



*Scientia et Humanitas:*  
*A Journal of Student Research*

Volume 3 2013

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### ***Submission guidelines***

Original unpublished undergraduate and graduate research from the natural and social sciences and from the humanities is now being accepted for the 2013 issue of *Scientia et Humanitas* from MTSU students and recent graduates either by themselves or in conjunction with a faculty mentor.

Articles should have approximately 10 to 30 typed, double-spaced pages and may include revisions of papers presented for classes, conferences, Scholars Week, the Social Science Symposium, or Honors theses. Papers should include a brief abstract of no more than 250 words stating the purpose, methods, results, and conclusion.

Papers may be submitted through the online submission system on the journal's website, [capone.mtsu.edu/scientia](http://capone.mtsu.edu/scientia).

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## Preface

In the third volume of *Scientia et Humanitas*, I am excited to report a boom in author submissions. As we receive more and more papers from a more diverse group of students, the journal is increasingly able to represent the university and its contributions to various areas of research more faithfully. This edition of *Scientia et Humanitas* offers a diverse array of topics and several award-winning articles as well.

Four award winning essays open this volume. *Clint Bryan*, a PhD candidate in English and winner of the 2012-13 William R. Wolfe Graduate Writing Award, and recipient of the Deans' Distinguished Essay Award, applies elements of social literacy theory to Tobias Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* to examine Smollett's commentary on eighteenth-century society. Following Bryan's piece, *Katie Stringer*, also receives the Dean's Distinguished Essay Award for her examination of the history of the relationship between museums, sideshows, and people with disabilities and will graduate with a PhD in public history in this year's Spring commencement. Representing the natural sciences, *Anna Love*, who earned her B.A. in English (2010) and is now seeking a B.S. in science (chemistry/pre-medical), in collaboration with *Dr. Ngee Sing Chong* of the chemistry department is awarded the Dean's Distinguished Essay Award for her analysis of the products of the gas phase reaction between chlorine dioxide and malodorous compounds produced during putrefaction. *Kayla McNabb's* essay examining the relationship between Edgar Allan Poe's "The Philosophy of Composition" and Process Theory won second place among the college of liberal arts graduate students at this year's Scholars' Week poster session. McNabb is currently pursuing an M.A. in English.

The Humanities are represented more strongly in this year's issue than in any previous with seven articles. In addition to Bryan's, Stringer's and McNabb's projects, *Jonathan Bradley*, a late stage English PhD candidate, offers an existential reading of Southern women's writing. *Sarah Gray-Panesi*, another English PhD candidate, examines Anne Rice's Southern Gothic to illustrate the writer's connections with the Southern literary tradition. Two more English PhD candidates, *Margaret Johnson* and *Fadia Mereani*, round out the Humanities. Johnson examines the possibilities of Milton's Satan as allegory in *Paradise Lost* while Mereani considers Edgar Allan Poe's poetry as an influence on that of Wallace Stevens.

The Social Sciences are represented by six projects in this issue. *Jamie Sutton*, a graduate in philosophy (2012), offers a brief explanation of Islamic limitations on violence and how extremists sometimes circumvent them. *Philip Routon*, a PhD candidate in economics, examines "fly-by-night" firms and the methods they use to decide whether to follow or ignore certain governmental regulations. In one of two collaborative efforts in this year's issue, *Rachael Smith*, an undergraduate in anthropology and art history, and *Crystal VanDalsem*, an undergraduate in anthropology and philosophy analyze the accumulation of tobacco waste around Peck Hall following MTSU's smoking ban. Pursuing a Master's in

social work, *Hyeryon Kim* evaluates Asian American parents' perceptions of their children's educational experience. *Rita Jones*, an undergraduate in communication studies, evaluates the communication experiences of international students on American college campuses, while *Michael DeHoff*, an undergraduate in organizational communication, provides an examination of the interpersonal relations in the People's Republic of China.

In my first year with the journal, I have been repeatedly impressed not only with the level of scholarship presented by students at MTSU for publication but also with the amount of work my editorial team has put into making sure the journal continues to be a worthy vessel for MTSU students' work. Many thanks are due to my fellow editors, reviewers, proofreaders, and advisors, and especially to the Honors College for sponsoring this publication. To the students of MTSU, thank you for your contributions, and I hope you enjoy the third issue of *Scientia et Humanitas*.

***Sarah Gray-Panesi,***

Editor in Chief

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## **Why Humphry Can't Read or Write: Tobias Smollett, 18<sup>th</sup>- Century Literacy, and Preservation of the Social Order**

*Clint Bryan*

*Winner of the 2013 William R. Wolfe Graduate Writing Award  
Deans' Distinguished Essay Award recipient*

### **Abstract**

*Literacy for lower socioeconomic populations in Great Britain did not enjoy a high priority in privileged eighteenth-century society. Although contemporary literacy theorists have only begun writing about a social turn in literacy in recent decades, Tobias Smollett's nearly 250-year-old novel *Humphry Clinker* offers significant clues that literacy—especially for the lower classes—has always carried social implications. By situating an illiterate servant cum lay preacher at the center of a novel that bears his name but denies his agency, Smollett extends his vocal critique of Methodism that threatened to unravel the hierarchical social order of late eighteenth-century Britain. Smollett's disdain for Methodism and its class-leveling practices was well known during his day—even to John Wesley, its founder. Smollett finds in *Clinker* the perfect foil on which to circumscribe his antipathy toward Methodism and the social reform aims of its architect—including universal literacy for all Britons. By labeling Methodism as injurious and making sport of it as a daft lay preacher, Smollett brackets the positive contributions of Wesley's followers in order to protect the social status quo. As I apply six components of social literacy theory from contemporary theorist David Barton's seminal article "The Social Impact of Literacy" to this picaresque novel, *Clinker* the character emerges as a true hero in Smollett's novel for the social revolution faith-based literacy efforts would exert on Britain in the latter eighteenth century and beyond.*

Literary foils often gain their force by posing a threat to a virtuous protagonist. Eighteenth-century novelists certainly trace this trope, particularly through villainy. The pedophile sea captain is but one enemy young Tommy Anderson encounters in Edward Kimber's *The History of the Life and Adventures of Mr. Anderson*. The deplorable landowner Barlow, who purchases the boy for indentured servitude and strives to deprive him the right to literacy, is the sort of opponent dynamic plots are built upon. All antagonists need not be felonious—just persistent. The daughter Roxana denies giving birth in Daniel Defoe's book by the same title, and continues to pursue justice and acknowledgement by a mother bent on her own aggrandizement.

In satirical fiction, however, conventional methods for sketching characters that embody the views the author wishes to lampoon distort the binary of hero and villain. Humorist Tobias Smollett, writing his novel *Humphry Clinker* just months before his death, casts his antagonist in an unlikely role as the title character in a virtually plot-less travelogue throughout the British Isles. Karen Duncan has noted that Smollett stages Humphry as a menial footman and a "loveable, bumbling fool" in order to accentuate and then dismiss "the previously perverse or threatening aspects of his Methodism" portrayed in the novel (n.p.). Clearly Clinker is no match in wits to the well-bred, well-read, well-traveled Matthew Bramble, a doppelgänger for Smollett himself. In this epistolary novel, Humphry is one of a few central characters not granted a pen to express his thoughts; his voice is only related secondhand (putting him in league with the farcical Lismahago). By situating an illiterate servant cum lay preacher at the center of a novel that bears his name but denies his agency, Tobias Smollett extends his vocal critique of Methodism that threatened to unravel the hierarchical social order of late eighteenth-century Britain in *Humphry Clinker*.

In order to investigate the satirical layers in this comic novel and their attendant social implications, one must initially interrogate the central character's odd name. Stephen Hart has amassed several sources of eighteenth-century slang terminology in an online database, including the *Lexicon Balatronicum* (1811) based on Francis Grose's *Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*. The character's first name *Humphry* most likely stems from a colloquialism:

To dine with Duke Humphrey; to fast. In old St. Paul[']s church was an aisle called Duke Humphrey[']s walk (from a tomb vulgarly called his, but in reality belonging to John of Gaunt), and persons who walked there, while others were at dinner, were said to dine with Duke Humphrey.  
(Hart n.p.)

Since fasting is a practice customarily associated with both the pious (intentionally) and the poor (unintentionally), the moniker fits. The surname *Clinker* is more curious in origin. Hart's sources indicate the word meant at the time everything from "a crafty fellow" (from Nathan Bailey's 1737 *The New Canting Dictionary*) to "irons worn by prisoners" to "a kind of small Dutch bricks" (Hart n.p.). How the word came satirically to include human excrement may be traced to the *Oxford English Dictionary's* usage of *clinker* as "a mass of bricks fused by excessive heat and adhering together" (OED). By assigning him a name



equivalent to a bawdy joke, Smollett clearly intended to lampoon this lowly servant as a laughingstock.

Despite how the young man appears at his first meeting with Matthew Bramble (buttocks exposed, gaunt from fasting, devout, and illiterate based on his station—thus, a microcosm of the lower social classes), Humphry Clinker adopts a different persona by the end of the work. Admittedly, the whiteness of his bare buttocks would have signaled the eighteenth-century reader to the condition of Clinker's soul, since the equation of white skin with purity was commonplace. Of course, his name is changed when his true identity as the unclaimed, illegitimate son of none other than Matthew Bramble himself is restored (Smollett 172).

The surname "Lloyd" renders him Welsh. Smollett may have intended this reversal of Humphry's identity to reinforce the pre-modern values of an earlier era when social stratification was strictly enforced. Even his love interest confines him to a certain lower station. The Winn Jenkins character (whose letters are crudely constructed of various malapropisms) is likely fashioned after Swift's poems composed in the voice of a serving maid (Rogers 307). That the footman falls in love with Winn Jenkins (a woman now deemed by the Brambles as lower than his true station), in his former identity as Humphry Clinker and marries her despite his elevated status once his birthright is revealed, is a further subversive act against the social order emphasized in the novel. Smollett's protagonists often sport names that seem to pull in opposite (i.e. aristocratic/plebeian) directions: Roderick Random, Launcelot Greaves, and Peregrine Pickle. Smollett finds in Humphry Clinker the perfect foil on which to circumscribe his antipathy toward Methodism and the social reform aims of its architect—including universal literacy for all Britons.

## **HIS HEART WAS STRANGELY COLD**

Smollett's disdain for Methodism and its class-leveling practices was well known during his day—even to John Wesley, its founder. In his *Continuation of the Complete History of England*, Smollett launches an invective about the religious movement: "Weak minds were seduced by the delusions of a superstition stiled (*sic*) Methodism.... Many thousands in the lower ranks of life were inflected with this species of enthusiasm" (qtd. in Anderson 204 and Gassman 67). Enthusiasm in the eighteenth century meant being overcome by emotion rather than ruled by rationality in a religious gathering, an objection to the Methodists and other demonstrative worshippers others shared with Smollett. Duncan notes that Humphry, as a character, is stricken with enthusiasm as well—a way to comment on the prevalence of unmitigated religious fervor among the Methodists (n.p.). Gassman agrees, noting that the "handling of Methodism in *Humphry Clinker* is designed to illustrate these charges" of enthusiasm and hypocrisy (68). True, Wesley's "heart was strangely warm'd" at Aldersgate, signaling his own conversion to Christianity, although he condemned excessive enthusiasm expressed in Methodist worship meetings (McInelly 84). Because of incidents like the one printed in Smollett's writing, Wesley penned a response in his own journal, "Poor Dr. Smollett! Knows nothing" of the Methodists' efforts to educate

the masses (Anderson 205). Smollett's ignorance of the fuller picture of Methodism is indicative of his failure properly to investigate the movement before forming his prejudices against it.

Smollett's own heart stayed cold toward the religious fanatics (as he viewed them) for the duration of his life. Gassman states that the aversion Smollett and other vocal critics held for the Methodists amounted to an "unqualified disapproval of the movement which the Wesleys and Whitefield had begun in the late 1730s" (67). Smollett employs the novel form with a "treatment of religion in *Humphry Clinker* [that] is basically satiric... an attack upon defects and abuses, follies and fallacies which the author believes to be dangerous" in his day (Gassman 71). Some critics claim that *Humphry Clinker* strikes a more conciliatory tone toward religion than Smollett's other works (Frank 126, Anderson 203). Moreover, Misty Anderson's article notes that Smollett considers "Methodism an inferior expression of taste, literacy, or feeling[,]" although he does not adopt the "paranoid hostility of Fielding or Foote" toward the sect (201, 204). Anderson cites several critics who trace Smollett's "career-long assault on Methodism," although she calls it a "more complex affair" than a simple denunciation (204).

This characterization of Smollett's longstanding condemnation of what he perceived as religious hypocrisy seems short-sighted. For example, Bramble's ranting at Humphry upon finding him preaching to the women in his family gives Smollett a platform for airing his own "sentiments and prejudices" against Methodism (Gassman 68). In Jerry Melford's letter from 10 June, the curmudgeonly Bramble asserts, "What you imagine to be the new light of grace... I take to be a deceitful vapour, glimmering through a crack in your upper story — In a word, Mr. Clinker, I will have no light in my family but what pays the king's taxes" (Smollett 155). This episode indicates how vehemently

Smollett denounces Methodism, because he considers it an offense against both order and reason, two of the principles of human life most cherished by him and many of his contemporaries. To Smollett Methodism was a further pernicious force in the threatened breakdown of a rational, ordered society. (Gassman 69)

By labeling Methodism as injurious and making sport of it as a daft lay preacher, Smollett brackets the positive contributions of Wesley's followers in order to protect the social status quo.

Early Methodists were social reformers whose tireless efforts with the poor, the indigent, women, and uneducated lay preachers often concentrated on increasing literacy rates for these marginalized groups (Burton 67). From the founding of the Holy Club at Oxford, John Wesley, his brother Charles, and their friends devoted themselves to work among the poor, especially with teaching them to read. Later, Wesley and his followers established numerous schools, especially in Wales, and Sunday schools, that exerted a "most potent influence on the spread of elementary knowledge though its means were necessarily limited, and its methods imperfect" (Adams 40). The record of history manifests "the tradition of early British Methodism as a rich site for examining historical connections

between literacy, rhetoric, and class equality” (Burton 68). Harvey J. Graff cites the research of Roger S. Schofield chronicling that at the time of the publication of the novel (1754-1784), illiteracy was around fifty-nine percent for the occupational group “Laborers and Servants,” of whom Humphry is representative (*Legacies* 234). Rab Houston asserts that male servants in Scotland were seventy percent illiterate while women servants were ninety percent illiterate (192-93). Graff notes that by the end of the eighteenth century, large swaths of Scotland (especially the Highlands) “remained more often illiterate than literate” (*Legacies* 246-47). Houston posits that “persistently high” female illiteracy could be linked to “the continuation of patriarchal dominance in Scottish society” (Houston 200). Filling a vacuum left by the sorry state of public education in England, charity schools helped to “socialize the poor” and to produce model denizens of a proper social order (Graff, *Legacies*, 231). Kristin Mapel Bloomberg grounds an analysis of nineteenth-century educational reforms in an eighteenth-century awareness of “the need for children’s general education ... [as] an English social concern” (48). While charity schools and Sunday schools proliferated, many dissenting religious reformers (Methodists included, although they remained within the ranks of the Church of England) cared more about morality instruction than functional literacy per se (Burton 71, Schofield 300). Often the heart received more attention than the head in these schools.

The impetus behind foregrounding morality in these religious schools is apparent. Learning to read the Bible for oneself ensured the “development of a God-fearing, moral, and subservient working class[,]” as a foundation for social welfare (Graff, *Legacies*, 239). When reviewing a book by Neuberger on literacy in the eighteenth century, Graff notes that charity schools employed “reading instruction which focused on the Bible and catechism through memory and rote learning [that] does not necessarily suggest that a ‘fluent’ reader comprehended much of what he or she enunciated” (Graff, *Labyrinths*, 155). The coursework covered in charity schools and Sunday schools was not limited to children; these organizations:

...offered instruction in reading and writing to working class people and their children. Wesley believed that literacy was important to spiritual development so that his followers could read not only the Bible but also other spiritual texts published by the Methodist Connexion (sic). (Burton 73)

Literacy education in parochial settings focused almost exclusively on reading rather than writing (Thomas 111). This is one reason that a religious education may have measured incomplete from a functional literacy perspective: Houston defines the primary “criterion of literacy” in the eighteenth century as the capacity to sign one’s name on a document (184). If the Methodists and other social reformers neglected writing instruction to privilege reading the Bible and religious texts, a complete sense of literacy may have failed to be fully realized. Still, these religious groups offered a valuable skill that would eventually upset the social class stratification upon which British society was founded: the capacity to read for oneself.

## THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF LITERACY

Literacy for lower socioeconomic populations in Great Britain did not enjoy a high priority in privileged eighteenth-century society. Although contemporary literacy theorists have only begun writing about a “social view of literacy” in recent decades (Barton 185), Smollett’s nearly 250-year-old novel offers significant clues that literacy—especially for the lower classes—has always carried social implications. In the character of Humphry Clinker, Smollett creates an unwitting vehicle for his social critique. Co-opting this character in a rhetorical move reminiscent of Smollett himself, I wish to apply to *Humphry Clinker*’s six components of social literacy theory from contemporary theorist David Barton’s seminal article “The Social Impact of Literacy.” Read thusly through a lens of social literacy theory, Humphry Clinker the character emerges as a true hero in Smollett’s novel for the social revolution faith-based literacy efforts would exert on Britain in the latter eighteenth century and beyond.

Barton broadens the social parameters of literacy in liberating ways that resemble Humphry’s upward mobility from his position of servitude: “Literacy is a social activity and can be described in terms of people’s literacy practices which they draw upon in literacy events” (187). When Clinker is first introduced in the novel, his naked hindquarters are exposed, establishing him as a pitiable figure (Smollett 93). When he is subsequently seen as “exalted upon a stool, with his hat in one hand, and a paper in the other” preaching to his fellow footmen, Bramble mocks him as a huckster or snake oil salesman, telling him to fetch the hackney coach—in essence, to know his place and to retain it (Smollett 113-14). A footnote in Shaun Regan’s Penguin Books edition of the novel indicates that when Clinker vows to cure his “fellows in servitude and sin... [of] profane swearing... that avoids neither profit nor pleasure[,]” he is echoing popular sermons by Thomas Bradbury and others (415-16). Bramble castigates Clinker for his naïveté: “But, Clinker (said he) if you should have eloquence enough to persuade the vulgar to resign those tropes and figures of rhetoric, there will be little or nothing left to distinguish their conversation from that of their betters” (Smollett 114). Barton recognizes that the written word is involved in everyday life. By shaming his footman in front of his peers, Bramble causes Clinker to thrust a paper into his pocket—likely hiding a tract that had reached his hands from those apprenticing him to the Methodist laity. Maybe Humphry is trying to use the tract as preaching notes—even if he can barely read the words themselves. Seeing Clinker holding a document (even if he is unable to comprehend it) jars Bramble because

...along with women and apprentices, servants stood at the boundary of the literacy/non-literacy divide, and as such were a particular source of anxiety to the eighteenth-century ruling class, which was acutely aware of the ideology-forming powers of the printed word. (Frank 47)

When Barton refers to *literacy practices*, he means “common patterns in using reading and writing in any situation[,] and people bring their cultural knowledge to an activity” (188). Clinker is enacting a spiritual revolution of sorts on a micro-level (that eventually will have social implications) in this scene (recorded in Jerry’s letter dated 2 June) by preaching a

message of liberation to those who like him are in servitude. Paula McDowell notes that the eighteenth century served as a “transitional period” in terms of literacy before a significant shift in “elite attitudes toward mass education” in the century to follow (185). Using novels like *Humphry Clinker* to serve as a “powerful analytic lens on historic transitions” is warranted (McDowell 186). Although Humphry Clinker is rendered a buffoon by Smollett—one deemed least likely to occupy a place as a member of the clergy, even in a performance such as an impromptu sermon on the dangers of swearing—he serves as a fitting prototype for the Methodist field preacher:

For Wesley, a rhetor was a good man or woman, regardless of class or education, speaking from scripture and experience, clearly, in plain style and with love, to an audience that includes all people. With this definition, Wesley effectively shifts the cultural structure of rhetoric from hierarchy to community, a lesson that extended beyond the limits of religion. (Burton 87)

By casting Clinker as an absurd preacher seated “[a]t the foot of the stair-case” preaching to a “crowd of lacqueys and chairmen,” Smollett has inadvertently emphasized how literacy transcends the limitations of socially-prescribed, class-based roles (113).

Barton expands the narrow definition of functional literacy into areas that Humphry Clinker experiences in the novel: “People have different literacies which they make use of, associated with different domains of life” (188). While he may not possess the capacity to read and write fluently, Clinker knows horsemanship in the novel—a nod Duncan notes to Methodist circuit riders (n.p.). Beyond his penchant for hospitality, Clinker possesses a natural protective sensibility for the man he serves. For example, the servant risks his own safety to save Bramble from drowning in the turbulent waves at Scarborough, even though the older man was never in danger. Bramble can accede to “Clinker’s intention [as] laudable, beyond all doubt; but nevertheless I am a sufferer by his simplicity” (Smollett 206). The metaphor to evangelistic zeal is clear: In order to be “saved,” the subject must acknowledge he is drowning in his sin. In essence, the Methodists concentrate on “saving” those who do not recognize a need to be saved. Instead, Bramble’s faint appreciation for Clinker’s misguided efforts serves as an affirmation of the “practical charity of the Methodists” (Gassman 72).

By denying agency to Clinker to use his varied knowledge for purposeful means, Judith Frank posits that *Humphry Clinker* despises servants even more than most fiction of its time: “[F]unctioning as mere signs, servants are the very antithesis of labor in this novel” (119). While I recognize what Frank asserts, I disagree with her conclusion. Humphry Clinker serves as more than a sign of unheralded social status in this work. Clinker becomes empowered in the novel long before his rightful social class is exposed, given the revelation of his biological father, Matthew Bramble. Clinker accomplishes several heroic feats—most notably saving Bramble from drowning—while he is relegated to servant status. On two occasions he holds the attention of other footmen and even members of Bramble’s

household as he preaches to them, all while occupying a servile role. In his humble station, Clinker demonstrates a key tenet of Methodism:

Wesley's students were laymen without access to formal higher education, individuals whom he trained to speak plainly in the language of common people. Wesley's preachers were a part of a system of community literacy that extended to the poorest members of the Methodist Connexion. (Burton 81)

In the academy today, modern theories of literacy emphasize skills beyond merely reading and writing; Humphry Clinker evidences a diverse familiarity with domains of learning that help him to serve his master well, even though he is not functionally literate.

The degree to which Clinker seamlessly assimilates into the Bramble clan confirms Barton's claim that "[p]eople's literacy practices are situated in broader social relations. People have networks of support and roles within these networks" (190). Initially Tabitha Bramble views Humphry derisively, but later she becomes one of his ardent pseudo-parishioners. The typical reader in 1771 would likely have been able to spot Tabitha Bramble and Humphry Clinker "as the characters in the novel most apt to succumb to the histrionics of the Methodists" (Gassman 70). Tabitha is shown to have "groaned in spirit" and "threw up the whites of her eyes, as if in an act of ejaculation" as "a footman was then holding forth to the congregation within" (Smollett 154, 153). Smollett seems to revel in portraying the figure of a desiccated "old maid" displaying strong emotions for further comedic effect.

This scene need not be read only in a jocular fashion. Clinker has won Tabitha over by appealing to her exaggerated emotionality; through impassioned preaching he has undone years' worth of class-based snobbery. To appreciate how stark this scene played in the eighteenth century, Keith Thomas observes that "the uneven social distribution of literacy skills [had] greatly widened the gulf between the classes" (116). Humphry equalizes the divergent classes through an inclusive gospel message that renders every person—noble or servant alike—on the same status. In so doing, he powerfully disrupts "a pervasive hierarchical structure of illiteracy" (Houston 189). Anderson charges that it is precisely *because* Humphry cannot read nor write that explains his appeal to the women in the novel: "He is also cleared from suspicion about his ulterior motives because he is not a writer in the novel. Eponymous but voiceless, he is artlessly present as a function of his actions and the impressions he makes on others" (214). Clinker cannot represent himself; he must be represented through the eyes of his fellow characters.

Clinker is more similar to the female characters than his male counterparts in that he is denied a fluent voice. The women's letters in the novel lack the mechanical polish and articulation of the ones composed by men. This association confirms a resonant fact from that era: "In Scotland as in England the most striking feature is the markedly lower literacy attainment of women compared to men" (Houston 189). Over the modern period (roughly the sixteenth to the nineteenth century), British men were twenty-eight percent illiterate while women were eighty percent illiterate (Houston 189). Although Matt

Bramble temporarily relegates Humphry back to the servile position for which he was hired by breaking up the worship service, "Clinker's Methodism threatens to undermine hierarchical social relations; thus, an outburst of patriarchal authority must curb this threat" (Gottlieb 93). The surprising fate of Clinker at the end of the novel, when he is revealed to be the bastard son of Bramble himself and no longer merely his menial servant reveals that the classes are not as rigid and constrictive as would first appear. Biology replaces class.

Humphry Clinker performs his literacy orally, coming to life in the novel via the speeches and observations others attribute to him. Barton argues that "[p]eople participate in literacy events where reading and writing are entwined with spoken language and with other means of communication" (191). The role of orality in eighteenth-century literacy has been a matter of considerable scholarly inquiry to date. Keith Thomas posits that early modern England was neither an oral society nor a "fully literate one" (98). That noted, Thomas contends that "print and writing did not entirely displace the spoken word.... In early modern England oral communication was still the chief means by which technical skills were transmitted, political information circulated, and personal relationships conducted" (113). Although Humphry holds a piece of paper during his impromptu preaching venue to the other servants—maybe a broadleaf, pamphlet, or tract produced by the Methodists for the proselytizing of the unconverted—it is his extemporaneous oratory that effected a change in his hearers. Unlike "lazier or less gifted" Anglican preachers who often read pre-printed "sermons of famous preachers" verbatim, the Methodists were known as spirited orators whose fervent preaching was marked by vocal flourishes (Burton 74). Wesley himself often preached at 5:00 a.m. to teeming mobs of hundreds of laborers before their workday began. A literacy that valued skillful oration had dynamic power to disrupt the social order as Methodists communicated whenever and wherever a preaching venue would open up—even outside the steepled churches of Britain.

Eighteenth-century lower classes were often denied access to literacy in their formative years by those, like Matt Bramble, who sought to reinforce stereotypical boundaries for them. Barton impugns this restriction of social literacy and agency as fundamentally inhumane: "People have awareness, attitudes and values with respect to literacy and these attitudes and values guide their actions" (192). The pre-modern social order questioned the "relative importance attached to literacy [for the lower classes] as compared with other activities, such as practical and physical activities" (Barton 192). In deference to his master's dictum, Humphry leaves the makeshift pulpit to get the carriage ready. By his boisterous assertion of power, Matt Bramble echoes compositionist Deborah Brandt's notion of "literacy sponsors...[as] any agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach, model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold literacy" through "powerful incentives" (556). Seeing such free exercise of power not granted to Clinker as a servant, Bramble could not bring himself to allow the young man to continue the masquerade as a lay preacher. Smollett undoubtedly knew the educational track that John Wesley granted to his initiates. If Humphry were to surrender to a vocational call to Methodist ministry, he would be educated to read and write in the process. Wesley was

systematic in preparing neophyte ministers, as he “laid out a course of study and sent his preachers books to read” that they were expected to spend up to eight hours per day studying (Burton 76). Moreover, Clinker would have also been encouraged to maintain a journal of his spiritual experiences that he would submit to his ecclesiastical superiors. Wesley himself often corrected mechanical errors to these journal entries before offering them for publication (Burton 82). Wesley believed in empowering any lower-class individual who felt a call to ministry despite his/her minimal education; he advocated for full sanction of that person’s *métier* without restriction. During the early modern period “illiteracy ... proved compatible with political and religious activism and Nonconformity” (Thomas 104). After Matt Bramble scolds Humphry, however, the servant “submits his religious identity to a premodern class hierarchy, which paradoxically allows him to continue a critique of social inequality in Methodist terms” (Anderson 214). Although he maintains a “serf-like relation to Matt” for the remainder of the novel, his recognition as a long-lost son (renamed Matthew Lloyd) circumnavigates class issues by recognizing that the young man belongs *naturally* to another (higher) class. While a class stratification will remain intact for many decades in Great Britain, the reversal of Humphry Clinker’s fate at the end of the novel prefigures how society would come to recognize a dismantling of the social class structure in England in years to come (Anderson 219).

The Humphry Clinker who initially meets the Bramble family in the most inauspicious of circumstances is not the same person rendered at the conclusion of the novel. Barton recognizes this metamorphic quality of social literacy: “People face changing demands and are learning about literacy throughout their lives” (193). This feature of literacy is the one most complicated by Smollett’s novel; by being inserted into Bramble’s family, Clinker would seem to automatically escape the need for education (unless one adopts a fairly broad definition of *education*.) Barton mentions the transformative power of “adapting social practices in a changing environment... [of] rapid social change where new technologies and political changes are changing the demands on people” (193). Many power brokers in proper eighteenth-century British society feared the influence education could have on the masses by “weaken[ing] society by alienating people from manual labor, threaten[ing] the natural social order, [and] promot[ing] social mobility” (Graff, *Legacies* 174). The nobility, as well as upper-class, landed gentry families like the Brambles, depended on the preservation of a society whereby they received preferential treatment based on their sense of entitlement. Teaching those who served the elite unnecessary skills like reading and writing stood to discompose such an elaborate system of privilege. Graff observes that “[e]ducation for the masses was based in a useful literacy, but above all, instruction in the duties of their social position, their estate, [that were] most important” (Graff, *Legacies* 178). Thomas claims that literacy was

...not necessarily subversive of existing social forms[,] and in early modern England it is very doubtful whether it did much at first to undermine the prevailing social order. Certainly the clergy did not think



so; for most of them saw literacy as a means of reinforcing the status quo, by instilling godliness, civility, and law-abiding behaviour. (118)

Granted, increased literacy rates do not exert upon their host society an immediate impact on par with revolution. In fact, heightened literacy may serve counterproductive aims. Houston acknowledges this paradox:

[T]he social mobility afforded by education to the lucky few was usually only to the level of schoolmaster or minister—positions of heavily circumscribed social, economic, and political power compared to that enjoyed by the land owners. Literacy may actually have strengthened rather than diminished socioeconomic inequality during the pre-industrial period. (200)

Over time, however, access to reading and writing enables marginalized groups to exhibit their own right to better themselves. Smollett did not position himself exclusively against education over the course of his writing career. In writing *Roderick Random*, for example, the author enacts a “valorization of literacy,” one that Jennifer Thorn questions due to the “absence of demonstrable proof that literacy did increase the odds of wealth” on behalf of the recipient of the instruction (693). *Random* is a Scotsman. According to Smollett’s Preface, one reason for this character choice is that education in Scotland was much superior to that available in England, so it was realistic that *Random* would know Latin. Despite a tenuous connection to economic viability, literacy empowers the learner to function in wider circles within his or her society—arenas that heretofore may have been off limits.

## CONCLUSION

Given the seemingly arbitrary sequencing of the Bramble family travels, this picaresque novel by Tobias Smollett obviously intends to satirize Methodism and to reinforce rigid rules about social mobility by the illiterate lower classes, but this plan is actually supplanted when the history of literacy education since its publication is considered. Smollett may have thought he dealt a decisive blow to the “new light” (a colloquial sneer for Methodism) in his comic novel. History proves otherwise. Vicki Tolar Burton uses superlative terms when she describes the scope of Methodism’s empowering literacy campaign:

John Wesley expanded the boundaries of eighteenth-century rhetoric in both class and gender. . . . Giving all people liberty to speak, including those usually excluded, as well as bringing the masses to literacy are achievements that have been both praised and condemned, often around issues of gender and class. (Burton 84).

Privilege in eighteenth-century England was proffered upon those whose birth entitled them to such esteem. For people like Smollett, seditious religious movements that promised to elevate the status of the lower classes threatened the social order that had prevailed for centuries. Smollett’s solution for his pitiable, (literally) unlettered character is to reveal that he has been living below his privilege all of his life. Although Humphry immediately moves up in social class by being acknowledged as Bramble’s son, the fact remains at the novel’s

end he is still illiterate. David Barton's influential essay "The Social Impact of Literacy" notes that "functional literacy" (knowing how to read and write at a basic level) has been historically "tied to a narrow view of literacy associated with work" (194). In other words, literate lower classes would not know their place in society. Heretofore, Humphry had no legitimate (in the eyes of society) reason to be granted literacy. In fact, to be able to read and write articulately would have only furthered his inane (in Bramble's view) goal of becoming a Methodist field preacher. At the end of the novel he is established as a rightful heir of Bramble's, but is no way actualized to act accordingly to his newfound status because Smollett ultimately denies this character the capacity to read and write for himself. Despite the obvious economic benefit, Humphry is hardly better off than when he was first in Bramble's employ.

As in the novel *Humphry Clinker*, literacy continues to this day to be a means by which elite members of a society commodify those classes deemed beneath them. Barton acknowledges the sad irony literacy often accentuates in a culture: "Ultimately literacy reflects inequalities in society: inequalities of power, inequalities in the distribution of wealth, and inequalities in access to education" (196). It is my contention that Smollett unknowingly belies his objective in writing *Humphry Clinker*. He may have intended to demonstrate the farce of ignorant, illiterate upstarts following dubious religious movements, but what he accomplishes in this satire is a precursor to what would follow in Great Britain in coming decades: an upheaval of prohibitive social mores built upon a class-based system that could not survive the paradigmatic shifts that lay ahead.

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## **Disability, the Sideshow, and Modern Museum Practices**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper addresses questions about disability history, the history of the relationship between museums and people with disabilities, the history of museums and exhibits as collections of curiosities including people with disabilities, and how that past has informed the present. Preserving and distributing knowledge have been the major pillars of museums' work during the modern age. Racial and ethnic inclusiveness were addressed throughout the Civil Rights Movement and the decades that followed, and accommodations have also been made in society for physical disabilities with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Many times the community has excluded disabled people, whether intentionally or not.*

*In addition to evaluating information on how museums and other organizations of the past, the sideshow, and the community in general treated people with disabilities, this paper also presents information about how modern museums react to their learning disabled visitors. The paper presents information about research into possibilities of a model for museums to use to develop specific programming and exhibits for people with cognitive delay and disabilities*

## **Introduction**

The words *museum* and *exhibit* have different meanings and evoke different feelings for every person. Age, race, and other demographics could affect the way that a person views museums, exhibits, and educational programming; furthermore, museums from the distant past would hardly be recognizable to many people today. From the collections by ancient kings and nobles to the early cabinets of natural curiosities of Europe, museums have an extensive history. Additionally, people with disabilities have had a long and storied past, which is often forgotten or excluded from the history that is presented in classrooms, museums, or at historic sites.

## **Dime Museums and the Birth of the Sideshow**

Artist, inventor, and entrepreneur Charles Willson Peale opened the first major “museum” in Philadelphia in 1794. In a broadside distributed to the American Philosophical Society and other prominent social figures of Philadelphia, Peale emphasized that his museum would both collect and exhibit publicly a wide range of artifacts, focusing on natural history and art but including historical items as well. His museum was a for-profit enterprise, but Peale would have liked government support. To keep the doors open, he depended on attractions that ensured repeat customers.<sup>1</sup>

Peale’s museum struggled, and eventually entertainment broker P.T. Barnum bought most of the collection. Barnum’s American Museum, opened in New York City in 1840, advertised itself as a museum, but it was really little more than a “freak show.” Indeed, following the opening of Barnum’s “museum” in 1840, freak shows would remain at their height until 1940. The museum contained many exhibits and gaffes, but it also housed many people who were considered to be rarities worthy of exhibition. These people included: General Tom Thumb, a person with dwarfism; “the Aztec Twins,” albinos; the “What Is It?,” who was also a person with microcephaly; and many other “living curiosities.”<sup>2</sup>

For over 100 years, entrepreneurs organized exhibitions of people with physical, mental, and behavioral disabilities or impairments to amuse the public and generate a profit. Barnum’s “museum” and others like it became a sub-category of museums, known as “dime museums” which advertised exhibitions as educational and scientific activities, but the exhibits were actually a profitable business for those in charge.<sup>3</sup> The dime museum began its rise in American popular culture in the mid-nineteenth century. Dime museums charged a low admission fee for the general population to see “dioramas, panoramas, georamas, cosmoramas, paintings, relics, freaks, stuffed animals, menageries, waxworks, and theatrical

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1 Hugh H. Genoways and Mary Anne Andrei, eds. *Museum Origins: Readings in Early Museum History and Philosophy* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2008), 23.

2 Phineas T. Barnum, *An Illustrated Catalogue And Guide Book To Barnum's American Museum* (New York : Wynkoop, Hallenbeck & Thomas, circa 1860). Microcephaly literally means “small head.”

3 Godkin, 9.

performance.”<sup>4</sup> The museums served as varying educational experiences for Victorian people who wanted to spend their leisure time advancing their lives in some way.<sup>5</sup> Many “freaks” performed at these sites and were exhibited in buildings that were called *museums*. Whether or not these institutions fit the definition of a museum today is not determined here, but the term was irrevocably associated with the weird, strange, and unknown.<sup>6</sup> The museums often housed gaffes or fake objects and people and, as in the case of Barnum’s museum following its downfall, were often transformed into a circus or carnival sideshow exhibits. The people of the time likely did not conflate museums with sideshows; however, the sideshows were generally billed as educational events and opportunities.

In 1865 Barnum’s American Museum was destroyed by fire. A few days later, critic Edwin Lawrence Godkin described and chastised the museum in the pages of *The Nation*: “the worst and most corrupt classes of our people must seek some new place of resort.” He then questioned whether visitors were more upset by the fire that destroyed the museum or the state of the artifacts in the museum when it stood. Godkin asserted that the “insufficiency, disorder, [and] neglected condition” of the museum should have insulted visitors.<sup>7</sup>

The Barnum American Museum fire was reported in the *New York Times*, and the article listed many of the items of interest that had been lost in the fire, though none of the people who were exhibited had been killed.<sup>8</sup> After the fire claimed the museum, an article published in 1865 claimed that Barnum was constructing a new museum to replace the old. The author claimed: “[T]he fact is, that the loss of the museum was a national calamity.”<sup>9</sup> However, the museum yet again burned to the ground in 1868 and was not again rebuilt.<sup>10</sup> Instead, Barnum took his show on the road where it became one of the most famous traveling circuses.

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4 Andrea Stulman Dennett, *Weird and Wonderful: The Dime Museum in America* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 5.

5 Ibid., 7.

6 More information about the rise and impact of Dime Museums and entertainment industry as a whole is available in Dennett’s *Weird and Wonderful: The Dime Museum in America* (New York: New York University Press, 1997); John Kasson, *Amusing the Million: Coney Island at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978); Hugh H. Genoways, and Mary Anne Andrei, eds. *Museum Origins: Readings in Early Museum History and Philosophy*, (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2008); Charles C. Sellers, *Mr. Peale’s Museum: Charles Wilson Peale and the first popular museum of Natural Science and Art* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1980); Gary Kulik, “Designing the Past: History Museums Exhibitions from Peale to the Present,” in *History Museums in the United States: A Critical Assessment*, eds. Warren Leon and Roy Rosenweig. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 3-37.

7 Edwin L. Godkin, “A Word About Museums,” *The Nation*, (July 27, 1865): 113-114.

8 “DISASTROUS FIRE: Total Destruction of Barnum’s American Museum.” in *New York Times* (1857-1922); Jul 14, 1865; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009).

9 “Barnum’s New Museum Project.: MUSEUM WILL CONTAIN...” in *New York Times* (1857-1922); Jul 18, 1865; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009) pg. 5.

10 “BURNING OF BARNUM’S MUSEUM: LIST OF LOSSES AND INSURANCES” in *New York Times* (1857-1922); Mar 4, 1868; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009) pg. 8.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Barnum and Bailey's "Greatest Show on Earth" boasted "Peerless Prodigies of Physical Phenomena" with both born and created anomalies. In the image are a strong man, a bearded lady, a pin-head, two small men, a dog-faced girl, two unidentified ladies, a man with a parasitic twin, a sword swallower, conjoined twins, and a giant. Organizers named the people who were integral to these attractions curiosities, rarities, oddities, wonders, mistakes, prodigies, special people, and even monsters. They categorized performers into different races and natural mistakes, such as giants, people without arms or legs, the obese, conjoined twins, "wild" men allegedly hailing from foreign and unexplored lands, little people, albinos, and more. Today's freak shows consist mainly of people who are "made freaks" who do dangerous tricks or have rare talents, though there are some instances of "born different" still exhibited today.

From the popular Coney Island amusement area in New York City to traveling circuses and sideshows, exhibits that featured people with physical differences were some of the most prevalent attractions. Dime museums and national exhibitions up to the mid-twentieth century often featured humans who were considered "different" for the public to view. The exhibition of people in these shows was sometimes voluntary and sometimes decided by the guardians of the people considered to be "freaks." The exhibitions of people considered different have been called many things: Raree Shows, Halls of Human Curiosities, Sideshows, Pitshows, Odditoriums, Congress of Oddities, Collections of Human Wonders, Museum of Nature's Mistakes, and Freakshows. One of the first examples of a traveling exhibit of a person appeared in 1738 in a colonial American newspaper; the paper ran an advertisement for an exhibit of a person who "was taken in a wood at Guinea, tis a female about four feet high, in every part like a woman excepting her head which nearly resembles the ape."<sup>11</sup> Throughout the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries, freakshows or sideshows were among the most popular attractions for the middle-class public. The situation of those individuals with disabilities, especially those with cognitive delays, is an important piece of the past that informs present displays and exhibits, museum policies, and popular attitudes.

## **What is a "Freak"?**

To understand the impact that these past exhibitions have on the present, it is important first to understand what a freak show is or was, and what defines a "freak." Robert Bogdan argues in 1988 that freak was a metaphor for separation, marginality, and an aspect of the dark side of human experience. He goes on to assert that "freak" is a frame of mind for the person called a freak, a set of practices that person employs and a way of thinking about and presenting people. To be a freak is to enact a tradition of stylized presentation.<sup>12</sup> *Sideshow U.S.A.* by Rachel Adams defines "freakishness" as "a historically variable quality, derived less from particular physical attributes than the spectacle of the extraordinary body swathed in

11 Robert Bogden. *Freak Show: Presenting Human Oddities for Amusement and Profit* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 25.

12 Ibid., 3.



theatrical props.”<sup>13</sup> Rather than a medical or standardized term, Adams argues that “freak” serves as a classification for those who performed or displayed themselves for the public. Adams also claims that those who are called freaks “announce themselves as the antithesis of normality” by participating in exhibitions.<sup>14</sup> Rosemarie Garland-Thomson is a disability historian who analyzes disability and the freak show; she claims instead of self-naming that the road to “enfreakment” comes from the “normal” people with more power who need to validate their own regularity by calling attention to differences in others. Garland-Thomas argues that “freaks are above all products of perception: they are the consequences of a comparative relationship in which those who control the social discourse and the means of representation recruit the seeming truth of the body to claim the center for themselves and banish others to the margins.”<sup>15</sup> Humans have created the aspects of freakishness as a cultural construct, and the attributes of “freakishness” are not intrinsic to a person with any certain disability or ability. By creating this separate cultural category, society takes away the humanity of the people who are considered to be freaks. Bogdan warns viewers not to conflate the performance with the person behind his or her role in the sideshow.<sup>16</sup> Building upon Bogdan’s assertion, Garland-Thomson again argues that:

[T]he body envelops and obliterates the freak’s potential humanity. When the body becomes pure text, a freak has been produced from a physically disabled human being. Such accumulation and exaggeration of bodily details distinguishes the freak from the unmarked and unremarked ordinary body that claims through its very obscurity to be universal and normative.<sup>17</sup>

By labeling a person a freak, the sideshow takes away the humanity of the performer because he or she might not have the same physical characteristics of the “normal” person. Adams summarizes the phenomenon by claiming that “[l]abeling a person *freak* evacuates her from humanity, authorizing the paying customer to approach her as an object of curiosity and entertainment.”<sup>18</sup> To reconcile the exploitation of people who were different as curiosities worthy of admission price, society had only to take away the humanity of those individuals.

### **People with Cognitive Impairments in Sideshows**

Sideshows were not limited to the physically disabled, however, since some of the most popular performers had both physical and cognitive impairments. Some of P.T. Barnum’s most successful and famous exhibitions were those performers known as pinheads. The term

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13 Rachel Adams, *Sideshow U.S.A.: Freaks and the American Cultural Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 6.

14 Adams, *Sideshows U.S.A.*, 9.

15 Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1997), 63.

16 Bogdan, 10.

17 Garland-Thomson, 60.

18 Adams, 10.

was used to label sideshow performers who had small heads throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many of these people who were labeled as pinheads for the show had a medical condition called microcephaly in which the patient has a small skull, and thus, a smaller brain than the average person. Some people with microcephaly have normal intelligence, but most experience some level of mental retardation or cognitive delay. Additionally, many people with microcephaly also have characteristics of dwarfism and seizures, and though many performers who were labeled pinheads had microcephaly, not all were afflicted with the disease<sup>19</sup> The Aztec Children, the Wildmen of Borneo, the Wild Australian Children, Zip the What Is It?, and many other pinheads gained national fame through the sideshows and other media. All of these acts had smaller heads than the average person, and all except the Wildmen of Borneo had sloping foreheads common among individuals with microcephaly. The individuals categorized as pinheads were all purported to have been captured in wild lands outside of the civilized United States. This categorization assisted in stripping the humanity from people who were presented as unintelligent creatures that needed care from a “keeper,” much like animals at a zoo.<sup>20</sup>

The first known exhibition of people with microcephaly, the Aztec Twins, began in the mid-nineteenth century. While traveling in Central America in 1849, a Spanish trader named Ramon Selva discovered two small children in San Miguel, El Salvador, named Maximo and Bartola. The children were described as dwarfish and idiotic, and Selva convinced their mother that he would be able to cure the children if he was allowed to take them to the United States. When Selva returned to New York, he sold the children to the man who became their manager and owner and displayed them in freak shows up to the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>21</sup>

Publicity reports called Maximo and Bartola “the Last of the Ancient Aztecs” in an attempt to gain popularity for their mysterious backgrounds and heritage. To validate their history, their manager sold a booklet called *Life of the Living Aztec Children* which told the fabricated story of how he obtained the children for the sideshow. The booklet claimed that three adventurers came across the children as they were sitting as idols on an altar in an ancient Aztec city.<sup>22</sup> When the children were first exhibited in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1850 dressed in outfits with Aztec designs and feathers, they were an immediate success not only among the public but also with the scientific community.<sup>23</sup>

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19 National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, <http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/microcephaly/microcephaly.htm>, accessed 11/23, 2012.

20 Robert Bogdan, “The Exhibition of People We Now Call Retarded,” in *Freak Show* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 119 – 146.

21 Phineas T. Barnum, *An Illustrated Catalogue And Guide Book To Barnum's American Museum* (New York : Wynkoop, Hallenbeck & Thomas, circa 1860).

22 Barnum's American Museum, “Illustrated memoir of an eventful expedition into Central America” (New York: Wynkoop, Hallenbeck & Thomas, printers, 1860).

23 Bogdan, 129.

One observer claimed that the public saw the children as “subjects deserving of careful scrutiny and thoughtful observation... they must be objects of vivid interest.”<sup>24</sup> The fact that the children seemed to be severely cognitively impaired was not addressed in the booklet that accompanied the exhibit or by observers. Their intelligence level, race, size, and other child-like aspects served only as a way to dehumanize Maximo and Bartola in their exhibition. An article from 1860 in the *New York Journal of Commerce* called them “the greatest curiosities of the human race ever seen in this country.” The author went on to say “they are human beings there can be no doubt; and they are not freaks of nature, but specimens of a dwindled, manikin race.”<sup>25</sup> Though this author did recognize their humanity, he continued to diminish them because of their race. Rather than addressing the impairment the children were born with, the public saw the exhibit as showcasing a previously undiscovered race of people.

Following the success of Maximo and Bartola, the next set of so-called twins that Barnum made famous was called the Wild Men of Borneo. As with the Aztec Twins, the Wild Men were provided with an elaborate origins story. Growing up on a farm in Ohio, Hiram and Barney Davis were neither wild nor from Borneo.<sup>26</sup> However, because the United States and the Netherlands contested for colonial control of Borneo in the mid-1800s, the Wild Men’s exhibitors chose this for their home country to raise curiosity. To create the façade of wildness, Hiram and Barney were renamed Waino and Plutano and were exhibited before painted jungle scenes and instructed to speak gibberish and snarl while wearing chains.<sup>27</sup> The men were around three feet and six inches tall, and they were called “dwarfs” and “imbeciles.” Accounts from people who met them described Hiram and Barney as “mentally deficient” and “mentally defective.”<sup>28</sup> When Lyman Warner appeared at the Davis home and offered to exhibit the boys in a freak show, the family initially refused to let them go; however, when Warner returned with a wash basin full of money, the boys’ mother decided that there would be more money and opportunities for Hiram and Barney in the freak show than at home.<sup>29</sup>

Around the same time as the Wild Men of Borneo, Barnum also exhibits the Wild Australian Children. Again, there was an elaborate story of the capture of the children from a near extinct and as-yet undiscovered race of people from an exotic land; however, Tom and Hettie were actually microcephalic siblings who were severely mentally retarded, and they were born in Ohio as opposed to Australia.<sup>30</sup> A pamphlet that accompanied them

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24 Ibid., 130.

25 From the *New York Journal of Commerce* as quoted in *Life of the Living Aztec Children*.

26 “Living Aztec Children,” 122.

27 “Exhibition of Wild Men” in the *New York Daily Times*, Aug 7, 1854; accessed through ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times*.

28 Ibid., 122.

29 “Exhibition of Wild Men” in the *New York Daily Times*, Aug 7, 1854; accessed through ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times*.

30 Bogdan, 120.

claimed that an adventurer and explorer named Captain Reid captured them in Australia. The pamphlet did not address their cognitive abilities but instead said that the children were “neither idiots, *lusus naturae* [meaning monsters or freaks of nature], nor any other aberration of humanity. But belonged to a distinct race hitherto unknown to civilization.”<sup>31</sup> The so-called children traveled with sideshows for at least thirty years and were therefore not considered children for most, if any, of their exhibited time. Their mental abilities and the characteristics of their exhibition instead categorized them as children.

Perhaps the most well-documented of P.T. Barnum’s popular exhibits was Zip the Pinhead, also sometimes called the “What Is It?”. His real name was William Henry Johnson, and he was born around 1840 in New Jersey.<sup>32</sup> His condition, both physically and mentally, is still disputed, but it is known that Johnson was small in stature, standing between four and five feet tall. Bogdan argues that today Johnson would surely be diagnosed as mentally retarded and microcephalic;<sup>33</sup> others argue that the shape of his head and his behavior are contrary to this diagnosis. Regardless, he was one of the most popular “freaks,” and he was exhibited during the peak of sideshow popularity from 1840 until his death in 1926.<sup>34</sup>

Johnson’s sister wrote an article that said he was recruited to the sideshow at the age of four. Johnson never spoke extensively about his past, and many times he was described as being incoherent when he did speak. However, one person who knew him in the circus life described him as “a pinhead, but fairly intelligent.”<sup>35</sup> The publicized story about Johnson, or Zip, claimed that he was captured along the River Gambia in Africa and brought to the United States. Johnson was an African-American with a dramatically pointed head, which when shaved was accentuated. He was often dressed in a monkey-suit to his neck and exhibited as a missing link between apes and humans.<sup>36</sup> Zip’s character went beyond the “wild” aspects of his past though, and he was presented as a clownish character who took part in many staged displays for publicity including boxing, playing the violin, and participating in a simulated marriage to a dwarf.<sup>37</sup> At his death, his sister claimed that Johnson could speak like an average person. She also claimed that his dying words were, “Well, we fooled ‘em for a long time, didn’t we?”<sup>38</sup> Many people of all backgrounds attended

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31 Bogdan, 120.

32 “ZIP, THE WHAT IS IT? TO QUIT THE CIRCUS: He’s 83 Now...” from the *New York Times*, Apr 11, 1926; pg. E19. Accessed through ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009).

33 Bogdan, 134.

34 “MANY CIRCUS FOLK AT ZIP’S FUNERAL: Aged Freak Buried Simply,” in *New York Times*; Apr 29, 1926; pg. 48. Accessed through ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009).

35 “AN OLD BARNUM BARKER” in *New York Times*, Nov 12, 1933; pg. X5. Accessed through ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009).

36 Bogdan, 132.

37 “GIANT THE BEST MAN AT MIDGET WEDDING” in *New York Times*, Apr 17, 1916; pg. 9. Accessed through ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009).

38 Marc Hartzman, *American Sideshow* (New York: Penguin, 2005), 50.

his funeral from the sideshow and the public, and the story of his death was published in twenty newspapers.<sup>39</sup>

In addition to the the Aztec Children, Wildmen of Borneo, The Wild Children of Australia, and Zip, there were many other performers with microcephaly and some degree of mental retardation who were exhibited in sideshows up to the beginning of World War II and the decline of the sideshow in general. Schlitzie the Pinhead, whose real name was Simon Metz, was another of Barnum's exhibits. His fame extended to film after his appearance in Tod Browning's 1932 film *Freaks*. Once sideshows began their decline, however, Simon Metz was placed in custodial institutional care.<sup>40</sup> At Coney Island in the early twentieth century, Pip and Flip were exhibited as Twins from the Yucatan and Wild Australian Children; in reality they were women with microcephaly. Their real names were Elvira Snow and Jennie Lee, and they were born in Georgia.<sup>41</sup> In 1910, two children called Aurora and Natali were also exhibited as ancient Aztec children, though photographs suggest that they were likely people with microcephaly as well.<sup>42</sup> By claiming that they were behaving as humane westerners caring for "freaks," the sideshow managers were able to reconcile the stories of wild races in unknown areas of the world with the docile and kind people who were exhibited.

In reviewing primary sources from the time period, the exhibition of people with cognitive impairments never seems to have been criticized by the medical community or physicians. Instead, many scientists and doctors accepted and assisted such displays as educational experiences, and they attended the exhibits along with the general public to examine and comment on the exhibits. Scientists studied the people in the exhibits and wrote articles about them, but none of the articles critique the study of people with disabilities.<sup>43</sup> The impact of the sideshow is visible in one book by J. Langdon Down who described microcephaly as "the Aztec type" in a medical text written in 1887.<sup>44</sup> In professional literature by influential scientists from the United States and Great Britain, the "so-called Aztecs" are referred to throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and as late as the 1930s, "Aztec-like" was a term for microcephaly.<sup>45</sup> By the 1930s, mental retardation became recognized as a medical condition, and the display of people with microcephaly was reduced. Rather than being amazed or intrigued by such "freaks," people were offended by the exhibitions and pitied those individuals on display.

39 "Zip, Barnum's Famous 'What Is It' Freak, Dies of Bronchitis in Bellevue; His Age Put at 84" in *New York Times*; Apr 25, 1926; pg. 1. Accessed through ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The New York Times* (1851-2009).

40 Bogdan, 146.

41 Ibid., 142.

42 Ibid., 133.

43 Ibid., 121.

44 J. Langdon Down, *Mental Affections of Childhood and Youth* (London: J. & A. Churchill, 1887), pages 18, 19, and 72.

45 Charles Bernstein, "Microcephalic People Sometimes Called Pinheads" in *The Journal of Heredity*, Vol. 13, 1922, p 31.

In 1985, complaints voiced by concerned citizens prompted the New York State Fair's Sutton Sideshow attraction to be moved away from the midway of the park, and the term freak was no longer an acceptable term for people with disabilities in the amusement industry.<sup>46</sup> This solidified the belief that freakshows were crude, exploitative, and somewhat embarrassing to society; it has even been called the "pornography of disability."<sup>47</sup> Bogdan argued that the freakshow of the past is in decline because of low attendance, criticism from disability rights activists, and changing opinions and wants from their audiences.

When Robert Bogdan's book was published in 1988, the author argued that the freakshow was a dying exhibition style that would not be around for much longer for financial reasons and propriety's sake. The shift from "born different" to "self-made" freaks in sideshows and other displays is shown in the sideshows of Coney Island today, television shows, and movies. An article from the *Disability Quarterly Studies* in 2005 details the differences between those born with a disability and those who are "made freaks." Author Elizabeth Stephens states that

the contemporary freak body is in this way just like the normative model of the body found in 21<sup>st</sup>-century culture, a plastic and self-made construct, constantly transforming and re-inventing itself. The wonder and anxiety generated by the body of the self-made freak arises not from the randomness of its physical difference, as responses to the "born" freak did, but at its celebration of different capabilities and aesthetics<sup>48</sup>

Though the freakshow of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century seems to be a thing of the past, a reinvention of the show and its meaning has prevented the collapse of sideshow and freaks completely. In modern society, sideshows or exhibitions that exploit people with disabilities are generally looked down upon. Even though such blatant exploitation is not as prevalent in the United States as it was in past centuries, the impact that the past has had on the present situation is still evident.

## **The Disability Civil Rights Movement, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Museums**

The special issue of the *Public Historian* from Spring 2005 was primarily concerned with disability and museums.<sup>49</sup> The articles range in subject matter from the historic home of Franklin D. Roosevelt to visually impaired visitor's experiences at a museum to reviews of various historical websites and books. This journal's firsthand accounts of people with disabilities and their experiences are striking. Their stories show society's lack of compassion and sensitivity toward people with disabilities and even a lack of awareness of their situation.

46 "Sideshow Freaks a Vanishing Act," in *Bangor Daily News*, August 26, 1985, 16.

47 Bogdan, 2.

48 Elizabeth Stephens, "Twenty-First Century Freak Show: Recent Transformations in the Exhibition of Non-Normative Bodies" in *Disability Quarterly Studies*, Summer 2005, Volume 25, No. 3.

49 *The Public Historian*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (Spring 2005) Special Issue on Disabilities.

Also missing from the literature was the inclusion of those who have learning, cognitive, or developmental disabilities. Since the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act, much of the focus has only been on wheelchair accessibility. Accessibility for the sight and hearing impaired has also been embraced, but in many cases, those with learning disabilities are forgotten. Compounding this issue of limited accessibility, many museums are small and short-staffed, and resources and training are not always readily available for all staff and volunteers.

As Arelene Mayerson wrote in her 1992 article “The History of the ADA: A Movement Perspective,” the Americans with Disabilities Act did not begin with the passing of legislation in 1990 by Congress; it began much earlier with the people and communities that fought against discrimination.<sup>50</sup> In legal terms, the shift towards disability equality began in 1973 when the Rehabilitation Act was passed, which banned discrimination based on disability for the receiving of federal funds.<sup>51</sup> Following this, the disability civil rights movement gained momentum, and in 1988, the Americans with Disabilities Act was first brought forward to Congress for consideration.<sup>52</sup> In 1990, the act was passed which gave rights to people with disabilities that had previously not been guaranteed by federal law. The law protects against disability discrimination in employment, public services, public accommodation, and services operated by private entities, transportation, and telecommunications.<sup>53</sup> Museums and historic sites are also included under ADA as public places. Regardless of size or income, museums have obligations to provide and to maintain accessibility for visitors with disabilities.

Though the progress toward inclusion of people with disabilities at museums and historic sites has advanced exponentially since the time of sideshows and the exhibition of people with disabilities for entertainment, there is still a long way to go.<sup>54</sup> There is room for researchers to investigate the creation of a model for museums and historic sites to use to better engage children with cognitive delay learning disabilities who are in special education classrooms. Such researchers could benefit from reviewing successful sites in New York City; correctly established, these programs could be beneficial to students, teachers, and museum professionals. Researchers in this area could go on to explore special education in secondary schools and how public history can relate to various communities of people with disabilities who have previously been underserved by the public history field.

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50 Arlene Mayerson, “The History of the ADA: A Movement Perspective” from the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, 1992. Available at: [http://dredf.org/publications/ada\\_history.shtml](http://dredf.org/publications/ada_history.shtml), accessed, January 10, 2013.

51 Section 504, Rehabilitation Act, 1973.

52 S. 2345, *Americans with Disabilities Bill in the 100th Congress, April 28, 1988*

53 The Americans with Disabilities Act, Public Law 101-336 (1990).

54 The Association of Science-Technology Centers provides an excellent resource for museum legal obligations for accessible practices. Additionally, the Museum Access Consortium in New York City, consisting of the Transit Museum, the Tenement Museum, and the Jewish Museum all serve as excellent examples of museums working to accommodate all people with disabilities at their museums and historic sites.

Currently, a severe lack of opportunities for people with special needs or learning disabilities exists, and in many cases, the complete nonexistence of programming for this group of people is striking. The museum community is largely embracing universal design, and creating museum exhibits that work for the largest audience at all times would help serve this community immensely. However, also creating specific programming to target audiences such as students with developmental or learning disabilities will be very beneficial. Measuring the success of these programs will be difficult because of special education curriculum requirements and the students' special needs, but through surveys of students and teachers and observable data, researchers will be able to make an assessment of the successes and failures of the programming.

The programs called for above will bring new audiences to museums, serve a new population in museums, involve a new community in the process, and provide more opportunities for students and museum staff. This could also possibly provide educational jobs and work service opportunities or volunteer experiences for students. Specialized programming has the potential to reach more students and families, spark other interests in students, inspire children, and teach students something new and worthwhile, while also providing social, educational, physical, and motor skill education to students. Compared to the way that people in the past were treated at museums or exhibitions, as exhibits themselves, these improvements to museum education are laudable. There is still a long way to go to make improvements universal and accepted, but the groundwork has been laid and conditions will continue to improve.



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# **An Exploration of the Gas Phase Reactions of Chlorine Dioxide and Malodorous Compounds of Putrefaction Using FT-IR Instrumentation**

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*Deans' Distinguished Essay Award recipient*

## **Abstract**

*Chlorine dioxide has been used to replace traditional water treatments, deactivate *Anthraxis bacillus*, and remediate various molds and bacteria. This study aims to analyze the products of the gas phase reaction between chlorine dioxide and malodorous compounds produced during putrefaction. The study focuses on the reactions between chlorine dioxide and three specific chemicals: cadaverine (amine), 2-hexanone (ketone), and cyclohexyl mercaptan (thiol). The analysis of the gas phase reaction products is carried out using a Varian 7000 Fourier Transform infrared spectrometer (FTIR) with a 2.4 m gas cell. The measurement of most reaction by-products requires spectral resolution of  $0.5\text{ cm}^{-1}$  because the spectra of most gas phase standards are available for spectral resolutions of  $0.5\text{ cm}^{-1}$  or  $0.25\text{ cm}^{-1}$  only. The reaction between cadaverine and chlorine dioxide resulted in the rapid formation of ammonia gas. The GC-MS analysis of the reaction between chlorine dioxide and cadaverine showed the presence of the following nitrogenous compounds: cyanogen chloride; chloromethane; dichloromethane; chloroform; dichloro-acetonitrile; and hexachloroacetone. The reaction by-products of cyclohexyl mercaptan were identified as sulfur dioxide, methanesulfonyl chloride, cyclohexene, 1-chlorocyclohexene, cyclohexanone, and 2-chlorocyclohexanone. Detected byproducts of the reaction between the Tenax sorbent material and chlorine dioxide include acetophenone; 2-chlorophenol; benzyl chloride; chlorobenzene, benzeneacetaldehyde; phenylethyne; and benzene. Increasing concentrations of carbon dioxide and other reaction products were mirrored by decreased concentrations of chlorine dioxide and the malodorous chemicals.*

## Introduction

Mammal putrefaction has many noxious products, including mercaptans, amines, and carbonyl compounds. In the past a 15% lead acetate solution has been used to convert odorous compounds in coffins into salts, which, in turn, must also be removed via glass wool (1). Chlorine dioxide is a safer, more practical method for neutralizing these compounds.

Chlorine dioxide is also “more powerful, easier to use, and more environmentally friendly than equivalent chlorine treatments” (6). Although chlorine dioxide treatments are not as cost efficient as chlorination, they do not produce the same harmful byproducts as chlorine when reacting with organic compounds, and as a result many water treatment plants for highly populated areas have replaced traditional chlorination with a chlorine dioxide treatment (7). In addition to the treatment of water, the Environmental Protection Agency acknowledged liquid chlorine dioxide as a safe and effective treatment for: bleaching textiles, washing fruits and vegetables, bleaching paper and pulp, disinfecting meat and poultry in 1967, and in 1988, chlorine dioxide in the gas phase was registered as a sterilant for manufacturing laboratory equipment, environmental surfaces, tools, and clean rooms (8). There are, of course, many more cited applications for chlorine dioxide.

In 1998, Hisashi Inomura and Yoshinao Makino applied for a patent for a method of generation for chlorine dioxide gas for sterilization, citing coffin disinfection as a possible application (4). The following year another Japanese patent application was

filed for chlorine dioxide products to be used for disinfecting the dead (2). The products include a spray solution and an injectable solution of chlorine dioxide, which are used to disinfect and deodorize bodies before placement in coffins (2). While these patents are on file, little to no other information is available on the gas phase reaction between chlorine dioxide and the compounds associated with decomposing cadavers.

Cemeteries, livestock farms, and disaster areas often encounter challenges with cadavers, especially the noxious gases released during decomposition. In an effort to characterize several types of reactions between chlorine dioxide and volatile organic compounds released during mammalian decay, model compounds with three distinct functional groups were chosen for the study: cadaverine (a biogenic amine), 2-hexanone (a ketone), and cyclohexyl mercaptan (a thiol).

The relationship between cadaverine and chlorine dioxide gas is especially significant because liquid chlorine dioxide is currently an accepted treatment of the volatile sulfuric compounds that cause bad breath, which is also caused, in part, by cadaverine (3)(6). Also, cold-smoked fish are undergoing scrutiny by the Food and Drug Administration because of the hazardous biogenic amines that are still present after processing; cadaverine is among these biogenic amines (9). As mentioned previously, the EPA considers chlorine dioxide an effective treatment of meat and poultry; therefore, it also has the potential to reduce concentrations of cadaverine and other biogenic amines in cold-smoked fish (8).

The analysis of the gas phase reaction between chlorine dioxide and these compounds associated with putrefaction explores the various reaction byproducts and their respective concentrations. This project seeks to determine the efficacy of chlorine dioxide as a disinfectant and deodorizer of malodorous compounds released during decomposition.

## **Materials and Methods**

### *Chlorine Dioxide Production*

Z Series Research – Fast Release Chlorine Dioxide requires mixing equal amounts of Part A and Part B chemical precursors to generate chlorine dioxide gas (ICA TriNova; Newnan, GA). For these trials, approximately 2 g, unless noted otherwise, of Part A and Part B were mixed in a 500 mL Büchner flask, which was sealed with a rubber stopper while the sidearm of the flask had a short piece of hose that was pinched shut with a clamp.

As the ClO<sub>2</sub> gas was generating, a silicon-lined 6-L gas stainless steel canister was prepared by evacuation to -30 in Hg followed by the injection of 5 µL of the malodorous compound with a gas-tight syringe into the canister. Then, after approximately 60 minutes of generation, the chlorine dioxide gas was introduced to the 6-L gas canister. Nitrogen gas was immediately used to pressurize the canister to 30 psi, and samples were taken successively for 40 minutes. The samples were collected with a 2.4 m gas cell, which was evacuated to -30 in Hg between each sample and was filled with the gaseous reaction mixture to a pressure of 0 psig to

minimize the transfer of gas between the gas cell and the ambient air.

This reaction involves a second procedure, which is similar to the aforementioned method with the exception of the resolution, the quantities of the starting materials, and a glass tube with a Teflon seal in lieu of the 6-L gas canister. For this reaction, 3 µL of cadaverine and 4 g of Part A and Part B of the chlorine dioxide precursor materials are used. Also, the chlorine dioxide gas production occurs over a 3-week period in a 6-L gas canister, after which it is introduced to the glass tube with Teflon seal containing 3 µL of cadaverine.

### **Instrumentation**

A Varian 7000 Fourier transform infrared spectrometer (FT-IR) was used to analyze the samples in the 2.4 m gas cell. A 4 cm<sup>-1</sup> spectral resolution allows the sample spectra to be acquired at a shorter time interval and hence a greater frequency relative a higher resolution at 0.5 cm<sup>-1</sup> so that, while the spectral features are not as well defined or sharp in peak shape, the time series gives a more accurate depiction of the reactions' chronological phases and can better identify any transient intermediate products. Each sample spectrum is processed using 25 co-added scans with an open aperture. When the cadaverine was analyzed, the FT-IR's resolution setting was 0.5 cm<sup>-1</sup> in order to facilitate the measurement of ammonia gas evolved. Both methods have a sensitivity setting of 1 on the FT-IR.

## Results

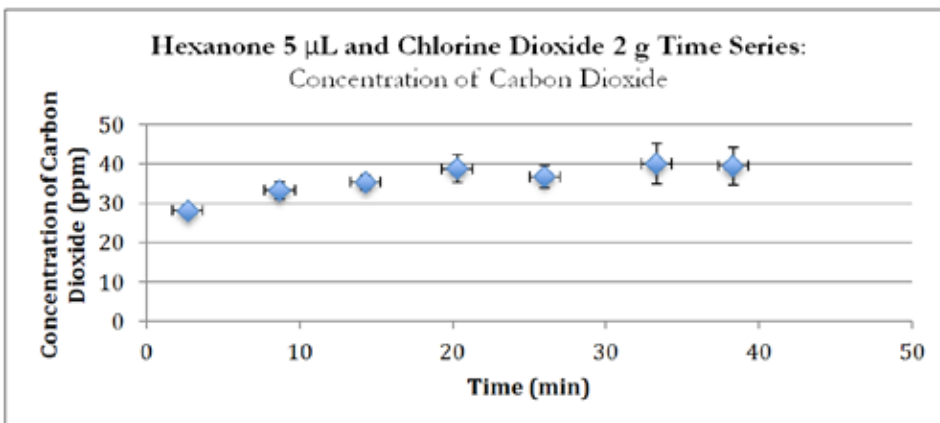


Figure 1.1: Concentration of Carbon Dioxide Graph in 2-Hexanone and Chlorine Dioxide Reactions

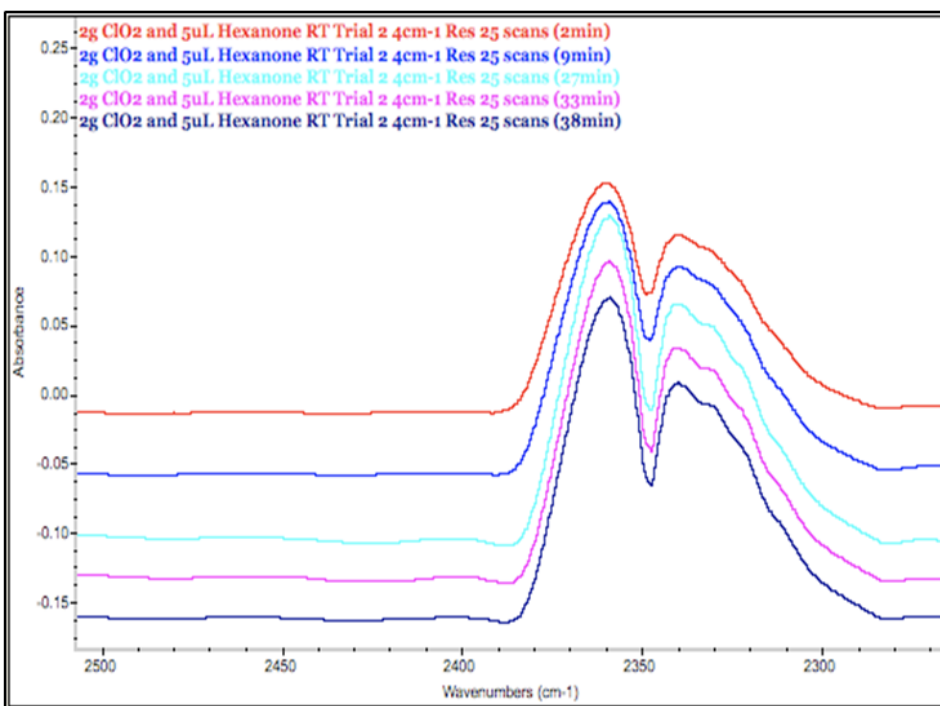


Figure 1.2: FTIR Spectrum; Region of C-O Asymmetric Stretch Indicative of Carbon Dioxide Concentration in 2-Hexanone and Chlorine Dioxide Reaction, Trial 1

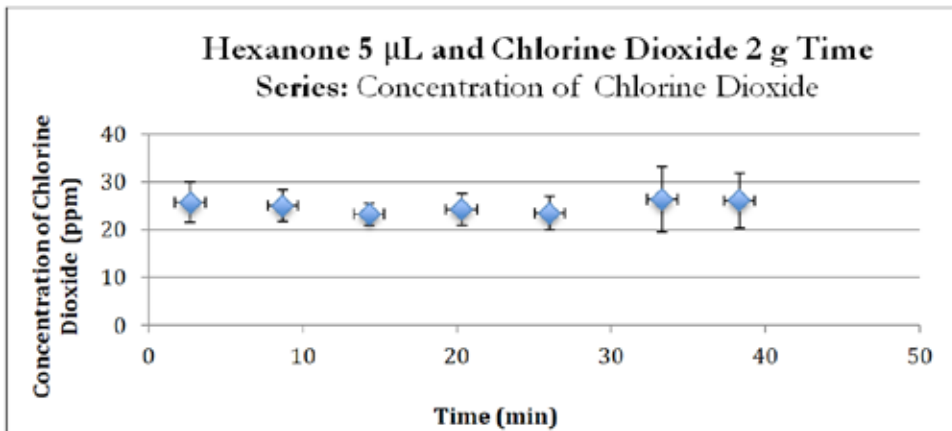


Figure 2.1: Concentration of Chlorine Dioxide Graph in 2-Hexanone and Chlorine Dioxide Reactions

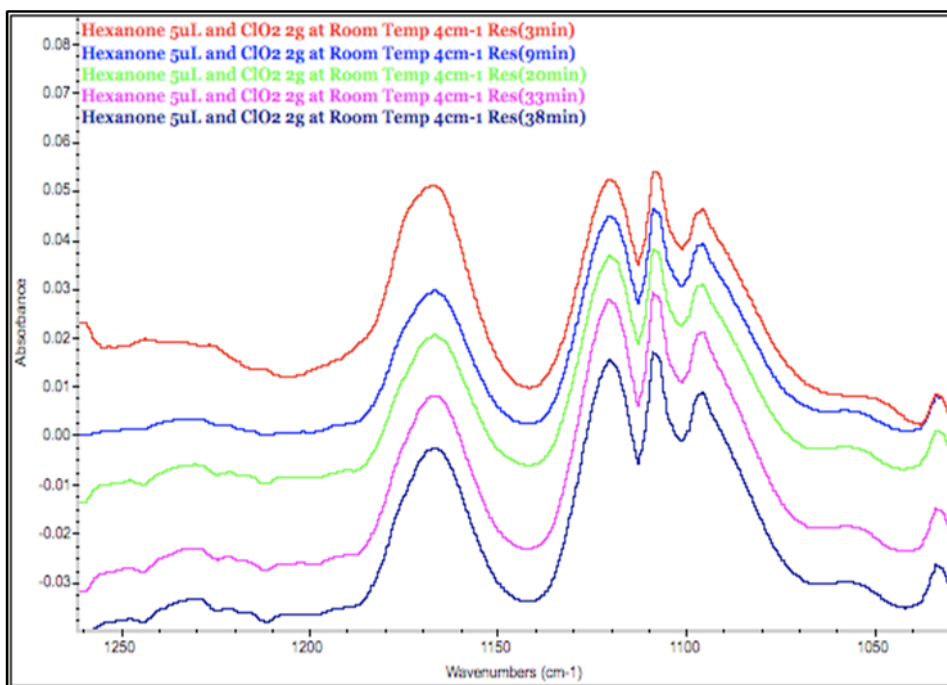


Figure 2.2: FTIR Spectrum; Region of Cl-O Asymmetric Bending Indicative of Chlorine Dioxide Concentration in 2-Hexanone and Chlorine Dioxide Reaction, Trial 1

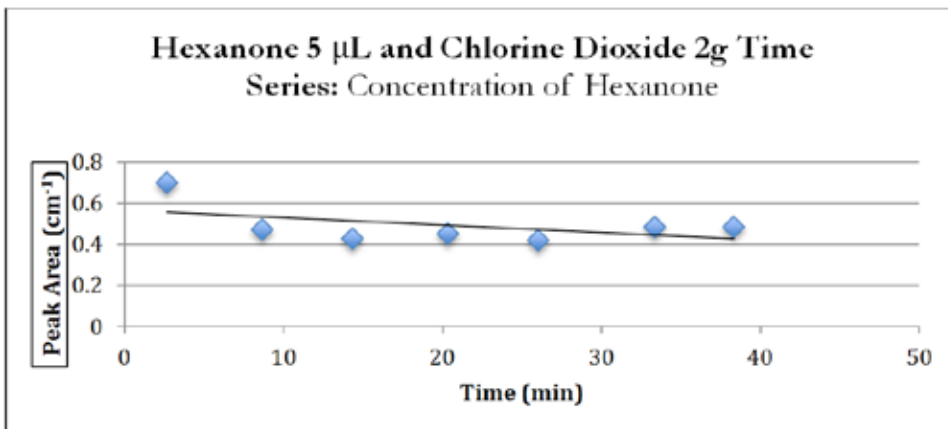


Figure 3.1: Variation of Hexanone Concentrations as a Function of Time in Reactions of 2-Hexanone and Chlorine Dioxide

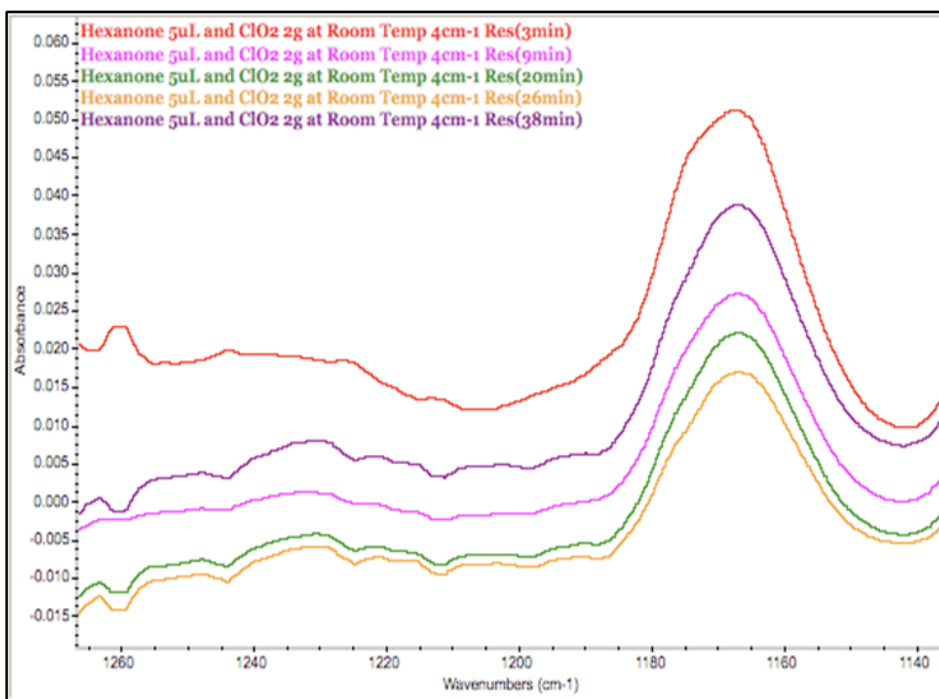


Figure 3.2: FTIR Spectrum of the Fingerprint Region Featuring 2-Hexanone Concentrations in 2-Hexanone and Chlorine Dioxide Reaction (Trial 1)



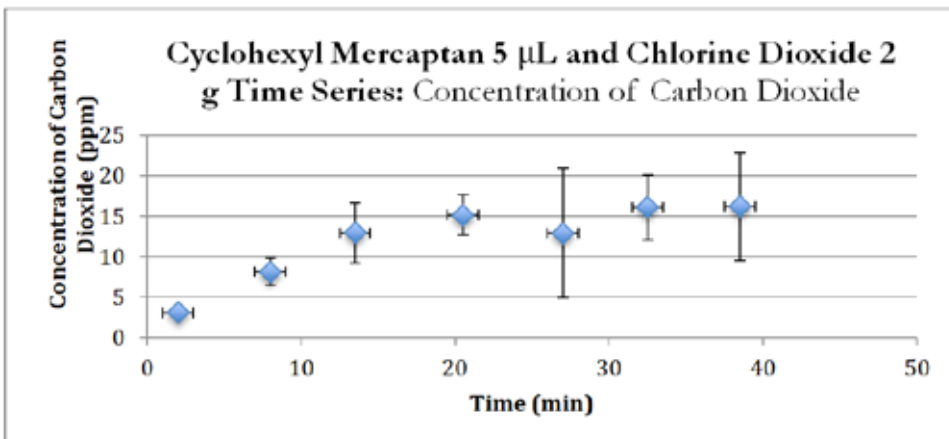


Figure 4.1: Concentrations of Carbon Dioxide Produced in the Reactions of Cyclohexyl Mercaptan and Chlorine Dioxide

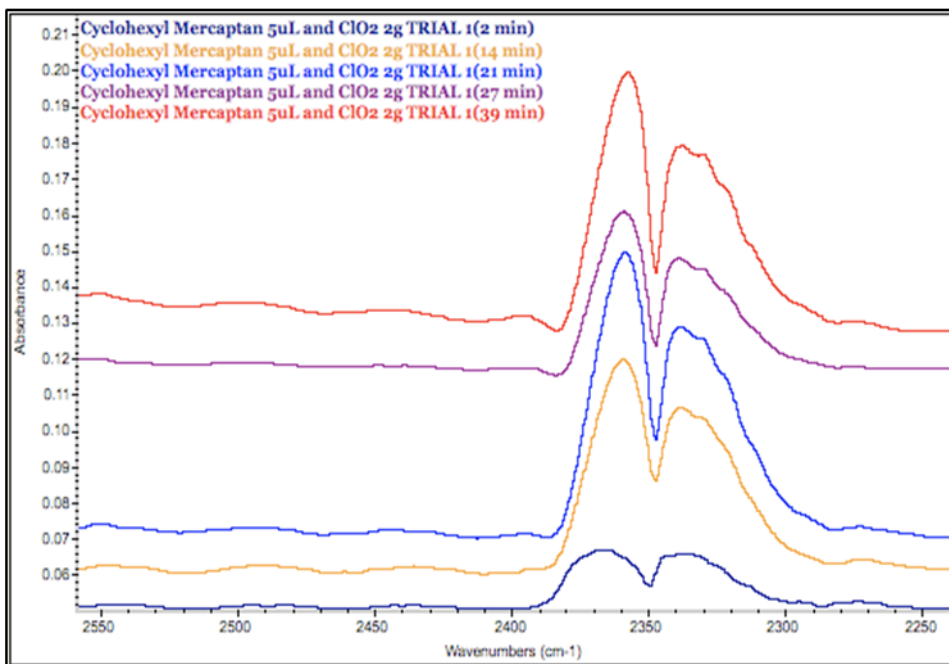


Figure 4.2: FTIR Spectral Region of C-O Asymmetric Stretch of Varying Carbon Dioxide Concentrations Resulting from the Reaction between Cyclohexyl Mercaptan and Chlorine Dioxide (Trial 1)

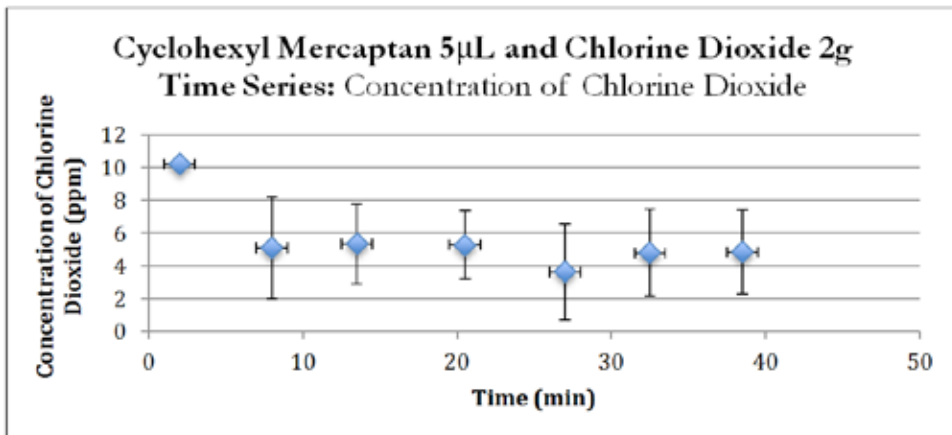


Figure 5.1: Time-Dependent Concentrations of Chlorine Dioxide in Reactions between Cyclohexyl Mercaptan and Chlorine Dioxide

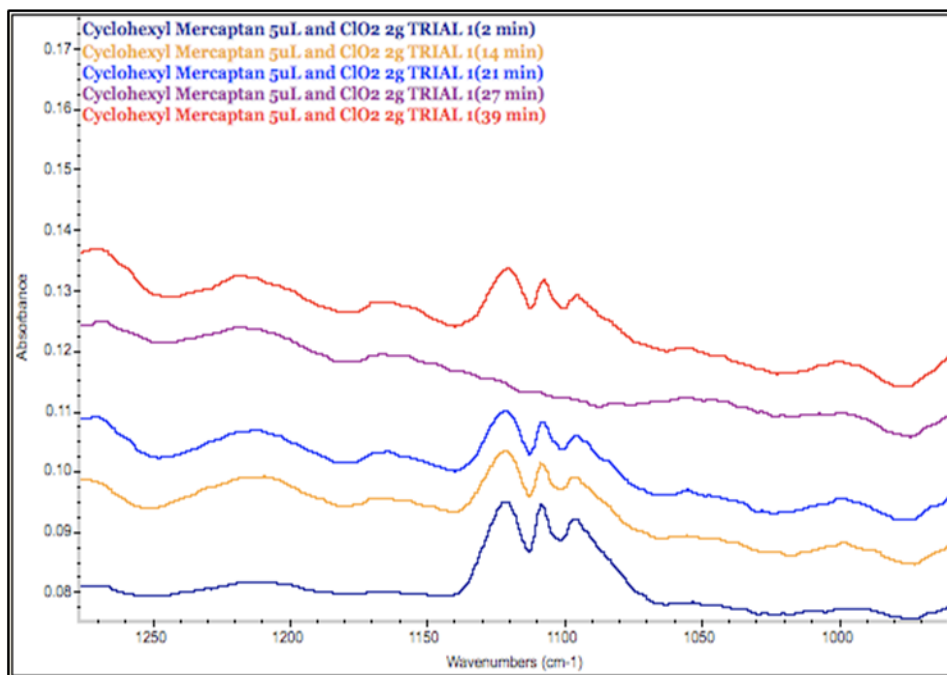


Figure 5.2: FTIR Spectrum; Region of Cl-O Asymmetric Bending Indicative of Chlorine Dioxide Concentration in 2-Hexanone and Chlorine Dioxide Reaction, Trial 1

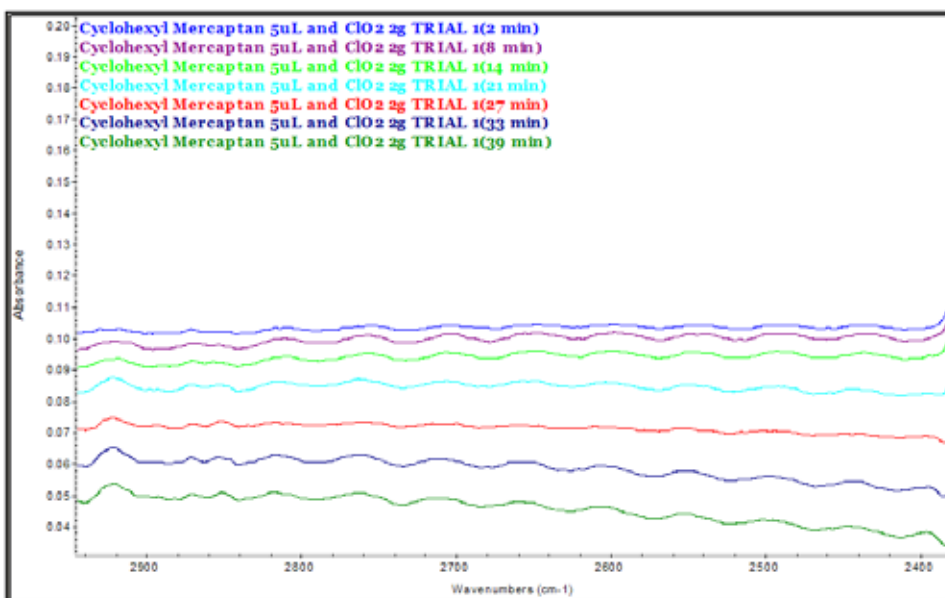


Figure 6.1: FTIR Spectrum; Region of S-H Stretch, Absence of Peak Indicates Depletion of Cyclohexyl Mercaptan Concentrations

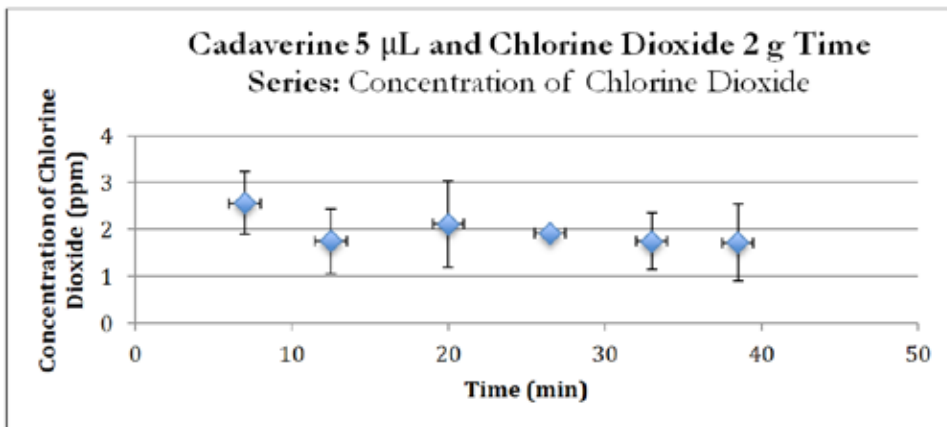


Figure 7.1: Concentration of Chlorine Dioxide Graph in Cadaverine and Chlorine Dioxide Reactions at 4  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  Resolution

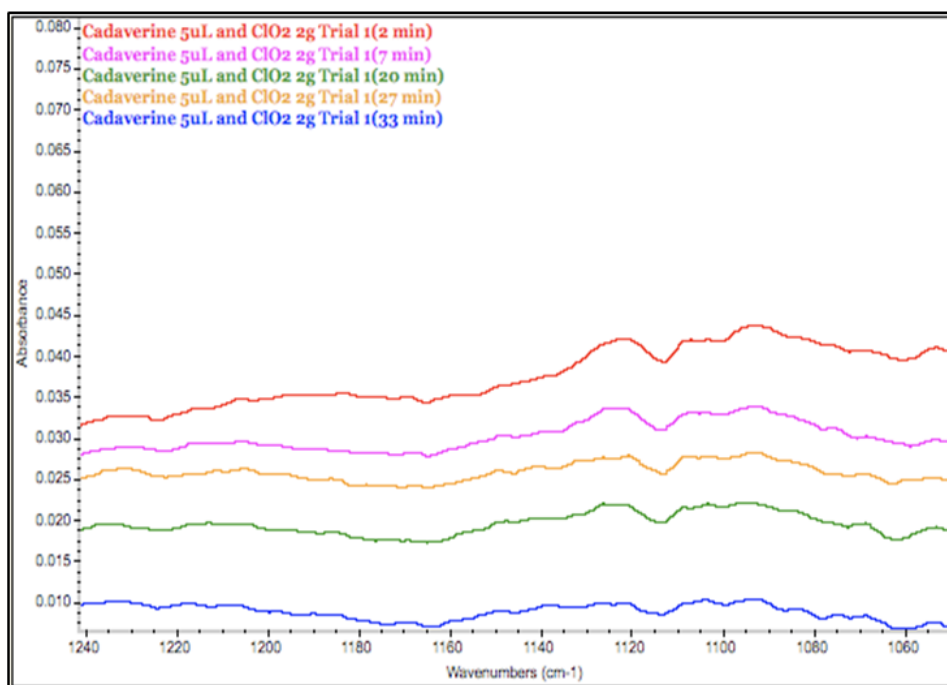


Figure 7.2: FTIR Spectrum; Region of Cl-O Asymmetric Bending Indicative of Chlorine Dioxide Concentration in Cadaverine and Chlorine Dioxide Reaction, Trial 1 at 4  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  Resolution

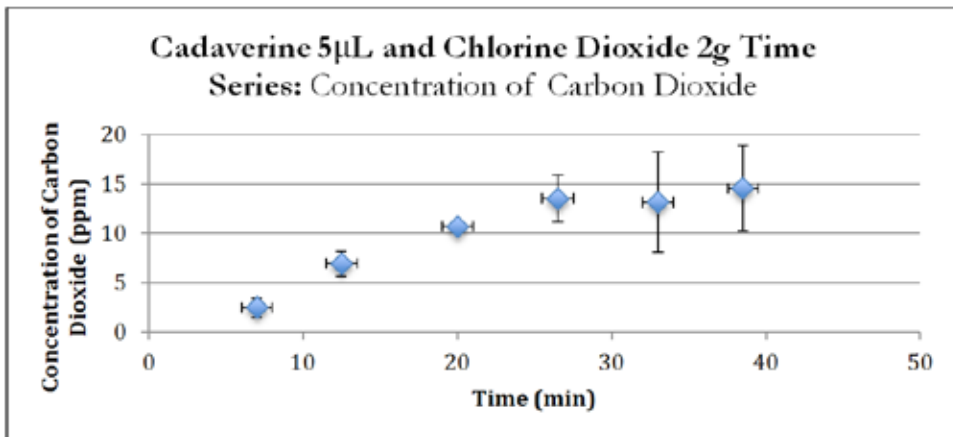


Figure 8.1: Concentration of Chlorine Dioxide Graph in Cadaverine and Chlorine Dioxide Reactions at 4 cm<sup>-1</sup> Resolution

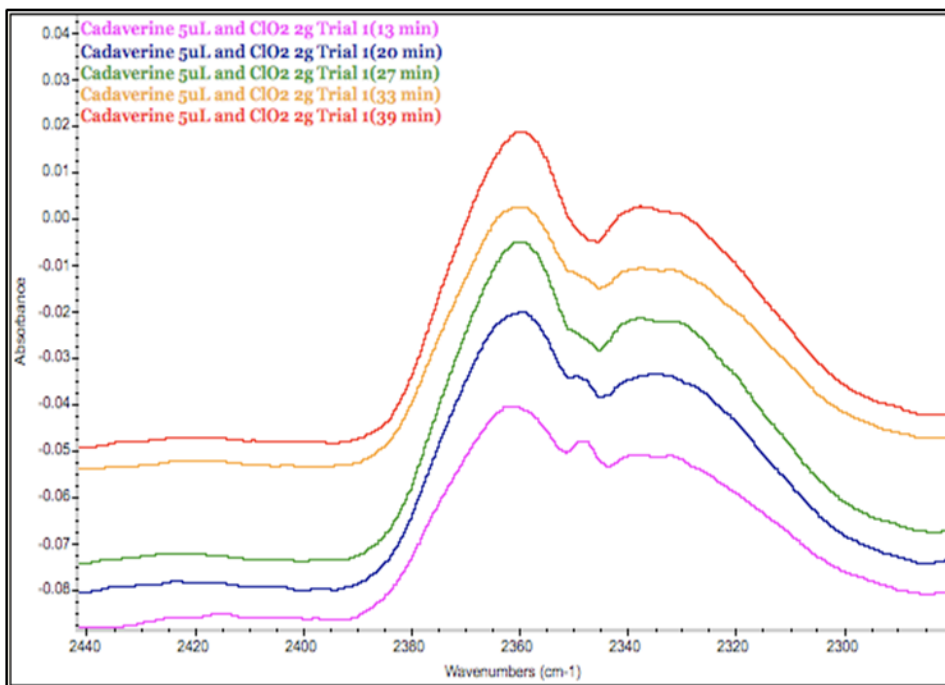


Figure 8.2: FTIR Spectrum; Region of C-O Asymmetric Stretch Indicative of Carbon Dioxide Concentration in Cadaverine and Chlorine Dioxide Reaction, Trial 1 at 4 cm<sup>-1</sup> Resolution

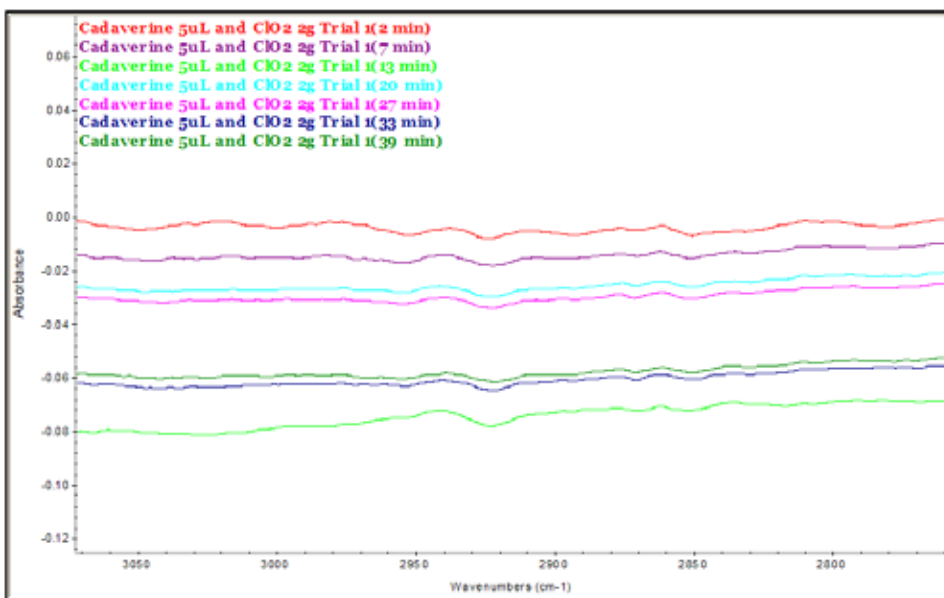


Figure 9.1: FTIR Spectrum; 2800-3000 cm<sup>-1</sup> Region of Cadaverine Presentation

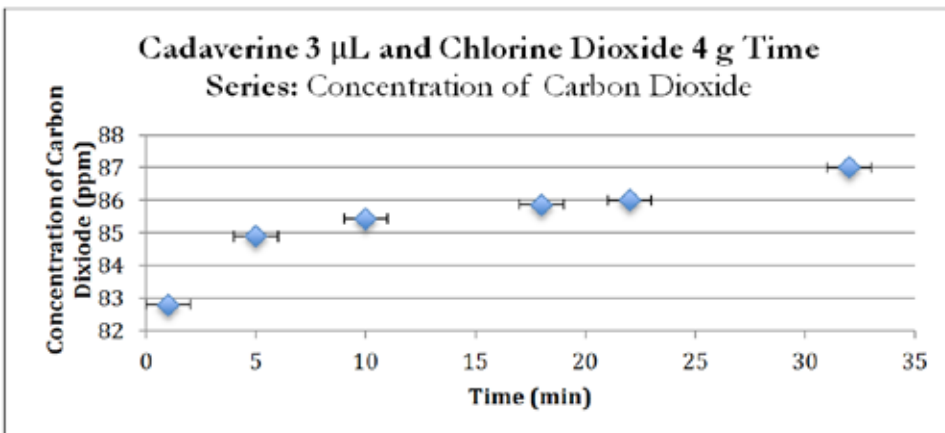


Figure 10.1: Concentration of Chlorine Dioxide Graph in Cadaverine and Chlorine Dioxide Reactions at 0.5  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  Resolution

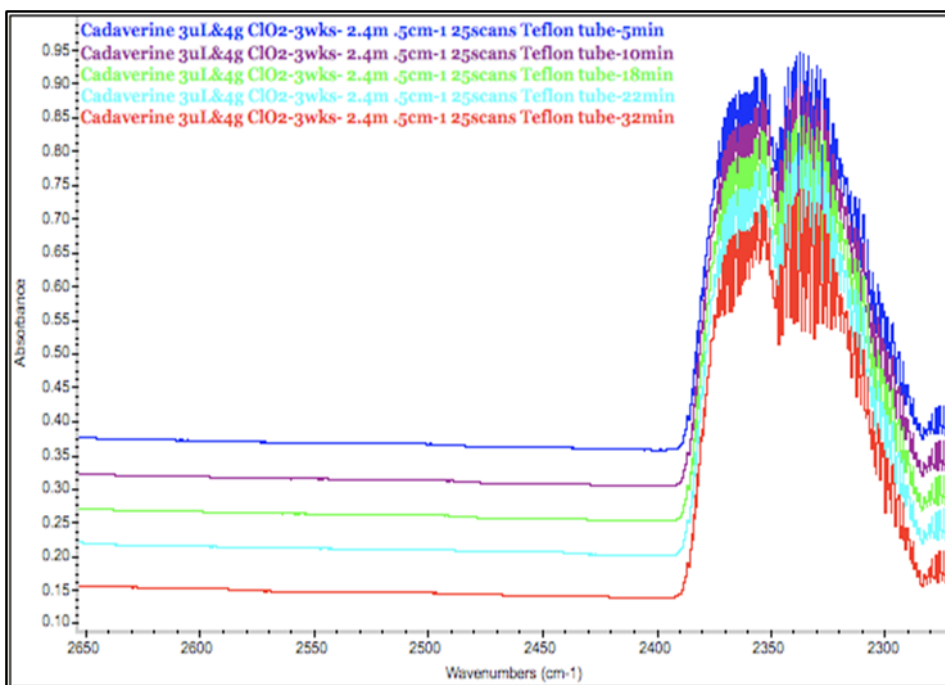


Figure 10.2: FTIR Spectrum; Region of C-O Asymmetric Stretch Indicative of Carbon Dioxide Concentration in Cadaverine and Chlorine Dioxide Reaction, Teflon tube trial at 0.5  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  Resolution

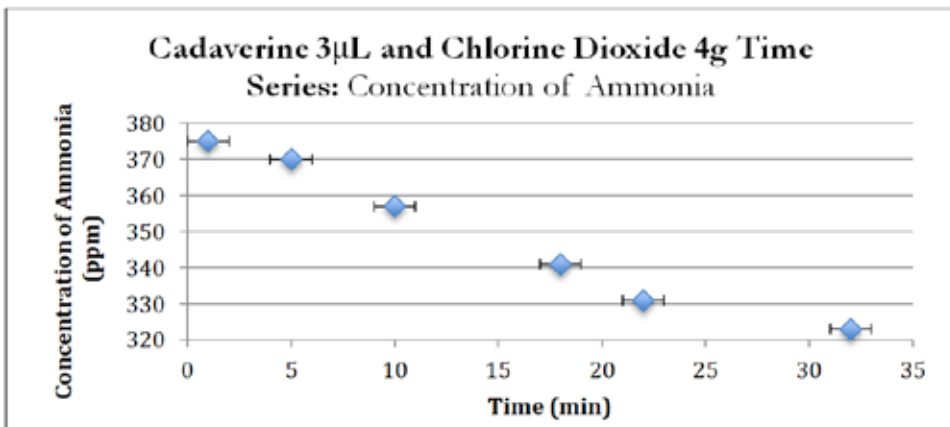


Figure 11.1: Concentration of Ammonia Graph in Cadaverine and Chlorine Dioxide Reactions at 0.5 cm<sup>-1</sup> Resolution

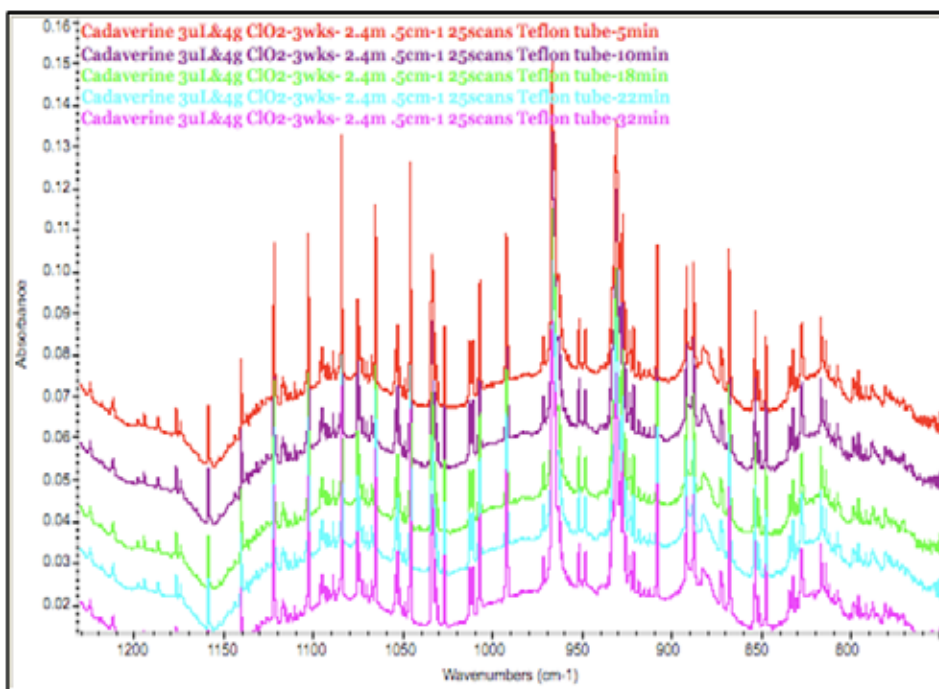


Figure 11.2: FTIR Spectrum; Region of Asymmetric Deformation for N-H Bonds Indicative of Ammonia Concentration in Cadaverine and Chlorine Dioxide Reaction, Teflon tube trial at 0.5 cm<sup>-1</sup> Resolution



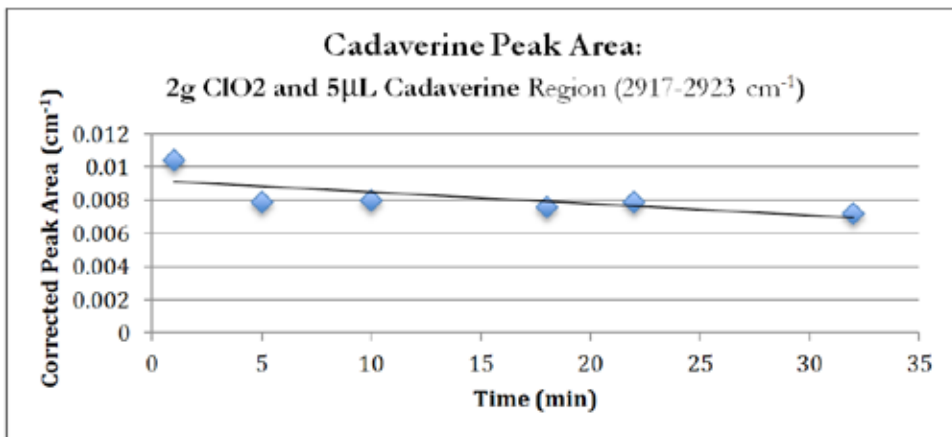


Figure 12.1: Graph of Cadaverine Peak Area in the Reaction Between Chlorine Dioxide and Cadaverine at 0.5 cm<sup>-1</sup> Resolution

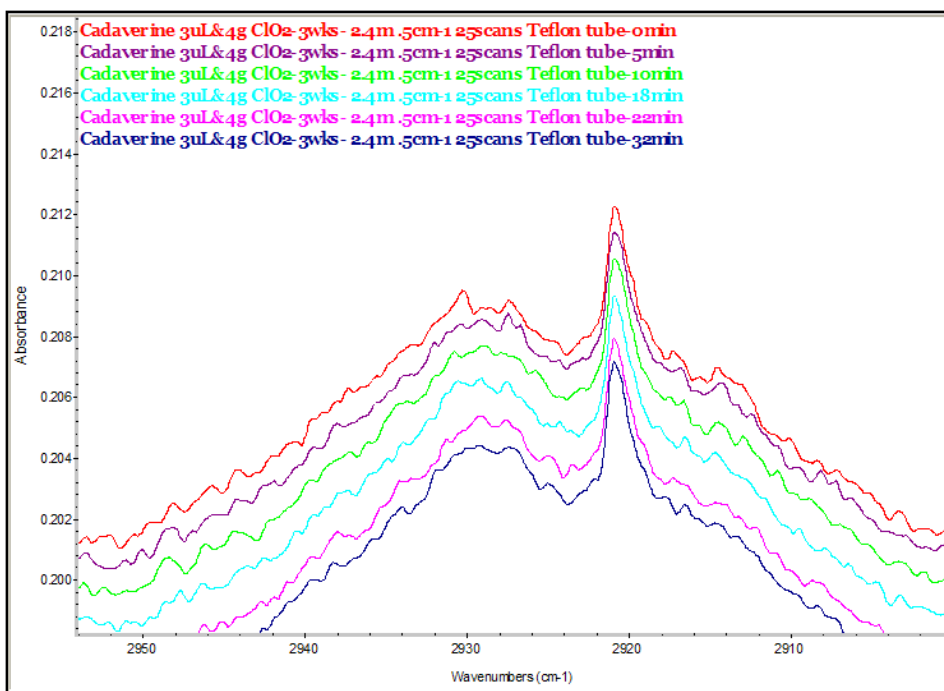


Figure 12.2: FTIR Spectrum, Cadaverine Peak Area Time Series for the Reaction Between Chlorine Dioxide and Cadaverine at 0.5 cm<sup>-1</sup> Resolution

## Conclusions

The experimental trials all exhibited the same trend: the concentrations of carbon dioxide and intermediate organic products of the malodorous precursors increased as a function of time, while the concentrations of the gaseous chlorine dioxide and the malodorous compounds decreased or were undetectable in the spectra. Overall, the results suggest that chlorine dioxide successfully diminished the concentrations of the malodorous compounds in question.

A preliminary study on chlorine dioxide gas generation and concentrations as a function of time was complete prior to this study. The study consisted of several time series to indicate the concentrations of chlorine dioxide gas as generation and degeneration occurred. The gas reached peak concentrations at around 20 minutes and began to degenerate after that time. When 2g of each precursor were allowed to react, the concentration of chlorine dioxide was 749 ppm at the 20-minute interval. As suspected, when 5g of each precursor were allowed to react, the concentration was higher at the 20-minute interval at 923 ppm.

Of the three studies on the model compounds, the trials involving 2-hexanone produced the most dramatic results. The reaction between 2-hexanone and chlorine dioxide presented very high concentrations of chlorine dioxide (*Fig 2.1*) and carbon dioxide (*Fig 1.1*), while the peak area of 2-hexanone diminished significantly (*Fig 3.1*). During the reaction between 2-hexanone and chlorine dioxide, the peaks representing 2-hexanone were visible in the fingerprint region spectra (*Fig 3.2*).

In the analysis of the reactions involving cadaverine and cyclohexyl mercaptan, the chlorine dioxide concentrations were lower than expected. In this instance, the reaction was occurring very quickly producing large quantities of carbon dioxide and even larger quantities of hydrocarbons while simultaneously depleting the concentrations of chlorine dioxide and malodorous chemicals. The reactions occurred, to a large extent, in these experiments before the first sample of the time series could be processed, which was approximately 2 minutes after the introduction of the chlorine dioxide to the malodorous compounds.

The results of the cyclohexyl mercaptan time series presented no peaks at the 2550  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  wavenumber, which is where the S-H stretch of a mercaptan would be visible (*Fig 6.1*). The diminished peaks were another signifier that the reaction occurred very quickly before the first sample was processed by the FTIR. During the characterization of this reaction, the chlorine dioxide concentrations decreased by approximately 50%, while the carbon dioxide concentration increased almost 400% (*Fig 5.1 and 4.1*).

The studies on cadaverine were done at 0.5  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  and 4  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  spectral resolutions. Prior to completing the study of the reaction between chlorine dioxide and cadaverine, a sample of cadaverine was processed with a Golden Gate ATR to create a reference spectrum; this spectrum presented two strong peaks between 2800  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  and 2950  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  wavenumbers. In the 0.5  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  resolution study, these peaks were very small, and they continued to diminish as a function of time (*Fig 12.1*). In contrast, the study at 4  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  had no detectable peaks in that region (*Fig 9.1*). The reaction

characterized with a higher resolution displayed concentrations of ammonia that decreased as a function of time (*Fig 11.2*). Because the ammonia peaks overlapped the chlorine dioxide peaks in this reaction, the concentrations of chlorine dioxide could not be calculated. However, the reaction analyzed at  $4\text{ cm}^{-1}$  showed a decrease in chlorine dioxide concentrations (*Fig 7.1*). Overall, the cadaverine was no longer detectable or had significantly diminished concentrations, which supports the efficacy of the chlorine dioxide.

While all of the studies presented consistent results, further analysis of the reactions should be carried out using gas chromatography mass spectrometry to positively identify the intermediate organic byproducts of the reactions. A preliminary GC-MS study was carried out on the reactions between cadaverine and chlorine dioxide and cyclohexyl mercaptan and chlorine dioxide using a pre-concentrator. However, the Tenax sorbent material in the pre-concentrator reacted with the chlorine dioxide contaminating the reaction and muddling the results. Some of the contaminated products were acetophenone; 2-chlorophenol; benzyl chloride; chlorobenzene; benzeneacetaldehyde; phenylethyne; and benzene. In spite of the contamination, the cadaverine reaction showed the presence of several nitrogenous compounds: cyanogen chloride; chloromethane; dichloromethane; chloroform; dichloroacetonitrile; and hexachloroacetone. In the cyclohexyl mercaptan study, sulfur dioxide; methanesulfonyl chloride; cyclohexene; 1-chlorocyclohexene; cyclohexanone; and 2-chlorocyclohexanone were present. A

glass bead trap may be used to substitute the Tenax sorbent material to prevent contamination of the reactions.

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## **Discovering Poe as a Compositionist: Edgar Allan Poe's "The Philosophy of Composition" and Process Theory**

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*Second place winner of the Scholars' Day best presentation (Liberal Arts/Graduate category)*

### **Abstract**

*Though Poe has commonly been remembered for his contributions to the detective, horror, and science-fiction genres, we should consider how his innovation extended into other areas. This includes his critical works, such as his essay "The Philosophy of Composition." Despite Poe's classical training and the trends in composition instruction before and during his educational career, the theory of composition argued for in his critical essays is more analogous to the Process Theory established by compositionists over 100 years later than the teaching methods of his time, suggesting that Poe's concept of composition was very progressive. To truly understand Poe's environment, we must examine the tradition that informed early nineteenth-century educational systems as well as Poe's own academic experience. In order to discover the connections between Poe's critical methodologies and those of later composition theorists, we must compare the preexisting notions in the field to the developments seen in composition theory during the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries.*

Edgar Allan Poe's name has become synonymous with the detective story, the Gothic, and the single effect<sup>1</sup>; however, these are not the only notable contributions Poe made during his career. As were a number of his contemporaries, Poe was interested in both writing fiction and reviewing the writings of others. This diverse engagement with others' works led to one of Poe's less discussed contributions: his philosophies about composition and the writing process. Despite Poe's classical training and the trends in composition instruction before and during his educational career, the theory of composition argued in his essays is more analogous to the process theory established by compositionists over 100 years later than the teaching methods of his time, suggesting that Poe's concept of composition was well ahead of its time.

The atmosphere surrounding the teaching of composition changed drastically over the two hundred years preceding Poe's life. Early schools in America resembled those found in Britain and Europe. A seventeenth-century minister, John Brinsley, put forth his plans for a grammar school in Virginia in the 1660s and published *A Consolation for Our Grammar Schools* (1662), which outlined these plans.<sup>2</sup> While writing about Brinsley's plans, Elizabeth A. Wright and S. Michael Halloran state, "Brinsley's views were typical of formal English education in the early seventeenth century. Writing English was closely connected with study of the classical languages, and with oral pertated [sic] material and printed texts, and recitation both catechetical and disputational were standard classroom activities."<sup>3</sup> This preference for instruction in classical languages continued in Britain and America into the eighteenth century.

In their essay, "From Rhetoric to Composition," Linda Ferreira-Buckley and Winifred Bryan Horner discuss the eighteenth-century grammar school system that was popular in the British Isles. These schools had been religiously based and focused primarily on teaching students to read and write in Latin.<sup>4</sup> Students continued to study ancient languages as they moved into their secondary education, studying "Greek and rhetoric while continuing to improve their proficiency in Latin by writing verse."<sup>5</sup> While this method of instruction was wide-spread during the eighteenth century, Wright and Halloran comment that "[d]uring the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, [...] the sovereignty of the classical languages

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1 Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," in *Essays and Reviews*, ed. G. R. Thompson (New York: The Library of America, 1984), 13-14. The single effect is an emotion or feeling that the author wishes the audience to experience. It is decided upon at the onset of writing and is considered by the author as he or she makes each decision about the piece. This effect is conveyed through the choice of setting, tone, incidents, and characters.

2 Elizabeth A. Wright and S. Michael Halloran, "From Rhetoric to Composition: Teaching Writing in America to 1900," in *A Short History of Writing Instruction: From Ancient Greece to Modern America*, ed. James J. Murphy (Mahwah, NJ: Hermagoras, 2001), 214.

3 Wright, "From Rhetoric to Composition," 216.

4 Linda Ferreira-Buckley and Winifred Bryan Horner, "Writing Instruction in Great Britain: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries." in *A Short History of Writing Instruction: From Ancient Greece to Modern America*, ed. James J. Murphy (Mahwah, NJ: Hermagoras, 2001), 189.

5 *Ibid.*, 189.

was increasingly challenged, and writing instruction in English evolved in response to social, political, religious, and economic developments.<sup>6</sup> Despite this general shift, some schools wanted to maintain the old methods of instruction while many embraced English as appropriate for academic writing, and the instruction of composition in English gained ground. These radical changes in education occurred in both England and America and exposed students to both classical teaching pedagogies and composition in English and other modern languages. These varied methods of instruction greatly affected Edgar Allan Poe. His exposure to classical training as well as writing in English informed his concepts of literature and composition.

As a young boy, Poe moved to England with his foster family, the Allans, and was exposed to the British education system. Poe's family was in Scotland and England for several months before his foster father, John Allan, enrolled him at the Misses Dubourg's Boarding School in 1816.<sup>7</sup> At the boarding school, Poe was learning "English grammar and composition" using the works of Joseph Addison or Oliver Goldsmith as models for writing prose and the models of John Milton or James Thomson for writing verse.<sup>8</sup> Notwithstanding the level of education Poe was receiving at the Misses Dubourg's, Allan sent Poe to a "better and more expensive school" outside of London, run by the Reverend John Bransby in late 1817 or early 1818.<sup>9</sup> At this school, Poe continued to receive aspects of classical education<sup>10</sup>, learning Latin in addition to modern languages such as French and other subjects including literature, history, and dance.<sup>11</sup> Despite John Allan's financial hardships, as he was forced to move his family back to Richmond in 1820, he continued to invest in Poe's education.<sup>12</sup>

Upon their return to Richmond, Allan arranged for Poe to study under Joseph H. Clark. At Clark's school, Poe continued his study of Greek and Latin as well as mathematics, science, and elocution. Poe did well in school and excelled at elocution, even winning a city-wide contest. In 1823, John Allan sent Poe to study at William Burke's school where his academic success continued. Because of his previous mastery of many of the classics, Poe was allowed to pursue independent study at Burke's school and continued to complete assignments early in order to devote time to "desultory reading and creative writing."<sup>13</sup> In 1825, Allan received a large inheritance from his late uncle and purchased a new home in

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6 Ibid., 173-174.

7 Arthur Hobson Quinn, *Edgar Allan Poe, a critical biography* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1941), 67-69.

8 Kevin J. Hayes, *Edgar Allan Poe* (Chippenham, U.K.: Reaktion, 2009), 36-37.

9 Quinn, *Edgar Allan Poe*, 69-71.

10 Kevin J. Hayes, *Edgar Allan Poe in Context* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 221-222. A classical education included learning to read and recite Latin and Greek. Poe read ancient texts from "Ovid, Caesar, Virgil, Cicero, and Horace in Latin" and "Xenophon and Homer in Greek."

11 Ibid., 71-73.

12 Ibid., 79-80.

13 Hayes, *Edgar Allan Poe*, 37-39.

downtown Richmond; as a result, Poe left Burke's school. At this time, Poe was sixteen years old and considered prepared for the university.<sup>14</sup>

In 1826, Poe began attending the University of Virginia. The school was rather new but was already considered "among the finest institutions of higher learning in the nation."<sup>15</sup> Its founder, Thomas Jefferson, had established a progressive curriculum, which allowed students to pursue their interests by creating individualized plans of study. Poe continued to study modern and ancient languages and wanted to continue his study of mathematics, but he could only take two courses per term because Allan would not pay for a third. He also pursued learning outside of the classroom by becoming part of the Jefferson Society, a group that met to discuss literature.<sup>16</sup> Poe was only able to remain at the University of Virginia for one year. He had not been given adequate money for school books or supplies and had taken to gambling to supplement the small amount of money supplied by Allan. After Poe's first year at the university, Allan came to collect him but paid very few of his debts before returning with him to Richmond,<sup>17</sup> effectively ending Poe's education until 1830, when he was appointed at West Point after a short time in the army.<sup>18</sup>

As a military institution, West Point expected its cadets to endure a great deal of physical training and develop discipline in addition to progressing through their standard curriculum. After Poe passed an entrance exam testing his abilities to read, write, and perform basic arithmetic, he participated in encampment and spent two months focusing on military instruction before being allowed to move on to academic courses.<sup>19</sup> During his time at West Point, Poe continued his studies of mathematics and French but was stifled in his more fanciful pursuits. The university rules disallowed cadets from possessing novels, poems, or books that were not directly related to their studies.<sup>20</sup> As Poe had a growing interest in writing his own poetry and pursuing self-study, these restrictions made it difficult for him to follow the rules even as he did well in his coursework. His records from the school show that "he stood third in French and seventeenth in Mathematics in a class of eighty-seven."<sup>21</sup> Between the limitations being placed on Poe academically and his foster father choosing to remarry after the death of his foster mother, Poe began neglecting his military duties and decided to resign from West Point to pursue his writing aspirations. Allan would not support this course of action, and Poe was court-martialed and removed

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14 Ibid., 39.

15 Ibid., 39.

16 Ibid., 39-42.

17 Quinn, *Edgar Allan Poe*, 108-112.

18 Ibid., 166.

19 Quinn, *Edgar Allan Poe*, 169.

20 Ibid., 169.

21 Ibid., 171.



from service for his "Disobedience of Orders" and "Gross neglect of Duty."<sup>22</sup> Despite this inauspicious end, Poe was a superior student throughout his academic career.

Poe's experiences in the English and American educational systems certainly affected his perception of writing in addition to his feelings about poetry and prose, but they did not dictate his future approaches. He wanted to discuss the writing of others and found an outlet for that in his reviews. Poe read and reviewed dozens of works by various authors, and as he developed as an author and proto-theorist, he wanted to present his own theories about composing poetry and prose. He was able to present these ideas in critical essays that were published in *Graham's Magazine*, *Southern Literary Magazine*, and *Sartain's Union Magazine* from 1846-1850. These publications included "The Philosophy of Composition," "The Rationale of Verse," and "The Poetic Principle." Poe's theory culminated in his "Philosophy of Composition," but it began as Poe reviewed the works of other writers and assessed their literary value.

Poe's critical reviews positioned him to comment on the composition style of authors such as Charles Dickens, Thomas Moore, and Nathaniel Hawthorne, among others. Although, at the time, many readers were skeptical about Poe's practices as a literary critic, some later scholars, such as Emerson R. Marks, have argued for a reevaluation of Poe in this field. In his article, "Poe as Literary Theorist: A Reappraisal," Marks argues that "Poe is generally credited with having propounded a poetic ontology more thoroughly defined by Coleridge a generation earlier and an analytical method destined to be elaborated by the New Critics a century later."<sup>23</sup> Because Poe drew from both his own education and his critical musings, aspects of his criticism reflect established ideas about composition of poetry and prose as well as progressive ideas about critical theory and composition. His time as a literary critic allowed Poe to refine his theories about composition and build up to his seminal work on the subject.

Poe finally discusses his concepts of composition explicitly in his essay, "The Philosophy of Composition." In this essay, Poe uses his composition of "The Raven" to present his methodologies, and the reader can see the influence of his classical training and years of experience in the magazine business. Poe presents his preference for "unity" and "beauty" as well as his "single effect," which was used as a tool to convey both. Poe's focus on unity in his works was influenced both by his studies of the classics and contemporary sources such as "British periodicals, the criticism of Augustus Wilhelm Schlegel, and the criticism of Coleridge."<sup>24</sup> In addition to Poe's discussion of the single effect, unity, and beauty, "The Philosophy of Composition" returns to a concept of planning a story backwards, from the end to the beginning, to ensure the correct causality, an idea he first presented in his second

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22 Ibid., 173-174.

23 Emerson R. Marks, "Poe as Literary Theorist: A Reappraisal," *American Literature* 33, no. 3 (November 1961): 296.

24 Beverly R. Voloshin, "The Essays and 'Marginalia': Poe's Literary Theory," in *A Companion to Poe Studies*, ed. Eric W. Carlson (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1996), 277.

review of Hawthorne's tales.<sup>25</sup> Poe discusses all of these aspects of "The Raven" in the context of rationally planning out the work before commencing the act of composing. Though Poe's experience with the classics influenced how he viewed works, the way he presented his process of composing was very forward-thinking. It was not particularly influential in the United States, but as commented in Dennis Pahl's article, "De-composing Poe's 'Philosophy,'" "the French symbolist poets (Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Valéry), as great admirers of Poe, found in the essay a strong confirmation of their own aesthetic method—a method emphasizing a kind of poetic 'suggestiveness' that would range 'beyond the limits of direct speech.'"<sup>26</sup> While the French were considering Poe's theories, he was being largely over-looked in America. Despite Poe's contributions, the field of composition continued to develop without his influence.

From the mid-nineteenth century, when Poe was writing, through the first half of the twentieth century, composition instruction and theory in America underwent broad changes. Beginning in the 1860s, grammar became more universally acknowledged as necessary and worth teaching. Robert J. Connors cites several factors that contributed to this shift. In his book, *Composition-Rhetoric: Backgrounds, Theory, and Pedagogy*, Connors starts with the perception that formal grammar, which primarily constituted learning grammar in ancient languages, was "sterile and impractical," the new-found focus on teaching rhetoric and eloquence through written communication, and the cultural shift toward awareness of correct speaking all contributed to the changing values in education.<sup>27</sup> Because this change occurred after Poe's time, his works do not seem preoccupied with grammar. Although Poe was not involved in this movement, "a few theorists saw that rhetoric and grammar would be melded in the developing discipline of composition" and began to work toward the establishment of the field.<sup>28</sup> As these pedagogical changes from the late nineteenth century took hold in the universities, professors experienced excessive workloads as they attempted to review each student's written work for mechanical correctness.<sup>29</sup> After establishing programs to teach composition and encountering these heavy workloads, some programs followed Harvard's lead, concluding that "composition belongs in secondary schools."<sup>30</sup> In John C. Brereton's book *The Origins of Composition Studies in the American College 1875-1925: A Documentary History*, he discusses this time of constant change. During the first few decades of the twentieth century, newly-developed textbooks helped composition instructors as they guided students to produce controlled, predetermined compositions. It

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25 Voloshin, "The Essays and 'Marginalia,'" 286.

26 Dennis Pahl, "De-composing Poe's Philosophy," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 38.1 (Spring 1996) N.P.

27 Robert J. Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric: Backgrounds, Theory, and Pedagogy* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997), 127.

28 Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric*, 127.

29 Ibid., 140.

30 John C. Brereton, *The Origins of Composition Studies in the American College 1875-1925: A Documentary History* (Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1995),

was not until the mid-twentieth century, however, that compositionists became particularly interested in how students write, why they write, or what they want to write about. John R. Hayes and Linda S. Flower researched how students write, and their work became the study of Process Theory.

The research of Hayes and Flower, which ultimately resulted in the Process Theory Model, was progressive and included the use of “think-aloud protocols” to document what each writer did as he or she approached a given writing task and as he or she completed it. Think aloud protocols include training the test subjects to verbalize every aspect of their cognitive process while writing.<sup>31</sup> After collecting and coding their data, Hayes and Flower determined that there were three primary component processes in the writing process: planning, translating, and reviewing.<sup>32</sup> Hayes and Flower subdivided these primary processes into their sub-processes and further researched them. After five years of research, Flower and Hayes published “A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing,” in which they present the four key points that serve as the basis for their cognitive process theory. They found that “writing is best understood as a set of distinctive thinking processes which writers orchestrate or organize during the act of composing”; “the processes of writing are hierarchically organized, with component processes embedded within other components”; “writing is a goal-directed process”; and “writers create their own goals in two key ways: by generating goals and supporting sub-goals which embody purpose; and, at times, by changing or regenerating their own top-level goals in light of what they have learned by writing.”<sup>33</sup> Flower and Hayes’s findings about the writing process have been and are very influential in composition instruction. Despite their great influence, though, Flower and Hayes were not the first to muse about how writers go about writing. Edgar Allan Poe addressed some of these same questions in his essay, “The Philosophy of Composition,” over 100 years before Flower and Hayes’s 1981 article.

While Poe’s “The Philosophy of Composition” did hearken back to the works of Coleridge and many of the Scottish aestheticians who influenced his early schooling with his discussions of beauty and unity, his methodologies for investigating his writing process is much more similar to that of the twentieth century.<sup>34</sup> Like Hayes and Flower, Poe muses about how others write. In his “Philosophy,” he states, “I have often thought how interesting a magazine paper might be written by any author who would—that is to say who could—detail, step by step, the process by which any one of his compositions attained its ultimate point of completion.”<sup>35</sup> Poe’s “Philosophy” is his attempt to exhibit this step-by-step journey

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31 John R. Hayes and Linda S. Flower, “Identifying the Organization of Writing Processes,” in *Cognitive Processes in Writing*, eds. Lee W. Gregg and Erwin R. Steinberg (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1980) 4-5.

32 Hayes and Flower, “Identifying the Organizaition,” 12.

33 Linda S. Flower and John R. Hayes, “A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing,” *College Composition and Communication* 32 (December 1981): 366-381.

34 James M. Hutchisson, *Poe* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2005), 66.

35 Poe, “The Philosophy of Composition,” 14.

through the writing process in which he uses “The Raven” as his example. He discusses his planning throughout the essay and contends that every work of literature must be planned all the way through before writing starts. On this point, Poe comments, “Nothing is more clear than that every plot, worth the name, must be elaborated to its *dénouement* before any thing be attempted with a pen.”<sup>36</sup> As a part of Poe’s planning, he also settles on an *effect* that will inform all of the choices he makes while completing the work. These choices include his choice of a melancholy tone because it “is thus the most legitimate of all the poetical tones,” his choice of a raven because it was “equally capable of speech [as compared to his first consideration of a parrot], and infinitely more in keeping with the intended tone,” and his choice of an enclosed setting because he saw it as “absolutely necessary to the effect of insulated incident.”<sup>37</sup> In both the choice of the raven and the choice of the enclosed chamber, Poe reviewed his first choices, a parrot and a forest or open field respectively, and decided to revise them during his planning process based on his desire to maintain his intended effect. Poe goes on to consider the audience of the work as well as the proper length for his poem in his planning. All of Poe’s choices as outlined in his “Philosophy” greatly resemble the basis of process theory as proposed by Flower and Hayes: Poe presents his procedure for planning, translating, and reviewing and the components of each of those processes; he proposes that certain decisions need to be executed first, such as deciding tone or effect; he sets goals throughout his planning, primarily focusing on bringing his single effect to fruition; and he reevaluates the importance of his decisions based on his goals. In opposition to many of the ideas promoted during Poe’s extensive education, he developed his own thoughts about the writing process that would not be fully embraced or expanded upon until the mid-twentieth century.

Poe has been recognized for his contributions to literature and is beginning to be better recognized for his contributions to literary theory, but Poe’s early commentary on composition theory has been largely overlooked. The educational environment that Poe experienced was rigid and primarily focused on classical ideals of education, so his musings about the writing process and his foray into data collection about his own writing process, which resembles the think aloud protocols used by Flower and Hayes, is that much more informative and relevant for the history of composition research.

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36        Ibid., 13.

37        Ibid., 17-21.

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# **Transgress Not the Limits: Just War Theory in Early Islamic Theology**

*Jamie Sutton*

## **Abstract**

*Since the beginning of America's "war on terror," the permissible targets and methods of warfare within Islamic theology continue to be the subject of much discourse among a global audience. An examination of sources illuminates rich traditions of regulation applying to warfare in Islamic jurisprudence. These traditions range from distinction of legitimate targets to the proportionality of destruction, and taken as a totality, they represent a demonstration of concern for the principles of Just War Theory many decades before a codified western tradition of such began.*

*This essay offers a concise introduction to the classical regulations on warfare within Islamic jurisprudence along with their place in the modern context. While not an exhaustive effort, the paper offers an understanding of what these Islamic limitations on violence are and how they are circumvented in the modern context by extremists.*

*“Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for Allah loveth not transgressors.” – Qur’an 2:190*

When discussing Islamic theology in a modern context, the issue of violence and the justifications as to when and how it may be applied will inevitably be the subject of several questions. The world stage for discussion is dominated by the revolutions of the Arab Spring, the American wars and interventions in the Middle East, the continued legacy of Islamic Revivalism, and the operations of groups of so-called “Islamic Radicals” or “Muslim Fundamentalists.” Observers outside the religion of Islam have a deep, and understandable, concern over the rhetoric and process of religious justification undertaken by a certain strain of Islam that has proven itself both willing and able to commit acts of violence. Likewise, within the Muslim community there is genuine and intense debate over the proper interpretation of the historical and religious sources considered central to Islam: The Qur’an<sup>1</sup>, the *Hadith* of the Prophet Muhammad<sup>2</sup>, and the earliest generations of Islamic scholars. Many authors and commentators<sup>3</sup> have framed this internal debate as no less dramatic than a battle for the “soul” of Islam.

Since the earliest days of Islam, there has been vigorous debate as to when violent means are justified from the standpoint of the religion and to whom and when those means should be applied. In the philosophical context, Just War Theory has always been the attempt to examine the relationship of justice and warfare and is a construct composed of two main areas of inquiry: *Jus in bello*—justice in war, and *jus ad bellum*—justification for war. In the Western tradition, Just War Theory originates largely with the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas. However, when viewed in the context of the whole Islamic tradition, the legal and theological debates within the Islamic framework include all of the elements that are generally supposed to constitute a doctrine of *jus in bello*, justice in war. In the early juridical sources, there is rarely, if ever, a single specific text that can be considered to encompass the total structural system of argument and ruling that fits within the accepted boundaries of a Just War Theory. But I think that given the wide range of diverse views within early Islam and the military realities of the situation in the Hijaz desert region, along with Islamic communities’ relationships with the empires bordering them, enough discussion exists to demonstrate that an early form of Just War Theory was in clear if fitful development.

Islam as displayed in the Qur’an and the Hadith sources makes a strong attempt to be an eminently practical religion in regards to violence. The words of the Qur’an seem to take for granted that a stance of pacifism is neither sufficient nor desirable as a means to meet all the challenges the Islamic community might face. There are multiple verses encouraging peace, indeed upon close inspection, it is clear that any verse condoning violence is in

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1 The holy scriptures of Islam

2 The collected sayings and traditions attributed to Prophet Muhammad, taken to be prescriptive norms worthy of emulation.

3 Excellent introductory examples include Reza Aslan, Khaled Fadil, and Karen Armstrong



close proximity to verses exhorting believers to understand that peace is better. But the Qur'an also spends ample time encouraging believers not to shrink from the martial duties required in support of the community. The Qur'an contains verses that command fighting such as 2:216, which explains to hesitant believers that fighting is good for them; 4:74, which states that those killed for their faith in battle will earn great rewards; 3:167, which suggests that any who hesitate to fight for fear of death are hypocrites or non-believers; and of course, 9:5, the famous "verse of the sword," which commands Muslims to slay the *mushrikun*—the unbelievers—wherever they are found. The Arabic word *mushrikun* literally translates as "those who associate partners with God" but is typically translated as unbeliever or polytheist in English translations. These few examples, among many others in the Qur'an, amply serve to demonstrate that there is no moral timidity about the occasional necessity for violence in the in the early Muslim world.

Despite this, the combat called for in the Qur'an could not be accurately described as bloodthirsty or unrestrained. The martial aggression of the early Islamic empires waxed and waned as any civilization's military history might, and frequent sometimes impassioned attempts are made to depict members of the early Muslim community as zealots sweeping aside their neighbors in a wave of religious fervor and offering the choice of conversion or the sword. However, since the Qur'an contains numerous restrictions and limitations intended to curb violence, and the *Hadith* contains even more, this interpretation of early Muslims does not withstand scrutiny. Attempts to interpret and apply the "limits" referred to in 2:190, in which the Qur'an asserts that in fighting believers should not transgress certain boundaries of behavior, led to intellectual movements, which constituted a detailed Just War Theory hundreds of years before St. Thomas Aquinas would develop and codify the ideas of earlier philosophers to form the Christian equivalent.

The concept of *jus in bello* with which this paper is concerned can be identified conceptually in the Hebrew scriptures and Deuteronomical commands on limiting collateral damage for the early Jewish people. In the west, the main source for Just War Theory is largely a product of the Roman Catholic tradition, particularly St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine of Hippo. The Western tradition of justice in warfare was originally conceived as a sort of theological exercise. In short, it was an attempt to answer the question: If Christianity is ideally a religion of brotherhood in Christ, and given Jesus' famous biblical admonishment that he who lives by the sword is doomed to die by it, then how does Christianity confront the realities of a world in which it seems that war is nearly inevitable, whether Christians choose their participation or not? Towards the 16<sup>th</sup> century these religious underpinnings were replaced by a concern for international treaty and contract models of international law. Here we see a close parallel that mirrors the Islamic need to reconcile an absolutist belief in scriptural divine commands with the practical needs of existence in a culturally and religiously diverse world.

The directives of traditional Just War Theory require that, once violence has been initiated, several types of ethical concerns must be respected as much as possible in order to maintain the justness of the war. These concerns include: making a proper distinction

between combatant and non-combatant, ensuring that responses and destruction are proportional to the desired objective, ensuring that the minimum force necessary to finish the military objective is used, seeing that captured enemy soldiers are treated fairly and humanely, and providing that no methods which are considered unjust or evil are used as a weapon of warfare. In modern times, this last concern has been fully expanded into a vigorous discussion surrounding chemical and biological warfare, but has also traditionally included acts such as rape.

A primary ethical concern for *jus in bello*, then, is the question of just practice. While the justice of jihad was never in question—any legitimate jihad was just—if a particular military expedition was not just, then it was by definition not a legitimate “striving in the way of God.” As is the ideal for all of Islamic theology, the rules governing warfare for Muslims are supposed to derive from divine revelation in the form of the Qur’an and the *Hadith* sources.<sup>4</sup> The bulk of the task for Islamic jurists was in applying the source material to new situations as they arose and teasing out distinctions for those areas that are addressed only obliquely. The challenge of meeting new innovations in both the technology and methods of violence required the Islamic jurist to attempt to craft an internally-coherent system of principles and theory out of the sometimes extremely specific and highly contextualized examples provided by revelation in the Qur’an or Hadith. In this way, the concepts of Just War Theory in Islam grew alongside the development of the structure of *shari’a* itself. *Shari’a* has always had this dual role within the Islamic system. The Arabic word means “path” or “road” and is in Islamic theology the perfect and eternal unchanging law of God, his dictates for how humanity is to order their lives. On the basis of this ideal, jurists attempting to model *shari’a* in earthly legislation created a complex and highly technical legal field that has continually evolved over the course of Islamic history. In the early and classical periods, the struggle was to combine practical and immediate needs of the current context with the desire to adhere (at least by analogy) to the dictates that were believed to be products of divine revelation. These sources can seem confusing and even contradictory at times, but they provide a broad enough basis to have served as the foundation for Islamic legal rulings relating to each of the typical considerations required of a classical Just War Theory: distinction of targets, proportionality, military necessity, fair treatment of prisoners of war, and right means of waging war.

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4        Though a complete overview of the methods by which various schools of theology have analyzed and interpreted these sources are beyond the scope of this paper, it is useful here to make a brief overview. In formulating Islamic jurisprudence, the Muslim scholar is meant to follow a fairly simple process. The Qur’an and the *Hadith* are to be textually analyzed along with the context of the circumstances in which the particular verse or tradition was formed. In cases where there are multiple interpretations possible or there are no explicit instructions on an issue, the jurist is supposed to apply the weight of precedent to the matter and follow the judgment of the majority of respected scholars who have come before. If new information is available which those previous scholars did not possess or the situation seems to otherwise be unique, then analogical reasoning is supposed to be applied, looking for relevant similarities to other more familiar situations. Finally, permeating all of this process, jurists are to use their own independent judgment in applying what they feel the principles “behind” the sources would direct for a decision. Schools of Islamic legal thought primarily differ mostly on which parts of this process are given the most weight.

Generally, in the Qur'an itself some form of limitation on killing is recognized (2:190), that life can only be taken with just cause (17:33), that people who are not actively hostile are to be made peace with (4:90), and that all existing peace agreements must be honored (9:4). The *Hadith* contains a number of more specific regulations that further combine to explicate how these general limitations are carried out. Pacifism is not even considered as a possibility in the harsh environment of the tribal raid-driven society of the early Arabian Desert. Whether in the face of oppression or existential threat or in order to guarantee the freedom to practice the Islamic religion in an area, violence is considered an acceptable response. In contrast to classical Just War Theory, the early discussion amongst scholars never seems to be *if* Islamic warfare is just. As a matter of theological doctrine, for early Muslims the governing of all the world in Islamic terms would be the greatest good that could happen for mankind, and imposing of this goal by invitation and, when necessary, by warfare was the first concern of the state.

Indeed, by the very juridical definition of the word, any legitimate jihad would be a just and righteous undertaking. Any such undertaking that was not just and righteous would not be a true jihad. Thus early Islamic jurists debated issues such as the permissibility of violence against Muslim political rebels, and what duration and effort should be expended in non-violent conversion attempts. Examples of these early debates are the Sunni/Shi'a split over the succession after Muhammad. The groups of Ash'ari and Khawarij split over whether rebellion against an impious ruler could be justified and how frequently the invitation to embrace Islam and end hostilities must be renewed. In general though, a state of warfare was assumed to exist between the Muslim and non-Muslim state, the *dar al-Islam* (Land of Islam) and *dar al-harb* (Land of War) respectively.<sup>5</sup> As seen in Medieval Western Christendom, which also explicitly assumed a universal imperative for all mankind, assuring the opportunity of unbelievers to live under a government ruled by God's standards was often treated as its own *de facto* justification for warfare. Even given this truth, the jihad did not necessarily constitute a program of endless violence. In *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*, Majid Khadduri (1979) notes some jurists said merely being prepared for war was enough to fulfill the communal obligation of jihad, and the obligation to call all the world under the authority of Islam had many various non-violent methods of being pursued. This shows a clear example of how the early debate on this matter was, at best, divided. Furthermore, this is shown as the early Islamic scholars clearly assumed the destiny of the whole world was to follow the religion of Islam; however, the obligation to fight in order to make this happen was not universally accepted.

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5 Some early Islamic scholars (most notably the Shafi'i) recognize a third division of the world into the *dar al-sulh* (Land of Treaty or Peace) which encompassed non-Muslim states in which the freedom to practice Islamic religion was protected and treaty relations involving a ceding of some monetary tribute or land to the Muslim state was made either before hostilities began or after a prolonged war with no clear winner. Other schools of thought insisted that such entities, by ceding tribute and accepting the right of Muslims to worship, became part of the Islamic world by default, and should be considered under the protection and guidance of the Islamic Leader, regardless of whether or not the factual form of government changed.

The question of conduct *in* war was frequently of more importance to the early Muslim jurist than of whether or not to go to war. Early scholars were consumed with questions about the incorporation of newly encountered military strategies and weapons, whether military service in jihad was the duty of every individual in the community or only some, the right leadership and authority for the conduct of war, and the manner in which troops should behave. However, while religious scholars grappled with these questions in the formation of the different schools of Islamic theology and jurisprudence, the practical needs of the Islamic state and the political considerations of treaty, warfare, and expansion needed to be conducted and carried out by political leaders. The earliest unified Islamic communities developed rules regarding their actions practically at the moment they were needed. Michael Bonner (2008) points out in *Jihad in Islamic History* that like most Islamic law, doctrines of religious jihad developed separately in a tense co-existence with the political functions of the Islamic State and even then, not until at least the 8th century. This points to the likelihood that in at least some early Islamic states, the scholars were explicitly encouraged by the political powers to interpret religious rulings in the way most favorable to the foreign policy of the time.

Within that process of development though, we see a number of threads constraining the behavior of fighters, both in the arguments of Islamic jurists debating the *Shari'a* sources for jihad and in the works of writers like Al-Farabi and Ibn Khaldun who adapted philosophical arguments to highlight the issue of justice in warfare (Bonner 2008). Al-Farabi in particular was of the opinion that the invitation to Islam should be made through reasoned debate and missionary-type efforts; only the utter failure of these efforts should lead to violence as a possible option. One of the earliest recorded rules of warfare after the prophet Muhammad, given by the first Caliph of Islam, Abu Baker, was an address to the forces on various restrictions: to not mutilate bodies; kill no aged men, women, or children; destroy no livestock, fruitful trees, or palm trees except as needed for food; and leave unmolested those whose lives were dedicated to the monastic service of a religion (Khadduri 1979). Such restrictions from the earliest leaders after Muhammad showed an initially very clear concern for minimizing the damage and deaths in any armed conflict with Muslim troops. In fact, the ideal was to be able to achieve the military objective with as little force as possible.

Islamic jurisprudence early on shows a concern for the principle of distinction not only in questions of Muslim vs. Non-Muslim targets but also distinguishing between several categories of Non-Muslims, only some of which were considered the legitimate targets of jihad. In the *Risala* of Shafi'i (1987) an excellent example is made in which the Imam, or religious leader, attempts to reconcile two differing traditions. The Prophet was known to have prohibited the killing of women and children; however, there was also a *Hadith* transmitted which seemed to allow the killing of women and children during a surprise attack at night. Shafi'i brings together this seeming contradiction by explaining that during a surprise attack at night when there is much confusion, a Muslim warrior should not be held liable for killing women or children by accident. However, since the bulk of the

prophetic tradition was against it, the warrior should in fact be punished in any case in which it was possible to distinguish and recognize the target. Shafi'i further elaborates the religious principle in question: women are not valid targets since they do not fight. And children are not valid targets since they neither fight nor possess the mental capability to distinguish belief from unbelief. These same principles would later be extended, in the majority of scholarly rulings, to apply to the insane, the blind, and religious hermits.

The principles of proportionality and military necessity can be discovered in early Islamic legal concern as well. In fact, there were fewer than a handful of jurists in the 8<sup>th</sup> century who accepted the legality of unnecessary destruction without restriction. The practice of Abu Bakr was to order his soldiers to refrain from destroying crops and livestock except for taking what was absolutely required for their own food or the defeat of the enemy. This practice was then closely followed by most of the Caliphs and reinforced by jurists. The destruction of residential areas, if attacks were not being launched from those areas, was also forbidden (Abul Ala Mawdudi 1981). In general, the use of fire and siege engines was limited based on the strength of the enemy's fortifications and the judgment of the commander in the field. For instance, a ruling by the early jurist al-Shaybani stated that if the enemy were employing what in modern times would be referred to as a "human shield"—mingling behind or among a population of people which would normally be considered non-combatants—then attacks, even with siege weapons which wrought large-scale destruction, were permissible. This was the case even if non-combatants would be harmed, so long as reasonable care was taken to minimize the loss.

The treatment of prisoners of war is regrettably somewhat more mixed in the Islamic tradition. It is a defensible argument that in many ways the practices of the early Islamic empires in relation to POWs was a step forward in terms of comparable civilizations of the age; however, the practice of slavery alone casts a negative light on the record. Living persons were generally considered part of the spoils of war and divided into *asra*, which would be what we now call prisoners of war, and *sabi*, women or children to be taken as slaves and property (Khadduri 1979). In general, the main legal options for the Muslim commander concerning prisoners of war was to ransom them for the return of Muslim prisoners, force them into slavery (the new slaves being divided equitably among the warriors who were involved in the battles), or execute them. The majority of the predominant legal scholars of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries recommended execution only when ransoming prisoners would unreasonably restore strength to the enemy or there was some other compelling state interest in the execution. In practice, the women and children who comprised the *sabi* were immune to execution, only a small handful of documented cases exist where such killing took place. Interestingly, the treatment of prisoners of war is perhaps the one consideration in warfare that changes the most throughout the history of the Islamic empires as they transition from ruler to ruler and from dynasty to dynasty. The *Hadith* do seem to contain clear instructions that no one should be killed in captivity or bound, and that no prisoner should be put to the sword (Mawdudi 1976). And yet Muhammad himself, on at least two

occasions, ordered prisoners to be executed when they had been guilty of particularly harsh war crimes.

The final consideration of *jus in bello* in traditional Just War Theory is often referred to as *mal means*, which stipulates that soldiers may not use weapons or other methods considered evil such as sexual assault, force soldiers to fight against their own side, or use certain kinds of weapons. Of course, restrictions on chemical and biological warfare as it is known in the twentieth and twenty-first century are not addressed in early Islamic jurisprudence; however, there was considerable debate among the various schools on the issue of poison. Most scholars allowed the use of poisoned arrows or dumping into a militarized water supply with restrictions, but a very small minority either forbade it as causing excessive pain, or allowed it without restrictions. We also find general protections restricting the jihadist from free license to do as he wishes with an area under attack. There are generally accepted prohibitions on the destruction of residential areas, restrictions that prevent the Muslims from taking goods from civilian populations without paying fair value for them, and restriction on the use of fire. Mutilation of the dead or the display of corpses in order to instill fear in the enemy was also forbidden by most early scholars (Mawdudi).

One of the many arguments fielded by those who believe that Islamic history and theology are composed of unrestrained violence against the unbeliever is that the acts of modern militant self-styled “jihadis” acting globally with such groups as Al-Qaeda, Taliban, Hamas, or any number of other organizations identified as terrorists by large segments of the international community seem to support this idea. The spokesmen for such groups and lone actors following in their footsteps unquestionably speak in Islamic terms, use Islamic sources, and focus on religious goals as their motivation for undertaking acts of terror. It might be granted that at least the leadership of these sorts of groups, while usually not recognized scholars of Islamic law and jurisprudence, are not ignorant of their religion, and they clearly have a certain understanding of a religious duty to undertake often terrible violence, which can include violence against non-combatants and utilizing means such as suicide bombers.

A commonly repeated viewpoint in the public arena is that moderate and liberal Muslims advocating peace and democracy do not “understand” their own religion properly. This stance towards Islam is ironically also an argument that is very easy to imagine terrorist groups making in recruitment efforts. Indeed, Osama Bin Laden himself made statements to journalists to the effect that when the truth and gravity of the situation became apparent to Muslims all over the world, they would understand that the actions of people like embassy bombers would be seen as permissible and that acquiring any kinds of weapons with which to fight is a religious duty for Muslims (Rahimullah Yusufzai 1999).

The existence, then, of Muslims who are quite knowledgeable about the Shari’a sources and still come to conclusions such as making non-combatants permissible targets of terrorist acts, poses a problem for the observer with a thesis that early Islamic law showed a healthy concern for justice within warfare. We may point out, as does John Kelsay in his invaluable book *Arguing the Just War in Islam* (2008), that the first fully developed theories

of Islamic law were seemingly custom-tailored to disagreement and open interpretation, which would cause different schools of thought to take very different stances on the same issues. One could also consult the historical and socio-political contexts of both ancient battles of Islamic empires and modern-day terrorism. Compelling arguments have been made that religion is but one of many competing factors in the formula that leads to violent acts of terrorism.

For example, In the early 2000's the influential cleric Yusuf Al-Qaradawi made televised statements on Al-Jazeera and British televised news to the effect that women and children were legitimate targets of attacks in Palestine (though not outside those territories) due to what he calls the "militarized" nature of Israeli society, where there is mandatory military service and women may also serve in combat (Abdelhadi 2004).

In the case of Al-Qaeda, one of Osama Bin Laden's statements aired on Al-Jazeera with an interviewer argued that all Americans, even civilians, could be considered legitimate targets of violence. His argument is that, in a representative democracy where the military is funded by tax-dollars, paying taxes and continuing to live in the country is support for and agreement with the actions of the American government. Bin Laden references this most explicitly in the statement, "A man is considered a fighter whether he carries a gun or pays taxes to help kill us" (Yusufzai, 1999).

Hamas has made arguments supporting their use of children in war and of suicide attacks in various actions against Israel, modes of attack that are rare if not quite unprecedented in Islamic history. Their statements have made clear their opinion that their war with Israel is asymmetric in terms of equipment, numbers, capability, and other forms of military consideration. They believe the extreme nature of their being overmatched militarily justifies certain extreme and desperate measures. They also have made statements to the effect that they would recognize the rights of Jews to remain who resided in Palestine prior to the declaration of the state of Israel. The Israeli people are seen as invaders and, Hamas has stated, "It is our right as an occupied people to defend ourselves from the occupation by all means possible including suicide attacks;" their representative went on to say, "Jews have no right in it [ed: Palestine], with the exception of those who lived on the land of Palestine before World War I" ("Hamas in their own words").

I want to highlight in these arguments that these extremist groups all either implicitly or explicitly recognize that the normal restrictions on conduct have been suspended or superseded but not removed. These arguments serve to demonstrate that at least on the communal level these groups still recognize the traditional limits placed by the early Islamic sources on conduct of warfare. However, while recognizing those limits they argue that their specific situations are exceptions justified within a tradition that has long made allowances in its jurisprudence for practical necessity excusing otherwise forbidden acts. These are by no means an exhaustive sample of the arguments and reasoning made by extremist groups; however, each one exhibits attention to a certain traditional rule constraining Islamic warfare.

In the case of the statements from Al-Qaradawi and Osama Bin Laden, there is a clear attempt to work around the rules marking non-combatants as off-limits for intentional attack. Both statements make an argument not that attacking innocent civilians is permissible in Islam, but that the victims in question did not in fact qualify for that status. Bin Laden utilizes a common historical interpretation among the scholars that merchants and others who directly and materially support the military with arms or supplies are legitimate targets. Al-Qaradawi makes the argument that the *future* status of the victims as combatant is a virtual surety, and so it is not civilians who are killed but military recruits intended for the battlefield. In both cases, there is an attempt to overlay traditional exceptions onto modern situations. Through a tactic common in Islamic jurisprudence, an analogy is made that the modern situation is enough like these historical traditions to be a valid guide.

The cited statements by Hamas justifying its military efforts combine a direct appeal to Qu'ranic justification with an argument about military necessity. The Qu'ran states that those who drive others from their homes unjustly will suffer the worst punishments in the afterlife (2:85), and fighting in order to expel people from land from which Muslims have been driven (2:191) is one of the few justifications for war explicitly stated in the Qu'ran. The lopsided military capabilities of Hamas when compared to the modern and well-trained Israeli military pose a problem for traditional military tactics. Military necessity has long been considered a valid reason for exceeding the traditional limits in extreme cases. For example, many of the rulings about siege weaponry (which was difficult to aim accurately and incredibly indiscriminate in the damage inflicted) and attacking fortifications in the midst of a civilian population are based on the criteria of military necessity as determined by the commander in the field.

Hamas and the scholars who support their operations in Palestine and Israel prefer the term "martyrdom operation" to "suicide bombing" for a very specific reason. Suicide has always been absolutely forbidden in Islam by the majority of mainstream scholars since the very beginnings of the tradition. However, there are numerous stories of martyrs who went into battle against overwhelming odds that might be rightfully called "suicidal" and died fighting for their cause. In fact, in the rich history of Islamic poetry and scholarship this sort of martyr figure is often revered. Hamas draws a direct connection between the suicide bombers of today and these narrative figures attempting to claim that they are identical. They claim that in both cases a fighter is making a valiant strike against the enemy even though they are doomed to failure because it will have some military value.<sup>6</sup>

Whether their actions could be attributed to the governmental or military structure of a certain nation, the overwhelming inferiority of the terrorists' military capabilities, or the feeling that armed violence is an act of self-defense against those who have stolen homes,

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6 Of course, the strengths of this claim are debatable. Bernard Freamon (2003) in the *Fordham International Law Journal* makes a compelling case that this understanding of modern day suicide bomb operations is weakly supported, if at all, by the traditional sources. Rather, that the modern conception put forward by Hamas and their apologists is based on a Shi'a re-imagining of the martyrdom concept during the 1960's and 1970's, a full discussion of which leaves the current scope of this paper. The reference is made primarily to demonstrate that it is a matter, which is problematic, at best, among scholars of Islamic history.



the actions of these groups have been defended using the argument that extraordinary circumstances call for extraordinary measures. The justifications used by these organizations appeal to principles of independent reasoning, military realism, and textual interpretation that are foundational to Islamic jurisprudence. By arguing in such a fashion and from such sources, terrorists cede the concept that there are identifiable and reasonable limits to what one is allowed to do in the pursuit of Islamic warfare. It is a tendency, at least in the opinion of the majority of modern scholars within the Islamic tradition, that many of these arguments are weak reasoning and spring from minority or otherwise questionable traditions. At the least, it is clear that valid and historically supported alternative arguments exist which would much more tightly constrain the behavior of the Muslim who would consider himself a *mujahid*, one who wages jihad for God's path.

The sources and tradition of a rich Just War Theory are present in Islamic jurisprudence from the earliest days of the religious community, though their history is strewn with vigorous debate. The violence committed by certain fundamentalist, transnational, Islamic organizations does not refute the presence of an ethical standard of just war in Islamic theology. Rather, the nature of the justifications they present reaffirms it. The justifications used in the commission of these acts are based on a long tradition of Shari'a reasoning and use arguments drawn from the historical example of the Prophet Muhammad and other revered figures of Islamic antiquity, which are part of an Islamic dialog which is both uniquely modern and also connected to the roots of Islamic history. If we are to combat these dangerous ideologies within the modern Muslim discourse, we must be prepared to do so using the same methods and sources, engaging "on the enemy's ground," so to speak, and further educate people about the wide and diverse range of Islamic belief and behavior that is available.

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## **She Is She: Existentialist Themes in the Works of Women Writers of the Southern Renaissance**

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### **Abstract**

*Female writers of the southern renaissance had to deal with a number of oppressive forces, encapsulated in the idea of "Sacred Womanhood." The way many of these women writers depicted this struggle parallels the struggle for authentic self-hood as proposed by existentialism, and by using the philosophy to inform the events of various novels from writers, such as Zora Neal Hurston, Carson McCullers, Kate Chopin, and Ellen Glasgow, the actions and words of the characters can be more fully understood.*

The concept of objectification has been researched in academia from many different viewpoints, most notably feminist theory. Searching for a way to understand better how gender issues have affected society and continue to persist today, feminists focus on objectification as one of the means of control enacted by men. Feminists, however, are not the only scholars to examine the process of objectification in-depth. Existentialist philosophers such as Albert Camus, Søren Kierkegaard, Jean-Paul Sartre, Martin Heidegger, and Simone de Beauvoir have also studied how objectification affects the human mind and leads to a life of passivity, and attempt to illustrate how people deal with this problem and ultimately come to an awakening in the form of an authentic existence. This existential awakening parallels the rebirth women experience as they begin to fight back against notions of patriarchy and search for a new identity within a male-dominated culture. Considering that the Southern Renaissance<sup>1</sup> was a time when women were finding themselves more capable of speaking out against an unjust system and rejecting ideas of Southern tradition, it is not surprising that many women writers of the time period incorporate the theme of autonomous existence into their works. By reading the works of Southern women writers such as Kate Chopin, Ellen Glasgow, Lillian Smith, Zora Neale Hurston, and Carson McCullers alongside the works of existentialist philosophers, a new perspective is possible—one in which the explanations provided by the philosophers for a person's behavior inform the actions of the characters in the literary works and provide a fuller understanding of the characters' motives.

Before exploring the interrelationship between the problems facing Southern women and existentialist philosophy, it is important to outline the defining traits of "Sacred Womanhood" that many women writers of the Southern Renaissance were trying to expose or (in some cases) break down. In *Dixie's Diadem*, Anne Goodwyn Jones presents some of the adjectives meant to describe the Southern woman: "Leisure, passivity, dependence, sexual purity, submission, ignorance" (28). While intended to describe the perfect Southern woman, these terms also happen to describe what existentialists call an inauthentic existence. A life of "leisure" would generally conflict with the "essential *projects*" a person should work toward to find personal fulfillment (Barrett 225, italics in original). "Passivity" is a problem for all existentialists because an authentic existence requires a person to take an active role in deciding who he or she intends to be, to value, and to do. "Dependence" leads to passivity and contradicts the life of self-reliance promoted by the philosophy. "Sexual purity," that is, virginity for unmarried women and fidelity for married or widowed women, demands a person reject pursuing someone for whom they likely feel a true passion. In addition, the tenets of sexual purity are based in religious morality, which many existentialists rejected outright. All of the philosophers agree that "submission," particularly submission to the will or order of society, is the greatest injustice one can do to the self. Finally, "ignorance,"

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1 This literary movement beginning in the South concerned itself mostly with the conflict between the "old" pre-Civil War South and the post-Restoration South. Although scholars such as Carol Manning contest the years encompassed by the literary movement, arguing that the current dates do not acknowledge the contribution of many women writers working less than a generation before, the movement is generally considered to have occurred in the 1920s and 30s.

especially when one wishes to be educated, is an act of passivity and an abandoning of one's volitions. Considering that the ideal state of Sacred Womanhood parallels so closely the inauthentic existence described by existentialists, it follows that women characters attempting to escape the bonds of Sacred Womanhood share many experiences with those struggling toward the authentic existence described by existentialist philosophers.<sup>2</sup>

While critics in Southern American studies have written about existential themes, they have almost solely focused on the works of Southern male writers such as Faulkner to the exclusion of canonical women writers. While a large body of research does not yet exist on the subject, scholars looking at women writers of the same time period have still made connections with existentialism. Jones argues that Kate Chopin, like many other women writers of the time period, "seeks to find and articulate her individual voice in the face of terrible pressure toward uniformity, by seeking and speaking with the authority of her experience" (40). This struggle to find "individual voice" has its counterpart in existential philosophy; for both feminist and existential thought, the enemy is the same: "uniformity." Even the means for overcoming this problem is the same from both perspectives in that both require the "authority" of one's own experiences. Although she does not explicitly make the connection, Jones even enters the debate concerning to what degree women can be held accountable for not pursuing an authentic existence while being oppressed, stating, "as long as those feelings [desiring selfhood] and perceptions remained limited to the woman's private world, they could have little significant effect on the man's public world" (37). Jones acknowledges how little power women had in affecting "man's public world," but she still implies that writing fiction was a way to begin enacting change, therefore not completely excusing passivity as inevitable. In broader terms, Jones argues that forms of patriarchy "[a]ll deny to women authentic selfhood," which makes a woman's struggle two-fold—a struggle for existential selfhood and a *woman's* selfhood of the kind described by de Beauvoir. Both require the woman to stand against patriarchy, against societal norms, and against all that would force her to conform to something other than what she desires to be.

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2 Studying women's writing through an existentialist lens, however, a philosophy (like most) dominated by male writers, is itself problematic. Critics such as Michele Doeuff, argue that existentialism does not accurately reflect a feminine struggle because Sartre constructs certain metaphors that are meant to illustrate his concept of "nothingness," which Doeuff feels are sexist in that they present a world in which one must "penetrate" and "fill holes." She also points out that while Sartre argues that an inauthentic existence is the product of one's choosing not to pursue his or her own life, he does not allow for people who *cannot* choose because of social circumstances and therefore undermines what women have gone through historically. Doeuff even dismisses the work of Simone de Beauvoir, who identified herself as both an existentialist and feminist, because Doeuff maintains that de Beauvoir's work, *The Second Sex*, is an attempt to further Sartrian ideas in a different framework. However, Doeuff's depiction of de Beauvoir as presenting a feminine-masked version of Sartre's philosophy is by no means the common consensus. Karen Vintges opposes Doeuff's argument: "Feminists who thought *The Second Sex* merely implies the necessity for women to become identical to men severely criticized it. Closer scrutiny of the text discloses that its aim is exactly the opposite, namely to make women free to create new situations, new cultural meanings, and new ways of experiencing life as a woman" (141). Vintges interprets de Beauvoir's work as containing a different perspective than Sartre's, one that allows for a woman's unique experiences while still endorsing many of the same tenets common in existentialist philosophy.

It is precisely this multi-faceted battle that women writers of the Southern Renaissance try to articulate in their fiction.

In order fully to understand the mindset created by the tenets of Sacred Womanhood, one must turn to Lillian Smith's *Killers of the Dream*. The novel, part philosophical musing, part allegory about Southern tradition, attempts to expose the social and political structure of the American South and how it affects the women raised in such a system. Smith defines Sacred Womanhood, which is designed not only to control how women act but also specifically how they think of themselves and their role in Southern tradition. A powerful set of mannerisms and rules for living in the South, Sacred Womanhood requires women to conform or be ostracized for their defiance, and many women ultimately internalize its conventions. Smith states, "The majority of Southern women convinced themselves that God had ordained that they be deprived of pleasure, and meekly stuffed their hollowness with piety, trying to believe the tightness they felt was hunger satisfied" (141). The inability to pursue pleasure or desires because of social restrictions has its counterpart in existentialism; Sacred Womanhood would be a form of the "they," or the social mass that promotes definitions of one's existence. Like the life of adherence to Sacred Womanhood, the inauthentic life of existentialism occurs when one "subscribes to the mores of his [or her] society without even questioning the ultimate 'why' of such conformity" (Tulloch 41, original emphasis). The unquestioning mind is a problem for existentialists, but it is an even greater barrier for women of the South searching for selfhood because as Smith and others note, Sacred Womanhood requires ignorance from women (142). Therefore, questioning the circumstances of her life was taboo for a woman in this timeframe and even more difficult to overcome than it would be for a man.

One of the early women writers presenting characters trying to escape from underneath the veil of Sacred Womanhood is Kate Chopin. Although she was writing before the Southern Renaissance's traditional beginnings, critics such as Carol Manning argue that Chopin's themes and the male-bias of those dating literary movements justify her inclusion (xvii). *The Awakening* is the story of Edna Pontellier's search for authentic selfhood. By looking at the novel with existentialism in mind, some of the more ambiguous actions become clearer. Edna begins the novel in the throes of what existentialists call an inauthentic existence, in which she is beginning to understand herself: "An indescribable oppression, which seemed to generate in some unfamiliar part of her consciousness, filled her whole being with a vague anguish" (6). The "oppression" she feels is the need to conform to what Mr. Pontellier later refers to as "*les convenances*;" because those conventions do not reflect who she desires to be, they seem "unfamiliar" to her (51). Edna identifies that she "was not a mother-woman" or one of the women "who idolized their children, worshiped their husbands, and esteemed it a holy privilege to efface themselves as individuals" (8). By identifying herself as such, Edna reveals that she wishes to escape her inauthentic life dominated by social norms for what a woman should be and pursue a more fulfilling existence, one in which she would not have to "efface" her individuality and can become the "the situated, sensitive self" de Beauvoir desires for women (Vintges 136). Other characters

in the novel embody certain ideals that help Edna come to terms with the warring factions in her life. In particular, Robert takes on the role opposite Edna's husband as someone willing to acknowledge her freedom and newfound selfhood, which is why she develops a passion for him.

Existentially speaking, one of the most important events in Edna and Robert's relationship happens when the two are sitting alone together. Robert "seated himself again and rolled a cigarette, which he smoked in silence. Neither did Mrs. Pontellier speak. No multitude of words could have been more significant than those moments of silence, or more pregnant with the first-felt throbbings of desire" (30). The scene is seemingly unremarkable, but it takes on greater meaning when viewed through the lens of existentialism. In Heidegger's terms, to keep silent Robert and Edna "must have something to say;" they must each be prepared to offer "an authentic and rich disclosedness of" themselves. (208). Through their silent moment together, Edna and Robert express more than they could have through conversation, a fact the narrator acknowledges. With this in mind, Edna's passion for Robert later in the book makes sense since he is the first person honestly to communicate with her, the first actually to experience the "authentic" and "rich disclosedness" of her selfhood instead of stifling it with meaningless small talk. In contrast to her scene with Robert, Edna also experiences a quiet evening with her husband, though the circumstances here are very different. Mr. Pontellier does not communicate authentically with his wife because he has nothing to offer her—he simply wishes to establish his dominance over her. After ordering her to come inside (an order she refuses to follow), Mr. Pontellier proceeds to remain outside in order to show that he has not submitted to her demand that he "go to bed," that somehow he wished to stay outside the whole time. He does not remain outside with his wife because he enjoys her company and desires to spend time with her as Robert does. Instead, he makes a statement about who is in charge. This power play is solidified by the fact that once Edna decides to go back inside, Mr. Pontellier remains outside, as if to prove he can outlast her in a battle of wills (32). Because Robert, unlike Mr. Pontellier, is willing to acknowledge Edna's selfhood, Robert comes to represent the different life Edna desires.

Midway through the novel, while Edna is "casting aside that fictitious self which we assume like a garment with which to appear before the world" (57), she seeks out solitude, which may not seem that important until viewed through existentialism. Edna "found it good to dream and to be alone and unmolested" (58). Edna searches for solitude to escape objectification because as Sartre states, "[b]y the mere appearance of the Other, I am put in the position of passing judgment on myself as on an object, for it is as an object that I appear to the Other" (*Being and Nothingness* 198). The existentialists argue that humans view each other as objects because they can never truly understand one another. According to Sartre, people are unlike objects in that they can change and have the capacity to become something new at any moment. Since the "Other" is unable to comprehend this change and possibilities for the future, it is easier to view a person as fixed in time and form, just like common household objects. Women during the Southern Renaissance had an even

greater struggle with this issue because although men could not know the changes the “Other” might go through, they were still acknowledged as having a potential for change. For the most part, women were given no such allowance, and men (and other women) had a tendency to view women as a passive entity ready to be used, the same way a hammer rests on the table until someone needs to drive a nail. Consequently, when Edna moves out of her husband’s house and into her own, she attempts to escape all the people “passing judgment” on her, forming her into an object, and ultimately making her consider herself an object as well. In her solitude void of distracting “Others,” she is able to focus on her autonomous self, which she manifests through her art. After coming to terms with authentic selfhood, she can then return to society and not completely lose sight of herself in the crowd, in the “they.” While Edna makes some great steps in the right direction, her fall is eventually brought about by Madam Ratignolle—Chopin’s embodiment of Sacred Womanhood.

Edna’s implied suicide at the end of the novel is the product of her realization that she cannot escape her circumstances and remain in this new authentic life she created for herself. The triggering event for the suicide is Ratignolle’s plea after giving birth: “Think of the children, Edna. Oh[,] think of the children! Remember them!” (111). Ratignolle’s words help Edna understand that her actions—particularly those she plans to pursue in her new life—have an effect on others, namely her children. In the next scene, Edna tells Doctor Mandelet, “[b]ut I don’t want anything but my own way. That is wanting a good deal, of course, when you have to trample upon the lives, the hearts, the prejudices of others—but no matter—still, I should want to trample upon the little lives” (112). While Edna has no qualms causing problems for her husband, she does not feel comfortable letting her children see the negative effects that will likely come of her authentic life of freedom, in which she plans to begin an affair with Robert. This desire not to “trample” the lives of her children is especially relevant in contrast with Edna’s statements about motherhood earlier in the novel: “I would give up the unessential; I would give my money, I would give my life for my children; but I wouldn’t give myself” (47). In this exchange, Edna claims she is willing to give her “life,” the physical act of being alive, for her children but not her “self,” which translates to that autonomy she desires. This decree poses a serious dilemma for Edna at the end of the novel: She does not want to give up her authentic life but at the same time cannot negotiate keeping it without having a negative backlash that will affect her children. The only other option for Edna is to give up the “unessential”—her physical life—in order to maintain autonomy and not trample her children’s lives. Her final choice to take her own life accomplishes her goal of not giving up her autonomy, but suicide is also, as Camus states, a “confessing that life is too much for you or that you do not understand it” (497). Through her suicide, Edna concedes that she can find no answer to her dilemma—that she cannot “understand it.” Her inability to reconcile the pressure of Sacred Womanhood with a search for freedom illustrates the magnitude of what women living in the South had to contend with during this period.

Like Kate Chopin, Ellen Glasgow’s *The Sheltered Life* reveals a young woman’s struggle for authentic selfhood. Although Glasgow’s Jenny Blair has a much different experience



than Edna, Jenny Blair's actions are still marked by existentialist themes. From the beginning of the novel, the central concern is identified as Jenny Blair's "discovering her hidden self," which she articulates, "I am this and not that" (3). Even as a child, Jenny Blair starts to comprehend the difference between herself and the "Other," that she is a separate, sole entity. While Jenny Blair is starting her development earlier in the novel, the forces she will have to struggle with are present here as well. Discussing *Little Women*, a book Jenny Blair is reading, her mother tells her, "I remember I tried to form my character on Meg—or it may have been Jo" (7). Mrs. Archbald's declaration that she tried to live her life as a character in a book and the not so subtle implication that Jenny Blair should consider doing the same is both a statement about the social norms expected of women and a form of Kierkegaard's despair: "the lowest of all: in despair to will to be someone else, to wish for a new self" (52-53). To desire to live one's life as someone else, whether they be fictional or real, is a form of inauthentic existence because one can never truly accomplish this, and in pursuing this goal, one ignores his or her own unique experience. However, despite her mother's encouragement, Jenny Blair does not want to live as Meg, Jo, or anyone else and fall into a life of despair. As a result, from a young age Jenny Blair feels the need to reaffirm her identity, which she does by repeating a mantra throughout the novel: "I'm alive, alive, alive, and I'm Jenny Blair Archbald" (3). This technique works for Jenny Blair while she is still a child, but as she starts to get older and begins to understand more about the lives of the people around her, she realizes that maintaining her selfhood requires more than a few words spoken in times of self-doubt.

Later in life, Jenny Blair begins to understand that the people closest to her, such as her mother and Mrs. Birdsong, have all been severely affected by Southern tradition and the kind of falsified selves it produces. During a seemingly unimportant moment—dressing for a party—Mrs. Archbald says something that causes Jenny Blair to see beyond her façade that she has put up to appease Sacred Womanhood. Jenny Blair reacts by saying, "Oh, Mamma! Oh, Mamma, I've never seen you before!" (69). Mrs. Archbald dismisses the scene as the eccentric nature of a young girl, but the moment is important for Jenny Blair because she feels as though, in a moment, her mother becomes a completely new person. The occurrence that triggers this reaction is Mrs. Archbald's confiding that she does not wish to go to a party, which goes against Sacred Womanhood because women were expected to socialize in this era. Jenny Blair also comes across a more powerful image of the effects of Southern tradition in the form of Mrs. Birdsong, who toward the latter half of the novel is dying of "the long pretense of her life" (153). In the hospital, Mrs. Birdsong tells Jenny Blair that "you do take trouble if you have a reputation to keep up, and no fame on earth is so exacting as a reputation for beauty. [. . .] I sometimes think there is nothing so terrible for a woman [. . .] as to be loved for her beauty" (209). Mrs. Birdsong's admission is an expression of Sartre's claim that sexual attraction is one of the ways humans go about constructing someone as "Other": "I desire a human being, not an insect or a mollusk, and I desire him (or her) as he is and as I am in situation in the world and as he is an Other for me and as I am an Other for him" (*Being and Nothingness* 360). Therefore Mrs. Birdsong is

pointing out that valuing a woman for her beauty, as dictated by Sacred Womanhood, only sets her up to be further distanced from herself by the society that upholds those values. After internalizing these values of beauty and submissiveness, these women find authentic selfhood not only difficult but also seemingly impossible. Even seeing the stultifying effects of social norms playing out on those closest to her does not ultimately save Jenny Blair because according to existentialists, she must save herself.

Despite her experiences, Jenny Blair still comes to idolize Mr. Birdsong so much that he becomes an obsession, a great truth. While Camus states that “a single truth, if it is obvious, is enough to guide an existence” (561), Jenny Blair’s truth does not guide her existence. Instead, she lets her obsession with Mr. Birdsong shut out other parts of her life about which she previously felt strongly. About midway in the novel, Jenny Blair says, “I don’t care about men. All I want to do is to live my own life” (133), which reveals that she is more focused on her selfhood than falling into a patriarchal structure that dictates she find a man and marry. Her decision to leave home and move to New York, however, changes as her obsession with Mr. Birdsong grows stronger, so she essentially abandons the autonomy she felt she needed. Even Jenny Blair’s desire to leave Queenborough would not have necessarily provided what she needed, as John explains:

“The trouble is we imagine we can change ourselves by changing our scenery. [. . .] It is the same everywhere. People who have tradition are oppressed by tradition, and people who are without it are oppressed by the lack of it—or by whatever else they have put in its place. You want to go to New York and pretend to be unconventional, but nothing is more cramping than the effort to be unconventional when you weren’t born so. It is as hard on the nerves as pretending, like Cousin Eva, to be an ideal.” (217)

John tells Jenny Blair that simply leaving will not be enough and that even without Southern tradition bearing down on her, she still might find something else to oppress her. He also warns that even in New York, she might find herself pretending to be someone else, the same way Mrs. Birdsong pretends. John outlines the dual struggle that women face from an existentialist perspective: They must first escape Sacred Womanhood, but even after accomplishing that, they must not submit themselves to all the other oppressive forces in the world. He also comprehends and tells Jenny Blair that if she does escape the social norms of the South, it should not be by taking on some other false self since that type of pretending is just as destructive for an individual. At the end of the novel, therefore, when Jenny Blair witnesses the consequences of her obsession with Mr. Birdsong and by extension the consequences of Sacred Womanhood on Mrs. Birdsong, Jenny Blair, faced with the sight of Mrs. Birdsong holding a gun over her husband’s corpse, begins crying, “I didn’t mean anything, [. . .] I didn’t mean anything in the world!” (292). This final dismissal of responsibility for her actions does not suggest a positive future for Jenny Blair since dismissing her actions allows her to once again become the passive object Sacred

Womanhood demands. Ultimately whether she continues to pursue authentic selfhood or lets the trauma of the scene paralyze her into a life of submissiveness is left unclear.

While Jenny Blair's story is cut too short to see how her selfhood ultimately develops or fails to develop, Zora Neale Hurston's Janie in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* finds autonomy. Early in the novel, Janie is married off by her grandmother in order to "protect" her, though what she actually accomplishes is securing Janie under the veil of Sacred Womanhood. Janie eventually runs away from her first husband Logan with Jody Starks, a moment when she begins to truly understand how she will have to contend with social norms. Jody wishes to have "a big voice" in his community (28)—a problem for existentialists. According to Kierkegaard, the desire to become an important figure in the community has a tendency to lead to an inauthentic existence:

Surrounded by hordes of men, absorbed in all sorts of secular matters, more and more shrewd about the ways of the world—such a person forgets himself, forgets his name divinely understood, does not dare to believe in himself, finds it too hazardous to be himself and far easier and safer to be like the others, to become a copy, a number, a mass man. [. . .] Just by losing himself this way, such a man has gained an increasing capacity for going along superbly in business and social life, indeed, for making a great success in the world. (33-34)

Jody Starks is a "mass man," one who wishes to become integrated in society; his success in "business and social life" are strong indicators of this. In order for Jody to secure his place among the masses, he must have a wife who fulfills the role as well, the role of Sacred Womanhood. As de Beauvoir states, "man defines woman, not in herself, but in relation to himself; she is not considered an autonomous being" (5). Since Jody can only understand Janie as an extension of himself, as wanting the same life of social conformity that he wants, it is not long before Jody starts making demands of Janie as well, telling "her to dress up and stand in the store all that evening. Everybody was coming sort of fixed up, and he didn't mean for nobody else's wife to rank with her. She must look on herself as the bell-cow, the other women were the gang" (41). Jody objectifies her, turning her into the "bell-cow," a commodity that could be traded off just as any other property if need be. Jody starts removing Janie's selfhood and autonomy, but unlike Jenny Blair, Janie has a strong spirit and is willing to fight back against her oppression.

Janie's fight against the "they," embodied for her by her husband, begins in small ways. She contradicts her husband, "[s]ometimes God gits familiar wid us womenfolks too and talks His inside business" (75). Eventually the battle grows in scale, and Janie ends up emasculating Jody in front of the town, which for a mass man, is the greatest transgression she could perform. He shuns her from that point on, even through his terminal sickness. After Jody's death, a change takes place in Janie. One of the first things she does is "let down her plentiful hair," which as a part of a woman's body, had to be carefully restrained and monitored by Jody. It is not surprising that Jody's death has such an impact on Janie;

aside from freeing her from his control, his death also has existential significance. Death brings one closer to an authentic existence because

[o]nly by taking my death into myself [. . .] does an authentic existence become possible for me. [. . .] It frees us from servitude to the petty cares that threaten to engulf our daily life and thereby opens us to the essential *projects* by which we can make our lives personally and significantly our own. (Barrett 225-226)

After Jody's death, Janie feels "free" to pursue the project that is her life. One of her first decisions is to distance herself from the town and seek solitude, similar to what Edna did in *The Awakening*. While Janie is negotiating her new freedom and possibilities for selfhood, she meets Tea Cake, who offers her a perspective that reinforces what she is just beginning to understand, similar to what Robert was for Edna.

As Janie eventually comes to understand, Tea Cake is the antithesis of Jody. Where Jody wished to give Janie a set of instructions to follow, Tea Cake is interested in freedom. Janie was unable to learn checkers under Jody, but Tea Cake tells her, "You gointuh be uh good player too, after while" (96). He also contradicts the tenet that women should be weak, insisting that Janie could walk the seven miles he walks: "But Ah'm seen women walk further'n dat. You could too, if yuh had it tuh do" (97). Unlike Jody who attempted to make Janie passive, Tea Cake pushes her to be active and break free of the stereotypes of Sacred Womanhood. Janie could have come to these realizations on her own, but through exposure to her husbands and grandmother, she has come to internalize what women "are." Tea Cake not only offers the idea that it is possible for a woman to do all these things, he encourages Janie to do them, which if nothing else helps Janie resist some of the hegemony inflicted upon her. As their relationship develops, Janie begins to comprehend the difference between Jody and Tea Cake: "Tea Cake ain't no Jody Starks, and if he tried tuh be, it would be uh complete flommuck. [. . .] Dis ain't no business proposition, and no race after property and titles" (114). Janie differentiates between Jody's social life, in the form of "business propositions," and what she sees in Tea Cake, whose attraction is that he does not force anything on her but instead lets her decide her fate. At the same time, however, not all is perfect between the two. Tea Cake becomes jealous of another man and the possibility, though unfounded, that Janie may run away with him. In response he "whipped Janie. Not because her behavior justified his jealousy, but it relieved that awful fear inside him. Being able to whip her reassured him in possession" (147). Tea Cake is experiencing a frustration that is common to existentialists; Sartre points out that one cannot force the "Other" to be or act a certain way, though the desire to do so still exists (*Being and Nothingness* 385). At times, this frustration comes out in the form of violence, which is what happens to Tea Cake. He wants to force Janie not to leave him for another man, but since it is impossible, he lashes out in violence. If he could succeed in removing Janie's freedom, she would become an object, which is why Tea Cake feels reassured in his possession. Despite the problems that come up along the way, Janie's relationship with Tea

Cake is one that helps her achieve a more authentic life. Although the novel ends tragically (and absurdly<sup>3</sup>), Janie is ultimately a richer person for the experiences.

Perhaps more so than Hurston, Glasgow, or Chopin, Carson McCullers, with her connection to the French existentialists, presents women coming to terms with the oppression of their sex. In *The Member of the Wedding*, McCullers creates Frankie, a young girl who “belonged to no club and was a member of nothing in the world” (3). This statement seems positive in that it acknowledges that Frankie has not joined in the social world; the problem is Frankie *wants* to be a part of the world—wants it to the point of obsession. She adheres to Kierkegaard’s definition of despair, or “to will to be someone else” (52-53), which Frankie actually articulates herself: “I wish I was somebody else except me” (7). Frankie has internalized social norms so fully that she believes if she does not find a place in society and fit into a role dictated for her, she will become like the freaks at the circus, who in her mind, whisper, “we know you” (17). She associates herself with outcasts, but she seems unable to view being an outcast in any sort of positive way. The concept that she would have freedom without society’s forcing tradition on her never occurs to her. Since she does not value authentic selfhood, obtaining it is nearly impossible for her. The fact that Frankie does not value autonomy like other characters in the works of women writers could be because she is young, though Jenny Blair takes the opposite view to Frankie’s. Although both Jenny Blair and Frankie come to understand their separateness from the rest of the world at a young age, Jenny Blair attempts to reaffirm her unique identity while Frankie attempts to find a way to work herself into a social group. Like Jenny Blair, Frankie also realizes that “[t]hey were them [. . .], and she was her” (24), but Frankie, in discussion about her brother and his fiancée, attempts to twist this idea into something new: “*They are the we of me*” (35). Similar to the existentialists, Frankie has turned social groups into a construction. Instead of the “they” of existentialism, Frankie uses the inclusive “we,” because she does not *wish* to be a separate and unique identity. She does not want to be “suddenly alone and without help” in the world—a problem that follows her throughout the novel (*Existentialism and Human Emotions* 57).

Frankie’s desire to be one of Kierkegaard’s “mass men” manifests in many ways, particularly the fact that she “forgets [her] name divinely understood” (33). Throughout the novel, Frankie goes by three names: Frankie, F. Jasmine, and Frances. Frankie does not comprehend the significance of names or the identity they point to even after Bernice explains it to her: “Because things accumulate around your name [. . .] so that soon the name begins to have a meaning” (93). Frankie dismisses Bernice’s explanation because she does not value the freedom and self represented by her name and instead wishes something would “happen” to her. This happening that Frankie wants is some public event that will be

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3 This word is not being used according to its normal definition. In existential thought, absurdity is an acknowledgement of the meaninglessness of the world, so if a person continues living despite this meaninglessness, he/she is said to be living in absurdity. At the end of the novel, after having lost the love of her life to the circumstances of an uncaring world (an accidental attack by a rabid dog in a freak storm), Janie continues living despite her suffering.

acknowledged by the town. Since it has not happened, she instead decides to create new names which make her feel a part of her “we,” making her get lost in the social world.

Although Frankie seems to be wholly concerned with her “we,” she does manage to articulate, with the help of Bernice, some of the problems she is facing. Before she leaves for the wedding, Bernice tells Frankie about the existential state into which all people enter:

We all of us somehow caught. We born this way or that way and we don't know why. But we caught anyhow. I born Bernice. You born Frankie. John Henry born John Henry. And maybe we wants to widen and bust free. But no matter what we do we still caught. Me is me and you is you and he is he. We each one of us somehow caught all by ourself.” (98)

Bernice's description of everyone being “caught” is a reflection of the oppression imposed by social norms. She even acknowledges that people wish to “widen and bust free” from these constraints, although freedom is difficult to achieve. Finally, she also articulates the existential concept that everyone is a separate being. Although we may interact and have a relationship, we cannot truly share the experiences that make up our consciousness. Frankie seems to understand what Bernice tells her and even adds to the existentialist ideas, using the word *loose* instead of *caught* singularly: “You don't know where they all came from, or where they're going to. [. . .] People loose and at the same time caught. Caught and loose.” (99). Frankie's claim that people are both caught and loose is particularly relevant in existential terms because while people suffer oppression under social norms, they also have absolute freedom. As Sartre states, “there is no determinism – man is free, man is freedom” (*Existentialism is a Humanism* 29). Frankie seems to understand this because she realizes that she cannot understand “where they're going to.” It is this very realization on the part of Bernice and Frankie that likely results in the silent crying session between them and John Henry, all of whom realize what Camus regularly referred to as the “absurdity” of the world.

However, while Frankie experiences this moment of clarity, she does not learn anything significant from it. She continues her obsession with becoming part of the wedding party and running off with her brother and his new wife, which does not pan out. She remains “in a jail you could not see” even after returning home and attempting to run away again (128). The fact that Frankie has not made any progress toward escaping the oppressive forces around her is revealed toward the end of the novel through Frankie's assertion that her previous life seemed like it belonged to “a stranger” (127). This observation echoes Camus's statement that “[f]or ever I shall be a stranger to myself” (508). Although tragic, Frankie's greatest opportunity to pull away from the “they” and focus on herself comes in the form of John Henry's death. It is possible that by experiencing the death of another, Frankie may begin to pursue an authentic life for herself, similar to what Janie experienced in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Unfortunately, McCullers ends the novel before this possibility for Frankie can be explored, leaving her still an inauthentic person.

The burden of Sacred Womanhood is a force that is difficult for the Southern woman to combat, since she must fight against its internalization in order to find autonomy. This battle against Sacred Womanhood mirrors the existentialist battle against the confining

and stultifying effects of the “they;” therefore, many actions taken by women—such as a search for solitude, a reaffirmation of separateness, and growth through experiences of death—all have existential ramifications that illuminate somewhat ambiguous or seemingly inconsequential events. Women writers of the Southern Renaissance regularly deal with these themes, although each of their characters reacts differently. Chopin’s Edna feels that although she makes progress toward autonomy, she cannot escape Sacred Womanhood completely and therefore kills herself as her only viable option. Like Edna, Glasgow’s Jenny Blair makes progress through observing the people around her and how Southern tradition affects them, but that same observation results in a traumatic experience that leaves Jenny Blair’s future search for selfhood uncertain. More so than Glasgow or Chopin, Hurston presents a woman who eventually lives an authentic life in the form of Janie; despite the tragic ending, Janie’s life seems to be impacted for the better. Finally, McCullers gives the reader Frankie, who even at a young age is so obsessed with becoming part of the “they” that she is unable to even acknowledge the value of her own individuality. By illustrating the wide range of possible effects that Southern tradition could have on a woman during the time period, these women writers honestly present the complexity of social constructions and reveal the difficulties of coming to terms with a seemingly simple concept: she is “she.” By resisting the rigid assignment to constructed identities of “they” and “us,” Southern women subjected to the demands of Sacred Womanhood can be empowered to embody their fullest sense of self as individuals equal to the challenges society levels against them.

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# Communication Experiences of International Students in the U.S.: A Comparison Study of Cross-Cultural Adaptation between European and Asian Students

*Rita Jones and Yang Soo Kim*

## **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study is to examine the communication experiences of international students on American campuses. Y. Y. Kim's (1988, 2001) Cross-Cultural Adaptation Theory provides the basis for offering an explanation of the linkage between the communication competence and psychological health of international students vis-à-vis the American sociocultural milieu. In addition, the study analyzed the level of ethnic proximity and its effect on the individual adaptation experiences of European and Asian international students on American university campuses. The analysis uses portions of verbal transcripts obtained through 24 in-depth personal interviews between October and December 2012. Participants of the interview were international students from European and Asian backgrounds who were attending universities in the central Tennessee area.*

*The results show that host language competence and cultural similarities/differences reflected in verbal and nonverbal behaviors are important sources of psychological challenges/success for international students. European and Asian student groups are involved in different levels of communication activities with host nationals, based on their ethnic proximity and their degree of difficulty in adapting to the host culture. Nonetheless, as Kim's theory predicts, the overall outcome of the study affirms that communication is the central force in the adaptation of international students, as it promotes psychological health in an unfamiliar host cultural environment.*

## **Problem**

Research in the adaptation of international students has gained wide attention among faculty members, administrators, and professionals. This could be attributed to the growing number of international students enrolled in U.S. colleges. There were more than 720,000 international students in the U.S. during the 2010-2011 academic year, which showed a 32% increase since the 2000-2001 academic year (Institute of International Education, 2012).

According to a recent study, the experience of studying overseas is detrimental to the well-being of only a small proportion of individuals (Rosenthal et al., 2008). International students make great contributions to their host academic communities, enriching the campus intellectual and cultural environment and bringing financial income to the U.S. economy. Studying overseas, however, involves more than simply taking classes, as international students face many of the cross-cultural problems that non-student sojourners and immigrants face. As temporary sojourners in a foreign environment, international students experience more stresses on American campuses than American students (e.g., Boyer & Sedlacek, 1988; Kaczmarek, Matlock, Merta, Ames, & Ross, 1994; Pedersen, 1991). Specifically, the factors that can be attributed to psychological distress in a sojourn experience include the extent of life changes (Lin & Yi, 1997), life stressors (e.g., Nicassio, Solomon, Guest, & McCullough, 1986), cultural distance (Furukawa, 1997; Galchenko & van de Vijver, 2007), and language problems (Zheng & Berry, 1991).

Along with the language factor, cultural distance has been regarded as an important factor in sojourner adjustment, which is one cause of low academic performance among international students (Ledwith and Seymour, 2001). The perceived cultural distance between a sojourner's home culture and the host culture is also related to sociocultural adjustment, suggesting that a greater perceived distance results in more difficulties (Galchenko and van de Vijver, 2007; Ward and Kennedy, 1993) and is directly related to the amount of stress (Babiker, Cox & Miller, 1980).

Sadowsky and Plake (1992) found that, as a group, Europeans were better acculturated to life in the United States than Asians, Africans, or South Americans. They concluded that Europeans shared more traits, beliefs, and values with the dominant society than the other groups.

Ethnic proximity refers to the degree of similarity between the cultural strangers' ethnicity and that of the natives of the host environment. Culture difference/distance would be significant if there is a greater difference in cultural strangers' ethnic background compared to their host culture. Kim (2001) strongly argues that this factor is no less important to consider than those who have received greater attention (e.g., host language competence, host interpersonal relationships, host media use, and environmental factors).

The present study investigates the communication experiences of international students (both European students and Asian students) in the U.S. to explore qualitative insights into their process of cross-cultural adaptation. The study examines how international students'

communication experiences are related to their psychological well-being vis-à-vis their host cultural milieu. In addition, the study compares the experiences of European students and Asian students in terms of their ethnic proximity. Specifically, the important related issues were posed as the following three research questions: (1) *What kind of communication related difficulties do international students face?*; (2) *What kind of contact and communication activities do international students have with local people?*; and (3) *How is the ethnic proximity of international students related to their communication activities and psychological health?* The analysis utilizes verbatim transcripts from interviews conducted in the U.S. between October and December 2012.

### Theoretical Grounding

Guiding this investigation is Y.Y. Kim's (1988, 2001, 2005) Cross-Cultural Adaptation Theory. Grounded in an open systems perspective, Kim's theory (1988, 2001, 2005) approaches cross-cultural adaptation not as a specific analytic unit (or variable) but as the entirety of the evolutionary process an individual undergoes vis-à-vis a new and unfamiliar environment. Cross-cultural adaptation is therefore explained in terms of a dynamic interplay of the person and the environment. By placing adaptation at the intersection of the person and the environment, Kim defines cross-cultural adaptation as "the entirety of the phenomenon of individuals who, upon relocating to an unfamiliar sociocultural environment, strive to establish and maintain a relatively stable, reciprocal, and functional relationship with the environment" (Kim, 2001, p. 31). Implicit in this definition is the goal of achieving an overall person-environment "fit" that entails "almost always a compromise, a vector in the internal structure of culture and the external pressure of environment" (Sahlins, 1964, p. 136).

Based on this systemic conception of cross-cultural adaptation, the theory addresses two basic questions: (1) *What is the essential nature of the adaptation process individual settlers undergo over time?* and (2) *Why are some settlers more successful than others in attaining a level of fitness in the host environment?* The first question is addressed in the form of a *process model* that presents a three-pronged psychological movement Kim refers to as the *stress-adaptation-growth dynamic*—a movement in the generally forward and upward direction of increased chances of success in meeting the demands of the host environment. The stress-adaptation-growth dynamic is not explained as playing out in a smooth, linear progression, but in a dialectic, cyclic, and continual "draw-back-to-leap" pattern. The spiral model explains that humans, as open systems, have the natural tendency to resist evolution accompanied by the destruction of the old structure. This tendency manifests itself in various forms of psychological resistance, such as selective attention, denial, avoidance and withdrawal, as well as in compulsively altruistic behavior, cynicism, and hostility. Still, no open system can stabilize itself forever. If it were so, nothing would come of evolution. The state of misfit and a heightened awareness in the state of stress serve as the very same forces that propel individuals to overcome the predicament and partake in the active development of new habits. What follows the dynamic stress-adaptation disequilibrium, according to

the theory, is subtle growth. Periods of stress pass as settlers work out new ways of handling problems, owing to the creative forces of the self-reflexivity of human mentation.

Building on the process model, the theory turns to the second basic question: “Why do some settlers adapt faster than others?” or “Given the same length of time, why do some settlers attain a higher level of adaptation?” Integrating various factors addressed by different investigators as constituting and/or predicting differing levels or rates of adaptive change, Kim (1988, 2001, 2005) addresses this question in a structural model, depicted in Figure 1. The core of this structure is the dimension of personal communication, or *host communication competence* (Dimension 1), which is defined as the cognitive, affective, and operational capacity to communicate in accordance with the host communication symbols and meaning systems. This dimension serves as the very engine that pushes individuals along the adaptive path. Inseparably linked with host communication competence are the activities of *host social communication* (Dimension 2), through which strangers participate in interpersonal and mass communication activities in the host environment. Activities of *ethnic social communication* (Dimension 3) provide distinct, subcultural experiences of interpersonal and mass communication with fellow co-ethnics. Interacting with the personal and social (host, ethnic) communication activities are the conditions of the *host environment* (Dimension 4), including the degrees of receptivity and conformity pressure in the local population as well as the strength of the ethnic group. The individual’s *predisposition* (Dimension 5) — consisting of preparedness for the new environment, proximity (or distance) of the individual’s ethnicity to that of the natives, and the adaptive personality attributes of openness, strength, and positivity—influences the subsequent development in personal and social communication activities.

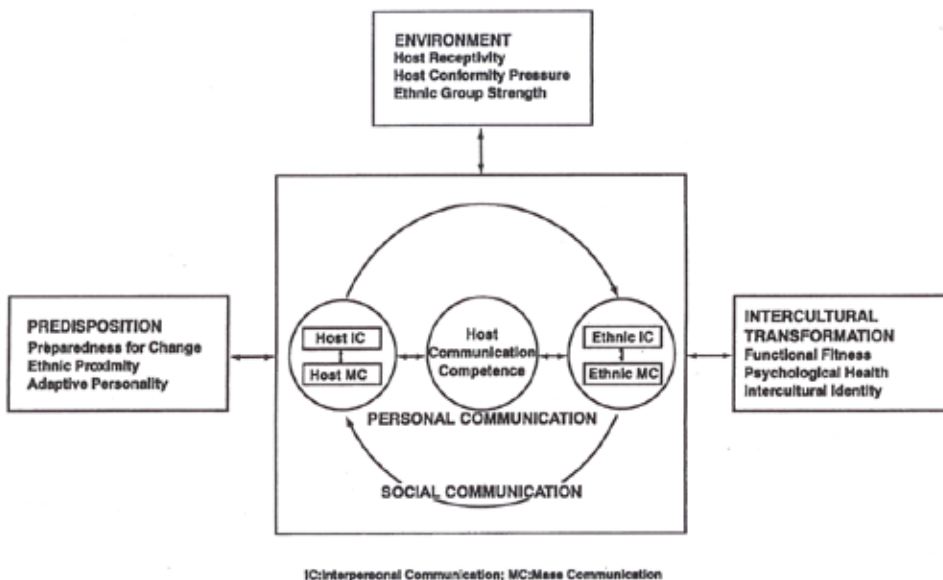


Figure 1. Y. Y. Kim’s Structural Model: Factors Influencing Cross-Cultural Adaptation (Source: Y. Y. Kim, 2001, p. 87).

Together, all of the factors identified above directly or indirectly contribute to explaining and predicting differential rates or levels of *intercultural transformation* (Dimension 6) within a given time period. The theory identifies three key facets of intercultural transformation: increased functional fitness, psychological health, and the emergence of an identity orientation that reaches beyond a single culture. The level of intercultural transformation, in turn, helps to explain and predict the levels of the other dimensions. The six dimensions constitute an interactive and functional model in which all the linkages indicate mutual stimulations (and not unidirectional causations), identified in 21 theorems (see Kim, 2001, pp. 91-92).

## Methods

The present study is based on an analysis of verbatim transcripts from interviews with 12 European students and 12 Asian students conducted in the U.S. between October and December 2012.

### Participants

The participants in this study were both European and Asian international students in universities in mid-South areas of the U.S. For the interview, both European and Asian student participants were selected by using a convenience sampling method.

For the European participants, there consists of a variety of different nationalities (see Table 1). Among the 12 interviewees, four interviewees were male (33.3%) and eight female (66.7%). The average age of the European interviewees was 24.08 years old (SD = 3.55 years; Range: 19-31 years), while the average length of stay in the U.S. was 1.5 years (SD = 1.7 years; Range: 3 months – 6.5 years). Seven interviewees were enrolled in a bachelor's degree program (58.3%), two in a master's program (16.7%), two in a doctorate program (16.7%), and one other (8.3%). Two interviewees (16.7%) had lived in a foreign country before coming to the U.S., and none of the interviewees had had prior intercultural training (100%).

For the Asian participants, there were five Chinese (41.7%), three Korean (25.0%), two Taiwanese (16.7%), and two Japanese (16.7%). Among the 12 interviewees, three interviewees were male (25%) and nine female (75%). The average age of the Asian interviewees was 28.58 years old (SD = 11.13 years; Range: 20-52 years), while the average length of stay in the U.S. was 2.18 years (SD = 2.37 years; Range: 2 months – 7 years). Five interviewees were enrolled in a bachelor's degree program (41.7%), five in a master's program (41.7%), one in a doctorate program (8.3%), and one other (8.3%). One interviewee (8.3%) had lived in a foreign country before coming to the U.S., and none of the interviewees had had prior intercultural training (100%).

### The Interview Procedures

All interviews were conducted by the first author in English, based on the interview questionnaire. All interviews took place in a library conference room or cafeteria or by phone. Most interviews took approximately 40 minutes to an hour to complete. The interviews began with an exchange of personal information (i.e., age, gender, length of stay,

education, etc.) after each interviewee had signed the consent form. All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed in their entirety, with the written consent of the interviewees.

Interview questions were written in English. Among the topics covered in the interview, open-ended interview questions dealt with the main research variables: cultural differences and similarities between the interviewees and the host environment (“ethnic proximity”); communication ability and communication-related difficulties with local people (“host communication competence”); experiences of interacting with local people (“host interpersonal communication”); and overall feelings and positive/unpleasant life experiences in the host country (“psychological health”). There were also questions about their intercultural experience, including first impressions and treatment by local people.

Regarding *ethnic proximity*, questions included the degree of differences and similarities between the interviewee’s national culture and the dominant U.S. culture (e.g., “What aspects of the American culture do you find different from yours?” and “What aspects of the American culture do you find similar to yours?”). Another question included the degree of difficulty that the interviewees experienced in following American customs or cultural habits, which was intended to explore the relationship between ethnic proximity and the degree of difficulty: (i.e., “How much difficulty have you had in following the American customs or cultural habits?”).

Regarding *host communication competence*, questions included difficulties in communicating with American people and coping strategies to deal with these difficulties (e.g., “Have you ever experienced difficulties in communicating with American people?”, “Did you try anything to deal with these difficulties?” and “How did it work?”). Based on the responses, follow-up questions were used to elicit specific incidents and typical experiences illustrating these differences and difficulties.

With respect to *host interpersonal communication*, one question was asked to indicate the amount of daily interaction with Americans (e.g., “Of all your daily conversations, approximately what percentage of them do you have with American people?”). Another question followed about the types of social activities with host nationals: (i.e., “What kinds of socializing do you do with American people?”).

Concerning *psychological health*, the interviewees were asked to describe their positive and/or unpleasant life experiences while living in the host country (e.g., “What are some of the positive/unpleasant experiences you have had while living in the U.S. so far?”) as well as their general feelings about their life in the host country (e.g., “Overall, how are you feeling about your present life in the U.S., as regards your life experiences interacting with Americans?”).

Questions about intercultural communication experiences explored their first impression toward the host country (e.g., “What was one of your first impressions about America and American people?”); their perceived attitude of Americans toward foreigners in general and the interviewee himself/herself in particular (e.g., “What do you think about the attitude of American people toward foreigners/international students like you?”); and their perceived attitudes and different treatment from Americans (e.g., “Have you ever had

experiences during which you were treated differently from Americans because you are a foreigner?”).

## **Results**

The interview data were analyzed based on a portion of the qualitative verbal responses that were relevant to the interviewees' personal adaptation experiences in the host environment. The interviewees' comments and testimonials in response to the interview questions serve as the basis for addressing the three research questions posed above: (1) to explore the degree of self-perceived ethnic proximity between Asian and European interviewees and the degree of difficulty in adapting to American culture; (2) to identify the communication-related difficulties; (3) to investigate the kinds of contact and communication activities that international students have with local people; and (4) to identify the overall feelings that international students have in their life in the U.S.

In analyzing qualitative interview data, all questions and responses to open-ended questions were transcribed by the first author. After transcription, the verbatim data were grouped into common categories based on emerging themes of ethnic proximity, communication difficulties, interpersonal contact and communication, and overall feelings and intercultural experiences in the U.S. The first and second authors reviewed these common themes and categories. Any ambiguous and contradictory categories were refined based on agreement between the two authors.

### **Profiles of Interviewees**

There are 12 interviewees from each ethnic group (Asian and European), totaling 24 interviews. A brief profile of five interviewees from each group is presented in the following.

#### **Asian Interviewees**

**Interviewee #1.** She is from China and 20 years old. She has been in the United States two months as an exchange student. She is enrolled in her undergraduate program in English with an emphasis in teaching. She has never lived in another country and had six months preparation of talking with other Chinese students in her country who had previously been exchange students. She does most of her socializing with her American host family. She does not try to follow American customs or cultural habits; she prefers to follow her own. She will return to China after this semester. She speaks fluent English with only a slight accent.

**Interviewee #2.** She is from China and 24 years of age. She has been in the United States for three years and four months. She is enrolled in the last year of her second bachelor's degree. This degree will be in Music Business. She had never lived in another country other than China but has visited other countries such as Germany, France, and Italy. She will not return to China as she has plans to marry her American boyfriend she met here in the United States. She speaks fluent English and has hardly any noticeable accent. She has a very positive view of America and American customs.

**Interviewee #3.** She is from China and 23 years old. She has been in America two years and six months. She is enrolled in her second year of her master's program in Mass Communication. Before coming to the United States, she had traveled around Europe. She holds the opinion that American customs are much like Chinese customs; however, she was having a hard time understanding the American sense of humor. The clarity in which this student displays her level of understanding of the English language was inspiring for the interviewer. The interviewee would very much like to stay in America and continue her education but does not believe her visa will be renewed.

**Interviewee #4.** He is from China. He is 32 years old and has been in the United States for seven years. He is enrolled in his master's program in Accounting. He had never traveled to other countries before coming to America, but he does travel from America to China often. Although he desires to stay in America, he will go back to China to help with the family business.

**Interviewee #5.** This student is 51 and is from South Korea. She has been in America for six years and seven months. She is now in her Ph.D. program in the English department. She began learning English as a second language when she was in middle school in Korea. She is actively involved in the interaction she has with host nationals. Almost 95% of her daily life involves some sort of interaction with Americans.

### **European Interviewees**

**Interviewee #1.** She is Dutch, 22 years old, and has been in the United States for a few months. Her highest level of education before coming to the United States was two years of college. She is continuing her degree as an exchange student in the Aerospace department. She will return to Amsterdam to complete her degree and aspires to return to the United States to work as a professional pilot for a major airline. She has never lived in a foreign country before coming to the United States. Due to her ethnic markers similar to Caucasian Americans, she was thought to be Canadian by some Americans. She considers this to be a "fun" aspect of her American life.

**Interviewee #2.** This is a female student, age 29. She is from Germany and has been in the United States for a total of six years and six months. She is now in her doctorate program in Sociology. This is the second time she has been an exchange student in the United States. She also spent one year of high school in America. Before coming to America, she had never lived in another country. After receiving her Ph.D., she will stay in the United States and marry an American who is in the health field.

**Interviewee #3.** This student is from Germany and is 24 years old. She has been in America for three months. She came to the United States after finishing her bachelor's degree in Germany and is now in her master's program in Interpreting and Translation Linguists. She studied in France for one semester before coming to the United States. She did not have any prior preparation for her stay in the United States; however, she is not experiencing any difficulties. She is enjoying the culture and customs of the Southern part of the United States, particularly the custom of addressing older people with "yes,



ma'am" and "no, ma'am." She shared that around 90% of her time was spent with American people or international students who speak English. This was her second time coming to the United States. She will return to Germany after finishing her degree program.

**Interviewee #4.** This is a male student, age 26, who is from the country of Belarus, a border state to Russia. He has been in the United States for one year and four months. He came to the United States with a master's degree and is now enrolled in his doctoral program in Physics. He lived in Italy before coming to America. His first formal classes in English were when he came to the United States to pursue his doctorate. His time spent speaking with other Americans encompasses most of his experience. He did state that most of his time was spent in the lab and everyone there, even the other international students, spoke English. He enjoys America very much and hopes to either stay in the U.S. to work or to return soon after renewing his visa. He emphasized how positive his experience in learning and working in the United States has been thus far.

**Interviewee #5.** He is from France and is 22 years old. He has been in the United States for three years and four months. He is in the Aerospace program for his bachelor's degree. He hopes to return to the United States as a professional pilot. He has lived in Spain and Morocco with his parents before coming to the United States. He fluently speaks English, Arabic, Hebrew, French, and Italian. This interviewee shared with us his level of discomfort and culture shock while being here in America. He spends most of his time with other international students. American TV and movies helped the most to overcome his culture shock. At the time of this interview, this student explained that he was still experiencing many difficulties with American customs and attitudes. Even though he would like to work in the United States after he returns to his country to graduate, he did not believe he could tolerate the "arrogance" of Americans.

## **Results of Interviews with Asian Students**

### **Ethnic Proximity—Cultural Similarities and Differences**

In most cases, the responses from the Asian students concerning how different American culture was from their own reveal issues with food, cultural norms, and communication styles. One interviewee commented on the differences in food:

Okay, for the food there is a lot of fast food here and people prefer to drink Coke and eat either sweet food and for the snacks there is always chips and some cheese. But in China . . . we don't drink Coke that often. It is always normal temperature and . . . for the meals, we cook meals for ourselves and we don't eat beef so much. We eat pork and in southern China we eat rice a lot.

Another interviewee also gave a similar comment: "Americans eat very fast and like oily food. In our country, preparation of food takes a long time, and they eat no oily food."

Another student reported different cultural norms:

I found American culture is very individualistic; it respects individual choice and never pushing others. In addition, even if you and another person are friends, there is a clear distinction between public and private affairs. First, it was a little bit awkward to me.

Different verbal and nonverbal communication styles were commented on by another interviewee:

Communication is pretty straightforward. They get to the point right away. In addition, eye contact rule is totally opposite, particularly in interaction with strangers. In Japan, people are not as open or relaxed about looking and greeting people they do not know or have been introduced to. People here engage in more small talk and friendly gestures, as in Japan people just often greet each other with a simple “hi.”

One interviewee pointed out different parenting styles:

Parenting is very, very different in my country...I am reluctant to generalize those kind of things. But by my limited experience—American parents...are more kind of patient. Korean parents, we identify ourselves with our children more. So if my children have a bad grade in school, instantly I try to blame my parenting style...if my daughter does something wrong...that means I taught her something wrongly.

Regarding similarities, some respondents indicated the government system. One respondent even reported no similarities in appearance, food, social system, or social customs.

### **Communication-Related Difficulties**

Host language competence is a major factor that can pose everyday challenges to Asian students in America. One student reported the number of difficulties:

A lot. Yes, a lot. For one thing, I am not fluent as some in speaking English. So sometimes I have to wait in line. And, the people want to deal with that kind of stuff quickly; I cannot speak as fast as the American people do. If there is a lot of time, it's O.K., but if it is a hurry, they kind of run out of patience.

Another student shared her experience during shopping:

...Yes...flip-flops and the staplers and something like that. In China I can find it easy but here I have to explain the kind of things I want and I don't how to say in English so that is the [hardest] part is to communicate.

An Asian interviewee who had traveled to many countries shared that America has many slang words:

I have been to northern Europe for summer vacation with my mom, just one week. We traveled to Norway, Finland, Denmark, and Sweden.

When I first came here, I could not understand the slang communication and some accent, and I think that is it.

Another interviewee gave his account of the difficulty experienced in the classroom due to lack of host language competence:

Not with instructors, but with the American students. Sometimes they do not want to listen to you. They don't have the patience to listen what you are talking...they just stay silent...sometimes they are laughing. That's very uncomfortable.

In response to the question about coping strategies used, one interviewee stated:

I will search on the Internet how these things will be said in English or if I can find one, I use my signature, I use my body. Or I just walk around the [store] to pick up the things I want. Something like that. But with my friends, I try my best. It's the words I have to explain as much as I can.

### **Host Interpersonal Communication Contact and Communication Activities**

Socializing activities with Americans include spending time with classmates, attending churches, and interacting with host families. The twenty-year-old exchange student from China described herself as shy, and she felt a high level of culture shock among food differences, language competence, and with the level of freedom to speak her opinion. She responded with a statement concerning what activities she takes part in:

I went to church with my friend and my host family and I go to the library and go to dinner and go do some sports: like running and walking and swimming.

Another Chinese student gave her experience:

I'm not a party person, I don't like that. I love to do like Facebook things and texting messages to my American friends. And I really, really love to hang out with my host family, my professors, and my fiancé's family. They're so intelligent and they are so charming. They are happy every day, and they are so helpful. They are always trying to help you with something. I love to hang out with them. I can learn a lot of stuff.

At the same time, most of the Asian students are not actively involved in interaction with Americans. Several interviewees reported:

Interactions? 10% or 20% Americans [in my daily interaction]. I am still mostly with my Chinese friends or other international students.

It is not so much because I spend my time, almost, I spend most of my time in the class and then the library. So I don't do so much communications with American people. Because I live in a big family in China, we know each other, and we can hang out after your work. And I have a lot of friends in there. But in America I often stayed with a Chinese group. In the past seven years I only made one American true friend.

Another Asian student gave us shared a view of how different ethnic markers had an impact on the frequency of interaction between American students and international students. She explained:

It depends. They are more interested in more countries compared to other countries. If we had a student from Norway, his English is like Americans, he looks like American. He knows like tons of, he has tons of friends. He is like an American. But I don't look like an American and I don't talk like an American, so I feel like there is a gap between the countries that are like Asians, those countries that don't speak English, or German, or Spanish speaking countries. There is a difference between those countries and Americans. . . . mostly the American student will talk to the American student instead of the Chinese student. I don't know why. I don't feel that they are racist or something like that. But, because they are similar to each other more than we are similar, but if we already know each other, then we will talk.

### **Psychological Health**

Asian interviewees mentioned their first impression about America/Americans as friendliness, happiness, freedom, and a big country. Two interviewees mentioned their image of America as this:

"They never stop smiling to others. They usually say, 'Sorry; thanks; excuse me.'"

"When you talk to them, when you are in class, they always have a lot of creative ideas. I will not ever have thought about that, and they are not fear to speak it out. I like that."

Each interviewee was asked to share a time when he or she may have felt treated differently from Americans because he/she was from another country. A Chinese student shared his experience:

When I first came here my English was so bad, but I had to take a history class, Recording Industry History. I like, I don't know anybody. Any names of those people, I don't know who they are or what they did. I don't know the event's name, so I asked my professor to give me the Power Points so I will preview before the class, and he did that. He told me that he had never given anybody else the Power Points. He just gave it to me. That's a good thing as in being treated differently than Americans.

The same interviewee also continued with his unpleasant experience:

...If I am just sitting in a classroom and I'm the American student, there is an American student to my left and on my right, there is a Chinese student. Mostly the American student will talk to the American student instead of the Chinese student. I don't know why.

One Asian interviewee indicates ethnocentrism of America as an unpleasant feeling:

Sometimes they want to talk about the relationship between Taiwan and Mainland China. They barely know where is Taiwan, or where is China. They know China is a big country, but where is it? They can't tell. Because I have a class and they send out a world. A map of the world. We say draw the countries. Where is America, where is the Middle East, where is China, where is Taiwan? They just know America. So sometimes I feel you may need to know more about others, about others countries then you can say that statement. But sometimes I just don't want to talk about so much politics because I think that would be a barrier in Americans and me so I just don't.

One student expressed her mixed feeling about the attitude Americans may have towards international students:

They are super nice and very good. People are very nice until you know, they feel threatened by international students. Probably, it [would be] different when international students try to find a job. Competing with American students...In that case, their attitude is probably different.

While there are different experiences among Asian interviewees, most Asian interviewees describe their overall sojourning experience as eye opening and rewarding. Two interviewees reported their experiences:

Before I came here, I never thought about the kind of diversity...Seven years ago, Korea was kind of a homogeneous society. You think of the old people you meet on the street you have black hair and black eyes, and you use the same language. When I came here, I say oh my gosh, all the hair color is different, their eye color is different. Their face is different; their skin color is different too. And, even among the American people, their accents are different. Same thing even in Korea, but some American people even cannot understand the accent of American people. In fact I think American culture improved my being. In China we are changing a lot. It is a focus on money, not on your person. My seven years in America, I can get more personal knowledge, capable of confidence, my person [is] stronger.

Keeping in mind the individual interviewees and how their life has been changed while living in the United States helps facilitate the importance of cross-culture adaptation. When asked if the interviewee has had any negative experiences while in American; one Chinese student gave this account:

No, because here I feel like it is my home. Maybe because my fiancé's home, his family are very connected. They are just a gorgeous family. They are so nice. And, they consider me as their daughter. They give me, not gifts, but when they are shopping they think about me. So I have

never missed home. Before I met my fiancé, my host family was like my real family. They are just so nice. They will invite me for every event or holidays that they have. They are always there to help me. So I have never felt alone here. I do have great friends, I don't know why; I might be born to be independent.

Another Chinese student shared his positive feeling:

I don't know how to say, but when I am here, I feel freedom. When I am in my class, it encourages me to involve in the talking. Encourage me to speak my own opinion. I'm trying to do that. Yes, and I like the library here because you have a lot of books and it's free, I can read a lot. I really like reading.

## **Results of Interviews with European Students**

### **Ethnic Proximity—Cultural Differences and Similarities**

While they feel similar to the dominant U.S. culture in many respects, most European students indicated cultural differences in regards to food, lifestyle, communication style, values, and social customs. Several interviewees commented that food is served in very big portions, and it is tough to choose healthy foods in the U.S. Also, they pointed out commonly that life in the U.S. seems to be more fast-paced compared to their countries.

The interviewees also shared their observations about different communication styles.

One interviewee reported:

I think Americans are really good at small talk... Germans just get to the point, say whatever they want to say, couple of sentences, and Americans just talk about anything like "How are you? What's been up lately? What are you doing? How is your mother?"

Another interviewee also reported her experience:

People in the U.S., when walking past you at a close distance, say "sorry" too often. In Sweden, no one even cares or notices....there is "too much sentiment" and most of things people say tend to be sugar-coated and not straightforward.

The different gestures also puzzled another interviewee:

... In France, first when you say hi you would give a kiss on the cheek... One of my first experiences, my friend came to get me at the airport and he gave me the weirdest thing I have ever seen which was the half-hug (gestures of the half-hug). I found that it being so cold, so unwelcoming, because in my culture, if we are friends, and we meet and you shake my hand, that is considered very cold and there is something wrong between us. If we don't give the kiss on the cheeks, there is something wrong if you don't do that. So...I felt at that moment unwelcome, what is that, it's cold—that was my first, I will never forget that moment.

Different values were reported as well:

The thing that is not very common in Sweden was that here in the U.S., a sense of accomplishment seemed to be very much encouraged as well as achieving success... American culture also seems to encourage hard work and being bold.

A social custom that was a surprise to these European interviewees was the American custom of a baby shower. A German student explained:

I would have to ask friends, "What in the world are you doing?" It just seems like a strange thing to do. Basically everyone just sits in a circle, the poor, the poor host has to sit in the center and unwrap all the gifts and be excited each and every time.

Another student from Latvia also indicated different dressing styles in the U.S.:

In Europe, it is disrespectful for professors to show up to class dressed in mainly sportswear... Here, individuals wear what they want.

Along with different customs and cultural habits they observed, European interviewees also pointed out similarities of American culture to theirs. One German student commented:

I would say overall, the American and German culture, it's pretty similar, especially if you compare to African and South America's or Asian cultures compared to the U.S. I would say, it's still, we have all the music, all the art culture, all that stuff is the same, it's just translated in German. Generally, most people in Germany are white, most people here are white, so there are a lot of similarities. The differences are very subtle I would say.

Other interviewees also commented:

The interaction with people... Like the customs during the meal, and how you greet someone, and how you talk and speak and how you say good-bye. All of that is really similar.

My country seems very culturally similar to Nashville, Tennessee. Both places have a large influx of young people, making them great places that foster modern cultural activities. Both places are full of cafes, concert venues, museums, clubs, and others.

### **Communication-Related Difficulties**

Communication-related difficulties were revealed in the area of host language competence. Some of the interviewees reported that they feel frustrated when they cannot be understood or cannot understand Americans. One interviewee mentioned:

Yes, when I talk to people who are really Southern and they have the accent, I really have trouble understanding what they are saying, like the ladies at the bookstore. I was trying to explain that I needed a stapler. I didn't know what the word for stapler was, so I tried to paraphrase and

describe it, and they were not getting my point. When they were talking to me, it was like “Sorry. Again?”.

While there are language and accent issues, however, most interviewees reported they did not have any problem with limited language competence. Most of them learned to speak English before they came to the U.S. One interviewee comments reflected on this fact:

I was lucky enough to grow up in schools where the English language was always taught as an optional second language...this helped me a lot.

### **Host Interpersonal Communication Contact and Communication Activities**

Most interviewees reported being active in interpersonal contact and social activities with Americans. The variety and frequency of their interpersonal interactions are reflected the following response:

We went to Chattanooga for fall break just to see more of the country. More of the culture and do typical American things, like pumpkin carving, I enjoyed that. And I went to a shooting range last weekend; that was quite an experience. We went to the Jack Daniel’s Distillery.

Comparing the approximate amount of time spent speaking to Americans by the international students gives a strong sense of their comfort level in engaging with Americans.

Another European student observes:

Sometimes I meet colleagues, and also sometimes I meet a friend of mine. He is also American. He was an exchange student at my home university last semester. I often go to lunch with him. And, I’m in a group. It’s a new group for university exchange students. So there’s exchange students and American students as well. Sometimes they offer like movie nights here. The cultural fest today...I also have a host family. It is a program they have here...We meet from time to time, and they have three kids. I went to their place, they have like a playground;, yeah it was fun.

I have experienced that the people in the south are generally are a lot friendlier, more open than Germans are, in general, so you know they do the whole small talk thing which, you know is a foreign concept to Germans. We just say what we want right away. Without any small talk ahead of time, so that is something I had to pick up on.

While there is a variety of interpersonal interaction with Americans, one interviewee pointed out the superficial nature of their relationship:

But, on the other hand I always thought relationships were often times more superficial over here. People will say things like, “oh we should hang-out”, they didn’t actually mean it – ‘you’re cool and I want to seem nice, but I’m not really planning on calling you any ways soon’ to set up a meeting or any type of thing like that. On one hand they [Americans] are easier to talk to, and friendlier in general, you know, kind of causal



encounters, but they [Americans] are a little bit more superficial than Germans.

### **Psychological Health**

Few students reported difficulty adapting to a new cultural environment. Most European interviewees reported a smooth transition and adaptation without major difficulties. Two interviewees' experiences are presented:

Even though I had some trouble getting used to the American culture, I could actually mesh with it much quicker than expected. I adjusted to the change of attitude and time perception almost immediately. And also I made a lot of friends quickly.

I don't think I had encountered culture shock. I have just adapted to more of the thinking and behavior style of the U.S...but have kept my religion, dress style, eating and hobbies.

This easy transition could be explained by the similar ethnic/cultural background (ethnic proximity) they might have, as suggested by these responses:

There really weren't any major cultural differences to adjust to. The general culture in Europe tends to be similar to American culture.

Because of the similarities between American and Northern European culture and customs, I did not really encounter anything strange or many things I had to get used to.

Americans tend to be well receiving of Northern and Western Europeans since they view them as being similar and of equal standards of civilization. Most of the white majority's roots came from European immigrants. So, I am not being seen as different from anyone else until I speak [English with a European accent].

The interviewees were also asked what first impressions they had of American people.

Most interviewees reported positive impressions of Americans, such as their being nice and friendly. Some responses are presented here:

They are willing to help. ...When we first got here because our apartment was a mess...all kind of terrible things that needed to be fixed...the landlord and the guy working for him came over all the time, trying to help us out...It was lovely.

Actually that was nine years ago, [it] was the first time I was here, in 2003. We were late, our aircraft was late. The customs hall was too crowded. We were not allowed to leave the plane. We wanted to call my mom's friend to tell her that we will take the next plane. We wanted to use the phone but we did not have the coins, we only have the bills. Then a woman came over to us and asks if we need help. I can change your money or whatever. We were really surprised and happy about that. It was very, very nice.

Another multifaceted part of intercultural adaptation is the perceived attitude of Americans toward international students. Respondents provided their positive experiences. One student gave her opinion:

I think they have a good attitude. For example at my university, in my department, more than half are internationals. Yes, they like international students. In general, I think they have very good attitudes. For example, Germans, they do not have a good attitude about foreigners, but Americans are good for that because most are foreigner before they came here, not so far ago, just a hundred years or so, so they're very friendly to foreigners is my opinion.

The interviewees demonstrated frankness and openness when asked if they had ever felt like they were treated differently because they are from another country. Below is the response from a European student:

Not in a bad way. One of my professors, I think, I get really shy in that class, because I feel like an idiot because everyone else is a native speaker. It's a media writing class, so you have to be like a journalist, I'm like oh god, I'll never be able to keep up, and then when I say something I mess my sentences up and stutter or whatever, and then he might think I'm a little dumb. I don't know. He makes sure he explains everything very clearly. But, that's a good thing.

In spite of overall pleasant experiences in the U.S., one German student explained his unpleasant experience as well:

I don't like it, because I was a foreigner, but because I was a German, I went to [a store] with my American friend because I needed some things to make a German apple pie. In Germany we have vanilla-sugar, sugar with a bit of vanilla in it. We didn't find it, so my friend asks a woman filling out the stock, and "Do you have it here?" "No, we don't have that," and I said, "Oh, it's a German thing," and she said, "Oh, you are German?" and I said *yes*, and she said, (throwing one arm out in front of her) "Ahh, Heil Hitler" – I was really shocked. That is the only thing that ever happened like that, most people are like *Germany, Germany is so cool, I want to go there one day*. Things like that. So, that's the only bad experience.

While there were different experiences among European interviewees, most of the interviewees indicated their sojourning experience was rewarding and pleasant. One interviewee reported that he likes being in the U.S., as being able to play college sports has been a great experience and there will be more experiences to come before he graduates. A student from Germany also commented:

I love it here. When I was here for vacation a couple of years ago I was in the South and I really loved it here. So since I came to the United States I was fourteen, I just fall in love with the country, the people, everything.

I could imagine when I go back to Germany next year, I need one more year, I could imagine coming back and living here.

One student from Belarus shared his feelings:

For me the experience to study in another country, to work and do science. I like the experience of studying and working in the United States, that's why I have a positive experience in the United States.

Another student commented that they hope the friendships made in the United States could be kept:

The friends I've made definitely; the international students as well as the American students. I hope I can keep up those contacts and after I leave maybe come back some day and visit.

### **Discussion**

The purpose of the present analysis has been to examine the communication and adaptation experience of international students in the U.S. by comparing Asian and European groups. Y.Y. Kim's (1988, 2001) Cross-Cultural Adaptation Theory has served as the basis for examining predispositional factors (e.g., ethnic proximity) and communication activities, which have been posed as three research questions: (1) What degree of ethnic proximity do the international students have?; (2) What kind of communication-related difficulties do the international students have?; and (3) What is the overall feeling and life experience of international students in their host cultural milieu?

The present analysis is based on the data from interviews conducted in the United States between October and December 2012. The results of the study show that both comparison groups express unique and individual experiences in their interaction with the different host environment in the process of cultural adaptation.

Regarding ethnic proximity, both groups indicated that food and eating habits were found to be major differences as compared to their ethnic cultures. In addition, different cultural values and verbal/nonverbal communication styles were also reported by both groups. For similarities, the European group reported more similarities than the Asian group (e.g., general culture, physical appearance, etc.).

Regarding communication-related difficulties, the major issue for both groups is largely centered in host language competence. However, while the lack of English language competence is a critical issue for some Asian students, European students cited accent issues as a difficulty. The European students, in general, seemed to be better prepared in English before they came to the U.S.

Regarding host interpersonal contact with Americans, European students enjoy a variety of network and socializing activities with Americans, more than their Asian counterparts. As both groups explained, this could be attributed to ethnic proximity, such as similar ethnic markers and better language competence.

Regarding psychological health, both groups generally perceived the host cultural environment positively. At the same time, both groups also reported a lack of interest and

racism in the attitudes of some Americans. This suggests that American society is very open and friendly to cultural strangers, but international students might face prejudice and racism sometimes in their daily lives. Both groups described their overall sojourning experience as rewarding and positive. However, regarding the process of adaptation, European students reported a smoother transition and adaptation without major difficulties of culture shock. Again, this could be explained by the ethnic proximity of European students with the white majority in America, as mentioned throughout the interviews.

As predicted by Kim's Cross-Cultural Adaptation Theory, the results show the centrality of communication in the process of adaptation among international students. In addition, the cultural novelty and similar/dissimilar ethnic markers (ethnic proximity) of international students are closely related to better language competence and greater levels of interpersonal interaction with host nationals. This might also enhance the smoothness of transition in an unfamiliar cultural milieu. In addition, the level of friendliness and openness of classrooms and community environments (perceived host receptivity) might have an impact on the international student's life and motivation to interact with host nationals. Overall, there is a reciprocal relationship between communication and psychological health.

Methodologically, this study uses interviews to describe the communication and life experiences of international students in the American cultural milieu. This emic perspective of using in-depth interviews yields richer information on the realities international students can face in the process of their cultural adaptation.

Practically, this study provides some insights into adaptation experiences in a different host cultural environment. The findings show that host language competence and active involvement in host interpersonal communication constitute an important factor in successful adjustment. In addition, the ethnic proximity as a background factor of international students could be related to better language competence and enhancement of active involvement in host interpersonal communication and treatment by local people. Thus, international offices of American universities need to take this into account when they prepare any workshop or post-arrival training program to help international students adjust to American campuses.

Because of the small sample size, the present findings are to be interpreted and generalized with some caution. They can, however, be less problematic as consistent findings are obtained over time across different studies involving different nationalities of international students in different countries.

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**Table 1. Nationalities of the European Interviewees**

Country	No.
The Netherlands	1
Germany	3
France	1
Belarus	1
Italy	1
Denmark	1
Switzerland	1
Latvia	1
Australia	1
Sweden	1
Total	12

## **An Analysis of Smoking and Tobacco Waste Patterns at Peck Hall, Middle Tennessee State University**

*Rachael Smith and Crystal VanDalsem*

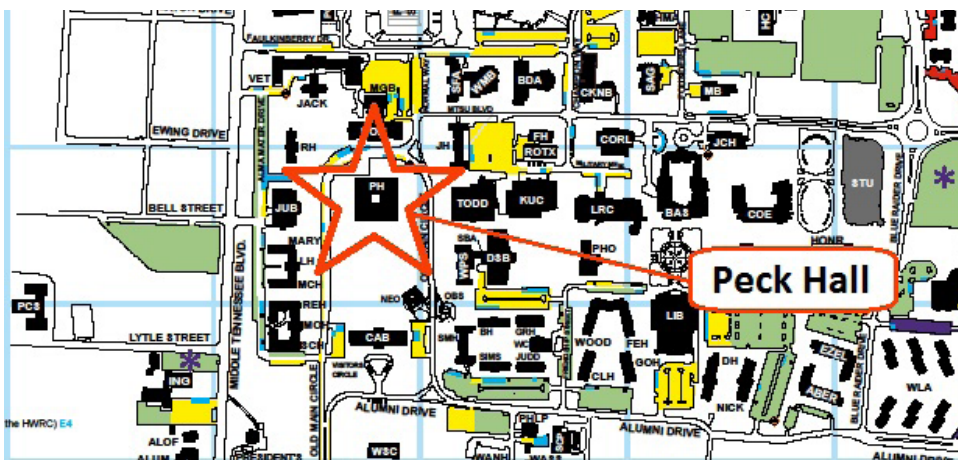
### **Abstract**

*This paper analyzes the accumulation of tobacco waste around the perimeter of Peck Hall. In spite of MTSU's tobacco ban, a number of students continue to use tobacco-related products on campus, especially along the southeast quadrant of the periphery of Peck Hall as a result of the placement of an unauthorized "butt bin." This site is also used as an area for student breaks between classes, with students engaging in a variety of activities at this site. Initial research suggests, while in place, the "butt bin" significantly reduced the amount of cigarette related waste in this area specifically (6 butts), and upon removal, a dramatic increase of cigarette butts were found in this same spot (75 butts), a week after. This increase stands in contrast to the more gradual accumulation of butts found around the rest of Peck Hall.*

## INTRODUCTION:

This paper discusses research conducted at Peck Hall on the campus of Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), a building housing classrooms, faculty offices, and a small convenience store, and examines the usage patterns of the promenade and perimeter of this building with respect to smoking litter at the site. This research constitutes a garbology project, a means of archaeological inquiry developed by William Rathje, which posits the analysis of waste as an effective and insightful means of gaining an understanding of the human condition (Rathje and Murphy 1992). Garbology focuses upon human waste at both the household and landfill levels. This project deviates slightly, relying upon surface collection to examine waste patterns at the chosen site. By counting the individual pieces of smoking related litter at Peck Hall, we are able to discern how the MTSU community uses this location and how the community disposes of its waste at this site.

Figure. 1 Parking Map of Middle Tennessee State University campus, indicating the location of Peck Hall ([http://www.mtsu.edu/parking/Map\\_2011-2012.pdf](http://www.mtsu.edu/parking/Map_2011-2012.pdf))



This research project sought to address a number of research questions:

1. How are smokers using the perimeter of Peck Hall?
2. Where is the greatest concentration of cigarette butts?
3. Why do smokers choose to congregate there?
4. What are the effects of the unauthorized smoking receptacle and its subsequent removal?
5. What social patterns can be observed around the perimeter of Peck Hall?



The primary question of focus was, “How are smokers using the perimeter of Peck Hall,” but the other questions allowed us to also inquire about how the perimeter of Peck Hall is used by a variety of MTSU community members.

In the fall of 2011, MTSU banned the use of tobacco products, which became effective January 1, 2012 (Gordon 2011). The MTSU community has been enlisted to halt tobacco use while on campus property. MTSU’s political body established a program through student health services to help smokers to quit. In spite of the official ban, however, enforcement has been limited, and individuals continue to smoke on campus. At the beginning of the Fall 2012 semester, an unauthorized “butt bin” appeared on the South East side of Peck Hall, a building located on the Western side of campus, housing numerous departments, including humanities and liberal arts. We decided to study this site in regard to said smoking receptacle, which was removed October 3, 2012. This did not stop smokers from continuing to congregate in this southeastern corner. By studying smoking patterns at Peck Hall, this project provides insight into the efficacy of the ban.

Additionally, examining the litter present on the MTSU campus allows archaeology to contribute to the overall campus environment. Understanding why and where community members congregate and the garbage that they leave behind allows for a more targeted approach to campus beautification. Broadly, preeminent garbologist William Rathje has discussed the examination of garbage and the benefits of such studies. Rathje initially conceived garbology. This method was created as a means to understand human waste patterns as another element of the anthropological goal of interpreting human cultural behavior. The research of Rathje and his students was conducted by analyzing fresh garbage from landfills to determine whether or not assumptions about waste disposal were accurate. They overturned many presumed ideas concerning the consumption patterns of the American population. For example, although there is a notion that Styrofoam constitutes 25 to 40% of landfill volume, research done by Rathje’s team proved that all polystyrene foam represents no more than 1% of total landfill volume. This work has brought to light new truths regarding American consumption and subsequent waste habits by creating a new methodological approach for modern archaeology. Applying this methodology to the Peck Hall perimeter provides insight into how specific usage patterns contribute to patterns of waste.

The methodology utilized for this project focuses on surface observation as opposed to collection of tobacco-related waste. Instead of counting individual observations in differentiated “piles” of waste, the volume of waste was analyzed. Then, the increase of waste over time was observed by comparing the increase of litter. A grid was formed through the use of mapping, constituting the basis of our methodological approach. Instead of using a typical archaeological grid, we chose to utilize architectural elements for two reasons. First, upon measuring the perimeter of Peck Hall it was established, that once divided in half, the preexisting structure was a prime number – unable to be divided into equal segments past this point. If the four larger quadrants were not divided any further, specific data in association to the location of smokers could not be understood. Second,

as a living population's waste was being observed, it was important to analyze behavior in relation to the architectural elements that organized, and influenced the actions of the "Peck Hall Culture."

#### **SITE BACKGROUND:**

Peck Hall, located on the western edge of campus, is a three-story modernist building. It is cube-shaped with a concrete and brick exterior, and its ground floor is an open breezeway. The ground floor is also surrounded by a promenade that many MTSU community members utilize as a break area. This is mostly likely due to the open yet sheltered nature of the exterior facilities at Peck Hall. The exterior ground floor contains a small convenience store, numerous bike racks, vending machines, and seven benches. The interior of the building houses such centers as the Confucius Institute, lab spaces, numerous classrooms, and offices for departments such as Political Science, Archaeology, and History. Our specific site was the exterior ground-floor promenade and the grassy perimeter extending roughly two meters around the building, including an extension to mulch patches and eroded areas.

Days chosen for observation and field study were Tuesday and Thursday from 1-2 PM, starting Tuesday, September 25 and lasting until Tuesday, October 23, excluding October 16 and 18 as they fell during MTSU's annual fall break. While we had an interest in observing the effects of a variety of weather patterns, the weather was mostly sunny, with temperatures ranging from the mid-60s to low 80 degrees Fahrenheit. Therefore, the weather was virtually uniformly conducive to individuals at MTSU for "break periods." As weather patterns such as rain or extreme cold were not observed, this negated our ability to analyze its effect on littering habits. In addition to observing the effect of weather, we felt this time period was sufficient. Although this project was limited as a class assignment, the relatively high number of fieldwork sessions allowed for a fairly longitudinal and systematic study.

Prior to beginning this fieldwork, it was expected that there would be less cigarette waste in the East to South East corner, yet more individuals smoking, as a result of the unauthorized smoking receptacle, or "butt bin" (Fig. 2). It was hypothesized that the cigarette waste present would consist of discarded cigarette butts, cigarette related packaging (cellophane, boxes, and foil inserts), and the occasional chewing tobacco-related products. We assumed that the "butt bin" would be removed at some point, allowing for data collection on the effect of the "butt bin" on cigarette-related litter. This would not have been possible without an extended period of observation. It was also thought that there would be less tobacco-related waste surrounding the rest of the exterior of Peck Hall.

*Figure 2. Sample smoking receptacle, or “butt bin.”*



This is an area primarily used by students as a space for breaks between classes, though faculty and staff are at times present. Additionally, some students use this space for extended periods of time. Socialization, individual, and group study behaviors are examples of activities undertaken during this lengthier period of occupation. With this background knowledge, it was expected that the specific location of these individuals would correlate with waste observed.

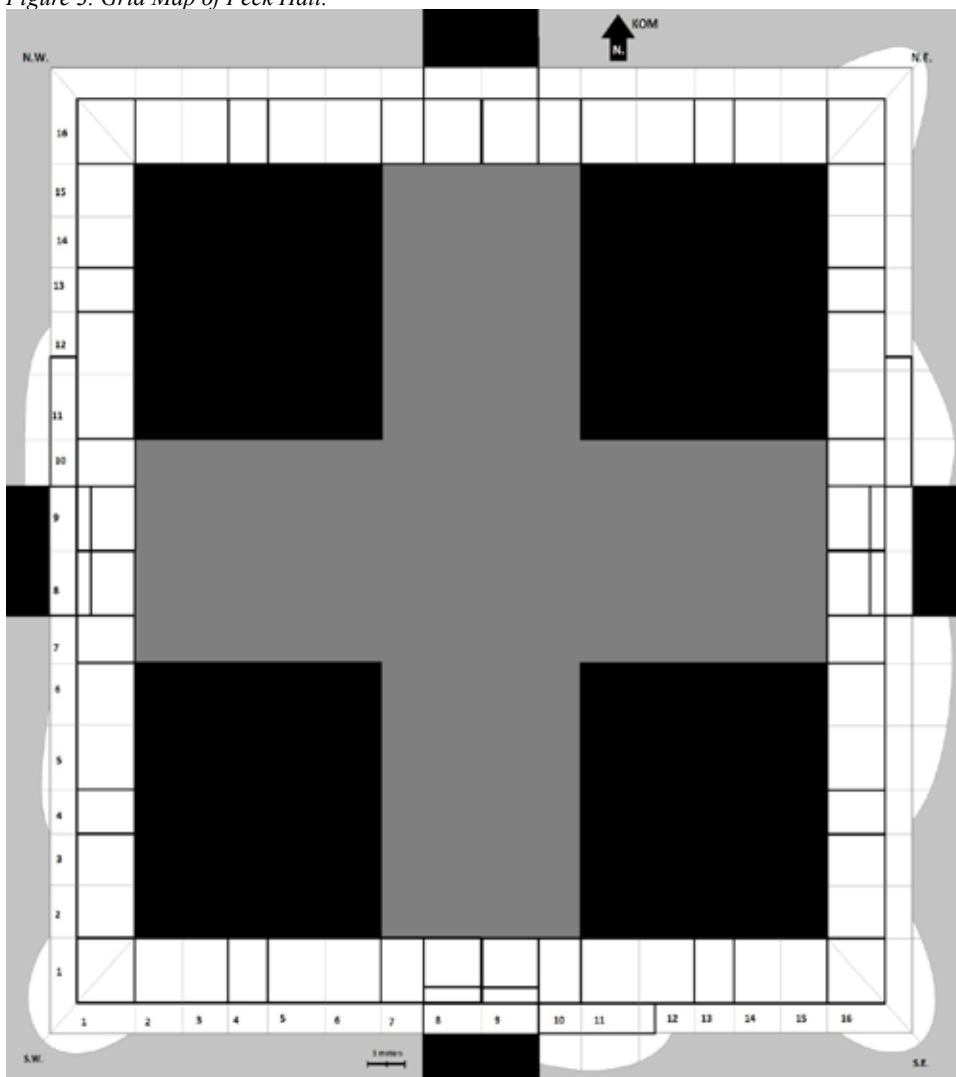
#### **FIELD METHODS:**

We began this project with a survey of the area, assessing both the waste present at the site and the appropriate method for laying out a grid on the area of interest. This initial survey of waste revealed high concentrations of cigarette butts and some tobacco packaging. These findings indicated the necessity of bulk counts covering a variety of waste types, including individual cigarette butts. It was also clear that the observation should focus upon a perimeter surrounding the building, rather than a more broad survey extending from the building to the road. We used this as our site primarily because the majority of individuals who utilize Peck Hall as a break area tend to remain close to the building rather than scattering about the grounds. It was necessary to decide between imposing a grid over the area and basing the grid upon the existing architectural features. Originally, we had attempted to establish a grid based on traditional archaeological methods. However, upon measuring the outer perimeter of Peck Hall, each side equaled 62.22 meters. This number, when divided in half, results in 31.11 meters – a prime number. Therefore, it could not be divided into an appropriate grid, consisting of equal increments. If we were to only collect quantified samples in these larger halves or quadrants, the resulting data would not have yielded the focused, patterned information necessitated by the research questions.

With these factors in mind, the decision was made to base the grid upon the preexisting architectural features. This provided the added benefit of being analogous to

the ways in which the building was already used. For instance, we used the gridded pattern already present on the concrete promenade, breaking down these sections by the existence of columns. Users of this area also tend to sit or stand leaning against the columns, adding a level of predetermination to their choice of location. Additionally, concrete lines also bisect these columns; these factors culminated into a preexisting, logical grid for observation, with some modifications.

*Figure 3. Grid Map of Peck Hall.*



After measuring the architectural “grid” features, it was observed that some sections were substantially larger than other sections. In order to impose a uniform size for the grid quadrants, we divided these larger sections in half. In total, each side of Peck contained

sixteen similarly-sized units. These grid units were then extended approximately two meters into the surrounding grassy area, so that litter discarded from the promenade could be included in the analysis. With the addition of these units, we were left with a total of 32 grid units on each side, for a mass total of 128 grid units. No units were any larger than 4.6 meters.

As can be seen in Figure 4, the white areas represent the area of observation as divided into the units mentioned above. The black and gray areas are shown to gain a spatial understanding of the layout of Peck Hall. The black areas represent the outer walkways, and the four ground floor sections containing various classrooms, labs, offices and the stairways that lead to the building's upper levels. The gray areas represent Peck Hall's inner walkway, and the surrounding grass not used for this study. The white, oblong sections represent the areas extended to encompass the entirety of five mulch patches, one segment of extreme water erosion, and areas surrounding the two "access ramps" not enclosed by said mulch patches. These exceptions to the established grid were maintained in order to include in the analysis all areas affected by heavy littering. The mulch patches are located in the southeast, southwest, west, and east sides of the building. There was extreme water erosion in the northeast corner, in which cigarette butts and other litter were dragged farther from the building en masse. Finally, there were no mulch patches surrounding the access ramps on the south and west sides of the building. However, these ramps were used much like the promenade. Therefore, there was a tendency for litter accumulation surrounding the ramps' exterior.

As there was no penetration of the soil, the basic methodology would be considered surface archaeology. Surface observation and systematic counting were employed as opposed to surface collection. We first attempted to count and classify each type of trash individually. However, as this proved to be unnecessarily detailed, it was decided to undertake bulk counts in order to analyze volume fluctuations from week to week. We started at opposite corners of the site working towards one another, taking counts of individual cigarette waste in each individual unit of the grid. These counts were marked on printouts of Figure 4 to gain a spatial and visual understanding of waste distribution at the site. During these counts, exceptional waste was noted, including writing utensils, newspaper, paper waste related to class work, and the occasional non-toxic medical-related waste (i.e. unused Band-Aids, cold and sinus products). At the beginning of each observation period community members at the site were marked and counted on the map to gain an understanding of the volume of individuals that would be typically present during periods of observation. This count was not comprehensive due to the constant movement of individuals coming and going at the site. Aside from this error, the methods employed were basic and sound for the research questions that we sought to answer. However, with more time, the research could have been expanded to a larger surface area and included gathering of physical samples from the site.

*Figure 4. Sample of Tobacco Waste – Newport Pack (weathered).*



**ANALYSIS OF THE SAMPLE:**

Analysis of our data consisted of a bulk count and subsequent analysis of fluctuations within the data collected. This analysis method was employed in order to understand how litter varies around the perimeter of Peck Hall as a result of social dynamics at the site. As such there was a limited classification of the particular types of litter under observation. However, using Rathje’s garbage project typology the data collected could be classified based upon the following categories (Rathje 2001: 22):

*Table 1. Garbage Item Code List.*

<u>Type</u>	<u>Code</u>
CIGARETTES (Butts)	123
CIGARETTES (Pack)	124
PIPE, CHEWING and LOOSE TOBACCO	127

Table 2 is an example of the raw data gathered on our first extensive day of observation (October 2, 2012). The data here comprises cigarette butt counts for both the inner promenade and outer grass units. These quantities are typical of counts gathered on subsequent observation days. Exceptions to this are grass units 2-4 on the east side facing Todd Hall, the units where the smoking receptacle could be found, where cigarette litter was found in higher concentration, after the removal of the smoking receptacle. This survey was completed a week prior to the removal of the butt bin. As is apparent, the grass by and large contained more bulk waste than the concrete promenade units. Higher concentrations can also be noted at the corner units as opposed to the interior units.

Table 2. Cigarette Butt Raw Data – October 2, 2012 – Grass Units.

Units	North		South	
	Grass	Prom.	Grass	Prom.
.5 Corner 1	15	0	58	4
2	17	2	37	40
3	11	1	30	3
4	10	1	22	1
5	24	7	32	15
6	21	1	29	2
7	24	1	32	1
Stairs/Walkway 8	1	0	0	0
Stairs/Walkway 9	0	0	0	0
10	32	0	0	0
11	35	5	3	5
12	26	3	58	10
13	20	2	20	5
14	32	3	39	3
15	25	16	0	4
.5 Corner 16	49	5	70	5

	East		West	
	Grass	Prom.	Grass	Prom.
31	3		36	5
6	7		36	0
22	3		29	1
26	5		16	3
51	12		7	3
47	3		29	6
26	2		29	2
1	0		0	1
0	0		0	0
1	2		1	7
0	2		0	0
21	5		39	1
9	1		13	8
17	2		17	5
2	2		21	1
68	3		53	1

Table 3 represents data collected a week after the removal of the “butt bin” in grass and promenade units contained to the eastern perimeter. When compared with Table 2 above, one can see the substantial increase of smoking waste in units 2-6, which may be attributed to the removal of the unauthorized smoking receptacle. Upon analysis of the surface collection data acquired after this date, these units decrease in the exponential accumulation of waste seen in Table 3. This does not mean that smoking waste does not increase. However, these units begin to follow a similar pattern seen in all other areas with a higher concentration of smoking litter. This brief massive increase could indicate a negative response to the “butt bins” removal by the Peck Hall smoking community.

**Table 3. Cigarette Butt Raw Data – East Perimeter Units – October 9, 2012.**

Units	Grass	Promenade
.5 Corner 1	56	13
2	75	14
3	62	7
4	68	19
5	62	3
6	111	5
7	65	2
Stairs/Walkway 8	0	1
Stairs/Walkway 9	4	0
10	31	2
11	7	3
12	41	4
13	16	1
14	18	0
15	23	0
.5 Corner 16	92	1

Table 4 is a quantified illustration of data gathered in these corner units. There was a specific focus in these areas because during previous cigarette waste counts, a marked increase in the corner units appeared as opposed to more central units. The “butt bin” had been removed at this point (October 3, 2012), which explains our shift in focus to the eastern perimeter where a significant amount of smoking was observed in Table 6. As can be seen, there is a dramatic increase in cigarette butt waste within the units observed in this location. To contrast this increase, we focused on units which had, in general, a higher occurrence of smoking traffic.

**Table 4. Concentration of Corner Units – October 9, 2012.**

Units	North		South		East		West	
	Grass	Prom.	Grass	Prom.	Grass	Prom.	Grass	Prom.
1	20	0	50	1	56	13	52	6
2	19	1	36	43	75	14	40	0
15	48	3	35	6	23	0	28	1
16	47	4	86	11	92	1	53	1



Table 5 lists the final count of cigarette data. This table displays a comparison of all units for the entirety of the site. It is clear that there is a substantial increase over time, when compared to previous charts, within the eastern perimeter units. However, units outside of this provenience also display significant accumulations, although we would not conclusively attribute these concentrations to human activity. Rather, these concentrations may be more indicative of natural factors such as wind and water depositions of waste. Units south 16, east 1, and east 4-7 are examples of the accumulations that occur within patches of mulch. Once again, we would not necessarily attribute these accumulations to human activity. Rather, the material characteristics of the mulch may result in litter becoming trapped in these areas as they are less likely affected by lawn maintenance (i.e. mowing), and possibly natural causes.

*Table 5. Cigarette Butt Raw Data – October 23, 2012 – Grass and Promenade Units.*

Units	North		South	
	Grass	Prom.	Grass	Prom.
.5 Corner 1	13	0	63	0
2	21	2	33	3
3	9	2	6	3
4	10	1	4	1
5	13	3	12	2
6	17	1	8	3
7	19	0	7	1
Stairs/Walkway 8	0	0	0	0
Stairs/Walkway 9	0	0	0	0
10	34	3	0	0
11	50	2	1	0
12	35	0	13	0
13	42	1	13	0
14	68	1	17	1
15	49	1	25	3
.5 Corner 16	60	4	90	3

	East		West	
	Grass	Prom.	Grass	Prom.
99	4	60	9	
81	5	21	2	
113	4	20	4	
66	29	14	4	
77	7	9	4	
93	8	44	2	
88	0	8	0	
0	2	0	0	
2	0	0	0	
29	1	7	0	
8	1	3	1	
30	2	39	4	
13	5	14	0	
15	3	15	0	
10	5	24	1	
75	4	45	0	

Though a longer observation period would yield a more comprehensive picture of smoking waste at the site, the data gathered during our course of study provides a strong introduction to the waste patterns at the Peck Hall site. The tables clearly illustrate

that cigarette waste continues to be an issue at the site, despite the smoking ban. However, individuals appear to be making some efforts to conceal their behavior or be more courteous, moving away from common walkways (Table 5) and refraining from disposing of butts on the building's promenade (Table 2). Table 3 indicates that the eastern perimeter has become a fairly popular place in which to engage in smoking activities, as can be seen when Table 3 is compared to Table 5, though this remains to be seen over a longer period of time. Additionally, a comparison of Tables 2 and 5 reveal that cigarette butt waste remains fairly constant over the observation period, except along the eastern perimeter. This could indicate that these patterns are fairly stable, though the implications of these data long-term will be discussed further below.

### **INTERPRETATION OF THE SAMPLE:**

The Peck Hall site is a highly-modified environment composed of the large concrete building, minimal landscaping features, sidewalks and a lawn area. The ground immediately surrounding the building has been subject to fairly substantial erosion as a result of weathering and foot traffic. Fieldwork was conducted during the late summer/early fall and conditions at the site were uniformly sunny or partially cloudy and temperate. There was no rain or extreme temperatures during observation periods. This was conducive to high levels of traffic, with MTSU community members using the area for eating, smoking, studying, and socializing. It should be noted that the lawn surrounding Peck Hall is used for tailgating purposes, thus, the area of study is also affected by these events.

The building is occupied year-round, with a decrease in traffic during the months of the summer session. Student, faculty, and staff employ the outer promenade as a break area. Individuals have been observed eating, studying, smoking and socializing at the site. Individuals who are smoking and/or socializing primarily use the grassy perimeter. This area is subject to a high amount of foot traffic, and, as a result of the building's structure, much social interaction occurs along the promenade. For instance, smokers have primarily occupied the southeastern perimeter, since the placement and removal of the unauthorized smoking receptacle. Individuals at this location appeared to exhibit greater levels of socialization, as they communicated while smoking. In contrast, the western half of the north perimeter displays little to no habitation. The individuals observed here were often eating or studying in isolation, most likely as a result of the reduced noise level.

The high concentration of cigarette waste attests to the site's use as a break area. In fact, the disproportionate amount of cigarette-related waste could lead one to believe the area was a designated smoking area. Of course, the tobacco ban hints at the area as a site of rebellion. The previously mentioned western half of the northern perimeter, in its lack of significant waste, could suggest that the area was off-limits, but the lack of a ledge upon which to sit could also explain why individuals choose to congregate there less frequently.

The distribution of waste at the site provides clues about the stratification at work in this social area. The concentration of cigarette waste in some units as opposed to areas such as the northern perimeter, where very few cigarette butts were observed, coupled with

historical knowledge of the social stigmatization of tobacco use, could effectively illustrate the segregation of smokers from non-smokers, and inferences could be drawn about their respective beliefs about one another. Without historical knowledge of the area, it could be inferred that smoking was done by members of mainstream society, as evidenced by the heavy accumulation of tobacco-related waste. However, with historical knowledge of the tobacco ban, the presence of tobacco waste would illustrate the flouting of societal rules by a marginalized community.

The material evidence present is complicated with respect to indicators of wealth at the site. The high concentration of cigarette butts and such waste as the discarded pack of Newport cigarettes (pictured in Figure 6), suggests that tobacco was a common good available to the general populace. However, with historical knowledge of the inflated price of tobacco products, coupled with excavation revealing the area as an educational institution, would suggest that tobacco items were valued over food items (found in smaller concentrations than cigarette waste), and that such inflation, perhaps with the intention of reducing this behavior, did not affect individuals' smoking habits. Analysis of the types of cigarette and food waste present at the site could indicate the levels of wealth and stratification at the site. Additionally, the accumulation of such waste would also suggest that users of this site were not actively involved in the maintenance of their environment. While most of the artifacts deposited at this site would provide few clues about the racial or ethnic composition of the area, miscellaneous items found, such as an adhesive bandage from Japan, could potentially hint at the area having a multicultural occupation. The distribution and types of artifacts can provide clues about the ideologies of this society. The segregation of smokers and non-smokers illustrates the attitude of the society toward this behavior. The evidence that this behavior continued, even when marginalized and banned, suggests a rebellion against dominant societal rules and beliefs, communicating some level of social turmoil. The accumulation of discarded waste at the site provides clues about the society's relationship to their environment, specifically indicating a neglectful approach.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The perimeter of Peck Hall is a contested and complicated site. In regard to the primary research question ("How are smokers using the perimeter of Peck Hall?"), the data would suggest that smokers are heavily utilizing this area, with these activities being concentrated largely in units east 1-7 with a marked increase over time. This increase could be attributed to the removal of the unauthorized smoking receptacle. There is a gradual increase in all other units, especially in the units with high smoking traffic, but it does not compare to the substantial increase of cigarette waste observed on October 9 and 23 in these units. However, during our first extensive cigarette butt count, the area surrounding the butt bin did not have the greatest concentration. Initially, it was the northeastern corner that had the most substantial cigarette butt waste. This led us to believe that the "butt bin" was having a positive effect in reducing the amount of litter caused by smokers in the area. However, the removal of the smoking receptacle shortly after initial observation leaves us

unprepared to draw conclusions about the impact of said smoking receptacle. Left in place over time, the “butt bin” would have most likely have resulted in a decrease of cigarette related waste throughout the units specified. However, this would not be a feasible solution due to the tobacco ban. Additionally, the presence of a “butt bin” in one localized area has no effect regarding the cigarette waste surrounding the rest of the perimeter of Peck Hall.

Regarding the second research question (“Why do smokers choose to congregate around Peck Hall?”), prior to the Tobacco Ban, individuals at Peck Hall utilized this area as a place to take a smoke break in between classes. With the 2011 tobacco ban, smoking behavior was said to have decreased at the site, though enforcement of the ban has been inconsistent. The researchers have no evidence whether tobacco use decreased, or subsequently increased as a result of rebellious behavior. Yet, with the introduction of an unauthorized smoking receptacle in the southeastern corner, smokers began to congregate in this area primarily. However, upon analysis of the data, it was realized that there was also a heavy concentration of smoking traffic in the northeastern and southwestern corners. This came as a surprise. However, it was understood that the tree coverage at these corners might provide the illusion of privacy, resulting in the more consistent use of these areas for smoking. The southeastern corner also has similar tree coverage, possibly explaining the continued use of this area by smokers after the removal of the butt bin. Alternatively, the placement of the unauthorized smoking receptacle could have been seen as an endorsement of the area as a “designated smoking section” by the smoking population of Peck Hall in spite of the ban, resulting in continued use of the area after the removal of said smoking receptacle.

To further research the site, it would be beneficial to collect and analyze samples from the site. This could provide additional information about the nature of waste at this location, such as what brands are more commonly smoked. The level of decomposition of samples could also indicate how long waste remains at the site. These types of questions could provide more pointed information about social stratification at this site. Surface archaeology could be conducted in conjunction with trash pulls located within the interior breezeway of Peck Hall. Such comparative data would allow for an understanding of what is being thrown away, as opposed to what is being disposed of on the ground.

While tailgating occurs at this site, little material evidence exists to indicate this activity. Thus, material culture at this site suggests weekday use (Monday through Friday), but gives little indication of weekend activities in the observed area (Saturday and Sunday). This is an incomplete picture as tailgating activities are undertaken by a more inclusive segment of the MTSU population. Thus, seeing only weekday litter gives a limited picture of the entirety of “Peck Hall Culture.” The tailgating population could be seen as a temporary migrant community in its influence of Peck Hall. The effect of these activities upon the site is limited. Additionally, waste at this site gives little indication of faculty use. However, pulling the interior trash cans could hint at differences in faculty and staff use of the site. Given that there are faculty offices within the interior floors of Peck Hall, there would most likely be a more visible separation of use found within the data left at the site.

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## **"Everything is Always Happening": Echoes of Faulkner and Warren in Anne Rice's *Blackwood Farm***

*Sarah Gray-Panesi*

### **Abstract**

*This project examines Anne Rice's Blackwood Farm as an addition to the Southern literary canon by considering aspects of the grotesque, as well as concerns with history, family, community, justice, religion, race, land ownership, and social class which proliferate in Southern literature in general. This essay analyses key events from Rice's text, and key works by William Faulkner and Robert Penn Warren in order to examine the extent to which Warren, Faulkner, and Rice share similar themes that reverberate throughout the Southern literary tradition. Finally, this paper argues that Quinn's quest for identity in Rice's Blackwood Farm echoes the journeys of Warren's and Faulkner's protagonists in The Sound and the Fury, Go Down, Moses, and All the King's Men.*

Anne Rice's fiction has been labeled Gothic, Southern Gothic, postmodern, innovative, monstrous, and excessive, and while most scholars are quick to note her reliance on Southern settings, none have discussed her significance as a contributor to the Southern literary tradition. Rice herself, according to biographer Katherine Ramsland, "did not feel she could call herself a Southern writer like McCullers, Faulkner, or Eudora Welty" when she published her first novel, *Interview with the Vampire* in 1977 (190).<sup>1</sup> Rice, who grew up in the South, had lived in California for over a decade at that point, and although she still gravitated toward "issues that typically captured the attention of" Southern writers, it was not until her move to New Orleans in 1989 that she began to identify herself as a Southern author (Ramsland 190). Indeed, with the publication of *The Witching Hour* (1990), Rice's fiction began displaying the profound influence of other Southern writers, a trait Rice herself stated is part of being considered Southern (Ramsland 316). While this influence can be felt in many of her texts, it is perhaps nowhere more poignant than in *Blackwood Farm* (2002). With its central themes of history, family, community, justice, and race, *Blackwood Farm* and Anne Rice both deserve to be considered a part of the Southern literary tradition.

Placing Rice, or any writer, within a given tradition requires at least some outline of that tradition. Richard Gray states in *The Literature of Memory* that "the funereal mansion, the intimations of incest, violence, and miscegenation, the brooding over the past and the desperate attempt to recover some of its memories" are all common themes in Southern writing (260). Indeed, he laments their inherently Gothic nature, falling prey to the belief against which Gothic scholars continually struggle—that Gothic is somehow an inferior mode.<sup>2</sup> One must concede, however, that written in 1977, Gray's study did not have the benefit of more recent scholarship illustrating the profound cultural implications of the Gothic. The literature of the South, in its preoccupations with history and the memory of "horrible deeds" perpetrated on "innocent victims," savors strongly of the Gothic. As Charles L. Crow points out in *American Gothic*, the term "Southern Gothic" has been so much employed that the words have nearly become interchangeable (134). Southern literature, however, is not Gothic, but many of its themes can certainly be employed to Gothic effect. History, family, community, justice, religion, race, land ownership, and social class are all themes with which the Gothic has dealt since Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* (1764). But, placed in a Southern context, they can be employed to almost any end.

To determine precisely where within the scope of the Southern literary tradition Rice's work fits, one must more closely examine her narrative style. Of course her work is Gothic; however, simply labeling her novels Gothic due to their reliance on the supernatural contradicts what actually constitutes the Gothic in America and especially the Southern Gothic. Defining the Gothic has never been a simple task, and delineating the varied strains of Gothic is even less so. In America at least, Crow asserts that "Gothic is no longer defined as a narrow tradition bound by certain props": the generic "clap-trap" of persecuted maidens, Byronic heroes, and hidden doors with which readers are so familiar no longer applies (2).<sup>3</sup> Instead Crow states that "it is now seen as a tradition of oppositional



literature, presenting in disturbing, usually frightening ways, a sceptical [*sic*], ambiguous view of human nature and of history" (2). Crow's argument expands upon Teresa Goddu's earlier groundbreaking study in which she asserts that Gothic, usually classified as "an escapist form," actually "registers its culture's contradictions, presenting a distorted, not a disengaged, version of reality" (2-3). The Gothic in America, rather than fleeing from its cultural concerns, challenges and questions the American Dream and concludes that not only are individuals and society unlikely to attain that Dream, but also that its attainment would be detrimental.

Rice's fiction is Gothic not because of its vampires and witches, but because it "exposes the repressed, what is hidden, unspoken, deliberately forgotten" in American culture (Crow 2). Her fiction could contain no supernatural characters whatsoever and it would still be Gothic by way of its narrative structure. Bette Roberts states in her critical biography, *Anne Rice*, that:

the journey from innocence to experience caused by loss or change that forces Rice's characters' to confront nothingness, the liberation of self that comes through this awareness, and the construction of an individual morality that affirms a human capacity for goodness are what it means to realize the potential of being human. These are the themes in her life and her art. (8)

This journey and the subsequent realizations that arise from it are not dependent upon the character's being a vampire or a witch. Indeed, to suggest that the presence of a supernatural creature in a text automatically delineates that text as Gothic is akin to assuming that because a building has a turret, it must be a castle. Neither case is true. Rice's vampires fit a Southern and American Gothic mode not because they are supernatural, but because they grapple with the "senselessness of existence and serve as metaphors for human beings searching for truths to live by" (Roberts 23). This point is perhaps best proven in the fact that for the majority of Rice's *Blackwood Farm*, vampires are not even mentioned.

Rather than focus on the supernatural in Rice's *Blackwood Farm*, this project examines her novel as an exemplar of the grotesque to elucidate the extent to which Rice writes in the Southern tradition regardless of her supernatural characters. Flannery O'Connor jokes in her essay "The Grotesque in Southern Fiction" that "anything that comes out of the South is going to be called grotesque by the Northern reader, unless it is grotesque, in which case it is going to be called realistic" (40). For our purposes, Crow's description of the grotesque as "the strange, distorted or monstrous, usually as applied to human characters" works nicely (6). The grotesque in recent years has been hyperbolized to the point of ridiculousness, the word usually only being invoked to describe something horribly deformed or monstrous. But acknowledging that grotesque can simply mean "strange," and thereby recognizing its close ties with the uncanny and the numinous is imperative to identifying the characteristics of Southern literature and the Southern Gothic. By this definition, the events witnessed or described by characters such as William Faulkner's Quentin Compson and Ike McCaslin, and Robert Penn Warren's Jack Burden become grotesque in the same way that Flannery

O'Connor's fiction is grotesque. Furthermore, the similarity between Quentin's, Ike's, and Jack's quests for identity and that of Rice's Tarquin Blackwood (Quinn) of *Blackwood Farm* provides the basis upon which I assert that Rice is, indeed, "a Southern writer like McCullers, Faulkner, or Eudora Welty" (Ramsland 190).

While scholars have yet to affirm that Rice works within Southern literary traditions, the framework for such an argument was constructed long ago. Leslie Fiedler's seminal, though dated, *Love and Death in the American Novel* describes a mode of Gothic in which, rather than focusing on the persecuted maiden and her heroic, though ultimately ineffective hero, the narrative centers around the "Stranger," invariably "a disaffected child of the reigning race and class," who has "cut himself out of the community that bred him in a desire to embrace some alien shadow-figure symbolizing the instinctive life despised by his white, Anglo-Saxon parents and his fated white, Anglo-Saxon wife" (362). For Fiedler, this shadow-figure or "shadow-spouse" is usually a dark skinned male such as Melville's Queequeg (365). Fiedler suggests that the Stranger's shadow-spouse is "properly of another race, a race suppressed and denied" (365). In Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses* (1942), Fiedler proposes that Sam Fathers, with his "warriors' and chiefs' blood" as well as his mother's "blood of slaves" becomes Ike McCaslin's shadow-spouse (162). In fact, Fiedler provides a list of exemplary shadow-spouses all in the form of Native Americans, Pacific Islanders, or otherwise "non-white" men. However, by limiting his representative set to male pairs only, he overlooks two of the most "sinister relationships" in the literature available to him (363). In his assertion that the shadow-spouse is a "forbidden erotic object," Faulkner's Caddy in *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) and Warren's Willie Stark in *All the King's Men* (1946) both fit Fiedler's mold regardless the fact that neither of them is "non-white" and only one of them is male (365). When the racial and sexual restrictions inflicted by Fiedler's dated reading are removed, new influential relationships can be detected between otherwise unassociated authors and texts. Applying this "Stranger and Shadow" model, Rice's Goblin in *Blackwood Farm* also becomes a modern representation of Fiedler's shadow-spouse as Quinn becomes the Stranger.

Fiedler's model allows for a much closer examination of Rice's influences than has previously been conducted. While Rice herself has stated that she is "a terrible reader [. . .] I can write about five times faster than I read," Faulkner and Warren's influences have reached her pen, whether directly or not (Rice, *Called* 144). I do not suggest that Rice set out to write *Blackwood Farm* as a literary doppelgänger or even that she took any of the texts discussed here as models for her novel. Rather, I argue that echoes of Faulkner and Warren can be heard in Rice's writing as they can be heard in many other Southern writers' work as well. Instead of reproductions of already familiar scenes, Warren, Faulkner, and Rice share similar themes that reverberate throughout the Southern literary tradition. These thematic similarities show themselves most clearly in the revelations that occur during what becomes a symbolic "reading of the will" in the McCaslin ledgers in Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses*, Quentin's identity-destroying conversation with his father in Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, Warren's "Cass Mastern" section of *All the King's Men*, and Rice's scenes in *Blackwood*

*Farm* in which Quinn discovers Rebecca Stanford's trunk and later hears the actual reading of his grandfather's will. Each of these scenes deal in memory, its persistence, and its ability to mar, irreparably, characters' perceptions of themselves and their ancestors. The thematic similarities between Rice's scenes and Faulkner's and Warren's provide evidence of Southern literature's influence on Rice's writing and serve to place her work within the Southern tradition.

*Blackwood Farm* opens with a letter from Quinn to the infamous Vampire Lestat, requesting his assistance with Goblin, Quinn's spirit doppelgänger, who has haunted him since he was a baby.<sup>4</sup> Since becoming a vampire, Goblin has taken to attacking Quinn after he feeds in order to rob him of some of the blood. Lestat accompanies Quinn to his home, Blackwood Manor, and what follows is Quinn's retelling of his life story complete with psychological, sexual, and vampiric comings of age. Quinn, now 22, has been a vampire for one year, and has lived his entire life on Blackwood Farm raised by his grandmother and grandfather, Sweetheart and Pops, and his great Aunt Queen. Sprinkled throughout the narrative are the rest of his "family": Little Ida, Big Ramona, Lolly, Jasmine, Clem, and other members of the extended African American family who have lived with and worked for the Blackwoods since Manfred, Quinn's great-great-great grandfather, built the mansion in the 1880s. After hearing Quinn's tale, Lestat not only assists Quinn in ridding himself of his spirit, but he also offers to make Quinn's lover, Mona Mayfair, a vampire as well.

While it seems from this short synopsis that the novel is a "vampire tale," only fourteen of the fifty-two chapters actually feature a vampire protagonist. *Blackwood Farm*, according to Rice, "can be seen as two novels trying to break apart from each other: one about the real world of the South as I knew it, with its big families and its unique characters; and the other a supernatural novel about the old themes of being ripped out of the world of grace into the world of darkness against one's will" (Rice, *Called* 199). It is Rice's novel "about the real world of the South" with which this project is concerned. Quinn is mostly sheltered from this "real world" for the better part of his youth until a series of deaths on the farm—his bedfellow Little Ida dies in her sleep, his grandmother Sweetheart dies of cancer, and his beloved tutor Lynelle is killed in a car wreck—inspire in him a simultaneous fear and fascination with death. After his grandmother's funeral, Quinn relates that he "pictured going upstairs to Pops' bedroom, taking his pistol out of the drawer and putting it to my head and pulling the trigger. I thought: 'If you do that, this terror will end'" (Rice, *Blackwood* 146). These melancholy broodings worsen as Quinn wrestles with his fear of death and of being homosexual, and he tries to determine how and if his identity is entangled with that of Goblin, stating, "when I thought of putting the gun to my head, I wondered if one bullet would kill us both" (150). Quinn's preoccupation with sexuality and identity in *Blackwood Farm* reflects this same preoccupation in Faulkner's *Quentin Compson*. Indeed, Quentin's identity is so tied to his sister Caddy's honor—read virginity—that her loss of it literally kills him. Quentin has built his entire identity based on notions of Southern gentility and honor, and his crisis arises when he realizes that these notions are a sham. Quentin ties

his identity as a Southern gentleman to that of his sister as a Southern "Sacred Woman."<sup>5</sup> When Caddy loses her virginity before she is married, Quentin wishes that it could be his virginity instead of hers that was lost, since, according to his father, Jason, "in the South," men are "ashamed of being a virgin. Boys. Men. They lie about it" (Faulkner, *TSF* 112). Quentin is appalled that Caddy's virginity and, by extension, her honor seem to mean nothing to his father: "But to believe it doesn't matter and he said, That's what's so sad about anything: not only virginity and I said, Why couldn't it have been me and not her who is unvirgin and he said, That's why that's sad too; nothing is even worth the changing of it" (Faulkner, *TSF* 50). Quentin's father believes that the notion of Caddy's honor is not even worth wishing for its return. Further complicating Quentin's crisis, his father suggests that, someday, Quentin will feel the same way:

you are not thinking of finitude you are contemplating an apotheosis  
in which a temporary state of mind will become symmetrical above the  
flesh and aware both of itself and of the flesh it will not quite discard you  
will not even be dead and i temporary and he you cannot bear to think  
that someday it will no longer hurt you like this. (Faulkner, *TSF* 112)

Quentin cannot bear the thought that he will eventually come to the belief that Caddy's honor means nothing because if this is true, then Southern gentility as a whole concept, which Quentin's father still upholds when he asserts that "no compson has ever disappointed a lady," is false (Faulkner, *TSF* 113). His identity destroyed, Quentin drowns himself.

Quinn, however, takes an active role in preventing his own suicide. Realizing that he has never explored the attic of Blackwood Manor, Quinn goes forth to seek the distraction that he hopes will save his life. His endeavor proves successful. Once in the attic, he discovers an old steamer trunk with a label in faded ink reading "Rebecca Stanford." A search of the trunk reveals several items, including a "small leather book with lots of pages of writing" (Rice, *Blackwood* 153). This, he discovers, is a book of poetry written by his great-grandmother Camille. Removing the book and several pieces of jewelry draws Rebecca's spirit, who then spurs Quinn on a quest to discover the location of Manfred Blackwood's Hermitage on Sugar Devil Island and thereby avenge her death. Rebecca orders Quinn to "find the island. Find what they did to me," and his search ultimately leads to the vampiric transformation that causes Goblin's violent behavior. When Quinn discovers his ancestor's Hermitage, he realizes that it "had been a house of torture" and that Rebecca and others were brutally murdered there (Rice, *Blackwood* 175). Quinn soon also discovers that from the Hermitage, the scene of so many torturous murders committed by Manfred Blackwood, he can see his own home, Blackwood Manor. The scene of past atrocities located in the very backyard of present life is a metaphor for the South itself, and Quinn's quest and the truths he learns about himself, his family, and his Southern legacy echoes the journeys of some of Southern literature's most famous characters: Warren's and Faulkner's protagonists in *All the King's Men*, *Go Down, Moses*, and *The Sound and the Fury*.

Although Jack Burden's quest does not begin at a ghost's behest, his desire to exhume the "ghosts of the past" drives him to learn the truth about Cass Mastern. Warren's "Cass

Mastern's Wedding Ring," included as the fourth chapter of *All the King's Men*, features Jack Burden describing himself as a younger man and his quest to find out who Cass Mastern was and by extension who he, Jack Burden, is. Readers will note that Rice's narrative structure in *Blackwood Farm* strongly resembles that of Warren's Cass Mastern episode.<sup>6</sup> Jack reads Cass Mastern's story in Cass's journal; as Jack reads the journal, so does Warren's reader. Carol Le Cor suggests that if "Cass Mastern's journal is his way of coming to terms with the burden of Southern history," then Jack Burden's "narration parallels and reiterates that of his ancestor" (128). By telling this story to Jack and in Jack's retelling it to the reader, the "legacy of guilt" associated with the South and slavery is passed on to the reader. Decades later, Rice uses similar tactics to pass Manfred Blackwood's guilt to Quinn. In Quinn's discovery of the truth of his ancestry, the guilt associated with the Southern past is, once again, transferred to the reader.

In Cass's journal, Jack learns the story of Phebe, Annabelle Trice's slave. Annabelle's husband Duncan, after learning of Cass and Annabelle's affair, commits suicide, but he does so in such a way that people conclude that he accidentally shot himself while cleaning his gun. Phebe discovers the truth, so Annabelle sells her "down the river . . . in Paducah, to a man who was making up a coffle of Negroes for New Orleans" (Warren 264). Confused, Cass wonders why Annabelle did not free her instead. Annabelle responds:

She'd stay right here, she wouldn't go away, she would stay right here and look at me. Oh, no, she wouldn't go away, for she's the wife of a man the Motley's have, their coachman. Oh, she'd stay right here and look at me and tell, tell what she knows, and I'll not abide it. (Warren 265)

Annabelle cannot endure not only the tales Phebe might tell, but also, and perhaps especially, the accusing looks of a former slave. Feeling a sense of responsibility for Phebe's plight, Cass decides to track her down and free her. He finds himself at an "inspection," in which white men parade slave women before other white men to be purchased to fill their brothels. What he witnesses disgusts him, and he ends up fighting one of the other men. Cass is ultimately unable to find Phebe, and he comes to refer to himself as the "chief of sinners and a plague spot on the body of the human world.' He would have committed suicide except for fear of damnation for that act" (Warren 273). Cass believes that his actions have resulted not only in his friend's suicide, but also in the living damnation of Phebe, so he spends the remainder of his life in atonement. Cass returns home after the "inspection," and for the next two years "operated his plantation, read the Bible, prayed, and, strangely enough, prospered greatly, almost as though against his will" (Warren 273). He uses his profits to pay his debts and set his slaves free, but he refuses to go North, refuses to move, believing that his example "if it is good . . . is not lost. Nothing is ever lost" (Warren 274). But he soon realizes that he did not free his slaves because they deserved to be free; he freed them "to relieve my spirit of a burden, the burden of their misery and their eyes upon me" (Warren 275). Observing the meaninglessness of his action, he joins the Confederate army as a private, "marching with other men" in order to "partake with them of all bitterness" (Warren 279). Cass is shot and, dying slowly in a hospital after the

Civil War has ended, writes, “It is all over but the dying, which will yet go on” (Warren 281). Jack explains that, in his short life, Cass learned that “the world is like an enormous spider web and if you touch it, however lightly, at any point, the vibration” wakes the spider (Warren 283). Unable to understand, Jack “laid aside the journal and entered upon one of the periods of the Great Sleep” (Warren 284). Rather than live life and risk disturbing the web, Jack retreats. This retreat mirrors Cass’s behavior in the years following his altercation at the “inspection” in that he affects nothing. When Jack wakes from his “Great Sleep,” he turns his back on his own history and goes to work to ensure another man’s legacy, Willie Stark’s, rather than his own.

Just as Jack Burden’s behavior mirrors Cass Mastern’s, so it also reflects Ike McCaslin’s in Faulkner’s *Go Down, Moses*. The truth of Cass Mastern’s past comes to Jack in a manner similar to the way in which Ike McCaslin learns of the historical atrocities committed by his ancestors. Cass writes his journal in an old account book, but it is the actual account contained within Ike’s uncles’ ledgers that reveal his ancestral truths. Richard Godden argues that Ike learns through a series of ledger entries that his grandfather “first rapes the slave Eunice, and then rapes Tomasina, his own daughter by Eunice” (9). As Ike reads the entries describing Eunice’s suicide by drowning, which he believes occurred in response to her daughter’s incestuous rape, “the old frail pages seemed to turn of their own accord even while he thought *His own daughter His own daughter, No No Not even him*” (Faulkner, *GDM* 259). Upon discovering the travesties committed by his ancestors, Ike repudiates his claim on the family farm only to be later convinced by his wife to take it back. Years later, long after Ike believes the “family curse” of incest and miscegenation has been broken, he learns that his nephew’s pregnant mistress is a descendant of the offspring of the original incestuous union that spurred his initial repudiation of his farm. Ike then realizes that, in the South, history, memory, and family will not be denied, and can never be forgotten, no matter how hard one may try to flee.

Rice’s Quinn learns all too quickly Jack Burden’s and Ike McCaslin’s lessons regarding Southern memory’s persistence and insistence, though her treatment of this motif relies less on old books and written word than do Warren’s or Faulkner’s. The book of poems Quinn finds with the jewelry in Rebecca’s chest is a catalyst to allow Rebecca to appear and tell her own story, and Quinn becomes an active participant in Rebecca’s storytelling rather than simply a passive reader. Rice’s manipulation of the revelatory scene, however, rather than pulling her novel away from Southern literary traditions, actually serves further to reinforce its tie to them. In Rebecca’s retelling of her story, Quinn and the reader experience the same sense of “time out of time” felt in Warren’s and Faulkner’s texts discussed here. Just as Ike muses that his buck “still and forever leaps” (Faulkner, *GDM* 171), and Jack Burden asserts that “all times are one time” (Warren 342), Rebecca reminds Quinn that “everything is always happening all the time” (Rice, *Blackwood Farm* 157). Furthermore, just as Ike and Jack’s examinations of the past serve to destroy their notions of their own Southern histories, so Quinn’s detours with Rebecca nearly serve to destroy his ancestral home.

While Quinn learns of Rebecca and her fate from a series of supernatural journeys into the past, he learns of his more recent ancestor's transgressions from the reading of his grandfather Pops's will. After doling out inheritances, the Blackwood's attorney, Grady Breen, shares that before he died, Pops informed him that the infamous Terry Sue of Louisiana backwoods fame, fertile to a fault, "had a child by Pops about nine years ago" while his wife Sweetheart was still alive (Rice, *Blackwood* 284). Pops allowed this child to live in squalor, providing a pittance of an annuity to the single mother of six children in the amount of five hundred dollars a week. Quinn and his Aunt Queen agree with Breen that they should "equalize things" by ensuring that all the children are taken care of, but Aunt Queen requests a written report of the circumstances to set up the arrangement. Breen responds, "No, I wouldn't do it in writing, Miss Queen . . . I wouldn't put anything in writing at all" (Rice, *Blackwood* 285). By putting this incident down in writing, the Blackwoods would be perpetuating the cycle set in motion by the McCaslins and Masterns of old: ensuring a record of past atrocities which can then be brought to bear upon future generations; however, not putting it in writing—attempting to hide the truth of the situation from the world—is what has allowed a relatively harmless situation to become an atrocity. While conceiving a child out of wedlock or by an affair is certainly not on a level with slavery or incest, the manner in which Pops, a man with hundreds of millions of dollars at his disposal, allowed the child to live is atrocious. Additionally, Breen informs Quinn and Aunt Queen that Terry Sue's "new man" beats the children. Readers learn later that it is actually Terry Sue herself who beats them, but the fact that "Pops knew of this sort of thing and did nothing about it" causes "a gloom" and a "feeling of unrest" to fall over Quinn, and he wonders what his grandfather had wanted from life (Rice, *Blackwood* 286-7). Quinn realizes that he has to make his life "greater" than Pops's had been or he would lose his mind: "I felt pursued by the pressure of life itself. I felt frantic" (Rice, *Blackwood* 287). When Quinn learns that Pops named his son after himself, even as he otherwise attempted to hide him from the world:

My mood grew even darker. Who was I to judge Pops, I thought. Who was I to judge the man who had just left me so much wealth and who might have done otherwise? Who was I to judge him that he had left little Tommy Harrison in such a situation? But it weighed on me. And it weighed on me that Patsy's character had perhaps been shaped by her lifelong struggle against a man who did not believe in her. (Rice, *Blackwood* 287)

Quinn questions everything he used to believe about his grandfather and finds himself disillusioned. Quinn's "daze about the newfound uncle and Pops's wealth" is the same daze in which Ike McCaslin and Jack Burden find themselves and which lead to Ike's repudiation of his legacy and Jack's "Great Sleep." Just as the pages of the McCaslin ledgers "seemed to turn of their own accord" (Faulkner, *GDM* 259) and Jack "must tell about the first excursion into the enchantments of the past" (Warren 236), so Quinn is forced to hear his grandfather's legacy, which will forever change his worldview.

However, unlike Ike, Quinn does not repudiate his legacy, and unlike Jack, Quinn does not fall into a “Great Sleep.” When he returns from the reading of the will, Quinn sees Rebecca’s wicker furniture, a reminder of history’s insistence on not being forgotten, and he realizes that he cannot flee or hide from what he has learned. Quinn realizes that trying to keep the “family secret” will serve only to destroy the family it is meant to protect and determines to welcome Pop’s son, Tommy, into the Blackwood family and proclaim him to the world instead.

This acceptance and advertisement of family scandal is exactly the opposite of how Faulkner’s Quentin Compson chooses to deal with his sister Caddy’s loss of virginity before marriage. Unlike Quinn, Quentin tries “to isolate her [Caddy] out of the loud world so that it would have to flee us of necessity” by making a claim of incest to his father (Faulkner, *TSF* 112). Quentin believes that he can keep his sister’s honor intact by sacrificing his own, as a proper Southern gentleman should do. However, as his father disabuses him of the myth of Southern honor and gentility that Quentin has come to identify with, Quentin approaches a crisis not unlike those faced by Ike, Jack, and Quinn. However, as Gretchen Martin points out in her essay, “Quentin’s dilemma is fixed between a romantic ideal and the real, but rather than examine the real, he continuously attempts to recover, or at least find compensation for the ideal” (Martin 58). Quentin, rather than taking action based on the destruction of his notions of Southern gentility and honor, attempts, and fails repeatedly, to reconstruct them and with them his own identity. Because Quentin is never able to patch his emotional wounds by taking action, he reaches a “psychological impasse that ends in his suicide” (Martin 58).

Quinn’s formation of identity is equally as romantic as Quentin’s, especially in his conception of honor; however, because he responds to his crisis with action instead of inaction, affirmation rather than negation, he is able to move past the destruction of his genteel Southern ideals and construct an identity based in reality rather than idealism. Quinn guides Lestat, himself, and the reader through the legacy of pain, horror, beauty, and wonder that is the American South and illustrates that while the South and its inhabitants may never escape history, rather than attempting to flee, or hide from it, they can embrace it and in doing so, move forward. In Quinn’s struggles with history, memory, and family, Rice demonstrates that, Gothic or not, supernatural or not, her fiction is distinctly Southern.



## Notes

- 1 Southern literature, or the Southern literary tradition, is usually defined as literature about the American South, written by writers from the region that typically includes North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Virginia, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Writers such as Carson McCullers, William Faulkner, and Eudora Welty as mentioned here are usually named to exemplify Southern writing.
- 2 Gothic literature has historically been considered an inferior mode due to its "popular" nature; however, scholars in the last two decades have offered compelling arguments for the genre that highlight Gothic's influence on canonical writing from the Romantic period to today. See for example David Punter's *A New Companion to the Gothic*, Fred Botting's *Gothic*, and the University of Wales ongoing *Gothic Literary Studies* series.
- 3 See especially Maggie Kilgour's *The Rise of the Gothic Novel*, Robert Miles' *Gothic Writing*, and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions* for listings of recurrent Gothic tropes.
- 4 Rice introduced the Vampire Lestat in her first novel *Interview with the Vampire*, and he has since been the protagonist of all but a handful of her vampire chronicles.
- 5 Sacred Womanhood was an ideal held up throughout the US until the end of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth; however, it was perhaps nowhere more strongly adhered to than in the South. The "ideal" woman was pious, pure, submissive, and domestic. Her job was to preside over her household and ensure her husband's contentment. See for example Barbara Welter's *The Cult of True Womanhood*.
- 6 Both Warren's Cass Mastern Episode and Rice's *Blackwood Farm* are constructed as frame narratives. The reader joins the protagonist in the present, and then accompanies him as he tells a story of the past, and finally returns with him, again, to the present and the conclusion of the narrative.

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## **Invisible Americans: Exploring Asian Parents' Perception about School Discrimination in the U.S.**

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### **Abstract**

*As American schools have become increasingly diverse, school-based discrimination toward immigrant students has gained wide scholarly attention. While Asian Americans are the second fastest-growing racial group in the nation and need closer attention, the study of Asian Americans has been limited, perhaps because of a "model minority" misconception.*

*The present study explores school-based discrimination toward Asian American students in the U.S., as perceived by their parents. The data was collected using three means: (1) preliminary content analysis of Korean American parents' community weblogs, (2) self-reported structured questionnaire surveys, and (3) in-depth personal interviews. The survey participants were 67 Korean American parents in the U.S. Eight of those 67 participants were interviewed.*

*The results show that Korean American parents perceive discrimination by school staff, unfair punishment, and improper handling of complaints. Examining Asian parents' perceptions of their children's educational experiences provides a unique view of the challenges faced by Asian American youth and insight into possible interventions schools could put in place to reduce discrimination and to enhance immigrant students' well-being and academic achievement.*

## **Introduction**

American schools are becoming more diverse racially and culturally. According to census data for 1940 to 1960, non-white students accounted for only 11-12% of the total enrollment. By 1996, non-white enrollment was at 36%, and by 2020, the population of minority students is expected to reach 46% in public schools in the U.S. (Ford & Harris, 1999). Asian Americans are the second fastest-growing racial group in the nation, growing 63.24% from 1990-2000, and recent data projected almost one in ten residents will be of Asian descent by 2050 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004).

Surprisingly, Asian American issues have gained little attention (Nakanishi, 1988; Ong, 2000). The common “model minority” misconception depicts Asian Americans as educationally successful, overrepresented in higher education, and generally a “successful or model minority” (Hacker, 1992; Takagi, 1992). This myth creates a significant barrier to understanding the depth of discrimination against Asian Americans (Chow, 2011).

Asian students do, in fact, face discrimination and unequal treatment in educational settings (Teranishi, 2002). Recent empirical literature on discrimination issues of Asian American high school students (Fischer, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000), Asian American college students (Lee, 2003; Liang, Li, & Kim, 2004), and Chinese American college students (Ying, Lee, & Tsai, 2004) provide clear empirical support to the finding that perceived discrimination has a negative impact on mental health. School-based discrimination, especially, has been found adversely to affect academic achievement among minority children in general (Fischer et al., 2000) and children of immigrants in particular (Padilla & Duran, 1995; Stone & Han, 2005; Szalacha et al., 2003), including those of Asian descent (Fist & Carrera, 1988; Olsen, 1988). Because of the importance of academic achievement for higher education and a student’s future life, Asian American students’ experiences at school need to be adequately examined (Farkas, 1996).

Among the 50 distinct Asian American ethnic groups, Korean Americans are one of the fastest growing. Approximately 1.1 million Korean Americans lived in the United States at the time of the 2001 census (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2001). One-third of this population was made up of children and adolescents. The rapid growth of the Korean American population and the limited study of this group also demonstrate the need for more scholarly attention.

Thus, the present study is to explore school-based discrimination toward Korean American students, as perceived by their parents. Although it is important to distinguish between perceived and actual discrimination, how an individual perceives his or her environment may be more important than “objective reality,” in that one’s perceptions will influence how one responds to the environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). If parents perceive unfair treatment, then that perception could be their reality (Marcus et al., 1991).

Recognizing the importance of the above issues, the following research questions are formulated:

RQ1. What type of school-based discrimination toward their children do Korean parents perceive?

RQ2. According to the parents' perspective, how does perceived school-based discrimination impact Korean American students?

Korean Americans tend to place young immigrants into two different categories. The "1.5 generation" (*ilchomose* in Korean) refers to Koreans who immigrated in childhood or adolescence with their parents, having been educated both in Korea and in America (Hurh, 1998), while "second-generation" refers to those who were born in the U.S. to Korean parents. Since second generation children generally have more competence in the English language and American culture than 1.5ers, many people assume that they would be less likely to experience discrimination in school. However, many Asians are still perceived as foreigners, no matter how many generations their families have lived in the U.S. (Mineta, 1997). Thus, the following research question is formulated:

RQ3. How does the level of perceived discrimination vary between U.S.-born students ("second generation") and immigrant students ("1.5ers")?

### **Methods & Procedures**

The present study used three means of data collection to address the research questions: (1) preliminary analysis of the content of Korean American parents' community weblogs, (2) self-reported structured questionnaire surveys, and (3) in-depth follow-up personal interviews.

#### ***Preliminary Content Analysis***

Two major Korean American parents' community weblogs (*missyusa.com* and *mizville.com*) were selected and content-analyzed, specifically the sections where parents share their children's school experiences. The purpose of this analysis was to find common issues of school discrimination among Korean Americans arising in public schools. In terms of parent testimonials, the authors could focus more on issues that are closer to the reality of Korean Americans. While researchers must have some reservations about taking websites as truthful records because one cannot verify the accuracy of the web contents or the identity of the writers, blogs do fascinatingly allow researchers to examine and enter a new realm of communication and self-representation (Ibrahim, 2006). The author chose these two particular websites because they are widely known among Korean American parents and they allow members only after strict identity confirmation procedures.

Any cases of perceived school-based discrimination posted on the two websites between January and December 2008 have been selected and content-analyzed for this study. During this period, a total of 40 parents posted on these two websites their experiences of school-based discrimination and racial incidents toward their children at

schools. Following standard practice for deriving emic categories/patterns (Miller et al., 2003), the authors reviewed and re-reviewed the 40 posted testimonials. Then the data were grouped into common categories based on emerging themes. In case of contradictory and ambiguous themes, the authors discussed and refined the themes based on mutual agreement. The data was originally written in Korean, and the major themes were translated into English. Common major themes found included unequal treatment, unfair grading, and unfair disciplinary action. All these themes were used to design survey and interview questions. In addition, important cases were also presented in the result section.

### ***Questionnaire survey***

Because of the difficulty of obtaining a reliable complete list of Korean immigrants in the area, this study employed convenience sampling combined with a snowball technique to recruit participants. The investigator contacted Korean church leaders and parents in the central Tennessee area and asked them to encourage participation in the study. Upon the participants' written consent, the questionnaires were administered and collected by the investigator in person. The respondents were then asked to suggest other potential participants for the survey. In total, 100 questionnaires were administered and 67 were returned, resulting in a 67% return rate.

Out of these 67 parents, 25 were male (37.3%), 40 were female (59.7%), and two did not answer the question about gender (3.0%). Of the 67 children, 40 were male (59.7%) and 27 were female (40.3%). The average parents' age was 41.92 years (SD = 5.43), while the average age of the children was 11.64 years (SD = 4.04). Thirty-one of the children were born in the U.S. (46.3%), while 36 were not born in the U.S. (53.7%). In the case of the children who were not born in the U.S., the average age when the child first came to the U.S. was 7.17 years (SD = 4.78).

The survey questionnaire was originally written in English and was translated into Korean by a Korean American bilingual interpreter. Then, following Brislin's (1980) suggestion, the Korean language version was *back-translated* into English again by the bilingual interpreter to ensure equivalence of meanings across the two language systems. In all cases, the respondents chose to complete the Korean version. It took 25-30 minutes to complete the survey.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section included nine items assessing perceived school-based discrimination (e.g., unequal treatment, unfair grading, and disciplinary action). Three items about unfair disciplinary action and unfair treatment were adapted from the study of Ruck and Wortly (2002) and modified. The rest of the items were created by the investigator after consulting with other parents prior to the research and based on prior preliminary content analysis. The format was a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree); the smaller number indicated a higher degree of perceived unfair treatment or school discrimination. There were three open-ended questions, dealing with whether parents had perceived any discrimination,

more details about it, and how they dealt with those issues. The last part of the survey was comprised of the personal demographics section for both parents and children.

### ***In-depth Personal Interviews***

The questionnaire survey was followed by in-depth personal interviews of eight of the participants, based on their availability. The average age of the interviewees was 47.4 years old (SD = 2.61; range 44-52 years). Two interviewees were male, and six were female. All interviews were conducted by the author in Korean. The shared background of the interviewer with the interviewees (same ethnic origin and experience of having school-aged children of Asian minority) helped to draw more frank and candid opinions. All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed in their entirety with the consent of the interviewees. Among the topics covered in the interview were open-ended interview questions that dealt with types of perceived discrimination toward their children, any effects of those discriminatory actions, and the parents' reaction. Based on the responses, follow-up questions were used to elicit specific incidents, typical experiences, and their reflections on the issues.

In analyzing the qualitative interview data, the same procedure was used as with the weblog content analysis. All of the questions and responses to open-ended questions were transcribed in their entirety by the investigator and then were grouped into common categories based on emerging themes. Before being presented, the findings from the Korean interviews were translated back into English by the investigator and verified by a Korean bilingual.

## **Results**

Upon grouping the results of the preliminary weblog content analysis, the questionnaire surveys, and the in-depth interviews, three major themes developed, namely unfair treatment by school staff, disproportionate disciplinary action, and improper handling of complaints/injuries. To analyze the difference between the experiences of U.S.-born children ("second generation") and non-U.S.-born children ("1.5ers"), a crosstab analysis was conducted. The analysis showed no significant difference between these two groups for all three issues.

### ***Unfair Treatment by School Staff***

The most common type of discrimination perceived by parents of Asian American students dealt with what they saw as unfair treatment by teachers and other school staff.

In the survey, all five questions regarding unequal treatment of Asian students showed significant agreement by the parents, ranging from 22.4% ("diminishing students' accomplishments") up to 40.3% ("unwillingness to give a referral to gifted program"). In response to the open-ended questions, 14 parents (20.9%) disclosed the specific type of treatment, and seven of them described it as unequal opportunities.

Eight parents out of 31 who had U.S.-born children showed agreement that they perceived unfair treatment, while 10 out of 36 parents who have non-U.S.-born children

reported the same experience (Pearson  $X^2(13, N=67) = 16.3, p = .23$ ). This finding suggests that there is no significant difference between perceived discrimination toward Korean American students who came to the U.S. at an earlier age (“1.5ers”) and those who were born in the U.S. (“second generation”).

The personal interviews revealed cases of unfair treatment. One interviewee explains:

When my son was in high school, the counselor was not kind at all. If my son had questions, the counselor would say that he didn't need to know. The counselor acted like the student could not even approach him, but he was very kind to others [white students].

Another interviewee reported her experience:

When we asked if my daughter was eligible for the gifted program, the teacher said that my child would get into the program if her grades were good enough. However the teacher did not even look at my child's grade or score; neither did she explain what the criteria were. Later in another school, my child was admitted into the gifted program.

A respondent explains her child's experience of perceived unfair grading:

The teacher gave a zero twice because she could not find my child's assignment. However, my child was sure about turning in the assignment. Even my child's classmates saw her turn it in.

The same respondent describes how the teacher alienated her daughter:

The teacher treated my child as a total stranger....as stupid and incapable.... She once cried during school [after mistreatment by another student], and the teacher stated that in American culture, you are only allowed to cry when your parents die.... The teacher would not listen to my child's story. She only listened to the other student's versions of the story.

One interviewee reports unequal treatment regarding school athletic activities:

My son was recommended for American League baseball because he had talent. Even though his credentials had been evidenced by this objective criteria, he didn't even make the school baseball team.... He was very disappointed, hurt, and lost interest in sports for the rest of his school days.

In the blog, two cases of unequal treatment are presented here:

My middle school student C's teacher doesn't like Korean students, especially those who study hard. Whenever C asked a question of the teacher, she ignored it or said “I'm too busy to answer.” When C asked for her grade, the teacher said she couldn't answer that. But a few seconds later, white students asked for their grades and she answered them all one by one.

When D ran for vice president in his school he had to give a speech. All the kids made a video of their speech. However, when D made and gave



it, they played all of them except for D's. The teacher said that she was sorry and had forgotten. The teacher said that his homeroom teacher would later play it in class, but he didn't give it to the homeroom teacher, so the homeroom teacher was unable to play it.

### ***Disproportionate Disciplinary Action***

A second major theme dealt with parents' perceptions that their children had received harsher punishment than non-Asian students.

In the survey, in response to related survey questions, 17 parents (25.4%) indicated that they perceived heavier punishment being given to Asian students, and 16 parents (23.9%) felt that lighter punishment was given to white students, specifically. On the open-ended questions, among the 14 parents who explained what type of unfair treatment they perceived, seven described it as unfair disciplinary action toward their children.

Seven parents who have U.S.-born children reported that they had experienced this, while 11 parents of non-U.S.-born children reported unfair/disproportionate disciplinary action (Pearson  $X^2(15, N = 67) = 11.76, p = .69$ ). This shows that there is no significant difference between perceived discrimination toward Korean American students who came to the U.S. at an earlier age ("1.5ers") and those who were born in the U.S. ("second generation").

In the personal interviews, the same sentiment about unfair discipline was revealed, as one parent described:

My child was in Kindergarten and was going to music class in a portable. The door shut before he got to it, and he was unable to open it. The music teacher did nothing about the other children's comments of 'K is not here.' For the entire class period K was outside, unable to get in. When the substitute teacher came to pick up the class and found him outside, she immediately sent him to the guidance counselor. The counselor was under the assumption that K had "boycotted music class" and refused to go in, so she gave him a stern talk.

Another incident of unfair punishment is reported as such:

For several weeks a student was bothering my child by pulling his shirt and kicking his foot. The student hit my child's stomach so he hit back in self-defense, but the school only gave my child ISS.

In the blog, a parent reported:

During lunch hour, B and friends played cards. They were a group of Koreans with one white student. They all received ISS except for the white student, even though the white student had brought cards also.

### ***Improper Handling of Complaints/Injuries***

The third major issue involved schools not properly handling Asian students' mistreatment by other students.

In the surveys, nine parents (13.4%) agreed with a question about unfair handling of personal injury to Asian students, and 23 parents (34.3%) showed their agreement regarding a lack of concern for minority students' safety.

In the personal interview, findings also revealed cases of Asian students being injured at school and the school handling the case improperly or unfairly. One parent mentions his experience:

My child was playing basketball and jumped up for a shot. He was intentionally pushed in the back by another student, fell head-first onto the asphalt, and scraped up his face. The teacher came over and even received evidence from a kindergarten parent (who had been watching) that he had been intentionally pushed. For some reason, the school nurse was not available and the school only called the student's father's office but did not leave any messages. They did not try to call home, although that was one of three emergency contact numbers in the student's records. Later, the school downplayed the incident in its accident report to the school board. Also, the school did not even punish the child who pushed my son.

Another parent also reported an incident of injury:

During PE class, my child was playing basketball and was hit with a ball and broke his glasses. However, my child wasn't sent to the school nurse, and no notification ever reached us [the parents].

The limited number of these cases reported is reflective of the common Asian cultural trait of "saving face." The author (himself Asian) assumes that the parents felt that such experiences would reflect negatively on their children. Also, limited English ability might be another factor that discouraged them from raising their concerns with the school authorities.

In the blog, only one case was described (in the time period that was analyzed), saying that the school did not take any steps when the parent reported that her son had been called "idiot" and other bad names all semester long.

### ***Effects of the Discrimination***

The parents in this study reported adverse effects on their children's confidence, self-image, and academic/activity goals. Most Asian immigrant students come from racially homogeneous countries and, therefore, may find being discriminated against very confusing (Levy-Warren, 1996), which magnifies the negative impacts.

In the personal interviews, one parent who experienced a teacher's unfair treatment, explained how the case affected his child's self-esteem:

My daughter once said to me, "Dad, I never realized that I was smart, I thought I was just an average student." I was shocked and was able to see how discriminating teachers can seriously influence the lower self-esteem of my child.

The parents felt it serious enough that they eventually transferred their daughter to another school.

Another parent who experienced unfair treatment in the area of athletic activity also commented about the effect on his future goal:

Later, I realized that it made a really serious impact on my son's life...  
He was very disappointed, hurt, and lost interest in sports for the rest of his school days.

In case of unfair disciplinary action, one father said it "took quite some time and energy for the child to recover from the shock."

### **Discussion**

The present study examined Korean parents' perceived discrimination toward their children in school settings. Preliminary analysis of Korean American parents' weblogs, surveys, and personal interviews were used to collect the data. In contrast to the notion that Asian Americans are free from discrimination, the findings reveal that Korean American parents perceive prevalent and varying types of school-based discrimination toward their children.

Regarding perceived patterns of discrimination, the most significant form of discrimination was found to be "unwillingness" to give referrals to the gifted program; 27 participants (41.5%) out of 67 parents reported this problem. This finding is consistent with existing literature indicating that children of color are underrepresented in gifted education programs (Ford & Harris, 1999) while being overrepresented in special education programs (Artiles & Trent, 1994; Harry & Anderson, 1994).

Failure to give correct grades and/or recognition to Asian students was also revealed, which could be an example of Luken's (1978) theory of communicative distances between majority (dominant) and minority (non-dominant) groups. Luken illustrates that when the majority group sees a serious threat from an ethnic minority group which succeeds in higher achievements than the dominant group (e.g., academic performance, position, and status), the majority group tends to display "disparagement," which is related to intense ethnocentrism, ethnophobia, and belittling/deriding outgroup members (refer to Luken (1978)).

Regarding disproportionate disciplinary action, the present findings suggest that Korean American students sometimes receive harsher disciplinary action than white students do. This is consistent with a study suggesting zero-tolerance policies are applied inequitably to ethnic/racial minority students (e.g., Verdugo, 2002). Research shows that there are many instances of disproportionate discipline issues involving minority students ("Opportunities suspended," 2000; Skiba, 2000; Cartledge, Johnson, & Tillman, 2001; Ruck & Wortley, 2002). Ethnic/racial minority students have higher numbers of office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions than do whites (Koch, 2000; Mendez, Knoff & Ferron, 2002). While a white, middle-class youth caught in possession of drugs is likely to be referred to

counseling and rehabilitation, an immigrant youth convicted of the same offense is likely to be deported (e.g., Suarez-Orozco, 2000, p.22).

Regarding improper handling of complaints/injuries, in the cases of personal injuries presented here, the interview findings indicate the lack of interest of school authorities for minority students' well-being. Research also shows that schools tend not to pay attention to immigrant students, their parents or their needs (Lee, 2006; Cabrera, 2006). Even if parents complain, some issues are never resolved (Louie, 2001).

Regarding the effects of this perceived discrimination, the parents in this study clearly reported negative impacts on their children. Studies suggest that perceived discrimination has been related to violent behavior (Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, Scheelk-Cone, Chavous & Zimmerman, 2004), substance use (Gibbons et al., 2004), and increased depression levels and reduced academic achievement in early adolescence (Ying & Han, 2006). Particularly, improper disciplinary action of schools can ruin minority students' academic careers ("Opportunities suspended," 2000).

Contrary to the researcher's expectations, the findings of the present study showed no significant difference between perceived discrimination toward Korean American students who came to the U.S. at an earlier age ("1.5ers") and those who were born in the U.S. ("second generation"). Since second-generation immigrants generally have more language competence and cultural assimilation and therefore should be more accepted into the dominant society, this finding is interesting and needs revisiting in future research.

### ***Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research***

The present study explored school-based discrimination toward Asian minority students as perceived through the eyes of their parents. Because of the exploratory nature of the study, with the small sample size (67 survey participants and 8 interviews), the present findings are to be interpreted and generalized with some caution. Future research would be richer if it involved a larger sample size and surveys/interviews with Asian students themselves. Future study could also be expanded to other Asian minority groups (e.g., Japanese, Chinese, or Laotian).

### ***Practical Considerations for Multicultural School Settings***

By examining Korean American students' educational experiences at school through their parents' responses, the present study provides a unique view of the challenges they face and a better understanding of the attitudes of Asian parents and students towards public education. This exploratory study will prompt further research of the overlooked ("invisible") Asian population and will provide insights into possible interventions schools could put in place to reduce discrimination and to enhance Asian minority students' well-being and academic achievement. Only when educators understand how Asian students' experiences affect their quality of life and learning at school can they take pedagogically sensitive actions to help the Asian children become successful members of the school community.

Schools can do two things to tackle these issues. First, districts should provide more cultural sensitivity training for school staff and students to reduce prejudice toward minority students. Second, schools need to establish more services for minority students so that their needs and concerns could be heard and handled properly. This could include, for example, a social worker or counselor specifically assigned to minority students.

### **Conclusion**

The present study shows that Asian minority students are frequently underserved because they are overlooked, prompting the term “invisible Americans.” Educators often fail to provide effective interventions to Asian American students, assuming they are well adjusted and do not face racism like other minority groups. All students should be able to have faith in school systems’ seeing that justice is served and should be given proper respect and protection from any harmful factors, regardless of their ethnic/racial backgrounds.

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## **Fallen Faith: Satan as Allegory in Milton's *Paradise Lost***

*Margaret Johnson*

### **Abstract**

*In Paradise Lost, Satan falls from the heavenly spheres, plunging through nightmarish limbo for nine days, and landing in the depths of Hell. Yet, prior to his descent into Hell, Satan belonged in Heaven, an archangel named Lucifer, a rational and perfect being created by God. John Milton depicts him as a powerful angelic being; as Archangel Raphael tells Adam, Lucifer is "of the first, / If not the first Arch-Angel, great in Power, / In favor and preeminence" (I.659-660). Lucifer dwells in heavenly paradise, where angels dance and sing, drink "rubied Nectar" and eat "Angels' Food" (V.633), and live on verdant lands covered with flowers and "delicious Vines, the growth of Heav'n" (V.635). So why would this favored angel choose to deny his Creator?*

*In Raphael's elucidation to Adam about Satan's fall, we learn that God favors his mighty Archangel Lucifer but not as much as His begotten Son, whom God anoints Messiah. God decrees that all heavenly beings must bow before His Son "and shall confess him Lord" (V.607-8). Milton renders Lucifer as envious, with a hardened heart, one who refuses to bow before the Son, and by extension, God, his Creator. By denying God, Lucifer seals his doom and is cast from Heaven, "Ordain'd without redemption, without end" (V.615). While it may appear that the Satan of Paradise Lost is destined to be banished from Heaven—to be used by God as a tool, if you will, to effect the salvation of the world in Christ—another conception of Satan's role exists. Milton uses the Satan character to argue against the prevailing Calvinist doctrine of his time—double predestination—and to espouse the less damning Arminian model of predestination, thus making Satan an allegory for a fallen faith in God.*

*That with reiterated crimes he might  
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought  
Evil to others, and enrag'd might see  
How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth  
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shown  
On Man by him seduc't, but on himself  
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd.*  
(*Paradise Lost* I.214-220)

**I**n *Paradise Lost*, Satan falls from the heavenly spheres, plunging through nightmarish limbo for nine days, and landing in the depths of Hell, where

[. . .] now the thought  
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain  
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes  
That witness'd huge affliction and dismay  
Mixt with obdurate pride and steadfast hate. (I.54-58)

Yet, prior to his descent into Hell, Satan belonged in Heaven, an archangel named Lucifer, a rational and perfect being created by God. John Milton depicts him as a powerful angelic being; as Archangel Raphael tells Adam, Lucifer is “of the first, / If not the first Arch-Angel, great in Power, / In favor and preeminence” (I.659-660). Lucifer dwells in heavenly paradise, where angels dance and sing, drink “rubied Nectar” and eat “Angels’ Food” (V.633), and live on verdant lands covered with flowers and “delicious Vines, the growth of Heav’n” (V.635). So why would this favored angel choose to deny his Creator and suffer in Hell for eternity?

Some readers of *Paradise Lost* believe Satan’s purpose, his destiny if you will, is to be banished from Heaven in order to be used by God as a tool to effect the salvation of the world in Christ, but another conception of Satan’s role exists. In Raphael’s elucidation to Adam about Satan’s fall, we learn that God favors his mighty Archangel Lucifer, but not as much as His begotten Son, whom God anoints Messiah. God decrees that all heavenly beings must bow before His Son “and shall confess him Lord” (V.607-8). Milton renders Lucifer as envious, with a hardened heart, one who refuses to bow before the Son, and by extension, God, his Creator. By denying God, Lucifer seals his doom and is cast from Heaven, “Ordain’d without redemption, without end” (V.615). So in his epic poem, Milton uses the Satan character to argue against the prevailing Calvinist doctrine of his time—double predestination—and to espouse the less damning Arminian model of predestination, thus making Satan an allegory for a fallen faith in God.

Puritan Milton lived in a highly religious time, but one fraught with deep divisions within Protestantism, for he was born less than 100 years after Martin Luther challenged the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church; denied the Papacy; and circulated his famous treatises that emphasized faith and grace over works. In those turbulent years of the Reformation, numerous ecclesiastical men struggled to distinguish elements of Protestant

belief to form a “proper” doctrine. Luther identified one aspect of the Christian faith—predestination—that would later become not only a doctrinal vexation in seventeenth-century England but a political one as well.

Predestination generally can be defined as “the divine decree according to which certain persons are infallibly guided to eternal salvation” (“Predestination”). Predestination presupposes that God’s will alone determines one’s salvation. St. Augustine asserted that man’s mind could not comprehend God’s divinity, nor could he fully understand how or why God chose those for salvation; therefore, man must trust in the mystery of predestination and have confidence that God’s choice, “nevertheless, is made in perfect justice.” Luther agreed with St. Augustine’s tenet but added the dictum of the total depravity of man, in essence decreeing that God predestined some for salvation and some for damnation. This became known as double predestination (“Predestination”). Other churchly men formulated their own reformed theologies of predestination, among them Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin. But it was Calvin’s theology that “proved for several generations the driving force of the Reformation in parts of Germany, France, Hungary, the Netherlands, England and Scotland” (“Reformation”).

England embraced Calvinism, which is also known as Reformed theology, and its doctrine of double predestination. Historian Peter White asserts that Calvinism became the “‘theological cement’ which held the Elizabethan and Jacobean church together” (1). Yet schisms in doctrine occurred within Calvinism itself, creating supralapsarian and sublapsarian believers. Supralapsarians believed that “God decreed the election and non-election of individual men *before* the Fall of Adam” (“Supralapsarian”). Sublapsarian believers stated that God’s decree came *after* the Fall of Adam (“Sublapsarian”). Milton, as we shall see, believed in the supralapsarian concept of predestination. And the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries saw even more dramatic doctrinal controversies centering on Reformed theology’s doctrine of double predestination, resulting in nothing less than political shifts in both the English monarchy and parliament.

During this time, the writings of Dutch Reformed theologian Jacobus Arminius gave rise to what has become known as Arminianism. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, Arminius began to question the theological interpretations of Calvin, especially those about double predestination; Arminius’ ideas became doctrine only after his death. Put simply, Arminians renounced the “deterministic logic of Calvinism,” instead decreeing “that the Divine sovereignty was compatible with a real human free will.” And as can be seen throughout *Paradise Lost*, Milton fully embraces this Arminian view of free will—man chooses whether to sin or not. As to predestination, Arminian believers proclaimed that Christ died for all, not just the elect, and that no person was predestined to damnation; Milton also rejected the Calvinist concept of some people being predestined to Hell while others were chosen for Heaven. Followers of Arminian doctrine further contended that both the supralapsarian and sublapsarian notions of predestination were not biblically based (“Arminianism”). Here, Milton parted ways with Arminianism because, as will be detailed later, he believed in the supralapsarian concept of predestination

insofar as God's edict occurred prior to the Fall. To contemporary thinkers, Arminianism represents a kinder, gentler Protestantism, but to Calvinists living in early seventeenth-century England, Arminianism was heresy.

Despite its status as heresy, however, Arminianism continued to grow in popularity in England, even within Oxford and Cambridge and the bishopric, and it became increasingly politicized as well. Religious historian Dewey D. Wallace Jr. reports that near the end of his reign, King James I saw little difference between Calvinism and Puritanism and thought the believers of both sects challenged his divine right to rule (83). Clearly, a religious and political shift was beginning to take place. Campbell and Corns assert that while James I kept a balance between Calvinists and Arminians, his son, Charles I, "allowed and promoted the [. . .] Arminians in general, and William Laud in particular" (30). Laud, an Arminian believer, became Archbishop of Canterbury under Charles I and is considered to be the "architect of an 'Arminian' church renewal in theology, liturgy, and administration" (Wallace 84). However, Bishop Laud came under attack by those who believed he promoted Arminianism over Calvinism, especially concerning the doctrine of predestination. David Como asserts that in enforcing Charles' "royal edicts against discussion of predestination . . . [Laud did so] in an unbalanced manner, attacking Calvinists while apparently leaving their anti-Calvinist opponents untouched" (263). Arminians, seemingly under the protection of King Charles and Bishop Laud, considered the King's decrees to be "a proper and fair means of concluding the debate" about predestination. Yet those who believed in double predestination felt obligated to continue preaching what they considered to be the "central part of the gospel of grace" (Wallace 91), thus becoming dissenters within their own State Church, a situation that further increased religious and political tensions.

John Milton attended university at Cambridge during the Laud years, but despite the archbishop's enforcement of the king's decrees, Milton appears to have been "broadly aligned with Laud on major issues," at least theologically speaking (45). And as he aged, Milton's theology became less Calvinistic and increasingly Arminian, especially concerning predestination. This theological shift can be seen in his posthumously published *Christian Doctrine*, wherein Milton uses biblical proof-texts to support his clearly Arminian theology.

In the *Christian Doctrine* chapter entitled "Of Predestination," Milton states, "It has been the practice of the schools to use the word predestination, not only in the sense of election, but also of reprobation. This is not consistent with the caution necessary on so momentous a subject, since where it is mentioned in Scripture, election alone is uniformly intended." He goes on to cite Romans, I Corinthians, Ephesians, Acts, Timothy, and I Thessalonians to support his contention and then writes that "it does not follow by implication that there are others who are appointed to wrath." The entire chapter is an exercise in deductive reasoning regarding election and predestination over double predestination, as is clear in his definition of predestination: "The principal special decree of God relating to man is termed Predestination, whereby God in pity to mankind, through foreseeing that they would fall of their own accord, predestinated to eternal salvation before the foundation of the world those who should believe *and continue in the faith*" (emphasis added 916). In this

succinct definition, he espouses a supralapsarian belief, a doctrine considered unbiblical by Arminius, but Milton acknowledges mankind's free will, a hallmark of Arminianism. Obviously, Milton chooses to follow his very own theology in this definition. But what sets this passage apart is the phrase "and continue in the faith." Throughout his *Christian Doctrine*, Milton emphasizes that belief alone does not merit salvation, continuing to believe constitutes an essential component of saving grace, and falling from faith brings reprobation.

Milton includes a subsection in his discussion of predestination—"Those who should believe, and continue in the faith." In this subsection, he asserts that God's decree of election is immutable, and that "the mutability is entirely on the side of them who renounce their faith." In other words, God grants mankind a free will, and God will damn those who stop believing in Him, though they had faith prior to that time. He further explains that "the privilege [of salvation] belongs to all who heartily believe and continue in their belief. . . and that thus the general decree of election becomes personally applicable to each particular believer, and is ratified to all who remain steadfast in the faith" (919). Milton here implies that free will determines whether or not a person remains true to his/her faith in God. God predestines all to salvation; individuals choose to continue in their faith or fall from grace.

While predestination may not be the sole focus of *Paradise Lost*, it certainly plays a weighty part in the poem, especially concerning the character of Satan. For centuries, critics have plunged themselves into the rich and vast language of Milton's epic more fully to understand its characters and meaning. One would think tremendous scholarship would involve Adam and Eve's expulsion from Eden, and to be fair, much has been written about these two. However, Milton's Satan appears to be the most controversial character of his poem and the locus of the dispute involves the doctrine of predestination. Did God predestine Satan to rebel in heaven so Adam and Eve would fall and God's Son could then redeem the world? Or did Satan choose to rebel, thus setting the stage for the first couple to sin, fall, and then be redeemed by the Son?

Those who focus on the theology of the poem tend to think of Satan in terms of duality, that is, God used Satan merely as a tool to realize his grand plan of salvation, or Satan is solely responsible for his own fall. Critics who study Satan from a literary viewpoint also tend to see the character in dual form. John Carey refers to these groups as "Satanist" (or "pro-Satanist") and "anti-Satanist" (161, 167). In his essay, "Milton's Satan," Carey discusses whether or not Satan is the hero of the poem. He states that the view of Satan-as-hero began with Dryden and continued throughout the eighteenth century, including the Romantics like "Blake, Byron, Shelley, and Hazlitt [who] championed Satan" (161). Andrew Escobedo asserts that "post-Renaissance interpretations of Milton's Satan" show the character as having "psychological depth and dramatic autonomy the romantics frequently interpreted as exemplary of the sublime will" (787). However, many critics believe the Satan character to be ill-conceived or an artistic failure, like "Johnson, who declared Satan's speeches 'big with absurdity'" and "Coleridge [who] identified him with Napoleonic

pride and sensual indulgence” (Carey 161). More current scholars, too, fall into these two specific camps: “anti-Satanists such as Charles Williams, C. S. Lewis, S. Musgrove, and Stanley Fish have been opposed by A. J. A. Waldock, E. E. Stoll, G. Rostrevor Hamilton, William Empson, and others” (161). So did Milton write Satan to be the hero, a type of sympathetic character, or did he mean for the character to be the epitome of pure evil?

Carey himself considers Satan an ambivalent character, one whose very ambivalence “is a precondition of the poem’s success—a major factor in the attention it has aroused” (161). This theory makes sense in that Milton’s Satan has been interpreted over the years in dual terms, as either hero or villain, sympathetic or hardhearted. Obviously, there can be no consensus about the nature of Satan, but perhaps Milton intended it this way. Maybe Milton wrote Satan to be approachable to readers, making him sympathetic enough for readers to self-identify with Satan’s turmoil and fallen nature while at the same time portraying Satan as self-deceived and willful, an author of his own damnation through his arrogance and free will. In this case, then, Satan becomes exemplar for Milton’s Arminian doctrine of predestination and allegory for fallen faith.

Book III of the poem shows most overtly Milton’s doctrine of predestination. In it, God watches as Satan flies from Hell to Earth. He shows the Son His new creation, Earth, and tells him of mankind’s fall and the subsequent need for divine justice. The Son offers himself as savior of the world, while Satan tricks the angel Uriel into giving him directions to Earth. The book contains two crucial passages about predestination and free will. The first occurs when God tells his Son about the fall of Adam and Eve:

So will fall  
Hee and his faithless Progeny: whose fault?  
Whose but his own? ingrate, he had of mee  
All he could have; I made him just and right,  
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.  
Such I created all th’ Ethereal Powers  
And Spirits, both them who stood and them who fail’d. (III.95-99)

Here, Milton clearly ascribes to the Arminian principle of free will, telling the Son that despite Adam’s “just and right” nature, he chose to disobey God of his own will and thus must fall. But in the next two lines, Milton shows that all his heavenly beings, too, were created “just and right . . . though free to fall,” which means Satan chose his path of self destruction.

The second passage in Book III related to predestination occurs at lines 173-202. Critic Maurice Kelley asserts that “perhaps no passage . . . is more important than Book III, 173-202, for in these lines Milton expounds his doctrine of predestination and its concordance with the mercy, grace, and wisdom of God” (75). Kelley compares this passage from the epic poem to Milton’s *Christian Doctrine* to conclude that the entire poem of *Paradise Lost* represents an Arminian, not Calvinist, view, thus exhibiting Milton’s theology of single, not double, predestination. Kelley also construes that this section represents Milton’s conception of free will as it relates to salvation and reprobation: “*Paradise Lost* . . .

does accord with the Arminianism of the *De doctrina*, which argues that God elects men to everlasting life on the condition of faith and repentance, and rejects only those who refuse to believe and repent" (76). Kelley succinctly and sufficiently proves his case that Milton's predestination doctrine is Arminian rather than Calvinist, but it must be noted that the passage centers on the fall of mankind, not Satan's fall. However, if we combine both parts of Book III, then a picture of Milton's Arminian doctrine of predestination, with the concomitant principle of free will, becomes complete: Milton's Arminian predestination belongs to mankind and Satan.

While the theology surrounding Satan and his fall continue to intrigue, perplex, and vex readers and critics alike, the literary aspect of the character, too, proves complex and challenging. Slotkin declares that "since Blake's infamous comment that Milton was of the Devil's party 'without knowing it,' critics have tended to see Milton's theological and poetic impulses as mutually antagonistic and to associate these impulses with the characters of God and Satan, respectively." Slotkin suggests Milton's poetry makes Satan "attractive," but that his theology creates an "unattractive" Satan (101). However, the theological Satan and literary Satan do not have to be at odds at all. If we read Satan as allegory for fallen faith, Milton's theology and poetry blend nicely, indeed.

In Book V, the angel Raphael recounts to Adam Satan's fall from Heaven. Michael Leib contends that his fall represents an "uncreation" and that "the immediate act which motivates Satan to disobey God is the 'begetting' of the Son by the Father" (81).

This day I have begot whom I declare  
My only Son, and on this holy Hill  
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold  
At my right hand; your Head I him appoint. (V.603-606)

Yet, Milton does not show Satan's immediate reaction. Instead, he provides a narrative wherein the angelic beings spend the remainder of the day singing, dancing, eating, and drinking. When twilight comes, they all retire "where they slept / Fann'd with cool Winds" (V.654-55). Amidst this tranquil scene, Milton inserts Satan, describing him as "fraught / with envy against the Son of God" and so prideful of his own superiority in Heaven that he cannot stand to think of the Anointed One (V.661-62). In fact, "Through pride . . . [Satan] thought himself impair'd" (V.664). Thus,

He resolv'd  
With all his Legions to dislodge, and leave  
Unworshipt, unobey'd the Throne supreme,  
Contemptuous. (V.668-671)

Milton's narrative delay in showing Satan's envy signifies a person who broods on a perceived affront and concludes he has been treated unjustly. How very human! Satan ponders his superior position in Heaven and feels, apparently for the first time, pride in his heavenly renown. But his pride leads him to jealousy, to "[d]eep malice," and finally to disobedience (V.666). Once again, Satan's feelings and actions resemble those of human beings. Although Milton does not specifically record Lucifer's time before his fall, we

know through Raphael that he was a highly placed and mighty archangel. Therefore, readers can infer that at one time, Lucifer adored and glorified God. But, as Stanley Fish suggests, Satan thinks himself into impairment and by doing so, “the qualities that now constitute him (malice, disdain, envy) are qualities he conceives.” In essence, Satan “made himself less by his thoughts” (512). As a result, he resolutely chooses to disobey God, and more importantly, to deny Him adoration and glory. In other words, Satan loses his faith in God. And Satan’s disobedience and loss of faith increase his wickedness as he gathers other heavenly beings to his side through lies and deceit and prepares to battle God’s angels. By the end of Book V, readers see Satan’s impending doom, and his fate symbolizes the reprobation of those who lose their faith in God. Readers can easily identify with Satan’s feelings of envy and jealousy, and we all understand how wrath compels some to act malignantly. We can, therefore, read Satan allegorically—he represents human fallibility but also mankind’s free will and the consequences of a fallen faith: damnation.

In Book I, we encounter a fallen Satan, a creature at once malevolent and sympathetic. He retains some of his angelic luminescence—“his form had yet not lost / All her Original brightness” (I.591-92)—suggesting there may remain some semblance of his heavenly temperament. To further enhance Satan’s complexity, Milton unites human worry and woe with feelings of vengeance and bravery:

but his face  
Deep scars of Thunder had intrencht, and care  
Sat on his faded cheek, but under Brows  
Of dauntless courage, and considerate Pride  
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast  
Signs of remorse and passion to behold  
The fellows of his crime. (I.600-606)

Milton complicates his character even more when, as Satan begins to address his fellow fallen angels, he begins to weep: “Thrice he assay’d, and thrice in spite of scorn, / Tears such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last / Words interwove with sighs found out thir way” (I.619-21). Here, Milton again uses Satan as allegory. He intends his readers to empathize, at least somewhat, with Satan’s emotional condition. Most people identify with the combined feelings of anger and remorse, and readers understand Satan’s muddled and confused state. It could be argued that the mere fact it is Satan crying means no sympathy should be shown him. Satan does, after all, embody evil, and his weeping could easily be a sort of manipulation. Yet, in the passage, no apparent reason exists for Satan to garner sympathy. True, the passage continues wherein Satan briefly recounts their lost war in Heaven, which could be interpreted as Satan feeling sorry for himself. But lines 605 and 606 indicate Satan specifically mourns for his fallen angels, not himself. Carey reports that pro-Satanist critics see Satan’s tears “as magnanimous compassion” (167) and that “by weeping ‘tears such as angels weep’ he seems more grief-stricken than mere human weepers” (168). Milton characterizes Satan as a mixture of anger and anguish, pride and anxiety to resemble not only the fallen human condition but also as an allegory for those



who do not continue in the faith. Satan's tears indicate the hopelessness for his fallen state. Satan chose to deny God and war against Him in heaven, thus his future holds nothing but reprobation and eternal damnation. And that future awaits all who follow in Satan's path.

Another passage in *Paradise Lost* reveals Satan as sympathetic and capable of remorse, although his regret and sorrow cannot save him from his state of damnation. Once again, his character can be read as an allegory for fallen faith and the consequences associated with that fall. In Book IV, when Satan spies Adam and Eve in Paradise, the first humans he has ever seen, Satan, in the guise of a cormorant, sits in the Tree of Life and watches them, "Two of far nobler shape erect and tall / Godlike erect" (IV.288-89). He sees that "in thir looks Divine / The image of thir glorious maker shone" (IV.291-92). He continues to observe them as they walk, hand in hand, through the garden, and then he finally speaks to himself, "at length fail'd speech recover'd sad" (IV.357):

O Hell! What do mine eyes with grief behold,  
[. . .]  
Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps,  
Not spirits, yet to heav'nly Spirits bright  
Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue  
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines  
In them Divine resemblance, and such grace  
the hand that form'd them on thir shape hath pour'd. (IV.358, 360-65)

In pensive sadness, Satan compares them to the angelic beings he once knew (and used to be himself). Readers can see Satan's current shape—a cormorant, which is hardly the heavenly being he once was—and imagine how he must feel seeing Adam and Eve's gloriously tall, erect bodies compared to his squat sea bird form. He acknowledges God's divine presence in Adam and Eve, and admits that he, too, could have loved them like he once loved God; however, Satan knows his fall from faith prevents him from ever sharing that love with them or anyone else. Thus, he continues to plot the couple's sin and fall from grace. As allegory, we see Satan symbolizing lost love—for his past magnificent life and his Creator God—which must be bracketed with fallen faith, for to deny God is to deny love.

Book IV also contains one of Satan's soliloquies that Carey suggests reveals the "true Satan." Milton shows Satan's internal debate in which "he vacillates between remorse and defiance" (163). Satan begins by calling to God:

But with no friendly voice, and add thy name  
O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams  
That bring to my remembrance from what state  
I fell, how glorious once above thy Sphere. (IV.36-39)

Readers see Satan's anguish at remembering his former angelic self; yet anger fills him as well, anger he directs at God. In the next lines, Satan takes responsibility for his emotions as well as his actions against God and acknowledges that service to The Holy One had not been difficult.

Till Pride and worse Ambition threw me down

Warring in Heav'n against Heav'n's matchless King:  
Ah wherefore! He deserv'd no such return  
From me, whom he created what I was  
In that bright eminence, and with his good  
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard. (IV.40-45)

Milton makes a vital point in this section when Satan says, "whom he created what I was," because we can infer that God created Satan unblemished and devout. But we also know through Milton's epic that God also created all beings with free will. Therefore, this passage illustrates that Satan's own emotions of pride and ambition compelled him to rebel that God did not create him to sin and rebel. As allegory, we see that his choice to sin, deny God, and rebel caused the dire consequence: his damnation.

The soliloquy continues as Satan affirms God's goodness and admits He deserves adoration. And Satan also confesses that his boundless ambition further engendered in him a profound desire to achieve greatness, perhaps to be as exalted as God himself, and that in such a narcissistic state, he chose to forget God's righteousness. Ironically, Satan immediately laments he had not been created "some inferior Angel" so that his ambition would not have been so great (IV.59), thus illustrating his complete egotism. And soon he starts rationalizing his poor choices, positing that if he had not rebelled, surely another angelic being would have done so. Once again, Milton constructs an all too human character, one that readers can easily recognize in themselves or others, one filled with ambition, inflated ego, and excuses. Yet Satan at once turns melancholy again, bewailing his sorry state. "Me miserable! which way shall I fly / Infinite wrath, and infinite despair? / Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell" (IV.73-75). Here, Satan nears his lowest emotional point, a misery with which many readers can relate, for most have felt demoralized at one time or another. He then asks if "there no place / Left for Repentance, none for Pardon left?" (IV.79-80), and he answers his question: "None left but by submission; and that word / Disdain forbids me" (IV.81-82). Satan's willfulness prevents him from repenting, which once again illustrates his free choice to deny God. Near the end of his inner debate, he expresses his utter hopelessness: "So farewell Hope, and with Hope farewell Fear, / Farewell Remorse: all Good to me is lost; / Evil be thou my Good" (IV.108-109). But readers see that his hopelessness instantly transforms into a lack of repentance and then willful evil. As allegory, this passage serves as a warning to readers: If you do not continue in your faith, you cannot feel remorse and thus repent; therefore, your fate will be to fall from grace and continue to sin without any hope of salvation.

Perhaps the most serious warning about fallen faith occurs in Book V, when Satan challenges Abdiel about his creation, denies that God formed him, and claims his own power above God's:

who saw  
When this creation was? remember'st thou  
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?  
We know no time when we were not as now;

Know none before us, self-begot, self-raiſ'd  
By our own quick'ning power [. . .]  
[. . .]  
Our puissance is our own, our own right hand  
Shall teach us highest deeds. (V.856-61, 864-65)

This passage, above all others in *Paradise Lost*, expresses what, in contemporary terms, we label the arrogant self-made man. Satan unequivocally separates himself from God, his Creator, his Guide, his true Source of power. Instead, Satan claims his life as his own to live as he sees fit, not as God would wish him to do. Read as allegory, Milton presents a cautionary tale about losing faith in God, the result of which is self-exaltation and total separation from God. The self-made man may glory in his industrious, even magnanimous, nature, but in reality, he only appears this way; Satan seems extraordinary, totally in control, when, in fact, he suffers mightily because of his separation from the Divine. Stanley Fish describes this type of empty arrogance: “That is what being Satan or any other agent cut off from God means: there is no longer anything in you that corresponds to the virtues you claim to admire or the knowledge from which you have turned away” (49).

But Milton provides another warning about the allegorical pompous self-made man. Near the end of Book I, the fallen angels build their version of a heavenly palace in Hell, called Pandaemonium. They use all the precious metals and materials from the earth to construct “the high Capitol / Of Satan and his Peers” (I.756-57), a vision of hellish beauty and the devils' belief in material riches. Obviously, the fallen angels desire to emulate God's realm, and in building Pandaemonium, they attempt to fill their spiritual void with material possessions. Read as allegory, the arrogant self-made man, in order to feed his tremendous narcissism, must continually exhibit his prosperity. Leib asserts that “Satan's material creations are illusory (nonsubstantial), whereas God's spiritual creations are real (substantial). In Satan's mode of thought, wealth becomes the substitute for divinity” (91). The arrogant self-made man's mode of thinking clearly matches that of Satan. If we understand this passage to be an allegory, we can easily see how Milton might have written this as a warning to his audience to place their whole beings in God's hands, to give Him alone credit for their good fortune.

In his epic poem, Milton offers readers the opportunity to see themselves not just in the human characters of Adam and Eve but in Satan as well. He creates the Satan character as a sympathetic one so his audience may readily identify with the turmoil he feels at having lost his faith. But Milton also wrote *Paradise Lost* to advance his theodicy, particularly regarding predestination. In his poem, he artfully—and clearly—asserts the Arminian doctrine of predestination, several times stating that all are created for salvation but that those who fall from grace do so of their own volition. In the character of Satan, Milton blends the literary and theological to craft an allegory for fallen faith, which, ultimately, makes *Paradise Lost* very much a cautionary tale to remain true to God and continue in the faith, as Satan asserts:

But what will not Ambition and Revenge

Descend to? who aspires must down as low  
As high he soar'd, obnoxious first or last  
To basest things. (IX.168-71)

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## **People's Republic of China (中华人民共和国): Interpersonal Relations**

*Michael DeHoff*

### **Abstract**

*Learning about a new culture can be an intimidating task. There is often so much information that it is easy to become overwhelmed. This is especially true for a culture with such a large history as China. Using a distillation of research by various scholars and interviews with Chinese people, this paper provides a starting point for understanding Chinese culture, with a focus on interpersonal communication concepts such as high versus low context cultures, nonverbal communication, and Hofstede's four value pairings.*

China is an ancient civilization rich in history and culture. It is a land of contrasts – a place that clings to its past and traditions yet stretches forward into the future. Its people are diverse and separated by language, culture, and economy but are united as Chinese. Of China's fifty-six different ethnic groups, this paper focuses on the one most people think of when they hear "Chinese:" the Han. This paper also refers mainly to those living in urban areas, as the gap between urban and rural life in China is so great, the two could almost be different ethnic groups themselves. Below I have given a brief history of China and an overview of the Chinese interpersonal communication concepts of face and conflict, shame versus guilt cultures, Hofstede's four value parings and high versus low context cultures, time orientation, nonverbal communication, gender roles, religious influences, taboo topics, and discrimination.

### History

China's recorded history began around 1766 BC with the Shang Dynasty, making it the world's oldest country. In the following 3,600 years China underwent a succession of dynastic rulers. China was first unified during the Qin Dynasty from 221-207 B.C. From 206 B.C.-220 A.D., the Han Dynasty ruled, and the Han culture, the dominant culture in China today, developed. During the Tang Dynasty, from 618-907, China became the cultural and economic center for Asia. European influence reached China during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). With the Europeans came opium, to which many Chinese soon became addicted. Chinese efforts to end the opium trade in 1800 began a long series of wars and conflicts against Europeans, particularly the British, as China tried to remove all foreigners. Efforts were met with little success, and the Chinese government remained weak. Student protests on May 4, 1919 began a shift away from traditional Confucian beliefs towards socialism, opening the way for the birth of the opposing Chinese Communist and Nationalist Parties.

### Demographics:

#### Name:

*Conventional long form:*

People's Republic of China

*Conventional short form:* China

*Local long form (simplified*

*Chinese):* Zhonghua Renmin

Gongheguo, 中华人民共和国

*Local short form (simplified*

*Chinese):* Zongguo, 中国

*Abbreviation:* PRC

#### Borders:

*North:* Mongolia, Russia;

*South:* Bhutan, Burma, India, Laos, Nepal, South China Sea, Vietnam;

*East:* East China Sea, North Korea;

*West:* Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan

#### Age:

Civilization/recorded history dates back 5,000 years. The dominant culture, the Han, can be traced back over 1,000 years. The current government was established in 1949 after a civil war.

#### Government:

Communist State

#### Language:

*Official language:* Standard Chinese or Mandarin (Putonghua – Beijing dialect)

*Other languages:* Yue

(Cantonese), Wu

(Shanghainese), Minbei

(Fuzhou), Minnan (Hokkien-

Taiwanese), Xiang, Gan,

Tibetan, Hakka dialects,

various minority languages



In 1931, the Japanese took advantage of China's weakened state to invade and start the Sino-Japanese War. They did not withdraw all their forces until after World War II, and many Chinese still resent them because of the atrocities committed during this time.

On October 1, 1949 the Chinese Communist Party took control under Chairman Mao Zedong and renamed the government Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo, or The People's Republic of China. They then implemented what is now called the Cultural Revolution: a large-scale purge of intellectuals and critics of the Communist party. Mao led China until his death in 1976, and his absence left the country in chaos. In 1977 Deng Xiaoping, an influential member of the Communist Party and a significant contributor to the creation of the People's Republic, took control and initiated a series of programs to modernize China that paved the way in allowing China to become the economic power it is today (Stanford 466-70).

### Individualism/Collectivism

The concepts of individualism and collectivism presented by Hofstede are one of his four dimensions of cultural variability. Individualism and collectivism involve the way cultures relate as groups. Hofstede defines individualistic cultures as those in which the individual's needs, desires, and goals are emphasized over those of the group (Gundykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 21). In collectivistic cultures, the group's needs, desires, and goals are emphasized over those of the individual. People in collectivistic cultures tend to belong to only a few in-groups in which they are highly involved (Gundykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 21). The values, standards, and beliefs of various in-groups may be considerably different, and the group's ideals greatly affect its member's beliefs and behavior in all aspects of life (Gundykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 21). Members of collectivistic cultures often rely on knowledge of others' in-groups to predict their behavior. (Gao & Gundykunst 442)

China is very much a collectivistic culture. Relationships, or *guanxi*, are extremely important.

### Literacy rate:

(age 15 and over can read and write):

*Male:* 95.7%,

*Female:* 87.6%,

*Total:* 91.6%

### Racial makeup:

56 ethnic groups

*Han Chinese:* 91.5%; Zhuang, Manchu, Hui, Miao, Uygur, Tujia, Yi, Mongolian, Tibetan, Bouyei, Dong, Yao, Korean, Bai, Hani, Li, Kazak, Dai and other ethnicities: 8.5%

### Religion:

Officially atheist.

Confucianism endorsed as a moral code, but not as a religion.

### Mandatory military

**requirement:**

No

### Major religious or government holidays:

The Spring Festival (New Years), The Lantern Festival (Dengjie), The Quingming ("pure brilliance" – feast of the dead), The Mid-Autumn Festival (Moon Festival), The National Day of China (founding of the PRC)

### Money:

Renminbi (RMB, ¥): yuan, jiao, and fen

*Front:* pre 1999 – portrait of two different ethnic minorities; post 1999 – portrait of Mao Zedong

*Reverse:* a national landmark (Great Wall, Yangtze River, Taishan Mountain, etc.)

They are the foundation upon which the Chinese society is built. Family relationships, in particular, have traditionally been very important and are the basis of Confucius's model of government and many of his values. A Chinese person is defined by his or her relationships – so much so that it has been argued that the individual cannot even be considered a complete entity in Chinese culture (Gao 469). Each person's identity is so tightly interwoven with his or her various in-groups that in the Chinese mind they are often nearly indistinguishable.

Along with referring to relationships in general, *guanxi* also refers to the obligations a person has to others within their in-groups or with whom they have relationships, for in China relationships and obligations are interconnected. If an individual has a relationship with someone, he or she has obligations towards this person. The depth of these obligations depends on the depth and type of the relationship.

Chinese scholar and social psychologist Kwang-kuo Hwang distinguishes three different types of relationships in Chinese culture (Hwang 949-53). The first, what he calls an "expressive tie," is the kind found among family, close friends, and other similar groups. In these, the point of the relationship is the relationship itself and they are generally long-lasting. Obligations in these relationships run deep and the individual is expected to help support his or her family and provide assistance when called upon. The second, called an "instrumental tie," is the kind established in order to gain something, such as with a salesman and customer. This kind of relationship is usually short-lived and does not incur any long-term obligations. The third type is a "mixed tie." This is the type of relationship formed between people like classmates, neighbors, and coworkers. It is not as close as an expressive tie and contains the possibility of personal gain. It is the most common relationship in China and creates an extremely complicated social network of something like exchanged favors, though they are not quite favors in the Western sense. These obligations are taken more seriously than a Western favor would be and are absolutely essential to getting things done (Hwang 949-53).

### **Face**

The concept of face is extremely important to the Chinese and is considered one of the core aspects of Chinese culture (Chan 5). Face is defined as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for him/herself by the line others assume he/she has taken during a particular contact" (Chan 3). In other words, it is a person's positive public image. China has two different types of face: *lian* and *mianzi*. *Lian* refers to the moral aspect of face. It represents a person's character. *Mianzi* refers to person's image. It is the social aspect of face, the reputation achieved through success (Chan 7; Gao 468).

In individualistic cultures such as the US, face is an individual thing: something belonging to each person and affected by his individual actions. In collectivistic cultures like China, face is communal. An individual's face is affected by not only his or her actions, but also the actions of any people and groups with whom they are associated. In turn, those same people and groups are affected by the actions of the individual. Face can also be shared among friends and group members. The concept of "borrowing someone's face" is similar

to how Westerners might ask to “use your name;” it is the reputation of the person that is being borrowed.

Because face is communal and relationships are so important to the Chinese, they are very concerned with making sure no one loses face. Chinese people will go to great lengths to avoid conflicts and interactions that could cause people to lose face. When conflicts are inevitable, they tend to try to take care of them quickly and quietly with as little damage to everyone's face as possible. To this end, it is not uncommon for a friend to act as a mediator between two conflicting parties (Zheng).

### **Shame Culture**

Cultures are divided into two different categories in regards to motivation for action: guilt cultures and shame cultures. In guilt cultures, ethics and truths are universal and people's motivation for behaving correctly comes from inside them. People act correctly because they know what is right and feel guilty if they act otherwise, even if no one else knows. In shame cultures, ethics and truths are situational; they change depending on the people and circumstances. Shame cultures are usually also collectivistic, so the opinion of others is very important. Correct behavior is enforced through social pressure; people act correctly because they want to fit in (Handout High/Low Context).

China is a shame culture. Since China is so collectivistic and relationally-based, what others think is extremely important, especially since actions reflect not only on the individual, but also on any group or people with whom they are associated. Thus maintaining a good, positive face is important for the sake of both the individual and those they care about. Often, people will act in ways they would not otherwise in order to maintain good face (Li, Wang, and Fischer).

### **High/Low Context**

High context and low context are terms presented by Edward Hall to describe the way in which cultures communicate. Low context communication is straightforward, and most of the information is expressly stated. High context communication is ambiguous, and much of the information is in the context rather than the words (Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 31). The feelings of the other person or group are emphasized over those of the communicator, and great care is taken to not say something that could be considered offensive and disrupt the group's solidarity. In Hall's ranking of cultures, China is the second most high context culture, exceeded only by Japan (“Handout High/Low Context”). This means a lot of emphasis is placed on what is implied and not said. In order to understand what is being “said,” one must pay careful attention to not only the words, but also who said it, to whom they are speaking, when it is said, how it is said, the situation in which it is said, and what is not said (Hall). In many instances, such things can be even more important and telling than the actual words. This subtlety is vital because it helps save face and preserve group harmony.

### **Power Distance**

Power distance is another of Hofstede's terms and describes “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations accept that power is distributed

unequally” (Gundykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 45). In other words, it is how much importance and influence is placed on hierarchy and power distribution therein. In low power distance cultures, there is not a great separation between those with power and those without power; people are considered to be generally equal. In high power distance cultures, those with power and those without power are seen as distinctly different. This difference is a fact of life and it is expected that those with less power follow those with more power (Gundykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 45). Obedience and conformity with the group are valued. For this reason, high power distance cultures are often collectivistic cultures (Gundykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 45). Things that threaten the group, such as communicating negative emotions, disagreeing with, or contradicting those in charge, are considered unacceptable. Those within the group also have more power than outsiders; therefore, less cooperation with outsiders is required (Gundykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 45).

One of the traditional values China retains is its hierarchical system, making it a high power distance culture. Chinese society is divided mainly by occupation, income, age, and gender. Males are generally more respected than females. Parents and elders are always treated respectfully, but anyone older is typically considered deserving of more respect. Occupation and income usually go together and are definitive status differences. People with more prestigious and/or higher ranking – and thus higher paying – jobs are a higher status. Anyone who works for the government is always of a higher status than someone who does not. Teaching is an extremely respected position. A teacher will always have a higher status than a student or former student, regardless of that student’s background or accomplishments in the future.

When meeting someone, one of the first things a Chinese person does is try to ascertain what the other’s status is and act accordingly. This generally involves showing respect and deference in speech, treatment, body language, and positioning. Higher status people are given the place of honor, wherever that happens to be, and when eating are served and allowed to start eating first (Ngai 19; Xu).

### **Uncertainty Avoidance**

Uncertainty avoidance describes the way in which cultures deal with things that are new, different, or strange. Low uncertainty avoidance cultures view differences as curiosities to be explored. High uncertainty avoidance cultures view new ideas and people, different behaviors and ways to do things, ambiguity, and other situations which cause uncertainty as dangerous and to be avoided (Gundykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 42). People in high uncertainty avoidance cultures tend to have higher levels of stress, worry about the future more, have a lower motivation for achievement, and value loyalty, structure, organization, and predictability (Gundykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 42). These cultures often develop clear sets of rules and rituals for dealing with people and situations and try to avoid situations where such rules do not apply (Gundykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 42). They prefer to avoid conflict, competition, and risk, but may actually engage in risky behavior faster than people in low uncertainty avoidance cultures simply to reduce ambiguities and

get it over with, such as confronting someone to establish where exactly they stand with them. (Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 42).

China has a high uncertainty avoidance culture. Although the Chinese have now incorporated many Western ideas and practices into their society, they are inherently wary of anything new. Loyalty within in-groups is extremely important, and out-group members should not necessarily be trusted. Conflicts should, if at all possible, be avoided. If conflicts must happen, they should be taken care of quickly and quietly with the fewest number of hard feelings that can be managed (Zheng). There is also great pressure to conform (Xu). “The nail that sticks out gets hammered” perfectly describes the Chinese mindset here. Normal and average are good. Being different in any way, good or bad, is inadvisable, and if an individual is different, he or she should definitely not emphasize it. This point was driven home to me when a Chinese friend of mine was agonizing over whether or not to introduce her new boyfriend to her other Chinese friends. When she realized I did not see what the problem with introducing him was, she explained she did not want the other girls to be jealous or think she was showing him off because they did not have boyfriends.

### **Masculinity/Femininity**

Masculinity/femininity deals with the values cultures emphasize and expect from their members. Feminine cultures value people, quality of life, and nurturing, emphasize fluid sex roles, service, and interdependence, and are more concerned with relationships than achievements (Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 47). Masculine cultures value things, power, and assertiveness and emphasize differentiated sex roles, performance, ambition and independence (Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 47). They are more concerned with financial and social achievement and recognition. Masculine cultures tend to place a greater difference on the roles of men and women, and many people in these cultures see same-sex non-romantic relationships as more intimate than opposite sex relationships (Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida 48).

The Chinese have no problem being assertive if there is something they want. Though they will nod and smile and agree in conversation, they will also continue to relentlessly push their point until their conversant either agrees or makes it clear that he or she will not back down (Ngai 19). This, along with China's traditional differentiated sex roles and social stratification, places China as a masculine culture.

### **Monochronic/Polychronic**

The terms monochronic and polychronic refer to how cultures view time. In monochronic cultures, time is linear and concrete. It can be spent, gained, or lost, and it is important that it is not wasted. People are punctual, efficiency is important, and standing in lines is normal. In polychronic cultures time is loose and abstract. Deadlines and punctuality are unimportant, bargaining is common, and people do not stand in lines unless forced.

China is traditionally polychronic, though western influence has moved some aspects of business more towards monochronic time (CultureGrams, Zheng). In general, however, things tend to happen when they happen. People move on to the next event when the current one is over and not before. A Chinese person might show up thirty minutes later

than the scheduled time and not think anything of it. Stopping to talk to people and build relationships is a must (Ramsay, Xu). An American friend mentioned a time when he visited China and someone traveled five hours on a bus to visit with him for an hour or so, then got back on the bus and rode five hours back home. This would not happen in a monochronic culture – why would a person waste ten hours of travel time for an hour of conversation when he or she could simply talk over the phone? But in a polychronic culture such as China, this is, while not exactly convenient, not unthinkable either, because the time spent is unimportant compared to the relationship built.

### **Past/Present/Future Orientation**

Past, present, and future orientations refer to the period of time cultures emphasize. Past-oriented cultures emphasize traditions and implement change slowly. Present-oriented cultures believe people should live in the moment and enjoy the day for what it is. Future-oriented cultures focus on and plan for the future.

China has traditionally been a past-oriented society. Great influence was placed on traditional Confucian values, governmental and family systems, and ways of doing things. During Mao's time, however, the past was deemphasized, and culture and tradition were set aside. The focus shifted towards the future and things like equality, the country as a whole, and betterment of the people and quality of life. With the Cultural Revolution, China has returned to some of its traditional values and practices, but it retains its future orientation. Family planning, the use of soft power, the emphasis of education, and the importance of children to the lead way into a new era as opposed to carrying on family names and traditions are all examples of how China has shifted its focus towards the future. China still respects its past and is influenced by traditional beliefs and practices, such as Confucianism, but is now more focused on moving forward.

### **Nonverbal Communication**

Confucian philosophy counsels being calm, collected, and controlled (So 1336). This influence can still be seen in Chinese nonverbal communication. Chinese *kinesics* (body language) is more restrained than it is in America. It is considered impolite to move around a lot when speaking (So 1347). Thus, Chinese are less animated when talking (CultureGrams). When first meeting, people are usually greeted with a polite nod or bow and occasionally a handshake (CultureGrams; Ramsay). Casual contact is infrequent among people not well known or in formal situations but more common among friends and family. A couple of my sources state that even among friends and family, contact is lower than in the United States (Ramsay, Zheng), while others (CultureGrams; "Center for Intercultural Learning") state that among family and same sex friends contact is higher. All agree, though, that public displays of affection are discouraged.

I have noticed among my own Chinese friends that contact is slightly lower than what is typical in America. When I asked one of my friends, LinLi, what she thought about America after being here a few weeks she remarked, "Americans act so friendly! Always smile so happy to see me, and give big hug! So different from China!" Her friends in China, although just as happy to see her, are not so outwardly demonstrative because along with

lower haptics, China also has stricter *display rules* than the U.S. The Chinese tend to be more stoic and are especially unlikely to show negative emotions, as these might cause conflict and upset interpersonal harmony (Chan 15). Emotions – again, especially negative ones – are expressed more subtly, with small changes in body language, silence, or perhaps seemingly innocent comments; and strong emotions are not displayed in public (Ramsay).

Despite an unwillingness to express negative emotions, the Chinese do not seem to share the Japanese tendency to speak softly, and they are not afraid to interrupt and talk over each other (*paralanguage*) (Ramsay). Nor do they always avoid eye contact. Among people of the same status, Chinese *oculesics* is similar to that of Americans (Ramsay; Zheng). In formal situations or when talking to someone of a higher status, however, a steady gaze is considered disrespectful (Ngai 19). In general, it is considered polite to look, but not stare, at the other person, especially when listening or during a conversation. (Ramsay; Zheng).

*Proxemics* is defined as the distance between two people when they sit or stand. In other words, it is a person's "space bubble" or personal space. Chinese generally have a similar personal space to that of Americans. For normal conversation and interaction with others, they tend to stand about the same distance as Americans (Ramsay; Zheng), around 2 to 4 feet for friends and acquaintances and 4 to 12 feet for strangers and formal meetings. For formal interactions this space is even larger. Buses, shops, and public areas tend to be much more crowded and in these people will stand much closer (Ramsay), though this may be less of a cultural difference and more because most Chinese towns and cities are larger and more crowded than those in the US. This is consistent with my own personal experience. All of the Chinese people I have met, regardless of how long they have been in the US, appear perfectly comfortable with the typical American personal space. It is also less common in China to invite people to one's personal home. Whereas Americans might invite friends over to their house for dinner, Chinese will typically treat them at a restaurant. Likewise, a Chinese child might go over to a friend's house to play, but such a playdate would never turn into a sleepover (Ramsay).

### **Artifacts**

The Chinese prefer to dress formally and even when dressed casually they coordinate colors and accessories. High heel shoes are very popular among females and are worn even when the situation makes them impractical (Ramsay; "Center for Intercultural Learning").

Dragons are an important Chinese symbol both historically and in modern times. Traditionally the dragon was the symbol of the emperor, and it is still often associated with the strength and power of China. It is considered the most popular spiritual animal and is a common design motif (Ramsay).

Red and gold are the colors of the Chinese flag and are the two colors most associated with China. Gold symbolizes loyalty, an important Chinese value. Red symbolizes happiness and good fortune. It is a common color during holidays and is often worn by brides instead of the typical American white, which is a color the Chinese traditionally associate with death and mourning (Ramsay).

## **Gender**

Like many cultures, China has historically been a male-dominated society. The man was the head of the household and dealt with all outside interactions. The woman's role was in the home, raising children and taking care of household affairs. Women were generally considered unworthy or incapable of education, and thus subservient to men (Leung 360). Daughters were not valued because they could not inherit or continue the family line. The communist government under Mao was the first to abolish this traditional system and enforce a more gender-neutral system, which encouraged women to work outside the home and participate in social production (Leung 365). The current government espouses gender equality, but even though women now have equal rights, traditional influences can still be seen in places, especially in rural areas. Women are still associated with the home and expected to take care of the domestic sphere. There is great pressure for women to be married, and sons are still preferred over daughters. High paying jobs, such as government jobs and the upper levels of business, remain mostly dominated by men, and in many cases, men are the preferred employees (Leung 371, Stanford 476).

## **Religion**

In the past, China was traditionally open and tolerant with different religions. Of all of them, Confucianism has without a doubt had the greatest impact on Chinese society. Confucian teaching places a strong emphasis on ethics and correct moral behavior, which still echoes through China today. It also laid out five relationships which became the basis of the Chinese government system and interpersonal interactions: ruler to ruled, father to son, husband to wife, elder brother to younger brother, and friend to friend (Li, Wang, and Fischer).

When the Communist government took over, it initially banned all religions. It now states that an individual is allowed freedom of religion, as long as the group with whom the individual worships is government sanctioned and does not attempt to convert others to their religion ("Freedom of Religious Belief in China"). The government itself is atheist, though it does endorse Confucianism as a moral code.

## **Taboo topics**

Every culture has certain topics that are best avoided in everyday conversation, and China is no different. The most obvious of these topics is politics (Xu). China's communist government has ears everywhere, and while it allows some measure of free speech, it is none too fond of dissenters. Contradicting or criticizing the government and its policies, Chinese or not, is a quick ticket to trouble. Therefore, the Chinese generally avoid talking about politics in normal conversation.

The Tiananmen Square protests and related topics should not ever be brought up in China. The government has banned all information on this topic, and if an individual starts inquiring about it, the police will show up on his or her doorstep. In her interview, LinLi told me she had a classmate who wrote a paper on Tiananmen Square and then promptly disappeared for several months. Until he returned, no one knew where he had gone, but everyone suspected, and he later confirmed, that the police had taken him for questioning.



Taiwan and Tibet are also touchy subjects. Both have conflicts with the government, and Taiwan's status is currently in dispute, as it claims autonomy and China claims it is part of China (Xu).

Death and dying are not often discussed in the Chinese culture. Although they seem to accept it as a part of life, death appears to be something the Chinese tend to avoid thinking about, and thus discussing (Xu; Inglehart, Basañez, and Moreno).

Sex is another topic that is not talked about much in Chinese culture. The Chinese are not as open as many Western cultures are about physical and/or intimate relationships. They also do not have as casual a view of sex and relationships, in general, as many Western cultures do. Conversing about this subject would be highly embarrassing for a Chinese person (Xu).

### **Discrimination**

With fifty-five specified minorities, China is extremely diverse culturally. The government claims to be proud of this diversity and states that there is no racial discrimination in China (China.org.cn). It is true that while minorities are treated much more fairly than they used to be and that the government is working towards making sure they have the same opportunities as everyone else, there are still many cases where minorities are looked down upon and discriminated against in employment, education, and marriage choice (Ramsay, Xu). Women are also often discriminated against in employment. A woman performing the same job as a man will usually be paid less, and there are some jobs women are generally not hired for (Leung 368).

People with lower incomes are considered to have a lower social status and are also looked down upon. This is one of the reasons why the Chinese like to dress nicely – nice attire means one has the money to afford it. The majority of people living in rural areas fall into this poor category (Ramsay; Stanford 473).

### **Conclusion**

The Chinese people are friendly and value relationships highly, but at the same time they tend to be careful about establishing close relationships. Harmony is very important; Chinese will go out of their way to avoid conflict, but they can also be firm and aggressive. Like any other people or culture, the best way to get to know them is to meet and spend time with them. Chinese culture is amazing and unique, and definitely worth taking the time to learn about.

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## **The Influence of Edgar Allan Poe on Wallace Stevens's Poetry**

*Fadia Mereani*

### **Abstract**

*The hints of American Romanticism in Wallace Stevens's poetry can be traced to Edgar Allan Poe and his poetic vision. To show the extent of Stevens's appreciation of Poe, the first part of the paper will examine some of Stevens's letters sent to a number of his acquaintances to show his exposure to Poe's writings and provide a historical and biographical account of the influence of Edgar Allan Poe on Stevens. The second part of the paper will focus particularly on the poetic ideas, concepts, and characteristics they have shared in their poetry and poetic theories. The last part of the paper will examine how Poe's idea of the death of a beautiful woman, one of the main themes these poets have shared, has been discussed in Stevens's "Sunday Morning."*

Although Wallace Stevens is a Modernist, his poetry carries some traces of American Romanticism. One of the possible reasons behind these Romantic traces in Stevens's poetry is his admiration and appreciation of Edgar Allan Poe as a writer and a poet. In addition to the Gothic and Romantic traces found in some of Stevens's poems, he shows his admiration of Poe by adopting Poe's understanding of the meanings of poetry and imagination and by using some of the poetic principles and themes of Poe's poetry in his own. To show the extent of Stevens's appreciation of Poe, the first part of this study examines some letters that Stevens sent to a number of his acquaintances to show his exposure to Poe's writings and provide a historical and biographical account of the influence of Edgar Allan Poe on Stevens. The second part of this project focuses particularly on the poetic ideas, concepts, and characteristics the two poets shared in their poetry and poetic theories. The study concludes with an examination of how Stevens discussed Poe's idea of the death of a beautiful woman, one of the main themes these poets have shared, in his "Sunday Morning."

### **Edgar Allan Poe in Wallace Stevens's Life**

Wallace Stevens mentions Poe in four different letters. In the first letter, dated January 17, 1909 and addressed to Elsie Moll, who was later to be his wife, Stevens tells her of an invitation he has received from his friend Lamb to attend a celebration of Poe: "There is a celebration of Poe in the air. He lived at Fordham Heights you know, for a period and the people up there have gone in for a tremendous ceremony of Friday, I believe, of this week. My friend Lamb sent me an engraved invitation as big as a bill-board" ("L 144" 122). Stevens, in these few lines, shows the enthusiasm of a fan eager to see Poe celebrated and honored. J. Donald Blount explains that the reference to Lamb is to Albert R. Lamb who "received the M.D. degree from Columbia's College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1907, after which he served there as an intern and later as a member of the faculty for many years" (89 n. 160). Thus, the invitation from Lamb, as a friend and an academician himself, indicates that they might have discussed Poe before. In other words, it proves that Lamb had previously known of Stevens's interest in Poe and wanted to bring the celebration to his attention.

The same letter also provides another proof of Stevens's enthusiasm and interest in Poe. Like a devoted fan, Stevens interrupted the flow of his letter to Elsie to express his excitement to know that Poe had offered to give a lecture in Reading, Pennsylvania, Stevens's hometown, and that the letter in which he had sent his offer was on sale: "By the way, did I ever tell you that Poe once wrote to somebody in Reading offering to lecture there and that the original letter is on sale at Richmond's now? The committee was unwilling to pay what he asked, so that he never came" (122). The reference to the letter on sale implies that Stevens was following Poe's news everywhere. It might also indicate his desire to collect it for himself. The same kind of lurking desire mixed with great regret could be detected in Stevens's comment on the committee. The fact that Poe had never been able to give the lecture in Reading because of the committee's unwillingness to pay his price seems

to upset Stevens and to arouse his resentment. This tone proves his understanding of Poe's financial difficulties as one of the early American professional authors. The juxtaposition of the reference to the letter on sale, which shows the audience's current appreciation of Poe, coupled with the committee's unwillingness to pay for his lecture when he was alive, denotes Stevens's mild aggravation with an audience who did not appreciate writers in time for the writers to benefit from that appreciation. However, it celebrates the renewed interest in Poe's writing and explains the reasons behind his success. In fact, in the following passage from the same letter, Stevens explains the change in the audience's taste and the shift of interest in Poe's works that led to "the revival of Poe," to use Stevens's words:

... nowadays, when so many people no longer believe in supernatural things, they find a substitute in the stranger and more freakish phenomena of the mind – hallucinations, mysteries and the like. Hence the revival of Poe. – Poe illustrates, too, the effect of stimulus. When I complain of the "boreness" – I have in mind, very often, the effect of order and regularity, the effect of moving in a groove. We all cry for life. It is not to be found in railroading to an office and then railroading back. – I do not say the life we cry for is, as a question of merit, good or bad. – But it is obviously more exciting to be Poe than to be a lesser "esquire." (122-23)

Stevens's desire to "be Poe" reveals more than his mere admiration of his works. Poe provides for Stevens an escape from the boring routine of life. He gives him a glimpse of the inner workings of the mind and an explanation, if impossible and grotesque, of some of the mysteries of life. Being Poe also reveals the secret of a successful writing profession. The secret lies not only in providing the audience the means of escape from their lives but also in always providing them with multi-dimensional perspectives with which they can renew their view of these lives. The psychological and supernatural dimensions of Poe's work, Stevens realizes, add a spirit to the everyday ordinary life. As these dimensions helped Stevens fight "the boreness" of his life and break the monotony that resulted from "order and regularity," they help the audience break loose from the grip of boredom and monotonous ordinariness. The new perspectives on life and its mysteries presented in Poe's works also help the audience see their lives differently. Joan Richardson observes that in "this Sunday letter" Stevens "defined what he felt about the supernatural in accounting for Poe's success" (*Early* 319). This understanding of the mechanics of Poe's success accounts for the influence of Poe's poetic theories on Stevens's works.

The second letter in which Stevens mentions Poe is again addressed to Elsie Moll and dated January 21, 1909, a few days after the first letter. In this letter, the reference to Poe also comes in the context of the influence of reading on Stevens's life and the different perspective it provides. Stevens tells Elsie how his life is altered by the mere act of reading. His affinity for reading was what made him stay up all night to "read Poe and Hawthorne and all the things one ought to read" though he had never done so before ("L 146" 125). Considering Poe in the top of the list of "things one ought to read" shows the extent of Poe's influence on Stevens's reading experience.

The third letter proves that Poe was an integral part of Stevens's reading experience. In this letter, addressed to José Rodrigues Feo and dated May 23, 1947, Stevens criticizes the public opinion that changes constantly. He says, "in the long run, as Poe said in one of his essays which nobody reads, the generous man comes to be regarded as the stingy man; the beautiful woman comes to be regarded as an old witch; the scholar becomes the ignoramus" ("L 606" 558). First, this reference to Poe's essays shows that Stevens read not only Poe's fictional works but also his non-fictional essays, which in turn shows that Stevens was familiar with Poe's poetic theories. Secondly, the reference to Poe in relation to the shifting public opinion explains Stevens's relationship with his audience. In his study *Edgar Allan Poe, Wallace Stevens, and the Poetics of American Privacy*, Louis A. Renza explores how Poe and Stevens guarded their private lives from their audience. He states that both Poe and Stevens shared an understanding of what it means to go private and "internally stage [some of their works] wholly to resist codifying appropriations" (xiii).

The last reference to Poe in the last letter addressed to Barbara Church and dated August 4, 1952, also discusses Stevens's relationship with people. Stevens could not describe how his need and resentment for people coexisted in him at the same time. He believes that Poe, on the other hand, was able to keep that relationship balanced because he "liked to analyze his feelings in crowds," creating in this way a private space in public ("L 839" 759). Renza's study proves, as do the 1947 and 1952 letters, that Poe's influence on Stevens affects both his style of writing and his perception of his role as a writer and as a public figure.

### **Poe's Influence on Stevens's Poetic Principles**

Several critics have made the connection between Poe's writings in general and poetical theory, in particular, and Stevens's writings. First, in respect to his concept of imagination, Stevens shares Poe's definition of imagination and the capabilities of the imaginative power. Elizabeth Phillips describes Wallace Stevens as "another celebrant of the freedom of the imagination" (6). Both Poe and Stevens, Phillips explains, admit the role of imagination in poetry and consider it the main component of the poetic creation (6). However, Phillips also illustrates how both Poe and Stevens understand the limitation of imagination in its dependence on the reality of things and on a variation of the world as people know it. Phillips states that Stevens "agreed with Poe that the imagination depends on what exists, and is free only to work collaterally with elements of the known world" (6). In her article, "The Black Bird of Edgar Allan Poe and Wallace Stevens' Thirteen Blackbirds," Paulina Ambrozy shows the similarities and differences between Stevens's and Poe's concepts of imagination. She explains that although both poets place a great emphasis on the imagination to understand and give meaning to the world, they approach the relationship between "the real and the imagined world" differently (280). Ambrozy states that whereas Poe focuses on the imagined world as the ultimate source of meaning, Stevens still relies on the real world to give him multiple perspectives for his poetry (280).

In addition to the distinction between the real and imagined world, Poe and Stevens make a distinction between the surface and deep meanings of a poem. Joan



Richardson explains that Stevens's distinction between a poem's surface and deep meanings is "the single most important stylistic feature of Stevens's life and work" (*Early* 66). Richardson bases Stevens's distinction on what she describes as "the American dissociation of sensibility" found in early American literature and in "the nineteenth-century works of Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne" (*Early* 66). The dissociation of sensibility used by Stevens and Poe allows them to hide their ideas, thoughts, and feelings under the surface of the poem. Richardson also points out that the reason some American writers have resorted to the dissociation of sensibility is their belief that "actions resulting from true thoughts and feelings were punished by the spiritual rhetoric of an overbearing sense of sin and guilt" (*Early* 66). Hiding thoughts and feelings beneath the surface of a poem saves the poets from that sense of sin and guilt. It also enables them to hide their private lives in the layers of meanings of a poem.

Another characteristic Stevens shared with Poe is his understanding of the purity of poetry. Poe's influence on French Symbolism is extended to Stevens's perception of poetry as a pure art that uses symbolism and illusion as artistic means of expression that keep poetry pure. In other words, illusions and symbols are purely used for art's sake and are not didactic in nature. Milton J. Bates makes that connection between Poe and the French Symbolists on one hand and Poe and Stevens on the other when he describes "Stevens's supreme fiction... as a form of willful illusion... [that] belongs to a tradition of literary illusions that includes some of Poe's poems, Huysmans' *À Rebours*, Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's *Axël*, Tennyson's 'The Lady of Shalott,' and Mallarmé's prose poem '**Le Nénuphar blanc**'" (201). Edward Ragg also makes a similar connection between Stevens and the French Symbolists in their reading of Poe's "Poetic Principle." He states that Stevens follows "the French Symbolist reading of Poe's 'The Poetic Principle'" in respect to what makes poetry "pure" (52). Ragg explains that the purity of poetry in Poe's "Poetic Principle" is derived from a focus on the musicality of words rather than on their semantic or pragmatic meanings or on their relationships to the real. Thus, poetry becomes "pure" when the poet focuses on the creation of sounds that superficially lack semantic meaning to create the effect of musicality and make poetry "autonomous" and "abstract" (52). Ragg's emphasis on the abstractedness of poetry for both Poe and Stevens is an emphasis on their "aversion to the notion of poetry possessing a didactic role" (52).

The musicality of poetry is, in fact, one of the main characteristics that Stevens shares with Poe. Joan Richardson also notices that Poe's influence on Stevens's writings manifests itself in his concern with "the sound of words" (*Later* 181). Richardson points out that Stevens's understanding of the significance of the sound of words in poetry might be based on Poe's *Eureka*, "a text that he did not name but that he also seemed to recall" (*Later* 181). The connection Richardson makes between Poe's *Eureka* and Stevens's theory of the sound of words is based on Poe's depiction of "Pascal's thought experiment of conjuring the movement of one stone on the sea floor that affects the universe with the waves it generates was translated into the effect that every word uttered has the power of transforming the shape of all things" (*Later* 181). Thus, the careful attention to the sound of words in poetry

has the inherent power to transform life and meaning. However, Richardson believes that, unlike Mallarmé and the French Symbolists in their understanding of Poe's musicality, an understanding that connects this musicality to the aesthetics of the art-for-art's-sake theory, Stevens's understanding of the poetic musicality comes from his desire "to reproduce as closely as he could the way he heard, the way he felt, moving about in constant physical disequilibrium" (*Early* 501). Stevens's understanding of musicality aspires to raise the standards of art and to give poetry and poets a high and transcendent position in life.

### **The Death of a Beautiful Woman on a "Sunday Morning"**

In "The Philosophy of Composition," Poe presents "the death... of a beautiful woman" as "the most poetical topic in the world" (756). Stevens also frequently uses the theme of death in his poems. Richardson points out that "it was the most constant theme of the poems he had written" in his early life and would continue to captivate him in his later works (*Early* 490). However, Richardson also points out that Stevens's treatment of death reveals a personality and a character that differ from Poe's (*Early* 490). Poe's treatment of death might suggest "a perverse predilection, the sign of morbid personality," while Stevens "was not being defensive or disingenuous when he expressed that he was concerned with death as an object of thought" (*Early* 490). Stevens's treatment of death goes far beyond the effect of death on human relationships to discussing death as a contrast and sometimes as an answer to human life.

One of the poems in which Stevens discusses the theme of death is "Sunday Morning." Stevens introduces the theme of the death of a beautiful woman to question the meaning of death as a major component of the religious and social systems that constrain the female figure presented at the beginning of the poem. Poe employs the theme of the death of a beautiful woman in "The Raven," for instance, to show the deep love and grief the speaker of the poem feels because of the loss of his beloved. However, Stevens introduces it in "Sunday Morning" to make a more solid argument about the importance of the death of a beautiful woman when the speaker of the poem suggests it to the beautiful woman as an answer to the ontological and theological questions that she has been reflecting upon at the beginning of the poem. In this way, Stevens makes the beautiful woman in the poem the very embodiment of the theme Stevens shares with Poe.

"Sunday Morning" is a meditative poem contemplating the meaning of life against the backdrop of dominant social and religious systems. The poem can be divided into two major sections: the reflective part that poses the questions about life and religion and the transformative part that attempts to answer the questions of the first part. The speaker of the poem is a woman who is still sitting in her "sunny chair" on a Sunday morning (2). Instead of going to the church, she sits there overcome by questions about her beliefs in life and about the death of Jesus in the crucifixion (9-15). Some kind of epiphany dawns on her in the second section when her thoughts and speculations are transformed to a different world by the answer "Death is the mother of beauty" (63). In this other world, all

the religious boundaries of her current world are broken and all the worries and fears of change are dismissed.

In the first four stanzas of "Sunday Morning," the woman seems to be happy and content in her own world of beauty enjoying the luscious pleasures of life. However, her thoughts and speculations about her religious beliefs have turned these pleasures of life, "the pungent oranges and bright, green wings," into "things in some procession of the dead" (9-10). The death of Jesus, a symbol of ultimate beauty and power, has turned everything beautiful into everything that is lifeless. This juxtaposition of the death of the permanent symbol of divinity and beauty has made her question her mortality and the temporariness of the pleasure she is enjoying. Her quest in life and her pilgrimage "to silent Palestine, / Dominion of the blood and sepulchre," she realizes, is a journey to her own grave and not only to the grave of Jesus (14-15). In these questions that darkened her day, the woman speculates the very nature of life and death.

In "The Raven," Poe makes the raven a sign of death. When the speaker first hears the sound of the tapping of the raven at his door, he dismisses it as "nothing more" than a mere visitor (5-6). The raven replies in answer for all of the speaker's questions about the death of his beloved "Nevermore" (48). Stevens also introduces birds as signs of desolation and death in the fourth stanza of "Sunday Morning." The birds in this stanza "are gone, and their warm fields / Return no more;" they tell the woman that the idea of paradise or heaven is not the answer to her questions about her life and death (49-50). Paradise with all of the signs of life it suggests, including the birds, would not provide the woman with the answer to her questions about death.

Stevens introduces the theme of the death of a beautiful woman exactly in the stanza that marks the middle of the poem as the answer to her questions. The poem consists of 120 lines, and the speaker suggests death in the stanza that marks the middle of the poem:

She says, "But in contentment I still feel  
The need of some imperishable bliss."  
Death is the mother of beauty; hence from her,  
Alone, shall come fulfillment to our dreams  
And our desires... (61-65)

Unlike Poe's narrator, who sees that "nevermore" is the answer to all questions about death, Stevens makes death itself a sign of birth and the creation of life and beauty. Death is a mother, a begetter of the beauty in the world. It is the embodiment of the beautiful woman because it is "the mother of beauty." Stevens strips the idea of death of all religious connotations associated with it because of the death of Jesus. Death, juxtaposed with the begetter of life, reminds the woman and the reader that life in its fluctuating state is to be worshipped and appreciated. Death is the mother of beauty because death is also the teacher that forces the woman to open her eyes. It dissipates the darkness that fell on her mind at the beginning of the poem and replaces it with the kind of friendly darkness "the pigeons" sink into "on extended wings" (118-20). Embracing the beauty of death as the ultimate answer of life would help the woman see life for what it really is, a place of worship.

Although the death of the beautiful woman is treated differently in “Sunday Morning,” Poe’s influence is still present in the poem. The difference in the treatment might be the result of Stevens being a modernist poet. In other words, Stevens is showing his concern with the questions of the religious and social dilemmas of his age. However, the presence of the theme of the death of a beautiful woman suggests that Stevens has retained some of the Romantic elements and subject matter of Poe’s poetry. Although this discussion of “Sunday Morning” is mainly thematic in nature, it would be worthwhile to study the stylistic techniques Stevens might have shared with Poe in the poem. And although this study is focused on “Sunday Morning” as an example of the poems in which Poe’s influence on Stevens can be detected, there is reason to believe that further examination of other poems by Stevens would reveal the extent of Poe’s influence on his poetic vision.

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# **Fly-By-Night Firms, Credit, and Regulation: A Simple Model**

*Philip Routon*

## **Abstract**

*“Fly-by-night” is a derisive term for a firm that appears to be untrustworthy and/or transient. Previous studies have focused on general fly-by-night firms’ behavior and their interaction with the credit market, while much less has been done to show how they approach government regulation. After a brief explanation of the importance of studying fly-by-night firms and a discussion of some relevant literature, this paper presents a simple model that permits a liability-holding fly-by-night entrepreneur to choose between complying or not complying with a governmental regulation. Though perhaps most useful as a classroom exercise, the model could be used to examine what factors affect the compliance decision and in what way. I find that (i) if we assume fly-by-night firms have relatively lower probabilities of project success, then they are unambiguously less likely to comply with governmental regulations; (ii) an increase in the interest rate on business loans decreases the probability of compliance; and (iii) from a regulatory standpoint, an increase in inspection rates deters non-compliance, but an increase in the non-compliance fine may not exert deterrence if strategic default is an option.*

**JEL Codes:** L29, L59

**Keywords:** Fly-by-night firms, regulation, loan default, regulator-agent game

## **1. Introduction**

In the world of business, the term “fly-by-night” is typically used to describe a person or firm that is unreliable, untrustworthy, transient, or financially irresponsible—one who runs away to escape debts or one who masks its true quality. Such firms can harm consumers, creditors, and the laborers they employ. Consumers of fly-by-night goods and services are prone to overpay for these goods, given their true quality. Creditors of fly-by-night entrepreneurs are at risk of not being repaid the money they are owed. Employees of fly-by-night entrepreneurs are at risk of both having their reputations tarnished and not receiving their due wages. For example, the firm could default and not honor its payroll.

Thus, studying, detecting, and exposing fly-by-night entrepreneurs can benefit several parties. Since it would be naive always to expect a truthful answer when asking firm owners about their true nature or the true quality of their product, we need other tools to help study or detect the presence of fly-by-nights. Economic theory is one such tool. Modeling the decision-making process of firms can aid in the explanation of these decisions.

The current fly-by-night literature has focused on firms’ general behavior and how they interact with the credit market. Little has been done to show how these firms deal with government regulation. Using a game-theoretic framework, this analysis attempts to do just that. Here, a fly-by-night entrepreneur plays a regulator-agent game against a regulatory agent. In this simultaneous-move game, the entrepreneur chooses whether or not to comply with some imposed regulation, and the regulator chooses the level of inspection. The model’s outcome helps demonstrate what factors determine the choice made by the entrepreneur.

The rest of the paper is structured in the following manner: Section 2 highlights several previous studies within both the fly-by-night and regulation literatures, the basis upon which my model draws some of its assumptions. In Section 3, I set up the model, work through it, and perform some comparative statics. Section 4 concludes the analysis by discussing the implications of the model.

## **2. Previous Studies**

Becker (1968) provided the “benchmark” model, as it were, for regulation compliance. Non-compliance fines are treated as any other cost of doing business. The model includes an enforcement agency whose efforts impact the expected penalties. Firms make a binary compliance decision and are assumed to act to minimize the sum of expected compliance costs plus expected penalties. The model concludes (somewhat obviously) that increasing either inspection rates or non-compliance penalties raises population compliance.

Becker’s (1968) benchmark model has a long list of simplifying assumptions, and many authors have expanded upon it and studied other aspects of regulation and compliance. For example, some authors (e.g., Heyes (1993)) have focused on inspectability and contested



enforcement; some (e.g., Kaplow and Shavell (1994)) self-reporting; some (e.g., Harrington (1988)) have extended the model to incorporate multiple periods; some (e.g., Sandmo (1998)) have incorporated risk aversion; and some (e.g., Bebchuk and Kaplow (1992)) have incorporated imperfect information. While the model presented here is abstract enough so that the regulation need not refer to a specific type, the example given is that of an environmental regulation on the production process of the entrepreneur's project. Heyes (2000) provides a good discussion of the literature on the implementation of environmental regulation, its enforcement, and compliance.

Parallel to the theoretical literature, an empirical literature on the compliance and enforcement of regulations has developed. For example, Gray and Deily (1996) examine air pollution data from the United States steel industry to estimate plant-level compliance and enforcement functions. The authors find that greater enforcement does indeed lead to greater compliance while greater compliance leads to less enforcement. Perhaps more interesting is that they find that firm characteristics (e.g., firm size, diversification, and gross cash flows) have little impact on compliance decisions. Feinstein (1989) collects data from over 1000 Nuclear Regulatory Commission inspections and performs a similar study of nuclear power plants while Epple and Visscher (1984), in a well-known paper, examine the occurrence, detection, and deterrence of marine oil spills. For further studies of this type, consult Fuller (1987), Harrison (1995), Laplante and Rilstone (1996), and Regens et al. (1997).

The literature on fly-by-night firms is quite scant. Faulhaber and Yao (1989) explain the effect of information asymmetry on the number of fly-by-night firms in an industry or an economy. The authors note that the lower the information asymmetry in an industry, the higher the quality becomes, and thus allowing fewer fly-by-night firms to enter. While their analysis mainly focused on the information asymmetry between the firms and consumers, Faulhaber and Yao also discussed the effect of asymmetry between firms and lenders. In certain markets, those with high levels of information asymmetry, lenders may loan to risky firms at the same or a similar rate as they loan to nearly riskless firms. If the lender is aware of the likelihood of a project's success, however, then he or she will take this information into account when determining the interest rate on the loan. In the model presented here, the entrepreneur is assumed to have already received a business loan to finance a project.

Boyd and Ingberman (2003) assert that premature dissolution is common among fly-by-nights and is actually a rational corporate response to the threat of future liability. By definition, fly-by-night firms often engage in risky projects. Such a firm could choose to dissolve or default if they find themselves facing a large future liability. I incorporate this realization into my model by assuming the entrepreneurs have the option of dissolution/default if the risky business project they are engaging in fails or if they receive a non-compliance fine from a regulatory agent that is greater than their expected profits.

### **3. The Model**

### 3.1 *Assumptions and Variable Definitions*

The model begins with an entrepreneur who has already decided to take on a single project in the pursuit of profit. This project has some probability of success  $p$  where  $0 < p < 1$  and, thus, a  $(1-p)$  probability of failure. A failed project yields zero revenue for the entrepreneur. A successful project results in  $R$  revenue for the entrepreneur. Revenue here refers to its strict definition (income a firm receives from its business activities) and is not to be confused with profit (which is revenue minus all business costs).

The entrepreneur is assumed to be initially assetless and therefore must take out a loan to pay for the project's production inputs. The loan amount is denoted by variable  $K$  and the interest rate on the loan denoted by  $r$ . The market for loans is assumed to be perfectly competitive, and this assumption also negates the need for a third player, the loan officer. If the project fails, the entrepreneur will default and not repay the loan or the interest.

Assume also that there exists some sort of regulation pertaining to the production process of the project. An example of such a regulation could be a government-imposed environmental regulation such as one requiring the entrepreneur to use scrubbers on smoke stacks.<sup>1</sup> The variable  $C$  will represent the entrepreneur's cost of complying with the regulation. Keeping with the environmental regulation example, this would include the cost of buying, installing, and maintaining the scrubbers. The entrepreneur has to decide whether or not to comply with the regulation. As we assume away any moral cost<sup>2</sup> of compliance, the entrepreneur will only consider the expected profits of each option when deciding whether or not to comply. If he or she decides not to comply, there is some probability  $m$  where  $0 < m < 1$  that they will be caught and, thus, probability  $(1-m)$  they will "get away" with non-compliance. For simplicity, assume that if the entrepreneur is inspected, then the chance of getting caught is 100 percent. Thus,  $m$  can now be thought of as the probability of being inspected by the regulator.<sup>3</sup>

If caught, the entrepreneur must pay a fine of some monetary amount  $F$  which is assumed to be some value such that  $F > R - (1+r)K$ . In words, the fine is larger than the entrepreneur's profit since  $R$  is revenue and  $(1+r)K$  is the amount of the loan repayment or costs. Since this would incur a net loss on the entrepreneur, if he is caught, he will default and receive a net profit of zero. The variable  $B$  will denote the overall bonus or reward given to the regulatory agent in charge of inspection for catching and turning in an entrepreneur who did not comply and is common to regulator-agent games. This could include, but is

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1 Scrubber systems are air pollution control devices that are used to remove some of the particulates and/or gases from industrial exhaust streams.

2 In this context, moral cost refers to the non-monetary (emotional/psychological) costs of not abiding by the regulation.

3 This point is made because a few regulator-agent models in the literature allow for the possibility of being inspected and still not getting caught. For the purposes of this analysis, allowing for this scenario would further complicate the mathematics while not adding much to the results.

not limited to, a simple monetary bonus, an increase in funding, or simply the benefit of maintaining the current level of funding.

### 3.2 *The Entrepreneur's Compliance Decision Process*

With the game set and assumptions made, the compliance decision process can now be investigated. Since the entrepreneur can simply default if the project fails or if he gets caught not complying with the regulation, the entrepreneur's decision on whether or not to comply with the regulation can be expressed by the relatively simple inequality

$$p[R - (1 + r)K] - C \geq p(1 - m)[R - (1 + r)K]. \quad (1)$$

If default is not an option, Equation (1) would contain more terms.<sup>4</sup> The left-hand side of this inequality describes the expected value of compliance while the right-hand side does the same for non-compliance. If the left-hand side of Equation (1) is greater than or equal to the right, then the entrepreneur will comply with the regulation. If not, then he will choose not to comply and take the chance of getting caught.

This decision can be further examined in terms of the key variables. Reducing Equation (1) in terms of project revenue yields

$$R \geq K(1 + r) + \frac{C}{mp}. \quad (2)$$

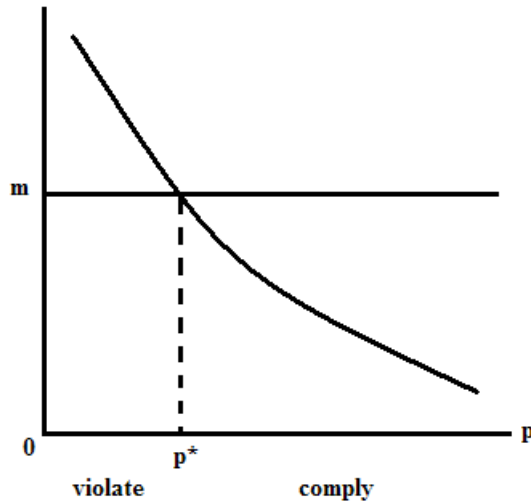
A high value of  $R$  will result in compliance and a value less than the right-hand side of Equation (2) will result in non-compliance. A similar simplification can be made for the probability of detection  $m$ . Solving Equation (1) for  $m$  yields

$$m \geq \frac{C}{p[R - (1 + r)K]}. \quad (3)$$

Here, a high value of  $m$  results in compliance and a value less than the right-hand side of Equation (3) results in non-compliance. Since fly-by-night firms are often characterized by a low probability of project success, then it can be especially valuable to look at the compliance decision in terms of  $p$ . Holding  $m$  constant, Figure 1 shows the critical value of project success (call it  $p^*$ ) where  $p^*$  separates those entrepreneurs who will comply with the regulation (those with  $p > p^*$ ) from those who will not (those with  $p < p^*$ ).

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<sup>4</sup> See the Appendix for this full inequality.



**Figure 1: Compliance and the probability of project success**

Thus, the riskier the project, the more likely the firm will violate the regulation. At the same time, Equation (2) shows that relatively larger values of project revenue result in compliance. Normally, firms only partake in risky projects when the revenue that success would yield is large. A fly-by-night-minded entrepreneur, however, may act differently and engage in risky projects more readily.

### 3.3 The Loan

Now, I turn to the credit market. The loan given to the entrepreneur will exhibit the property

$$K = [\alpha p(1 - m) + (1 - \alpha)p](1 + r)K \tag{4}$$

where  $\alpha$  represents the proportion of firms that do not comply with the governmental regulation and  $0 < \alpha < 1$ . This is because a value of  $K$  less than the right-hand side of the above equation would result in a loss to the lender. Hence, they would not lend in such a scenario. If project failure still yielded some positive revenue (for example, if resources could be sold for scrap) or if the non-compliance fine was not larger than  $R - (1+r)K$ , then Equation (4) would contain more terms.<sup>5</sup> Equation (4) is a strict equality since the market for loans was assumed to be perfectly competitive.

Reducing Equation (4) in terms of the gross interest rate  $(1+r)$  yields

$$(1 + r) = \frac{1}{p(1 - \alpha m)} \tag{5}$$

While the lender is not a player (decision maker) in the game, it is important to consider this property of the loan so that it may be applied to the model. Looking at the loan in terms of the gross interest rate, as in Equation (5), shows that  $r$  is negatively correlated with the probability of project success while positively correlated with the inspection rate. I now turn to the second player, the regulator.

5 For this “more complete” loan equation, see the Appendix.

### 3.4 The Regulator

Like the entrepreneur, the regulator wishes to maximize his or her own “revenue.” The critical decision is how much effort to put into inspection. Hence, in this simplistic game, the regulator chooses  $m$ . Choosing a larger value of  $m$ , the regulator both increases the number of potentially caught non-compliers and increases the amount of work they have to do (what one could call the cost of inspection). I assume the regulator’s objective function to be:

$$Bm\alpha - \frac{1}{2}m^2. \tag{6}$$

Thus, the regulator chooses the optimal  $m$  given  $B$  and  $\alpha$ . This objective function was chosen because it has the necessary properties. First, increases in the bonus received for catching a non-complier and increases in the percentage of firms that are non-compliers both result in higher optimal inspection rates. Second, increases in inspection rates exponentially increase the cost of inspection. Lastly, it yields a simple derivative. Taking the first order derivative of Equation (6) with respect to  $m$  and setting this equal to zero, as in Equation (7), gives the optimal inspection effort:

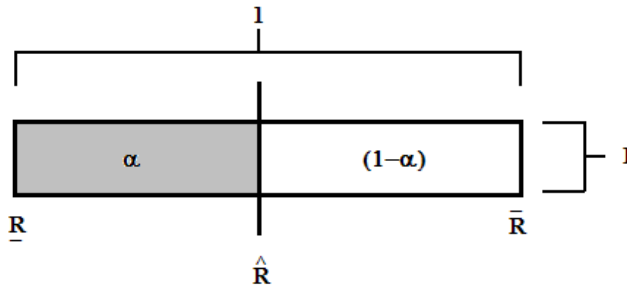
$$\delta m: B\alpha - m = 0 \Rightarrow m = B\alpha \tag{7}$$

### 3.5 Non-Compliers

Writing the entrepreneur’s compliance decision in terms of revenue ( $R$ ), as in Equation (2), as a strict equality gives a critical “comply or not” value of  $R$ . I denote this value in the expression:

$$\underline{R} \leq \hat{R} = (1+r)K + \frac{c}{mp} \leq \bar{R}. \tag{8}$$

Recall that entrepreneurs with values of  $R$  below choose not to comply with the regulation, *ceteris paribus*, and this portion of entrepreneurs is denoted as  $\alpha$ . This implies  $(1-\alpha)$  denotes the portion of entrepreneurs that comply. Name the lower and upper bounds of the critical “comply or not” value of revenue and , respectively. One can normalize the distance (or difference) between these lower and upper bounds ( - ) to unity. Figure 2 presents a simple visual representation of the portion of complying firms taking into account this normalization.



**Figure 2: The portion of firms that will comply**

In general terms,  $\alpha$  is now:

$$\alpha = \frac{\hat{R} - \underline{R}}{\underline{R} - \underline{R}}. \tag{9}$$

Plugging the critical value from Equation (8) into Equation (9) gives:

$$\alpha = \frac{1}{\underline{R} - \underline{R}} \left[ \frac{c}{mp} + (1 + r)K - \underline{R} \right], \tag{10}$$

which is a more explicit definition of the portion of firms that will choose not to comply with the regulation.

**3.6 Combining Compliance, Inspection, and the Loan**

In this section, I combine what has been learned of the portion of non-compliers, the gross interest rate, and the optimal inspection rate so that comparative statics can be performed in Section 3.8. Plugging the optimal inspection rate from Equation (7) into the previously derived equilibrium gross interest rate, Equation (5), gives the formula:

$$(1 + r) = \frac{1}{p(1 - \alpha^2 B)}. \tag{11}$$

Then, plugging Equation (11) and Equation (7) into yields:

$$\underline{R} \leq \hat{R} = \frac{K}{p(1 - \alpha^2 B)} + \frac{c}{\alpha B p} \leq \bar{R}. \tag{12}$$

Now we can take this new information and incorporate it into  $\alpha$  which gives:

$$\alpha = \frac{c}{\alpha B p} + \frac{K}{p(1 - \alpha^2 B)} - \underline{R}. \tag{13}$$

Notice the normalization was also used to obtain the above formula. Thus, we have derived a new expression for the portion of entrepreneurs who will choose not to comply with the regulation that takes into account the decision made by the regulator and the characteristics of the credit market.

**3.7 Equilibrium Inspection and Compliance**

Figure 3 displays the equilibrium values of  $\alpha$  and  $m$  in a graphical framework. Recall Equation (7) is the regulator’s optimal choice of  $m$  given  $\alpha$ . As one would expect, the greater the proportion of non-complying firms, the higher the regulator’s optimal  $m$ —

hence the positively sloping curve labeled Equation (7). The slope of this line is  $B$ . Also recall that Equation (10) implies that for larger values of  $\alpha$ ,  $m$  must decrease for the lender to lend at the same interest rate—hence the negatively sloping curve labeled Equation (10).

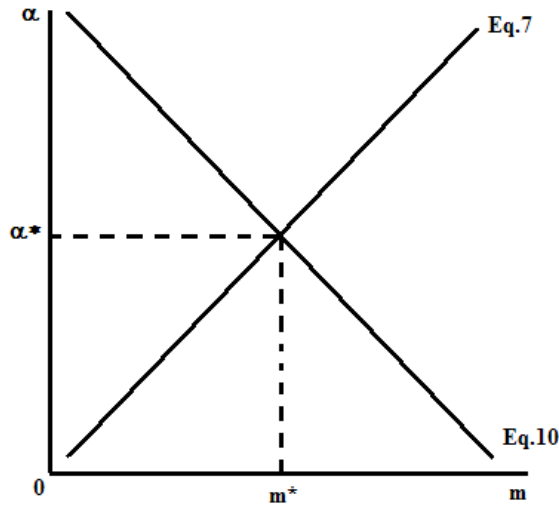


Figure 3: Equilibrium compliance and inspection rates

The intersection of the two curves gives an equilibrium level of inspection ( $m^*$ ) and an equilibrium portion of non-compliers ( $\alpha^*$ ).

### 3.8 Comparative Statics

For those less familiar with economic theory, comparative statics is the comparison of two different economic outcomes, before and after a change in some parameter. First, I will examine the impact of a change in the interest rate on business loans on the portion of firms that choose not to comply with regulations, that is, the effect of  $r$  on  $\alpha$ . The equilibrium gross interest rate from Equation (5) can be rewritten as:

$$(1 - \alpha m)(1 + r)p = 1. \tag{14}$$

For further simplicity, we might rewrite the gross interest rate  $(1+r)$  as  $\theta$ . Consequently, plugging the regulator's optimal decision from Equation (7) into Equation (14) yields:

$$\theta p(1 - \alpha^2 B) = 1. \tag{15}$$

From Equation (15), it is easy to see that if the interest rate increases, then, *ceteris paribus*,  $\alpha$  must increase to keep the equality steady. Thus, an increase in the interest rate results in an increase in the number of non-complying firms.

Another important relationship, that was already discussed briefly in Section 3.2, is that of the probability of project success and the compliance rate. That is, the impact of a change in  $p$  on  $\alpha$ . As of Section 3.2, the properties of the loan and the regulator's decision process had not yet entered the model, so it might be prudent to revisit this impact. Recall

the value derived previously for  $R$  from Equation (12), here with the bounds dropped from the expression:

$$\hat{R} = \frac{K}{p(1-\alpha^2B)} + \frac{c}{\alpha Bp}. \quad (16)$$

From Equation (16), it can be shown that an increase in the value of  $p$ , *ceteris paribus*, would result in a decrease in  $\alpha$ . In words, the higher the probability of project success, the smaller the portion of non-complying firms.

## 4 Discussion

This simple model results in three key findings. First, if we assume that fly-by-night firms are those with a low value of project success ( $p$ ) or define them as such, then, *ceteris paribus*; fly-by-nights are unambiguously less likely to comply with regulations. This assumes there is some positive financial cost of compliance. Second, it has been shown that an increase in the interest rate on commercial loans makes non-compliance even more likely.

The third finding is perhaps the most interesting. From a regulatory standpoint, the entrepreneur's compliance decision shows that an increase in inspection ( $m$ ) would deter non-compliance but an increase in the fine ( $F$ ) would not. This results in the following policy implication. To encourage compliance, regulatory agents should increase inspection rates instead of raising the non-compliance penalty. This finding, however, rests heavily on the assumptions of the model; namely that  $F > R - (1+r)K$  and, therefore, the entrepreneur can and likely will strategically default if caught being non-compliant. In the framework of this simple model, the way to increase inspection rates is to get policymakers to increase  $B$ , the benefit to the regulatory agent of catching a non-complier.

While relatively simple, this model could be used as a base for future models. Several aspects could be altered to fit more specific scenarios. Assumptions like the initial "assetlessness" of the entrepreneur could be relaxed. Additional complexities could also be added. For example, an informal credit market could be included increasing the loan options of the entrepreneur. Alternatively or additionally, one could allow for corruption on part of the regulator making the payment of bribes an option for the fly-by-night entrepreneur. Unchanged, the model can serve as a classroom demonstration, particularly as an example of an extended regulator-agent game.



## Appendix

### *The Entrepreneur's Decision without Strategic Default*

The entrepreneur's complete compliance decision could have been expressed as  $p[R-(1+r)K]-(1-p)(1+r)K-C \geq p(1-m)[R-(1+r)K]-(1-p)(1-m)(1+r)K+pm[R-(1+r)K-F]-(1-p)m[(1+r)K+F]$  if the option of strategic default had not been allowed. All terms represent monetary amounts. The left side of the inequality refers to regulation compliance while the right side refers to non-compliance. From left to right, the three terms on the left side of the inequality represent project success, project failure, and the cost of compliance. From left to right, the terms on the right side of the inequality represent project success without inspection, project failure without inspection, project success with inspection, and project failure with inspection. Since default was allowed in the model presented in the body of the paper, the terms that describe situations of project failure and/or inspection under non-compliance can be reduced to zero and become irrelevant in the entrepreneur's compliance decision process. Reducing this expression along these lines results in Equation (1):  $p[R-(1+r)K]-C \geq p(1-m)[R-(1+r)K]$ .

### *A More Complete Loan Equation*

For those interested in a more complete loan equality, it could be expressed as  $K=p(1-\alpha)(1+r)K+p\alpha(1-m)(1+r)K+(1-p)(1-\alpha)K+(1-p)\alpha(1-m)K+p\alpha mK+(1-p)\alpha mK$  where  $K$  denotes the loan amount. Again, the equation is a strict equality under the assumption of a perfectly competitive market for business loans. From left to right, the right-hand-side terms represent project success and regulation compliance, success and non-compliance without inspection, failure and compliance, failure and non-compliance without inspection, success and non-compliance with inspection, and failure and non-compliance with inspection. Under the assumption that the entrepreneur will default if either caught not complying with the regulation or project failure, then the last four terms become irrelevant and reduce to zero. Thus, the equation can be reduced by multiplying out the zeroed terms and combining some like factors to yield Equation (4).

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