themselves are puppets, physical representations of their lack of agency. Though they maintain their lines, they are voiced and puppeteered by the actors playing the murderers who have been double cast. They have been killed by Richard at this point of the play completely unexpectedly, perhaps par-

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6   Shakespeare, "Richard III," 1.4.116-117.
7   Shakespeare, "Richard III," 3.1.12-14.
8   Shakespeare, "Richard III," 4.3.17-18.

alleling their own misguided trust in Richard prior to death. As for Tyrrel, he is genderbent to be a completely silent WWI-era nurse (Jane Tyrrel), complete with medical mask, bloody apron, and chatelaine. She is sent to the tower to be the Princes' caretaker and it is implied she suffocates them with a pillow. This aesthetic change to a woman whose vocation is built on trust and gentleness furthers the parallels between the modus operandi and Richard's dynamic with his victims. And once again, this murder is carried out through a manipulation of the institution in which Richard resides– as it is in part due to his position as Lord Protector that allows him to recommend they stay in the tower. As such, Jane being represented as a nurse continues that throughline of commentating on institutional exploitation in both the monarchical sense and in the realm of medicine.

The next victim of note is Lady Anne, who is introduced as a widow and one of the first to see through Richard's schemes.[9] However, she marries him despite this, and their interactions remain cold and loveless for the rest of the play. There is a lot of freedom for the method by which she meets her fate. It's never explicitly stated in the text how she dies. Richard only orders for a rumour to be spread of Anne being sickly, making a passing remark after her death: "Anne my wife hath bid this world good night."[10] Thus, the inclusion of an on-stage end at all is of note. In the Chicago production, she is directly killed by Richard, who chokes her out on stage and– while her hand is in rigor mortis– breaks it to wrench the ring off of her finger (and cutting it off in the process). This plays on the coldness of their relationship. From the outset, he has no intent of being close to Anne and intends to discard her when the time comes, going so far as to say "I'll have her, but I will not keep her long."[11] Her death embodies their marriage's sheer lack of ardor– being bereft of blood. It is also not until she is already dead that the macabre is truly embraced. The real shock is in the breakage of her hand, as it is blocked to be invisible to the audience and relying on the foley effects of her breaking bones to imply Richard's actions. It emphasizes the purpose for her killing– which was not related to attachment (either personally or to the crown) but rather to the cutting off of his connection to her.

The specific staging of her murder in this production also symbolizes a degree of estrangement between her and Richard. The most similar method of death to Anne is the killing of the murderers, whose necks are snapped by Richard himself in a nonchalant fashion. It is possible this similarity lends to the idea that she lacks uniqueness or closeness to Richard, and was always a means to an end. Due to being strangled by with his bare hands, medical prop usage in her death is forgone entirely, indicating that Richard has accrued so much power that he is no longer bound by the rules and practices of the institution he is a part of to enact his will. It is at this point that his nigh complete control over his world has

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9   Shakespeare, "Richard III," 1.2.145-148.
10   Shakespeare, "Richard III," 4.2.29-50; 4.3.39.
11   Shakespeare, "Richard III," 1.2.215-216.

truly come to fruition, and the absence of subtlety and scheming in his conduct is being made known to foreshadow his imminent downfall.

The Duke of Buckingham is an advisor almost as ruthlessly opportunistic as Richard, taking his vying for power in stride and confidently aligning himself with him for a vast majority of the play. Yet in the face of these parallels, he is killed for his reticence to kill the princes, which Richard immediately regards with disdain in this aside: "the deep-revolving witty Buckingham / No more shall be the neighbor to my counsels. / Hath he so long held out with me, untired, / And now he stops for breath? Well, be it so."[12] This culminates in his eventual full-blown betrayal of Richard, fleeing to Wales to seek out Richmond, and subsequent execution for his treason.

Though the Duke's death is not necessarily described or directed in any specific way, it is implied he is beheaded due to his own entreatment of the guards to lead him to "the block of shame."[13] The Chicago production takes it many steps further, however, having him be disemboweled with a scythe and his intestines dropped into a tin bucket with a resounding thud. One could say he hadn't the *guts* to stay on Richard's side, and his reluctance to go far enough in his ambitions is what ultimately led to his undoing. The nature of this capital punishment is so up-front and memorable as one of the late deaths of the play, and this may be because it was the closest connection that Richard had to let go of. Being killed with a scythe was also striking– being one of the few instances of a non-medical instrument being used to kill within the production. The scythe is sometimes representative of justice, and with that understanding of its symbolism, it could represent what Richard sees as vindication for treason. Alternatively, the scythe and its relation to wheat (and therefore industry) could be representative of how Buckingham was motivated by the assurance of greater fortune through land and entitlement– and such a desire was turned against him in a form of contrapasso.

Finally, the life of Richard himself is ended rather unceremoniously, as he is shot in the chest and falls limp on the stage. The only gunshot that is fired throughout the entire show is done by the Earl of Richmond to deal a final blow to him, who– in the loss of his horse (represented by his mobility aid) crawls across the stage before his demise. No blood, no gore, no medicine. This last bout of violence being so removed from how it was previously characterized indicates a complete paradigm shift.

The gun signifies a sense of dignity in this situation by being so quick to put Richard out of his misery. However, the gunshot echoes across the entire theatre. Its loudness signals a new era, but perhaps this era will not be one wherein peace is perpetual. This is corroborated by Richmond's lines afterwards, wherein he turns to the remaining soldiers and calls upon them to hail him as king with a shout. That could contribute to a more ambiguous tone to the fate of the kingdom

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12   Shakespeare, "Richard III," 4.2.42-45.
13   Shakespeare, "Richard III," 5.1.28-29.

as a whole. "What traitor hears me and says not amen?" the last line called out, suggests a coarseness in character.[14] Richmond assumes himself to be gracious by having spared those who defected to his side from Richard's, but his line is delivered with an unwarranted force that contradicts his intent and calls into question how long this unity shall last– and if much about the institution shall change at all.

Viscera is, well... visceral. And whichever feeling it stirs to the mind is powerful when put in the right place at the right time: in an instant, it disconcerts enough to make one gasp, to look away, to pity, or to laugh. Edward Hall's vision of *Richard III* calls attention to the gorey details. In doing so, it adds depth in theme by superimposing its violence atop medical imagery: allowing for critique of the exploitation of two networks of power at once, and depth in character: choosing symbolic execution methods that further characterize its victims and their relationships with its perpetrator. Its display of bloodshed was just enough to add nuanced perspectives to the adaptation, and just "enough to make a man sick."[15]

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14   Shakespeare, "Richard III," 5.5.22.
15   Miyazaki, "Bloodborne".

What is Dead and Alive in Logical Positivism Today?

[Petra Urgacova]

1. Introduction

Logical positivism was an ambitious project in the 1920s and 30s that aimed to provide a concrete framework for scientific communication.[1] The goal was to reduce scientific knowledge to empirical statements verified by sense data and logical formulation.[2] The project failed for various reasons, such as being overloaded with complicated information and an inability to account for scientific laws, metaphysics, and ethics. However, there are still some faint lessons to be learned today. These lessons can be drawn from what remains of logical positivism today. While logical positivism as a movement and a theory is not discussed today, its core ideas—such as cognitive meaning in scientific hypotheses, the verifiability principle, and the push for precise language—still emanate in current scientific methodology. In this paper, I will explore which elements remain relevant in scientific discussions.

In section 2, I will review the history of logical positivism, mainly focusing on the works of R. Carnap and O. Neurath. In section 3, I will review examples of reasons why the project failed. In section 4, I will focus on three areas of logical positivism observed in current scientific practices, including the cognitive meaning of scientific hypothesis (4.1), the verifiability principle (4.2), and precise language (4.3).

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1   "Logical Empiricism (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, September 21, 2022, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/logical-empricism.
2   "Logical Empiricism."

2. Brief History of Logical Positivism

Logical positivism was a movement in philosophy that began in the early 1900s, and the goal was to unify science under the same language framework. Its goal was establishing firm rules for the empirical formulation.[3] Empirical knowledge refers to statements whose truth can be verified by observation or logical reasoning. Some leading movement proponents were part of the Vienna Circle, such as Rudolf Carnap, Otto Neurath, and many more. The logical positivism project was concerned with scientific methodology. Its ultimate goal was to unify science under a framework that could be empirically verifiable .[4]Simply put, scientific statements should be precise and testable by experimentation. If they are only theoretical, they should be proven through logical formulations.

Neurath's essay from *Logical Positivism* on the protocol sentences is an excellent example of an essay that emerged from the movement. The book itself is about reductionism and scientific knowledge's verifiability. Neurath discusses the imprecision of scientific language. He argues that we should strive to eliminate vague and metaphysical terms only to have a precise physicalist language.[5] Metaphysical terms are statements that cannot be empirically observed or proved through mathematics, such as the soul. We cannot see the soul nor have tests that can verify its existence. This is also called the verifiability requirement; for a sentence to count as scientific knowledge, it must be verifiable by experimentation that will yield observable facts or sound logical formulation.[6]

Returning to the idea of reductionism, Neurath's statement should be condensed. It should be reduced to a concise physicalist version that can be empirically verified. This also means that some statements, even if observable, are more accurate than others. For example, "Otto is observing an angry person" is less precise than "Otto is observing a thermometer reading 24 degrees".[7] That is because many variables affect whether we deem a person angry.

Additionally, it is also a subjective evaluation. In contrast, a thermometer at a specific temperature is universal. Its reading leaves no room for widely different interpretations of the temperature. That is why, in science, ordinary language should be replaced with the physicalist language of advanced science, which is reduced and verifiable by observation.

Neurath suggests using protocol sentences to make scientific statements more precise. A protocol sentence is a factual sentence where a personal noun occurs multiple times with specific association to other terms.[8] An example of a simple

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3   "Logical Empiricism."
4   "Logical Empiricism."
5   "Otto Neurath," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, March 1, 2024, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/neurath/.
6   Carl G. Hempel, "Problems and Changes in the Empiricist Criterion of Meaning," *Revue Internationale De Philosophie* 4, no. 11 (1950): 41–63, https://jwww.jstor.org/stable/23932368.
7   "Otto Neurath."
8   "Otto Neurath."

protocol sentence would be, "Otto now sees a red circle".[9]

An established list of true protocol sentences must be created to achieve unified science. This list would be essential for a consistent framework in scientific writing.[10] In theory, this list would be composed of empirical scientific truths upon which more research could be built. However, empirical observations often change, so the protocol sentences should also change if that happens. This is crucial because we cannot have two conflicting protocol sentences in the same framework. If we did, such conflicts would prevent the system from being unified.[11] This means there would also need to be a protocol to decide which protocol sentence should be eliminated.

Rudolf Carnap was another proponent of logical positivism who also worked on protocol sentences and reduced scientific knowledge to neutral ones to help unify the scientific language.[12] Carnap states that every scientific statement should be based on and be reducible to statements solely of empirical observations. So instead of asking, for example, "What kinds of words occur in protocol sentences?" it would be more precise to reformulate it as "What objects are the elements of a given direct experience?".[13] Once again, by learning how reducing statements to a physicalist language works, they could translate statements from different branches of science into a unified language.

Carnap also argues that statements should be verifiable through logical syntax. An argument based on empirical evidence could be translated into a set of unified symbols.[14] For example, if empirical properties A and B are the same, they could be written as A=B. Nevertheless, the project of scientific unification ultimately failed due to various reasons, including the verifiability principle and reductionism.

3. Reasons Why the Logical Positivism Project Failed

Logical positivism burned bright in the early 1900s but died in the next forty years due to various issues, such as those with the verifiability principle. One significant outcome of logical positivism was that all non-analytic knowledge must be based on experience, which excludes large parts of metaphysics, ethics, and aesthetics.[15] For a statement to have a meaning, it must be testable or observable.[16] So, for example, we have a sentence, "I see a red apple now." My observation confirms its empirical meaning on the assumption that I have pre-

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9   "Otto Neurath."
10   "Otto Neurath."
11   "Otto Neurath."
12   "The Unity of Science," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, January 9, 2024, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/scientific-unity/.
13   "The Unity of Science."
14   "The Unity of Science."
15   Hempel, "Problems and Changes," 1950.
16   Hempel, "Problems and Changes," 1950.

vious knowledge of what red means. However, as Carl Gustav Hempel indicates, this type of filter excludes large parts of science that are not verifiable in this way. For example, this excludes general laws as they cannot be conclusively verified by observational data.[17] This also raises the question of what kind of verification is enough to be scientific knowledge.

One issue with the verifiability of a scientific statement is that we do not know what counts as enough experimental evidence for a statement to be scientific. For example, the existence of electrons has been proven through experiments such as the one by J.J. Thomson with cathode ray tubes and others.[18] However, whether this evidence is enough is unclear because we cannot directly observe all the electrons or infer knowledge from our observations at any given point.

Logical positivism also failed to encompass objective truths that do not have empirical evidence.[19] For example, the theory of relativity, for which we do not yet have any experimental evidence that would fully explain all of its moving parts. If we cannot directly observe it, it would not count under logical positivism as good scientific knowledge. All a priori statements, knowledge acquired without experience, would not have a place in the unified science.

Scientific theories are complex, and some argue that logical positivism has also failed to encompass its complexity.[20] Logical positivism fails to encompass complex scientific theories that derive inference from multiple sources of evidence and thus are not only a collection of isolated statements that can be verified by observation. Nevertheless, there are many other reasons why the project ultimately failed in unifying science under one language framework. However, some valuable lessons can be learned from it that can inform our scientific practices. Specifically, I will talk about the cognitive meaning of the scientific hypothesis (4.1), the verifiability principle (4.2), and precise language (4.3).

4. Valuable Lessons From Logical Positivism

Despite its ultimate failure of logical positivism, it still introduced some key ideas to scientific reasoning, methodology, and writing. The following sections will explore three aspects that remain relevant today.

4.1. Cognitive Meaning of Scientific Hypothesis

Hempel was concerned with empirically verified statements and those that could be verified or falsified against empirical evidence, which he called cognitively meaningful. For example, let us say we have a statement: "All apples are

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17   Hempel, "Problems and Changes in the Empiricist Criterion of Meaning," 1950.
18   Allison Marsh, "Did J.J. Thomson Discover the Electron?" *IEEE Spectrum*, November 22, 2022, https://spectrum.ieee.org/discovery-of-the-electron.
19   Hempel, "Problems and Changes in the Empiricist Criterion of Meaning," 1950.
20   Hans Poser, "The Failure of Logical Positivism to Cope With Problems of Modal Theory," in *Synthese Historical Library*, 1988, 311–27, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-009-2915-9-8.

red." We do not know whether that is true or false, but we can empirically verify that by looking at various apples. Someone then goes into an orchard and observes all of the apples there; if they are all red, they have evidence supporting their claim, and if some are green, they have a reason to refute the statement. This means that the statement "all apples are red" is cognitively meaningful even though it is not empirically verified. We can go into the real world and check. Some sentences are not cognitively meaningful.[21] For example, the sentence "All mothmans are rainbow" is not cognitively meaningful because it is based on a fictional figure, so we cannot go to the real world and check through our library of empirical observations.

The idea of cognitively meaningful sentences can be expanded to a scientific hypothesis.[22] Hempel states that the hypothesis still has meaning even without implying that there are possible tests that would reveal whether it is confirmed by observation. This goes against logical positivism's notion that empirical statements are the only scientifically meaningful sentences. Hempel argues that to understand a hypothesis in empirical language, we must look at what observational sentences contain and what non-observational empirical sentences are related. This would help us determine whether the hypothesis confirms or disagrees with the empirical statements.[23]

Cognitively meaningful sentences can also help us make better scientific predictions. If we have an established set of empirical statements for which we have solid evidence to believe to be accurate, introducing a hypothesis and estimating whether it is correct before designing an experiment to test is a meaningful analysis. We can have a central hypothesis we wish to test and an alternative one if we do not get the expected results. For example, fish have a sensory system called the lateral line system on their skin that helps them detect water flow.[24] Based on the assumption from our empirical research, we know that this lateral line system can detect vibrations, so if we expose the fish to an oscillating probe, we may hypothesize that if the fish feels it, it will swim away.[25] However, from another set of empirical statements, we also know that the fish hearing system can detect vibrations in water.[26] So, let's run the experiment, and the fish swim away. It informs us that either hypothesis could be true, which is still cognitively informative but does not produce another empirical statement.

When multiple hypotheses are possible, empirical statements from a

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21   Hempel, "Problems and Changes," 1950.

22   Hempel, "Problems and Changes," 1950.

23   Hempel, "Problems and Changes," 1950.

24   Matthew S. Weeg and Andrew H. Bass, "Frequency Response Properties of Lateral Line Superficial Neuromasts in a Vocal Fish, With Evidence for Acoustic Sensitivity," *Journal of Neurophysiology* 88, no. 3 (September 1, 2002): 1252–62, https://doi.org/10.1152/jn.2002.88.3.1252.

25   Weeg and Bass, "Frequency Response Properties."

26   Weeg and Bass, "Frequency Response Properties."

positivist framework can help us create better experimental predictions. This is already being done, and it uses part of what Hempel discussed in terms of cognitively meaningful sentences.

4.2. Verifiability Principle

Rynin defends the verifiability principle by stating that it permits us to reformulate sentences and cognitive statements, which helps develop a semantics system. He argues that if we have a statement P, it will only be valid under necessary and sufficient conditions to establish the statement as true; he calls this the sufficient truth condition.[27] The same applies to cognitive statements: for them to be true, there has to be a condition that makes them true. Rynin argues that for a cognitive statement to have meaning, it has sufficient and necessary conditions under which it is either true or false. However, there are two types of cognitive meaning.

The first type of cognitive meaning is 1) the concept of cognitive meaningfulness and 2) the concept of cognitive meaning.[28]
A sentence is meaningful if it has a necessary or sufficient truth condition determining whether it is true or false. For example, if I have a statement, "I see a red apple now," and I have a necessary condition where the thing I am looking at is red, but that is not sufficient because I see a strawberry, my observation is false. However, if the condition is necessary and sufficient, it will yield a true condition. Rynin argues that when we try to explain the meaning of a statement, we need to do so through necessary and sufficient conditions. So, going back to the red apple, an object is a red apple if and only if it is red and possesses all the characteristics of an apple. This is why Rynin states that just because we know a statement is meaningful does not mean we understand its meaning because it needs to be explained in a sufficient and necessary condition, thus confirming the verifiability principle.[29]

For Rynin, the meaning of statements is composed of sufficient and necessary conditions, and if a statement does not fulfill it, it is deemed cognitively meaningless. For example, let us take the statement "For any substance, there exists a solvent," in which we cannot specify the necessary and sufficient conditions, so it would be deemed cognitively meaningless in terms of the verifiability principle.[30]

There is some scientific use for the distinction of proposition P being meaningful versus having meaning in terms of providing context. If I go back to the solvent example, it may be necessary for my solvent to be poler to dissolve

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27   David Rynin, "Vindication of L*G*C*L P*S*T*V*SM," *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 30 (1957): 45–67, https://doi.org/10.2307/3129288https://www.jstor.org/stable/3129288.
28   Rynin, "Vindication."
29   Rynin, "Vindication."
30   Rynin, "Vindication."

the substrate, but that may not be sufficient if it does not have the correct concentration. In that sense, I have a helpful observation that does not achieve the final goal. The necessary and sufficient condition rule for verifiability is helpful for methodological writing within the scientific context.

4.3. Precise Language

Many modern scientific papers use the passive voice rather than the active voice, which may be a fragment of logical positivism. The preference for passive voice may stem from logical positivism's goal of depersonalizing scientific claims and thus making them appear more objective and universally valid.

Part of this discussion of using precise language involves protocol sentences. As stated before, a protocol sentence is a factual sentence where a personal noun occurs with a specific association with other terms.[31] A protocol sentence that may be found in a scientific journal may look like "The experiment found that there was an increased amount of protein X." Here we have the noun and an association it found. Usually, scientific writing steers away from using a first-person perspective that would instead state, "We found that there was an increased amount of protein X." One of the goals of logical positivism was to make scientific knowledge more factual and reduced such as stated in the theory of reductionism by Carnap.

This notation may make science look more like an objective truth rather than inferential evidence. From the perspective of logical positivism, a meaningful scientific statement must contain an empirical claim, which both first-person and passive-voice statements can contain. However, looking at Carnap's examples of reduced sentences, I am not surprised if formulating scientific more objectively, aka in passive voice, is preferred as they appear more empirical. Even though, as mentioned by Neurath protocol sentences need to be reviewed if proven wrong or inconsistent with the other ones, making them appear more objective truths rather than something a person designed and tested may add to their false sense of credibility.

5. Conclusion

The Vienna Circle project for the unification of science attempted to create a solid foundation for precise and reduced language, but it ultimately failed to implement this idea. However, some of its proponents' ideas are still used. For example, Hempel's theory of cognitive meaningful sentences can be expanded to a hypothesis, and one should be based on previous empirical findings. Another example is Rynin's attempt to salvage the verifiability principle by introducing the distinction between meaningful sentences and the meaning of a sentence. His formulation helps advise using sufficient and necessary conditions when explaining experienced outcomes. Lastly, even if uncertain, the passive voice used

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31   "Otto Neurath."

in scientific writing may be a reminder of logical positivism's attempt to create an objective empirical statement about scientific knowledge. So, even if logical positivism is mainly regarded as a dead movement, cognitive meaning in scientific hypotheses, the verifiability principle, and the push for precise language are still present in contemporary science.

[Feature Articles]

La Morsure des Termites

Ethics of Unearthing Termites

[Em Allen]

Artistic production, economic value, and institutional prestige have long been interconnected, from Renaissance commissioning and patronage of artists by the church and the aristocracy to the modern art market and its many stakeholders. Many people measure artistic success in terms of commercial viability and institutional prominence, but many artists challenge these assumptions by eschewing traditional venues and artistic practices. Institutions are catching up and beginning to showcase these artists, raising questions about the neutralizing potential of becoming mainstream. A contemporary example of this is *La morsure des termites* ("The gnawing of the termites"), an exhibition featuring more than fifty international artists who occupy spaces outside of institutional and commercial boundaries. The exhibit was curated by Hugo Vitrani and hosted by downtown Paris' contemporary art museum Palais de Tokyo from October 2023 to January 2024.[1] *La morsure des termites* explores concepts relevant to our experiences of public space that provoke reflections about the relationship between art institutions and transgressive art. The exhibit simultaneously uplifts and validates street art within the art historical canon, and potentially negates its transgressive power as an extra-institutional practice. This essay will provide background on Palais de Tokyo and its relationship to street art, the execution and effect of the exhibition, and its position within larger discourses.

Palais de Tokyo occupies an unadorned gray concrete building that conceals an excitingly raw interior. Designed for the 1937 Paris World's Fair, the building was later split between two different modern art museums. The east wing has been home to the Musée d'art modern de la Ville de Paris since its construction, and the west wing has changed hands several times, becoming the

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1   Palais de Tokyo, *Edito: Saison Divers* (Paris: Palais de Tokyo, October 19, 2023).

Palais de Tokyo in 1999. It has no permanent collection; instead it hosts a series of temporary shows year-round. Renovations in 2012 rediscovered extensive subterranean spaces from the building's original construction, which made the Palais ideal for its current focus on urban, underground art.[2] Since its renovation, Palais de Tokyo has been dedicated to honoring urban art with a program directed by Hugo Vitrani, called the Lasco Project. Embodying a "modern cave of Lascaux" in the Parisian subterrain, sixty international street artists have staged interventions across over a kilometer of Palais de Tokyo's "interstitial spaces." Vitrani conceives of this undertaking as both a confrontation with and an infiltration of the museum's brutal architecture.[3]

La morsure des termites is an extension of this Lasco project, showcasing the kinds of artists involved in these subterranean interventions, the titular "termites." The term originated in a 1962 essay by film critic Manny Farber, who contrasts these termite artists with "white elephant" artists, who are more conventional and institutionally acclaimed. Vitrani describes termite art as gnawing its way into its environment and power structures, occupying a parasitic niche in the ecology of creation, neither expected nor wanted, but necessary.[4] The artists shown range from highly recognized to entirely unknown and "express themselves in languages and practices that are more difficult to grasp and manipulate."[5]

The purchase-only exhibition catalog is a rich collection of scholarly texts analyzing the politics of public space, the link between writing and identity, and the dichotomy of disorder and maintenance, thus providing a rich theoretical context for the exhibited works and emphasizing the historicity of graffiti through the Lasco-Lascaux connection. In his introductory essay, Vitrani connects modern spray-paint signatures to cave-painting hand-prints, both of which serve as markers of their creators, and highlights their shared subterranean locations within caves and subways, noting, "The underground spirit of graffiti has been enlivening the miracle of art for 40,000 years."[6]Another essay by Nicholas de Monchaux, Head of Architecture at MIT, traces the history of aerosols and links spray-paint to the blow-spray pigment used in the caves of Lascaux.[7] This connection "corrupts" not only contemporary art history but the conception of

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2   "The site and its history," *Palais de Tokyo*, https://palaisdetokyo.com/en/the-site-and-its-history/.
3   "Lasco Project #1," *Palais de Tokyo*, https://palaisdetokyo.com/en/exposition/lasco-project-1/.
4   Hugo Vitrani, "Il morso delle termiti," in "La morsure des termites/The gnawing of the termites," ed. Hugo Vitrani and Camille Mansour, *The Magazine of the Palais de Tokyo* 35 (Paris: Mazarine, 2023), 14.
5   Palais de Tokyo, *Edito*.
6   Vitrani, "Il morso delle termiti," 12.
7   Nicholas de Monchaux, "Aerosol," in "La morsure des termites/The gnawing of the termites," *The Magazine of the Palais de Tokyo* 35, ed. Hugo Vitrani and Camille Mansour (Paris: Mazarine, 2023), 86.

art prehistory.

Located in the first basement level of the museum, the massive room that housed *La morsure des termites* felt half-finished, like some abandoned building, an excellent match for the kind of underground graffiti it displayed— evoking precisely the kinds of places where the displayed art occurs more organically. A speaker installation by Samuel Bosseur played low, droning music that intermixed with the hushed shuffling of visitors and the muted clamor of an exhibition under construction in the next room. The works were housed within a massive, labyrinthian structure of raw wooden planks, constructed by architect Olivier Goethals, meant to embody a space like an "invisible city;" layered thickly with meaningful signs and never fully discoverable.[8] The structure left large gaps through which glimpses of other spaces in the exhibition could be seen; occasional black spray-paint tags were scrawled directly across the wood, dripping onto the floor. There were few barriers between visitor and art, with almost no railings or marked lines on the floor. This unbarred display methodology and meandering architecture made visitors aware of their occupation in a space which felt forbidden and the body's relationship to the artworks, which past museum experience teaches distance from.

At the same time this architectural structure emphasized the physical location of much street art, it foregrounded graffiti's place within official structures. This surfaces formally within the works as part of larger conversations about the connection between writing and authoritative meaning. Vitrani makes a point of mentioning how early street artists rejected the term graffiti and labeled themselves "writers."[9] Exhibited artist RAMMELLZEE deconstructs language and obscures meaning through ornamented gothic lettering, modeled after that of medieval manuscripts, questioning the authority of traditional alphabet, in his work *Ikonoklast Panzerism*.[10] More broadly, the early graffiti wild style, with its characteristic cryptic lettering, also subverts meaning through illegible aesthetics.[11] The rejection of meaning in writing, especially in gothic letterforms, which connote the authority of religion through their use in medieval manuscripts and their modern use in such things as newspaper headings (take the logos of the Los Angeles or New York Times), both question the authoritative nature of the alphabet and confer its official, legitimate nature onto the graffiti writers who use it.

This relationship between authority and graffiti extends beyond its formal elements to its material presence. Street art is defined by ideas of

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8   "La morsure des termites," *The Magazine of the Palais de Tokyo* 35, ed. Hugo Vitrani and Camille Mansour (Paris: Mazarine, 2023), 14.
9   Vitrani, "Il morso delle termiti," 8.
10   Vitrani, "Il morso delle termiti," 8.
11   Jeffrey Deitch, "Art in the Streets," in *Art in the Streets,* ed. Jeffrey Deitch, Roger Gastman, and Aaron Rose (Skira Rizzoli, 2011), 12.

disorder and the abject expressed in physical space and in opposition to ideas of maintenance. David L. Johnson's exhibited collection of illegally removed anti-homeless architecture, titled Loiter, makes clear the authoritative material hostility of public spaces.[12] Homelessness and graffiti share a commonality: abjection. In an essay on abjection and the female body, Christine Ross stresses the use of abjection in identity-making as the "other" against which the subject is created, and as the revolting which is policed. She conceives of the female body as "a materialization of a norm" and "the performance of an ideal construct."[13] Through this lens, a city functions much like the female body, beholden to norms and the ideal construction of society, where disorder is seen as symptomatic of criminal immorality. Tala Madani's *Shit Mom Animation 1*, included in the exhibition, makes this bridge between the female body and the city visible. Her animated form, smearing excrement across the surfaces it touches, embodies the idea of bodily abjection, vandalizing the places we occupy with our filth.[14] Her bodily excretions are akin to those of the city's graffiti. Graffiti, as a sign of disorder in the body of the city, qualifies as abject.

This abjection is often legally diagnosed: various works in the exhibit engage with criminological theories about the body and the city. The "broken window theory," first articulated by George Kelling and James Wilson in 1982, regards visible signs of disorder as a cause of criminality, arguing that the neglect of public spaces encourages transgressive behavior. The theory was used to justify the erasure of graffiti; rather than fixing underlying issues, the city polices aesthetics.[15] This maintenance is the response to the abjection of the city. As sociologists Jerome Denis and David Pontille discuss, maintenance (defined as the invisible upkeep of things) is a power relation, adhering to specific definitions of the default ideal state of things and the undesirable visual disruption of markers of disorder.[16] They conclude that maintenance is a tool, which manifests in unsustainable, problematic, or even harmful ways.[17] Ari Marcopoulos' exhibited photograph *Buff 1, Paris* (2007) of a Palais de Tokyo employee removing graffiti from a window demonstrates the "negative budget" for graffiti, revealing maintenance as erasure of what has largely been a public method of expression and identity construction (and the venue's own complicity).[18] Even the work of

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12   Wall text, *La morsure des termites*.
13   Christine Ross, "Redefinitions of Abjection in Contemporary Performances of the Female Body," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 31 (1997), 149, 154.
14   Wall text, *La morsure des Termites*.
15   Ingrid Luquet-Gad and Hito Steyerl, "The City of Broken Windows," in "La morsure des termites/The gnawing of the termites," *The Magazine of the Palais de Tokyo* 35, ed. Hugo Vitrani and Camille Mansour (Paris: Mazarine, 2023), 36.
16   Jerome Denis and David Pontille, "The Care of Things," in "La morsure des termites/The gnawing of the termites," *The Magazine of the Palais de Tokyo* 35, ed. Hugo Vitrani and Camille Mansour (Paris: Mazarine, 2023), 63-64.
17   Denis and Pontille, "The Care," 66.
18   "La morsure des termites," 52.

famous street artists has often been destroyed as part of property maintenance.[19] Johnson's *Loiter* and Marcopoulos' photograph, in conversation with the graffiti populating the exhibition, contrast the removal of harmless unsanctioned street art as a symptom of public disorder with official methods of making the streets actively hostile to their inhabitants. This strategy is ultimately political, aligning poorer and communities of color with the undesirable traits against which the city ideal is constructed.

La morsure des Termites' central concept is the subversion of these official powers by underground artists, but its very existence commodifies street art. Although only selectively, graffiti has increasingly been adopted by institutions and brought into commercial gallery spaces, which forces street artists to continually modify their practices.[20] SKKI discusses how he abandons his artistic practices the moment they become potentially profitable;[21] FUTURA 2000 did not attain art market prominence and did not want to, but his inclusion in the exhibition works against that desire;[22] the graffiti artist REVS refused to be part of the exhibition, "rejecting all collaborations with the sites that institutionalize or market artistic practices."[23]

Institutional dynamics concerning what art is promoted in prestigious sites like Palais de Tokyo are intertwined with commercial profit motives; institutional prominence goes hand in hand with commercialism. This paradox raises the question of the ethics of a major art museum displaying these ideas of institutional rejection and exclusion and commodifying them so blatantly. Palais de Tokyo undoubtedly profited off of the exhibition; in addition to ticket sales, the museum sold one hundred limited-edition T-shirts printed with Marcopoulos' *Buff I, Paris*, a collaboration with streetwear brand Études.[24] Further T-shirts printed with other works were produced in collaboration with another streetwear brand, Highsnobiety.[25] The commercial move of making limited-edition pieces using

19   Banksy, "Banging My Head Against a Brick Wall," in *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings*, ed. Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 431.
20   Deitch, "Art in the Streets," 11; Diedrich Diedrichsen, "Street Art as a Threshold Phenomenon," in *Art in the Streets,* ed. Jeffrey Deitch, Roger Gastman, Aaron Rose (Skira Rizzoli, 2011), 285-288.
21   Simon Johannin, "SKKI is the Limit," in "La morsure des termites/The gnawing of the termites," *The Magazine of the Palais de Tokyo* 35, ed. Hugo Vitrani and Camille Mansour (Paris: Mazarine, 2023), 45.
22   Matsumura, "Public and Street Art."
23   Wall text, *La morsure des termites*.
24   Robyn Pullen, "Palais de Tokyo Pairs up with Etudes for New Paris Graffiti Exhibition," *Culted* (blog), October 17, 2023, https://culted.com/etudes-and-palais-de-tokyos-new-exhibition-is-taking-termites-to-paris/.
25   Chris Erik Thomas, "Graffiti's Countercultural Power Is Being Celebrated At Palais de Tokyo," *Highsnobiety*, August 2, 2023, https://www.highsnobiety.com/p/palais-de-tokyo-graffiti-exhibition-il-morso-delle-termiti/.

art that often avoided commerciality feels incongruous, but selling merchandise presumably supports the exhibiting artists directly. Further, Palais de Tokyo's support of underground artists through the Lasco Project and La morsure des termites' questioning the devaluation of street art provide recognition of a culturally valuable artistic practice and critique the systems of power that designate it as undesirable.

La morsure des termites' art was interesting in its own right, the sheer bodily experience of the space was impactful, and the curatorial choices were bold, immersive, and aligned well with its thematic basis. Its conceptual basis was the strongest component, making a case for the historicity of graffiti as artistic expression, and connecting street art to contemporary discussions of authority, institutional critique, commercialism, and the politics of public spaces. Yet though the exhibition was intellectually engaging and gives unconventional artists a platform, one has to wonder whether a mainstream art institution can exhibit a typically marginal art form without compromising it. The official legitimation of these practices is generally at odds with its impact as a transgressive act, to say nothing of the ethical implications of profiting off those art forms, given these artists' characteristic resistance to institutionalization and commodification. The exhibition set the stage for further conversation about what effect unearthing termite art and exposing it to the institutional spotlight might have, both on art history (as the exhibition statedly aims to do) and on the art itself. Ultimately, the exhibition demonstrates that underground art has always surfaced in some form or another, surviving without the involvement of institutions, as well as the role of institutional recognition in recognizing street art as valuable, and worthy of remembrance, in its preservation.

No Time to Die

A Critique on the American Lifestyle

[Jillian Beaster]

Introduction: What is a "Blue Zone"?

Early is on time, but on time is late. Living paycheck to paycheck? Just pull yourself up by your bootstraps and you're sure to succeed. These phrases, common in the United States, indicate the notoriety of the American lifestyle, as we have seemingly started to equate stress to success. Although it feels like it, this toxic mentality is not shared across the world. Dan Buettner, founder of the concept "Blue Zones," classified five primary areas across the globe with higher average longevity, above average health and higher quality of life: Okinawa, Japan; Sardinia, Italy; Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica; Loma Linda, California; Ikaria, Greece. Often, people residing in blue zones move naturally instead of vigorous exercise, as Buettner found that "movement is engineered into their daily lives."[1] For example, instead of going on runs or to the gym, they will sustain a garden, walk from place to place and use manual tools for their labor. In addition, an average blue zone diet consists of plant-based and nutritionally rich proteins such as beans and whole grains, with an average of two to four glasses of wine per day.

Located in the North Aegean Sea, The Greek Island of Ikaria varies greatly from the United States. Buettner discusses some key principles of these blue zones, with a focus on Ikaria, and argues that their activity, purpose, diet and connections are what sets them apart from the rest of the world. The benefits of lifestyles that hold different concepts of time, values the well-being of the collective and prioritizes health is lacking in American society, in turn impacting overall

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1   Roundtable on Population Health, Board on Population Health and Public Health Practice, and Institute of Medicine, "Lessons from the Blue Zones®," in *Business Engagement in Building Healthy Communities: Workshop Summary* (Washington D.C.: National Academies Press, 2015), https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK298903/.

well-being and showcasing the need for reevaluation of the American way of life.

Section I: Time and Stress

   Being part of a capitalist society, young Americans are immediately introduced to a rigorous perception of time, preventing us from breaking out of the production and time efficient mindset. Often, Americans live in anticipation of the future, and therefore have a craving of meeting that future as soon as possible. Take cellphones for example; instead of walking to talk to someone in-person (as done in Ikaria), we "shoot someone a text," to reach the individual as soon as possible. Our need for time efficient mechanisms to complete simple tasks can also be seen in cars, grocery stores, dishwashers and laundry machines. Pakistani author Syed Zafar believes the controlling power of time is uniquely Western, juxtaposing his wife's American culture with his own. In an anecdote from his life, Zafar and his wife arrived at a Pakistani musical on time, but the program was delayed several hours, frustrating his wife, while many Pakistanis still arrived hours after the initial starting time.[2] Buettner interviewed an Ikarian physician, Dr. Ilias Leriadis, who mentioned that "'no clock is working correctly [on the island]…we simply don't care about the clock here,'" conveying the stark contrast between Ikarian and American culture, and the toxic relationship between Americans and the clock.[3] Our culture is not centered around taking a second to breathe, as for many, that second could be used for something more "productive." Many Americans fall into the inevitable trap of giving too much influence to time, but in a culture where our lives are structured around the clock, it is hard to forge a less time-bound routine.

   Though significantly less prominent than in the United States, stress, in Ikaria, still exists, but tactics to slow down the day are implemented and exercised. For example, "activities such as prayer, ancestor veneration, napping, and happy hour" are respected because they reduce stress.[4] The impact of creating a relaxed culture will positively influence stress levels, as the fixation on time is alleviated. In the blue zones, maintaining a lifelong sense of purpose is "[ikigai], [or], the reason for which you get up in the morning," and helps octogenarians and upwards active in their communities, adding to their life expectancy and overall fulfillment.[5] Something as simple as slowing walking pace between locations can impact time-related stress and allow a form of relaxation into the American day-to-day.

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  2 Syed Zafar, "It's About Time," *Carnegie Mellon University*, last modified September 23, 2010, https://www.andrew.cmu.edu/course/80-241/guided_inquiries/articles/its_about_time.html.

  3 Dan Buettner, "The Island Where People Forget to Die," *The New York Times*, October 24, 2012, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/28/magazine/the-island-where-people-forget-to-die.html.

  4 Roundtable, "Lessons from the Blue Zones®."

  5 Buettner, "The Island Where People Forget to Die."

Section II: The Collective vs The Individual

In America, the mentality of success is often "every man for himself," with heavy emphasis placed on the individual, leaving many people feeling isolated and struggling with mental health. According to Richard Weissbourd, psychologist and lecturer at Harvard, "[Americans used] to view... individual and collective well-being as powerfully entwined," but we have migrated towards a more individualistic society.[6] This shift is primarily due to American corporations becoming hyper-fixated on profit and less concerned with employee well-being. These combinations have caused a steady decline in American quality of life, as day-to-day life has become more and more of a competition, and "while [competitive] people always existed in society, they were usually identified and treated as outliers that needed to be constrained, not as examples of American greatness."[7] A national survey conducted by Making Caring Common indicated that 34% of Americans aged 18-25 suffer from serious loneliness, and a significant part of the American population is polarized, furthering American unhappiness.[8] The prioritization of efficiency over well-being shows the growing disconnect in priorities, and the pursuit of success rather than happiness.

Conversely, in Ikaria, the stress of time, as well as the fear of loneliness, is virtually absent. Dr. Leriadis states that "[an Ikarian community member] is not likely to ever feel the existential pain of not belonging or even the simple stress of arriving late. Your community makes sure you'll always have something to eat, but peer pressure will get you to contribute something too...even if you're antisocial, you'll never be entirely alone."[9] This boosts quality of life, as a sense of belonging heavily impacts the human experience. Ikarians work to uplift community members in many ways, for example, "'for the many religious and cultural holidays, people pool their money...and if there is money left over, they give it to the poor. It's not a 'me' place. It's an 'us' place,'" said Leriadis.[10] This strong sense of belonging helps any individual feel more comfortable with themselves, as they are accepted in the environment around them, and therefore feel safer, happier, and connected with their community.

Section III: Health and Diet

The fast pace of American life is expressed even in our food culture, as fast-food has replaced home-cooked and nutritious meals, simply because of time constraint. America is not necessarily known for its healthy eating habits, as pop

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6   Richard Weissbourd and Chris Murphy, "How Government Can Help Americans Find the Common Good Again," *Time Magazine*, April 11, 2023. https://time.com/6269091/individualism-ahead-of-the-common-good-for-too-long/.

7   Weissbourd, "How Government Can Help Americans Find the Common Good Again."

8   Weissbourd, "How Government Can Help Americans Find the Common Good Again."

9   Buettner, "The Island Where People Forget to Die."

10   Buettner, "The Island Where People Forget to Die."

culture like Super Size Me and the monopoly of fast-food corporations is visible across the world. Because of the previously discussed battle with time, "saving time and effort in shopping for and preparing food will continue to be important for many Americans...[resulting in] changed food patterns, fewer homemade dishes...increased purchase of prepared or convenience foods and frequent eating away from home," perpetuating the reliance on fast food.[11] Rachel Harrison from the NYU School of Global Public Health discusses that dependence on fast foods is directly correlated with lifelong health issues, as "ultra-processed foods are industrially manufactured, ready-to-eat or heat, include additives, and are largely devoid of whole foods...higher consumption of ultra-processed foods is associated with obesity and heart disease."[12] The rising production of sugary candy, beverages and foods almost kicks Americans as they are down, as they tend to be more accessible and efficient than healthy options.

Instead of buying products at a grocery or convenience store, Ikarians are primarily self-sustaining. A typical meal is "almost always beans (lentils, garbanzos), potatoes, greens (fennel, dandelion or a spinach like green called horta) and whatever seasonal vegetables their garden produced; dinner was bread and goat's milk," as well as remedial teas consumed nightly.[13] The Ikarian diet is comprised of homegrown potatoes, beans, greens, as well as locally produced goat milk and honey. Like Mediterranean diets, olive oil and vegetables are a main component, rather than diary and meat. Buettner found that "[these] dietary tendencies [are]...linked to increased life spans: low intake of saturated fats from meat and dairy [is] associated with lower risk of heart disease; olive oil... reduced bad cholesterol and raised good cholesterol," as well as additional benefits reaped from greens, goat milk, wine and coffee.[14] Contrary to the United States, Ikaria has "the cheapest, most accessible foods [that] are also the most healthful."[15] Since Ikarians typically grow their own food, they also have a better concept of what they are consuming.

Section IV: An Anecdote on Terminal Sickness and Blue Zones

In his New York Times article "The Island Where People Forget to Die," Buettner introduces the story of Stamatis Moraitis, who lived in the United States, and whose return to Ikaria extended his life by adopting a nourishing diet and returning to a cleaner atmosphere. Moraitis, Ikarian native and Greek war veteran, came to the United States in 1943 for treatment from a gunshot wound during his

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11   Institute of Medicine, *Ensuring safe food: From production to consumption* (Washington: National Academies Press, 1998), 53.

12   Rachel Harrison, "Americans Are Eating More Ultra-Processed Foods," *NYU School of Global Public Health*, October 14, 2021, https://www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications/news/2021/october/ultra-processed-foods.html.

13   Buettner, "The Island Where People Forget to Die."

14   Buettner, "The Island Where People Forget to Die."

15   Buettner, "The Island Where People Forget to Die."

time in the Greek armed forces.[16] Eventually, he settled down in Boynton Beach, Florida, marrying a Greek-American woman and starting a family of three children, working every day to achieve the American Dream. Then, in 1976, Moraitis fell ill, and was given nine months to live, confirmed by nine different American doctors. Buettner describes that Moraitis debated receiving severe cancer treatment in United States, but ultimately decided to return to Ikaria. Moraitis lived a fulling 30 more years. His return to Ikaria was extremely beneficial for Moraitis, as he never took drugs to combat his cancer, nor did he undergo any chemotherapy, "all he did was move home to Ikaria."[17] Moraitis says, "I've done nothing else except eat pure food, pure wine, pure herbs…the clean air, the atmosphere, the food, all of them together…here it is clean, you breathe clean oxygen."[18]

Conclusion

Though the blue zone lifestyle is incompatible with the American way of life, it is still possible to incorporate certain practices into day-to-day life. In the United States, we live in a society that prioritizes profit over prosperity, so the stress present in our lives is not any fault of our own. Evaluating aspects of your life that cause you stress is the first step to achieving a blue zone lifestyle. Slowing your breath, walking slower, and becoming more mindful of the food you are consuming can help to reduce unnecessary stress, potentially increasing lifespan. Because of its more relaxed structure of time, a focus on the community, and care of health, Ikaria and the other blue zones serve as examples of near utopian societies. The Ikarian emphasis on human happiness and connection are paramount to the concerns of time and money plaguing other communities. Americans deserve a life with a little more relaxation and joy, and taking inspiration from blue zones can help us achieve a more fulfilling life.

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16   Buettner, "The Island Where People Forget to Die."
17   Buettner, "The Island Where People Forget to Die."
18   Buettner, "The Island Where People Forget to Die."

Indigenous Religion

By Spanish Colonizers

[Julieta Rodarte]

The interference and conquest by European powers made acquiring accurate information about the Native people prior to the 1500s a complex issue. Their religion, according to the Spaniards, was delegitimized and their practices were deemed "evil", compared to Catholicism. Equally important is that not all Indigenous people used the same practices. Because of varied religious views and multiple geographical locations, each of their practices varied. This essay will first have a source analysis of the accounts of Ramón Pane, Pedro de Cieza de Léon, then Bernal Díaz. Following the source analysis, I will analyze specific passages from each source that outline the religious practices of different Indigenous populations. This can lead to a more profound understanding of what religious practices the Indigenous followed from the Indies, Central Mexico, and South America, despite the bias found in these accounts. The substantial number of accounts from the Spanish provides a glimpse of Indigenous life. However, this glimpse can be minimal, as the profound biases imbedded in Spanish accounts alter the accuracy of the information and requires a different strategy to have a better comprehension of what kind of spirituality the Indigenous had.

When Ramón Pane, a missionary priest, went on Christopher Columbus' second voyage in 1493, he was to convert the Indigenous to Catholicism.[1] He lived with the Taino and eventually learned the Taino language.[2] Because of this, he could record the religious practices of the Taino, as commanded by Columbus.[3]

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1   Ramón Pane, "A Report concerning the Antiquities of the Indians," in *The Human Record: Sources of Global History*, 4th edition, ed. Alfred J. Andrea and James H. Overfield (Boston: Wadsworth Cengage, 2001), 396-401.

2   Pane, "A Report," 396.

3   Pane, "A Report," 396.

The detailed descriptions of his records, however, had a long and complicated journey before publication. His accounts were ignored for some time because of a lack comprehension of Taino spirituality by the public.[4] It was Fernando Colón, Columbus' son, who took interest in his work and implemented it into Columbus' biography History of the Admiral Christopher Columbus by His Son.[5] Translation from Spanish to Italian would not occur until 1571, yet the translation had missing portions. Additionally, the original copy from Pane was lost.[6] In sum, not only was Pane's worldview comprised of European and Christian values, but the translations likely missed key information about the Taino. He only interacted with the Taino and only wrote "of the Indians of the island of Española, for [he knew] nothing about the other islands and [had] never seen them."[7]

Because his records only apply to the Island of Hispaniola, we cannot conclude anything else about other Indigenous groups. Initial entries contain basic information about Taino religion, their deities, and later focuses on their spiritual practices. Specifically, he records the process for healing a sick person and how it connects to their spirituality. The overall tone of his writing appears aggressive and dismissive, criticizing their traditions and religious leaders. This was especially present in the passage on healing the ill. His bias reveals itself when he proclaims that the bohutís, or religious leaders, "practice great frauds upon the Indians" by having them believe they "speak with the dead"[8] and "[declare] that they are speaking with the cemis" which are the physical figures for the Taino.[9] The lack of spiritual comprehension by Pane could have altered how he wrote about their religious practices. From the perspective of the Taino, their healing practices and ability to speak with the dead make complete sense. For Pane, who has a European and Christian perspective, he couldn't comprehend their perspective and would automatically assume it to be false.

Similarly to Ramón Pane, Pedro de Cieza de León also traveled to the "New World" and spent 16 years in Cartagena. During his stay, he learned Quechua and communicated directly with the Indigenous population. Cieza de León celebrated the work the Spanish did for the conquest and encouraged the conversion of the Indigenous. However, unlike Pane, he criticizes the approach of the Spanish, having said that their behavior had been unacceptable and cruel. He was one of the first to criticize the Spanish's behavior and proclaimed that the natives were equally as human as they were, making for quite the controversial statement at that time. In the passages of The Incas, he describes their lifestyle and details their social and political system, their personal behavior, imbedding parts of their religious beliefs and practices. It is important to note, however, that The

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4   Pane, "A Report," 396.
5   Pane, "A Report," 396.
6   Pane, "A Report," 396.
7   Pane, "A Report," 396.
8   Pane, "A Report," 398.
9   Pane, "A Report," 398-399

Incas passages did not primarily focus on religion, as did the sources of Ramón Pane and Bernal Díaz. In some sections, he praises the landscape and structures that the Incas built, and other sections picture their lands as fertile and rich with resources and precious ores. Early on, he states that it is an atrocity that "these idol-worshipping Incas should have had such wisdom in knowing how to govern and preserve these far-flung lands, and that we, Christians, have destroyed so many kingdoms."[10]

The prior section can perfectly encapsulate the bias Díaz holds, including his condemnation of what the colonizing powers had done. Using "idol worshipping" signals the heresy that he believed the Incas follow yet confidently proclaims the problems created by the Spanish inquisition. One possibly questionable trait of his writing is how he writes that any other tribe or group of indigenous people willingly submit to the Incas. When their soldiers go off on conquests, Cieza de León frequently elaborated on the generosity the Incas had towards any people they conquered by offering them "as much and as many lands, fields and houses as they had left."[11] Cieza de León also said that they could easily conquer by "[trying] to do things by fair means" in their conquests.[12] They strategically outwitted their enemy and "entered many lands without war", which all of these observations by him imply a perfect leadership and system of the Inca.[13] If he did have a positive view of their rulership and said that there are no flaws within it, which he did compare the Spanish and their lands and rulership, then he may had exaggerated some details about other traits of living by the Incas, including religious practices.

With Bernal Díaz's exploration, he recalls the exchanges with the Indigenous of Tenochtitlan and recorded their actions. His accounts are different because he wrote The Conquest of New Spain decades after he went on these voyages to Mexico. His writing contains many details, but these details could be falsified or be missing portions of essential information because of how long after the events it was written. This text also went through other translations before finalization, creating more possibilities for lost information. He uses celebratory language about how him and his men succeeded in their conquest of Tenochtitlan. He primarily wrote this account to glorify Spain, as well as being his last will and testament. Words such as "my comrades; all true conquerors, who served His Majesty" and "this expedition being undertaken by our own efforts" all explicitly declare that the collective efforts of the Spanish participants should be celebrated and revered for their work.[14] Including the work done by men, Díaz wrote a pas-

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10   Pedro de Cieza de León, *The Incas*, ed. and trans. Harriet de Onis and Victor Wolfgang von Hagen (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), 62.
11   Cieza de León, *The Incas*, 60.
12   Cieza de León, *The Incas*, 158.
13   Cieza de León, *The Incas*, 159.
14   Bernal Diaz, *The Conquest of New Spain*, ed. and trans. J.M. Cohen (London: Penguin, 1963), 15

sage about Doña Marina, an Indigenous woman who was eventually given away to Hernán Cortes, a Spanish captain.[15] Her mother and stepfather gave her away to other Indigenous people and later become a translator for the Spaniards.[16] Her role was indispensable to the Spanish because she could communicate in Tabascan and the language of Coatzacoalcos.[17] Díaz proclaimed that without her, they "could not have understood the language of New Spain and Mexico."[18] He clearly perceived Doña Marina as a valuable resource. Later passages outline the entrance of the Spanish into Mexico. Their arrival caused tension among the Indigenous, with Montezuma, the leader in Tenochtitlan, greeting the Spaniards with open arms. The welcoming reaction by Montezuma and his vassals is explained by the belief that their ancestors prophesized that there would be men who "would come from the direction of the sunrise to rule over [their] lands."[19] Even with Montezuma welcoming the Spanish with great attention, Díaz reiterates that their plan was to convert Montezuma and their population that their gods beliefs, were false.

Knowing that Pane, Cieza de León and Díaz all have European and especially Christian lenses that warp their perception of the Indigenous, this impacted their writing. Beginning with seemingly the most aggressive writing, Pane dove right into what the Taino people on the island of Hispaniola practiced. The most common practice described by Pane is the use of cemis, which can be comprised of varied materials. Because of its neutral description about what it's made of and what it does, it can be more confidently concluded that cemis were crucial in their spirituality. Examining his neutral statements, he describes that they are "made of stone or wood" and have many uses such as "some that speak, others that cause food plants to grow, others that bring rain, and others that make winds blow."[20] This neutral description can be potentially conclusive, since it merely makes a general description of Taino practices. However, directly after that passage, he went on a tangent saying, "these simple, ignorant people" believe "that these idols or rather demons do all these things."[21] This biased and irate statement is similar to how Cieza de Léon described the practices from Cartagena. In the earlier passages of his writing, he describes the Apurímac River and its surroundings. Across the river were the lodgings of the Incas and the location of an oracle where "the devil gave answers through the trunk of a tree, so the Indians say."[22] Again, this is a description with Christian beliefs attached to it. This needs to be kept in mind when reading his later passages. The most neutral statements by him were

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15   Díaz, *New Spain*, 85.
16   Díaz, *New Spain*, 85.
17   Díaz, *New Spain*, 86.
18   Díaz, *New Spain*, 87.
19   Díaz, *New Spain*, 220.
20   Pane, "A Report," 398.
21   Pane, "A Report," 398.
22   Cieza de León, *The Incas*, 134.

the process when the Inca overtook another indigenous group, with the newly overtaken natives being "ordered to worship the sun as God."[23] Another neutral observation implies that it's a direct description and can likely confirm that the Inca did see the sun as their god.

Out of the three men, Bernal Díaz had the most substance regarding religious practices. As stated prior, he makes it clear that they were there for the Spanish conquest and the conversion of Montezuma. With such a profound Christian lens, its highly possible that his portrayal of the temples and sacrificial practices in Tenochtitlan were exaggerated. To start, his neutral statements consisted of the names of deities they follow, such as Huichilobos.[24] It is said that the daughters of chieftains and other dignitaries "lived in a kind of retirement like nuns in some houses close to the great *cue* of Huichilobos" until they were married.[25] Again, basic descriptions can likely be taken as a fact. While human sacrifices were confirmed as a practice for the Aztecs, the exact details of the process are unclear. In Díaz' eyes, the temples were a horrid place. His disgust towards the temples and the *cues*, where the human sacrifices were made, was most present when he and other Spanish climbed the steps to reach the top of a cue with Montezuma. Describing the walls and floor as "caked with blood" and "the stench was far worse than that of any slaughterhouse in Spain" is graphic and grotesque. [26] Díaz claimed that there were many horrifying figures of their gods, along with a drum in which it sounds "like some music from the infernal regions."[27] The cues also seemed to have, according to Díaz, "many more diabolical objects" like "large knives, and many hearts that had been burnt with incense before their idols."[28] Examining this section, having figures of their gods in the temple would be logical, in addition to the tools needed to make human sacrifices. Regarding the gruesome scene, it's difficult to say how legitimate that is, considering he writes with a Christian lens. How horrifying looking the figures of the gods were and how bloodied the *cue* was, should be taken with a grain of salt. Looking at the neutrality available in his writing, such as the most basic descriptions, gets us closer to the truth of Aztec temples.

Historians must work as best as they can with sources that don't come directly from the population it's written about. In these cases, acknowledging where the biases come out and narrowing in on the most neutral statements, can reveal more truth. Again, not all indigenous people had the same religious practices, as this varied on where they lived. It is important to verify the origin of sources, who they describe, acknowledge any bias, and hone in on the neutrality. It is a complicated task for historians to manage, but historical truth is essential.

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23   Cieza de León, *The Incas*, 160.
24   Díaz, *New Spain*, 230.
25   Díaz, *New Spain*, 230.
26   Díaz, *New Spain*, 236.
27   Díaz, *New Spain*, 236-237.
28   Díaz, *New Spain*, 237.

The Indigenous had a rich and diverse culture. Extracting what may be true from the Spanish sources aides in the comprehension of the Indig1enous and their diverse religious practices.

[Biographies]

Authors' Biographies

Lorenzo Joaquin Anagnost '26
"Crimes in Crimea"

Lorenzo is a Junior from Skokie, Illinois. He is currently studying Philosophy and Politics. Lorenzo submitted to the Journal for clout. He is greatly interested in American constitutional jurisprudence and enjoys his position as a lead tutor in the Writing Center.

Emilce Antonella Mamani Fabian '27
"The Social, Economic, and Political Landscape of Baton Rouge in 1850"

Emilce is a Sophomore from Salta, Argentina. She is currently studying History and Sociology & Anthropology. Emilce submitted to *Inter-Text* because her professor told her that her paper was good. She is a research assistant, RA and chair of the History SAAC. Emilce is interested in social justice, feminism, decoloniality, immigration, etc. She really likes painting, running, reading, and talking with her family.

Avanel Ford '27
"Lee Krasner and Negotiating a Gendered Public Identity"

Avanel is a Sophomore from Des Moines, Iowa. They are currently studying Art History and minoring in Studio Art and Museum Studies. Avanel submitted to the journal because his advisor, Professor Matsumura, encouraged her to apply and join the community of humanities authors at Lake Forest College. They are involved with crew for the theater department, and acted in a student-directed staged reading of *The Plot, Like Gravy, Thickens!* Recently, Avanel presented at University Partner Fest at the Art Institute and had her art pieces displayed in the Durand Galleries and published in *Tusitala*.

Cara Goldstone '25
"'This Mania of Hers for Marriage': Nonromantic Connection in Virginia Woolf's *To The Lighthouse*"

Cara is a Senior from Nolensville, Tennessee. She is currently studying English on the creative writing pathway. Cara submitted to *Inter-Text* due to her firm belief in the power of accessible education, and she feels *Inter-Text* is a platform that encourages this. In her free time, she enjoys English literature, philosophy, and writing, especially poetry. Cara also likes spiders.

Trinity Look '25

"Humour, Humours, and Horror: Adapting the Violence of *Richard III*"

    Trinity is a Senior from Gurnee, Illinois. She is currently studying History. Trinity felt really proud of some of the work that she did for her English classes. The unique prompts pushed her to write essays she was really passionate about, and examining this production was something she was really looking forward to. Additionally, as a fan of horror, this perspective was one Trinity was especially enthusiastic to take. As mentioned before, Trinity is a fan of horror-- particularly horror games like *Silent Hill* and *Resident Evil*. However, she also spends a lot of her time as a dungeon master for her friends' DND campaigns. Drawing, writing, and singing in LFC's Chamber Choir ensemble is also on the weekly docket for her.

Bennett McKinney '28

"Manipulation, Monstrosities, and the Male Gaze: Christina Ramberg and the Female Form"

    Bennett is a Freshman from Muncie, Indiana. He is currently studying Data Science and English. Bennett is interested in lots of things like art, music, creative writing, and has a radio show at the college.

Gloria Nakafu '27

"'Studies in Perception 1' and the Objectification of the Female Nude"

    Gloria is a Sophomore from Kampala, Uganda. She is majoring in Art History and French. Gloria was encouraged to submit to *Inter-Text* by her advisor Dr. Kimiko Matsumura, for whose class she wrote this paper. She is also interested in the negative effects of culture and technology, especially on marginalized communities, so she wanted to highlight this problem through the unique lens of art history. Gloria is currently working as a research fellow for the new Krebs Centre for the Humanities, where she has done interesting work regarding the use of technology in the humanities. In her free time, she enjoys all things literary, as well as sewing and drinking tea.

Petra Urgacova '25

Petra is a Senior from Karlovy Vary, Czechia. She is currently studying Biochemistry & Molecular Biology and Philosophy. Petra submitted to *Inter-Text* because she values the opportunity to share her work with the broader academic community. She submitted this work in particular because it showcases her passion for philosophy and the sciences. At the college, Petra has served for the past two years as the president of the Future Health Professions club, with whom she organized events such as CPR certifications, learning to suture on bananas, and harm reduction workshops. It has also been her honor to be part of Kirk Lab, researching the enzyme telomerase in *Aspergillus Nidulans* for the past three years. Outside of college, Petra enjoys working as a medical scribe at the Lake Forest Acute Care, exploring Chicagoland, and painting in coffee shops. After a few years as a research assistant, she will pursue a medical degree specializing in palliative care.

Editors' Biographies

Em Allen '25

Em is a Senior from Orem, Utah. They are currently studying Art History with a minor in Museum Studies. Em joined *Inter-Text* last year after having an article published in Volume 4 and thought it would be a great opportunity to learn editing skills and help create something lasting as a student on campus. Outside of *Inter-Text*, Em loves visiting museums, watching (way too many) movies, making useless spreadsheets, and traveling. On campus, she is also involved in the Aikido club and the Durand art galleries. Off campus, Em has interned at the Swedish American Museum and the MacLean map collection.

Kieran Artley '25

Kieran is a Senior from Brookfield, Wisconsin. He is currently studying History and Economics. Kieran joined *Inter-Text* because of their interest in editing and the badgering from Professor Rudi Batzell and Aaron Brand. He spends his free time playing various video games, visiting the gaming club, investigating various insects and fish, and engaging with a card game related to spells and collecting.

Jillian Beaster '28

Jillian is a Freshman from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She is majoring in Politics and minoring in Legal Studies and Social Justice. Jillian joined *Inter-Text* to expand her writing skills and gain experience in the process of peer-review. Other than being an editor of *Inter-Text*, she is the News editor of *The Stentor* and a radio DJ on WMXM. Additionally, Jillian loves to rollerblade, read, hike, listen to music and go to the gym.

Gabriel Benjamin '28

Gabriel is a Freshman from San Francisco, California. He is currently undecided on what to study. This is Gabriel's first year with the journal, and he joined *Inter-Text* to try and find new ways to participate on campus and because he is interested in the Humanities and wanted to meet people who were as well. Outside *Inter-Text*, Gabriel is interested in history, music, art, and literature. He is also involved in *Tusitala* and the WMXM Radio Station.

Anna Blazkova '25

Anna is a Senior from Jablonec nad Nisou, Czech Republic. They are currently studying Communication and Area Studies (Middle East and North Africa). This is her first year as an editor with the journal after gaining an interest in the process. Beyond *Inter-Text*, Anna is the general manager of WMXM and enjoys knitting, hiking, and film photography.

Drew Carlson '25

Drew is a Senior from Gilbert, Arizona. They are currently studying Secondary Education and History while getting a minor in Politics. They joined *Inter-Text* because an email told them to. Outside of the Journal, they spend their days listening to music and DnD podcasts, and reading about political conspiracies.

Medhaansh Ghosh '28

Medhaansh is a Freshman from Maastricht, The Netherlands and Bengaluru, India. He is majoring in Politics and minoring in Economics. Being an undergraduate humanities student, it is important to him to be open to new topics and incorporate fresh ideas on topics that we already know about. *Inter-Text* as an undergraduate humanities journal offers that as a space for like-minded individuals to discuss and uphold the spirit of the humanities field and everything that it has to offer. Medhaansh is an activist for Child Empowerment & Women's Rights, a member of SASA, part of the Mock Trial Team and was part of the theater cast for the production *Blithe Spirit*. He is an active crime and mystery novel reader, and loves the comic series *Tintin*.

Sawyer Kuzma '26

Sawyer is a Junior from LaSalle, Illinois. They are majoring in Environmental Studies and Sociology & Anthropology. They joined *Inter-Text* to gain experience working on an academic journal and to learn more about the diversity of humanities research at the College. Outside of the Journal, Sawyer is a tutor at the Writing Center and a member of the Lake Forest College Concert Band.

Isaiah J. Moonlight '25

Moonlight is a Senior from Albuquerque, New Mexico. They are currently studying Biology and Philosophy. He joined *Inter-Text* as it provides students with an excellent opportunity to explore the world of editing and publication while also immersing you within social science writings from students doing all sorts of different and interesting course work. Moonlight is interested in the way people can learn across disciplines and how they can use that knowledge to shape our work in advocacy, education, awareness, and community action. He is involved in a variety of clubs and organizations on campus including being a Student Admissions Specialist (SAS), a student leader for the Native American and Indigenous Students (NAIS) empowerment group, the vice president of our Philosophy Club, and more.

Julieta Rodarte '26

Juli is a Junior from Vernon Hills, Illinois. They are currently studying History and Elementary Education. They joined *Inter-Text* because they really enjoy being in an academic environment, and they especially enjoy when they get to collaborate with others on academic projects. They really like listening to music chronically, spending time with their friends, and fully immersing themself into art and drawing.

Jayden Scott-Long '28

Jayden is a Freshman from Eswatini. He is majoring in Economics and Data Science and minoring in Physics. Jayden joined *Inter-Text* because he enjoys learning from those who are passionate enough to transform their interests into essays. Other than being an editor of *Inter-Text*, he is interested in traveling, sociology, and personal finance. Jayden also enjoys gymnastics, anime, video games, and debating important topics on campus.

Adriana Voloshchuk '27

Adriana is a Sophomore from Northbrook, Illinois. She is currently studying History and Finance with a concentration in accounting. This is Adriana's first year with the journal, and she joined because she wants to be a critical thinker and a strong writer; Adriana believes being exposed to a diverse set of high-quality work will help her achieve this goal. Outside *Inter-Text*, she likes to read the news and build LEGOs. Adriana is also a part of the school's Mock Trial team and the Ukrainian Student Syndicate.

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