

25th Annual

**Clement S. Stacy**

**Memorial Undergraduate**

**Proceedings**

Purdue  
University  
Northwest  
April 7-8, 2017



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COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES,  
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SCIENCES -

The Clement S. Stacy Undergraduate Research Conference, sponsored by the College of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences at Purdue University Northwest, was convened for the 25<sup>th</sup> consecutive year on April 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Once again submissions were reviewed by a faculty panel, and 79 presentations were selected for the conference. Students from 16 institutions presented their research on a wide range of topics in literature, history, political science, gender studies, film, religion, psychology, philosophy, and health.

Research is an essential part of the mission of higher education, and Purdue Northwest places great emphasis on affording undergraduate students the opportunity to engage in research and disseminate their findings. At the conference in April, the students were presenters; they had to hone their skills in public speaking, PowerPoint presentation, and responding to vigorous questioning from session attendees. In the proceedings, the students become authors, polishing research writing skills such as analysis, synthesis, and proper citation of evidence. I am extremely pleased that the work of these students is published in these electronic proceedings, and I hope you will enjoy reviewing the outstanding papers contained herein.

To the faculty mentors, friends and family of the students, I send my sincere thanks for your support of the students and their important work. I would also like to publically acknowledge Purdue Northwest's Rachel Pollack, who was the principal conference organizer. Her efforts were absolutely crucial to the success of this year's event. Valuable assistance was also provided by Ms. Kathryn Hejmej, Administrative Assistant to the Dean and Graduate Assistants Nicole Blakeley and Papa Otoo.

In honor of our 25<sup>th</sup> year we were joined by Chancellor Keon, guest speaker Dr. Alan Spector, and Dr. Paul McGrath. To them I express my gratitude.

I would also like to thank the moderators, Dr. Nicky Jackson, Dr. Cindy Torres, Dr. Jonathan Swarts, Dr. Frank Colucci, Dr. David Pick, Rachel Pollack, Milan Andrejevich, Benjamin Horjus, Theresa C. Dietrich, and Paula Zaja for helping make the conference a success.

Again, congratulations to the authors of these papers. I very much hope to see you continue your excellent work in the liberal arts and social sciences.

Sincerely yours,



Ronald CortHELL, Interim Dean  
College of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences  
Purdue University Northwest

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**Education in Japan in the Era of Globalization:  
Multicultural Approach, Westernization and  
Japanese Traditions in Teaching of the English Language**

**Tatiana Claudy**

**IPFW**

**[clauts01@students.ipfw.edu](mailto:clauts01@students.ipfw.edu)**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Why do human development researchers, sociologists, and linguists need to focus on the issue of teaching and studying English in Japan? There are several reasons that make this inquiry indispensable and important. For Japanese people, studying English is not a choice anymore, but a necessity because “English now is said to be an international language or a global language” (Honma, “English” 73). The fast and steady spread of English worldwide made it the most spoken language in the world: about 1,500 million of people speak English (“The Most Spoken”). Japanese people have to speak English not only to communicate with native speakers from the Great Britain, the United States, or Australia, but also to have a common language with people from other countries. According to Nobuyuki Honma, “from a Japanese point of view . . . English is the language for us to use with Chinese, Koreans, Bruneians, Thais, Malaysians, Singaporeans, and other Asians” (“Some Remarks” 9).

In Japanese Junior High and High schools, there is a mandatory foreign language study requirement (Miller). There is a choice of European languages: for instance, in 1998, in 551 schools (60% of them government schools), twenty-two languages have been taught (Gottlieb 33). However, for many years, majority of students have chosen English not only to fulfill foreign language requirements but also to be prepared for university entrance exams on English (Gottlieb 31). Today, an average Japanese student studies a foreign language for six years.

Nonetheless, many educators in Japan have concerns about English language proficiency of Japanese people: regardless of mandatory English classes, the percentage of people who actually can speak English is alarmingly low. In summer 2014, in 480 randomly selected public high schools, the Ministry of Education tested English listening, writing, speaking and reading skills of third-year high school students. Results were disappointing: on the exam, 13.3% of

students scored zero on the speaking assignment and 29.2 % of students scored zero on the writing assignment (“Disappointing levels”).

To address this problem, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in Japan (MEXT) proposed an education reform in 2008. Pursuant to this reform, “the full-scale development of new English education in Japan” will include the introduction of English lessons in Elementary School: in Third and Fourth grade – English language activities classes 1-2 times a week, and in Fifth and Sixth grade – English Language classes 3 times a week (“English Education”). After the implementation of this reform, an average Japanese student will be studying English for 10 years. Yet the prolonged study of English *per se* does not guarantee the desired level of language proficiency. Maybe the problem with unsatisfactory English education in Japan should be resolved differently? Maybe there are other reasons, for instance, cultural traditions, which impede English language acquisition by Japanese students?

The abovementioned issues prove the importance of my study: there is an urgent need to examine Japanese methods of teaching English, find their advantages and disadvantages, to strengthen the former, and to eliminate the latter. My choice of this topic is connected with my academic interest in linguistics. I also have personal experience in studying English as a foreign language and in tutoring English as a foreign language (in Russia and the United States), and this experience allows to evaluate the efficiency of English teaching methods employed by Japanese educators from both teaching and learning perspectives.

## **II. RESEARCH SETTING AND METHODS**

I conducted my research in the city of Toyama, Japan, from June 1, 2016 till June 10, 2016. The primary locations for my research were the University of Toyama (the Faculty of

Human Development), and Toyama University Affiliated Elementary and Junior High Schools. The secondary location was the Takaoka Super Global High School in Toyama prefecture.

In the University of Toyama I attended three classes of Professor Talandis (two classes in Conversational English and one class in American Literature) and two classes of Professor Okazaki (demonstrations of teaching methods by graduate students). In Toyama University Affiliated Elementary and Junior High Schools I attended two Annual Teachers' Conferences (on June 3, 2016 and on June 10, 2016) during which I observed three English classes and participated in one follow-up discussion. I also attended one English class in Toyama University Affiliated Junior High School. In Takaoka Super Global High School I attended the students' presentation and gave my presentation about IPFW. My research methods included the following: observing English classes, taking notes, interacting and group working with students, browsing through English text books and hand-outs used in classes and analyzing their content. During my observation I used Classroom Observation Protocol created by my instructor, Dr. Yamada, assistant professor at the Department of Sociology at IPFW.

There are several serious limitations to my research: first, limited time, location, and the scope of the research; second, language barrier due to English teachers' usage of Japanese during their classes, the usage of Japanese in English textbooks that I examined, and the usage of Japanese during the follow-up discussion after the first English class that I attended at the Teachers' conference on June 3, 2016; third, limited access to English textbooks and teaching material; and forth, the limited time for follow-up discussion with teachers and Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs). Taking into consideration these limitations, I consider my work to be a preliminary exploratory research of the topic.

I based my research framework on the model created by Nobuyuki Honna – “Three

Elements in Teaching English as a Language for International/Intercultural Understanding and Communication.” In my opinion, these three elements are essential in teaching of any foreign language, I would like to discuss them in more details.

First, it is paramount to understand the culture of the foreign language taught and learned because the evolution of any language is intertwined with the development of the society and its culture; moreover, many languages’ structures can be understood only through the study of the history of the countries where these languages have been originated. I would like to substantiate this statement by several examples:

1) In the United States, a judicial court’s place of business is called “a court house,” but in France it is called “a palace of justice.” The study of the semantics is based on cultural traditions: palaces are kings’ residences, but houses are common people’s residences. Thus, the term “court house” presumes that justice belongs to the people because in the United States there always has been a republican system of government; conversely, the term “palace of justice” presumes that justice belongs to the king because originally France has been a kingdom.

2) In the Russian language, the abundance of French words can be explained through the study of Russian history: for two centuries French has been the language of Russian aristocracy.

3) In Medieval France and Spain, knights – “caballeros” (Spanish) and “chevaliers” (French) – rode horses, and languages reflected this historical tradition: “caballo” is “horse” in Spanish, and “cheval” – in French.

4) In Russian, the word “man” consists of two words – “husband” and “rank,” and the word “woman” also consists of two words “wife” and “cabbage soup.” Thus, the languages reflected the labor distribution and gender roles in the society.

5) In many languages the word “computer” sounds similar (e.g., in English, Portuguese, Russian, Ukrainian, Spanish, Italian, and Japanese), but in French there is an original word “ordinateur.” The explanation of this linguistic phenomenon is based on the fact, that, firstly, the French people are extremely proud of their cultural heritage generally and their language specifically; and secondly, historically, France and Great Britain have been political and economic rivals, and the French are often reluctant to use English words and to speak English.

6) In French and Spanish, there are different personal pronouns for “men” and “women.” However, for a mixed group, the personal pronoun for men is used – thus, languages reflected the patriarchal organization of the society and the dominion of men.

The second element of the model, “Explaining Own Culture,” is a consequence of expanding the knowledge of another culture. Furthermore, according to Wolfgang Goethe, “Those who know nothing of foreign languages know nothing of their own.” For instance, I rediscover my native language, Russian, through my study of French, and now I understand the origin of many French loan words that became an integral part of Russian (e.g., “overture” means “beginning” in French, and “garde-robe” (“wardrobe” in English) means “keep clothes”).

Finally, the third element, “Teaching English as an International Language,” is the necessity of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In 1947, English has been introduced in Japanese middle schools as an elective subject to provide Japanese students with “the window to the world,” and instructors used audio-lingual approach to treat listening and speaking skills as primary, and reading and writing skills – as secondary (Gottlieb 31). Although this approach sounds promising, I doubt that its application brought the desired results. After looking through several English textbooks used in Japan in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, I found out that they consisted of texts, for example, on Greek mythology and excerpts from classical English literature, and, thus, these textbooks were

structured more toward the development of reading skills. While reading skills are important, they alone are not sufficient in modern global economy. Since English became the language of national politics (e.g., English is one of the official languages of the United Nations) and global business (e.g., many multinational companies, such as Renault, Samsung, Nokia and Daimler-Chrysler, established English as the common corporate language), the emphasis in teaching English should be on the development of speaking skills.

Another limitation of the traditional method of teaching English is the focus on English of the Inner Circle countries – Great Britain, the United States, Canada and Australia – where English is the first language for native English speakers. However, people in the Outer Circle where English has been brought by colonizers (e.g., South Africa, India, and Papua New Guinea) became *de facto* native speakers and created their own versions of English. Therefore, “the spread of English as a language for multinational and multicultural communication employed by an enormous number of non-native speakers shows that English is becoming more and more de-Anglo-Americanized all over the world” (Honna, “Some Remarks”11). Dr. Yamada noted that since “[p]eople with different mother tongues increasingly communicate through English, and various cultural and language backgrounds among native and non-native English speakers have shaped multicultural and multilinguistic conditions,” it is crucial that all English speakers would “broaden their view of the English speaking world” (“The Role of English” 5).

In the theoretical framework for my research I also used three interrelated elements: Multicultural Approach, Westernization, and Japanese Traditions. The rationale for the choice of these elements is based partially on Honna’s model and partially on the results of my observations of English classes in the University of Toyama and Toyama University Affiliated Elementary and Junior High Schools.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

As the theoretical foundation for my research, I used several scholarly articles on globalization and education generally and on teaching English as a multicultural language specifically. I chose articles published from 2008 to 2015 because their authors presented the most recent development in the research on my subject matter.

Jeanne Ballantine and Joan Spade provided a comprehensive overview of major sociological theories applicable to education: macro-level functional and conflict theories (including reproduction and resistance theories), and feminist theories; and micro-level interaction theories (including rational choice and symbolic interaction theories) (Ballantine 5).

Joel Spring discussed influences of globalization on schooling because “government and business groups talk about the necessity of schools meeting the needs of global economy” (331). He described the four major interpretations of the process of educational globalization: world culture, world systems, postcolonial analysis, and a culturalist theorist perspective (Spring 334). One of his conclusions is that “[t]he growth of English as the language of global commerce is making the teaching of English a fixture in most national curricula” (Spring 352).

Mieko Yamada researched Japan’s domestic diversity and the role of English language teaching within this sociological context. She argued that failure to understand English as a multicultural language may create prejudices toward English speakers whose English languages deviate from English language of native English speakers of the Inner Circle countries; besides, this attitude may lead to the reproduction of a linguistic hierarchy (Yamada, “Diversity” 215).

Mieko Yamada also performed a profound content analysis of English textbooks used in Japanese schools and examined how these books were used to project images of modern Japanese society. She found that, first, Japan domineered in the representation of the countries;

second, almost no Japanese ethnic minorities have been represented; and third, textbooks offered a broader view of the world, therefore “English uses and users in the Inner and Expanding Circles almost equally appeared in the most recent editions” (Yamada, “English” 501).

#### IV. ANALYSIS

I would like to analyze my findings in more detail using my three-element theoretical framework.

##### 1. Multicultural Approach

In all Japanese schools that I visited, the EFL textbooks *New Horizon: English Course* are used as the basic teaching tool. I looked through several of these books and found references to foreign countries, such as Korea, China, Japan, Australia, the United States, Holland, France, and Canada. According to Dr. Yamada, who conducted a thorough content analysis of these textbooks, there are references to one continent and twenty-four countries (“English” 498). These books also include representations of characters from Western and Asian countries, for instance, Emi from Japan, Lisa from Canada, Mike from Australia, and Judy from the United States.

According to my analysis of the textbooks, they provide balanced representation of Western and Japanese art – in one chapter, there were pictures of Johannes Vermeer (Holland), Claude Monet (France), Rene Magritte (Belgium) and Katsushika Hokusai (Japan). In my opinion, it is paramount to present together pictures of masterpieces of European and Japanese art because this approach gives Japanese students the opportunity not only to study art but also to understand the considerable contribution of Japan into the world art development.

During my observation of English classes in Toyama University Affiliated Junior High School, I also noted that though the focus of lessons were on Japanese culture and traditions, some foreign countries have been mentioned – Taiwan and China.

In the Toyama University, during one class in Conversational English, Prof. Talandis let students to listen to the same dialogue in three versions of English - British, American, and Australian, and explained some differences in word usage (e.g., “Oh, yeah?” in American English and “Really?” in British English).

## **2. Westernization**

According to my observations of English lessons in Toyama University Affiliated Junior High School and the University of Toyama, Westernization has been implemented in the following ways:

a) Professor Talandis formulated three “Golden Rules” to help Japanese students to master English conversation in the Western way. According to Golden Rule 1, since silence is not an acceptable answer, students should not remain silent for more than a few seconds (Talandis, “Conversations” 10). According to Golden Rule 2, since short answers are considered impolite, it is necessary to give longer answers by adding one or two extra pieces of information (Talandis, “Conversations” 12). Finally, according to Golden Rule 3, it is “natural sometimes speak about yourself without being asked a question” (Talandis, “13. Golden Rule 3” 52).

While giving Professor Talandis the credit he deserved for providing students with a comprehensive book on conversational American English, I have to note that each of these rules contradicts Japanese conversational traditions. Therefore, Japanese students may experience cognitive dissonance in trying to use these rules which may result in their reluctance to speak

English because speaking according to “Golden Rules” may be perceived by them as the loss (or at least a lessening) of their national identity.

b) In English classes that I attended (with the exception of Professor Talandis classes), rhythms or English songs (e.g., “Help!” by The Beatles or “Let It Go” from Disney animated cartoon “Frozen”) were used to facilitate the language acquisition. In one English class at Toyama University Affiliated Junior High School, the teacher clapped her hands using the rhythm “one-two-three,” and students repeated the lines of dialogues with this rhythmic accompaniment.

Using music and rhythms in teaching children and school students is an essential part of American teaching traditions where educational songs are widely used – from the “ABC” song that helps preschoolers to memorize the alphabet to a more complicated song “The Elements” (by Tom Lehrer) that helps school students to memorize the periodic table of elements.

### **3. Japanese Traditions**

According to my observations of English lessons in Toyama University Affiliated Junior High School and Takaoka Super Global High School, Japanese traditions have been taught through the variety of ways:

a) The content of English lessons included Japanese food, Japanese table manners, and Japanese traditional clothes. In Toyama University Affiliated Junior High School, topics of lessons were “Japanese traditions” and “Japanese Food.” In one class, students composed short stories on these topics; and another class, the teacher used a role game (a waiter and a customer) to teach students to converse about Japanese food and reasons for their gastronomic preferences. In Takaoka Super Global High School, students in my group gave me their short presentations on the preparation of sushi and the proper usage of chopsticks.

b) Methods of group work, work in pairs and changing partners were used in all the classes that I attended. Group work included equal input into the discussion of the topic, reading in turns, and answering questions. In one class of Professor Okazaki, IPFW students shared with Japanese students about different aspects of life in the United States. The graduate student, who demonstrated teaching methods and served as the lesson facilitator, called one Japanese student from each group and ask him or her to summarize the main points of the conversation with a native speaker.

Work in pairs was often arranged to change partners, and it has been done in different ways. For example, in one of Professor Okazaki teaching methods demonstration class, each student received a sheet of paper with a question and an answer. Students moved around the classroom asking the questions given to them and answering with the answers provided. Students with matching questions and answers formed pairs. This arrangement served several purposes: students had a chance to work with some of their classmates whom they may know less or with whom otherwise they would not communicate; in addition, a student with better language speaking skills was able to interact with a student with lesser language speaking skills, and both benefited from this exchange. This aspect of a group work is very important in Japanese English classes where on average thirty-five students present. Naturally, with this big number of students and relatively short duration of a class (50 minutes), it is impossible for a teacher to pay a lot of attention to each student or to give an extra help to students with weaker English skills.

3) Teachers' positive feedback and encouragement were essential parts of each English lesson that I attended. In Toyama University Affiliated Junior High Schools, the teacher gave feedback on every student's oral presentation, and especially he noted the good parts. The teacher gave uplifting comments to his students: he made a chart on the blackboard of each

presentation's main points and employed sociolinguistics to explain why these points are important in the structure of the presentation. In the University of Toyama, Professor Talandis observed group work of his students with native speakers from IPFW and noted that students became more active with every new native speaker joining their group.

## V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

I would like to start my discussion with the acknowledgement of positive elements at English lessons that I attended. There are numerous effective teaching methods that should be recognized and promoted, such as the following:

a) Singing a song in the beginning of lessons or using a rhythm during lessons not only creates an uplifting and inspiring atmosphere in the classroom, but also helps students in memorizing vocabulary and grammar rules, and research on brain activities supports “a music-language connection with regard to learning a second language” (Lems 14).

b) The goal for the lesson was displayed on the blackboard in two English classes that I attended at the Toyama University Affiliated Junior High Schools. Each teacher read the goal to the students at the beginning of his classes. This is a very important element of the lesson because it gives both the teacher and students a clear direction of how their efforts should be focused, and also it gives a sense of the satisfaction for the objectives achieved. As Wolfgang Goethe remarked, “It is not enough to take steps which may some day lead to a goal; each step must be itself a goal and a step likewise” (“Goals”).

c) Recitation and reiteration of vocabulary is an essential part of learning a skill: after a skill is practiced during certain time, the activity not only becomes easier with each reiteration, but the skill is naturally forced to “a subconscious level where it becomes permanently stored for recall and habitual use at any time” (“Learning”).

d) Using games and role playing is an indispensable tool for teaching children and school students any material or activity because games create uplifting atmosphere in the classrooms, encourage students' creativity, and make new concepts more comprehensive for students.

Research shows that "games have a special role in building students' self-confidence":

moreover, "they can reduce the gap between quicker and slower learners" (Boyle 3).

e) Students' gestures, movements and the display of emotions during English lessons also play a significant part in the process of learning. Movements and gestures help students to better concentrate on the learning material. As for emotions, they are generally essential to all human cognition. More specifically, "learning a second or foreign language is manipulated by our emotions, and emotions shape behaviour and perhaps all cognition" (López 45).

However, in my opinion, there were certain negative elements in the structure and methods used in English classes that I attended:

a) Sometimes there was a lot of noise in classrooms, and because of it teachers lost control of students. Noise does not promote learning even in small classes, but in Japanese classes consisted on average of thirty-five students, noise created obstacles to the language attainment by preventing students to concentrate on the material presented or to perform the required activity.

b) Dialogues in the textbooks are too prescriptive, and teachers wanted students to memorize them (especially Professor Talandis who instructed his students to repeat verbatim line by line). Though memorization is important, still students should be taught about certain flexibility that is acceptable in English (e.g., adverbs of time may be used at the beginning or at the end of a sentence).

c) Both teachers and textbooks set the goal for students to reach the language proficiency level of native English speakers from the Inner Circle countries. For instance, during his classes

in Conversational English, Professor Talandis often explained how students should speak English to “talk like native speakers.”

I strongly disagree with the position of Professor Talandis for several reasons. First, this statement is harmful because it sets the bar too high for many students to achieve and may cause them to be discouraged and stop learning English. Second, this statement may force Japanese students to think that they are not “good enough” if they do not speak like the British or the Americans. As Dr. Yamada noted, “[m]any Japanese may have a sense of inferiority about their own use of English, and this sense may come from attitudes toward privileging native speakers or idealizing English-speaking communities” (“Diversity” 218). In addition, as Dr. Yamada stated, “While native speakers of English often think that they own the language, English also belongs to non-native speakers who create varieties of it” (“English” 492).

d) Teaching students to include “thinking sounds” (e.g., “Uh-huh”) in their dialogues by Professor Talandis may be a great disservice to them because “thinking sounds” (“vocalized pauses”) will hinder these Japanese students from giving effective public speeches in English. Generally, vocalized pauses reduce the credibility of speakers who are perceived to be uncomfortable with their subject matter and anxious, and this perception by the audience may reduce speakers’ trustworthiness and persuasiveness on a given topic (Salazar 214).

In conclusion, there are many positive features in English student-oriented textbooks and in the structure of English lessons in Japan. However, many students do not use English outside the classroom. When interacting with native speakers, Japanese students are shy and not confident, and some teachers’ emphasis on the goal to speak as native English speakers (from the Inner Circle countries) may create additional barriers to Japanese students’ usage of English. Furthermore, the Japanese variety of English is viewed as incorrect and even “deviated from the

‘real’ English of native speakers” (Yamada, “Diversity” 218). Finally, some Japanese students do not fully comprehend the necessity of learning English; thus, they neither experience joy of studying English nor make sufficient efforts to master the language. In today’s globalized economy, lack of English speaking skills will inevitably create for them numerous disadvantages because “[l]earning the English language is strongly linked to the distribution of wealth, power and privilege” (Yamada, “English” 496).

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Michael J. Cleary  
Purdue University Northwest-Westville  
[Cleary@pnw.edu](mailto:Cleary@pnw.edu)  
Mclear80@gmail.com

How do teachers foster a love of learning in children that will stay with them as they grow?

**Abstract**

Frequently, the United States public education system is based solely on a student's ability to learn, retain, and recite information back, as shown through test performance. This system does not consider critical thinking, problem solving skills, determination in the face of setbacks, and social skills, which are collectively termed non-cognitive learning skills (NCLS). It is agreed that these skills help students reach their full learning and after school potential. For this project, six teachers and one principal at elementary schools located in Northwest Indiana were interviewed anonymously with the intention being to explore whether the teaching of NCLS could have a positive correlation on student performance at a local grade school. Student participation rates in academically related after school activities are compared with teacher interviews to find out if the students are being positively reinforced by NCLS or not. It was hypothesized that the higher a teacher rated the importance of NCLS, more of their students will participate in an academically related club during the 2015-2016 school year. While the normal after school activities participation rate before this study was ten to twenty percent, it was felt that a rate of forty percent participation would show a significant increase due to the teacher's reinforcement of NCLS. The research was exploratory in nature, performed at a micro level, and suggests that future research on a larger scale may further demonstrate the significance of NCLS.

## **Introduction**

Education is important. It gives people abilities and knowledge they did not previously have, while also helping to change and improve future generations. It is universally recognized, and something every single one of us experiences during some point in our lives. The role of public education is to pass on knowledge and skills, while taking the time to teach children until they learn and understand. Therefore, what we teach our children matters immensely in shaping the future world.

The success or failure of the education process matters greatly, and is important whether a student decides to go on to college, or goes directly into the workforce. Without a successful education, doctors, nurses, plumbers, carpenters, lawyers, congressmen, would not have the skills to heal, fix things, build houses, or uphold the law. Thus, education may be the most important thing for a country to invest in.

The current age of technology connects us with the rest of the world more than ever before in history. Because of this, a global perspective to the economy and an understanding of different cultures and countries should be taught and reinforced to students. “The new mission of schools is to prepare students to work at jobs that do not yet exist, creating ideas and solutions for products and problems that have not yet been identified, using technologies that have not yet been invented” (Darling-Hammond, 2010: 2).

With the constant advances in technology and the ever-changing landscape of the economy, how are today's teachers preparing students for the challenges of tomorrow? Also, what is being done to help students succeed? Is it possible to measure this so we know students

are being provided with the education and skills they will need to succeed not only in school but after graduating high school?

There are multiple things which could be a measure of student success, and people have different ideas about what student success may mean. We can look at graduation rates, or we can look at post education employment. We can look at overall grades, or we can look at state test scores. These are several examples, and there are probably even more aspects to it than this. Due to the multiple ways in which student success can be measured, it is challenging to determine whether students will continue to grow and learn throughout their lives.

More often than not, the focus of our education system is solely on the ability to learn and recite information back without using critical thinking or problem solving skills. But a successful education is more than just good test scores and the ability to recall information. Critical thinking, problem solving skills, determination in the face of setbacks, and social skills all play a vital role in a student's success. They are all things that children learn in school, whether it is being taught directly as part of curriculum or indirectly learned from classmates and teachers. Abstract thinking skills become important once a child graduates from high school and either enters either the workforce or college. Yet throughout public education, the focus is on concrete thinking skills such as reading and math.

When a student graduates high school, they have completed their time as a public education student. Some of them may go on to college and others will go straight into the workforce. No matter which path they take afterwards, a student's time in public education is viewed as having been a success once they graduate high school. Also, the normal age of high school graduation generally coincides with the legal age of adulthood in the United States. They

are then expected to handle responsibilities they did not have to worry about during their time in public education. Yet they are often not taught these responsibilities in the classroom because of the educational emphasis on concrete thinking skills.

Looking back to the beginning of the education process helps us to look at how students develop and change over time. To become a successful middle school and high school student, children need to have developed an enjoyment of learning during their time in elementary school. This researcher defines the success at the end of elementary school to be not only academic skills, but the life skills that help children to transition socially into adults by the end of high school. “There is ample evidence that skills such as motivation, perseverance and work habit positively influence students' academic performance” (Hsin and Xie, 2016 :3). These life skills are becoming more commonplace in elementary schools across the country, and for the purpose of this research paper will be referred to as non-cognitive learning skills (NCLS). These skills could also be referred to as social skills, or life skills, for they are tools that should help promote success in schoolwork and eventually the workplace.

### **Literature Review**

The idea of non-cognitive learning skills and the importance behind them has only recently started to be considered a part of the official teaching curriculum in schools. While NCLS is still a new area of scientific study, there is research that can be examined. Therefore, what is the current research on the subject, and where are we at now in regard to this type of learning?

Many who have examined this style of education have recognized professor Angela Duckworth as the pioneer and leading researcher in the field of NCLS. Her original research

began in 2005, is the first research of its kind and is the foundation for further study which Duckworth has continued over the course of her academic career. When she initially started, the sole focus was on student self-discipline, and it has grown to include several different personality factors commonly known as non-cognitive learning skills. Duckworth's original research study in 2005 on student self-discipline was an immediate success in the academic world. This success is noted in the statement, "she was certainly successful – very few doctoral students have their first-year theses published in a prestigious journal like *Psychological Science*" (Tough, 2012: 74)

In Duckworth's original study there was a positive correlation between self-discipline and academic achievement. "Highly self-disciplined adolescents outperformed their more impulsive peers on every academic-performance variable, including report-card grades, standardized achievement-test scores, admission to a competitive high school, and attendance" (Duckworth, Seligman, 2005: 941) According to the findings of this research, students who were more focused and determined to succeed achieved academically. "Self-discipline predicted academic performance more robustly than did IQ. Self-discipline also predicted which students would improve their grades over the course of the school year, whereas IQ did not" (Duckworth and Seligman, 2005: 942). A few years later, self-discipline and self-determination were rebranded into the new term, "grit", and by doing this, Duckworth had created a new area of research and study when it comes to student success. Grit became the cornerstone of Duckworth's research thereafter and is one the several different factors that make up NCLS.

Duckworth has now written her first book based on her research and it focuses on how grit, determination, and passion helps bring about success. "Talent is how quickly your skills improve when you invest effort. Achievement is what happens when you take your acquired skills and use them "(Duckworth, 2016: 42). To Duckworth and her research, the effort is what's

important. This does not mean that anyone can succeed, but it does mean that the more someone practices a skill, the better they will get at that skill, and Duckworth is associating this idea with academic progress. Ideally, the better a student gets at academics, that student will have better chances of succeeding after high school.

Paul Tough, who was previously quoted talking about Duckworth, has also written a book about how students in the education system can become successful by utilizing non-cognitive learning skills. His main argument is that these character traits are just as important to foster as basic math and reading skills. The question he poses, though, is how to go about measuring these traits in students. The only current way to gage this is through an assessment where students self-report, and this self-assessment scale was created by Angela Duckworth.

### **Research Methodology**

Both Duckworth and Tough argue about the importance of non-cognitive learning skills. Accordingly, for this project, it was decided to interview six teachers and one principal at elementary schools located in Northwest Indiana. The intention of the interviews was to explore whether this type of teaching could show a positive effect on student performance at a local grade school in Northwest Indiana. Since there are no known studies about NCLS on a local level, and because the literature research has been on a larger scale, it was decided to do a micro level study and analysis.

The teachers interviewed were all teachers of either the fourth or fifth grade, but this school was not the same one as the as the principal who was interviewed. Data from the interviews are what will be studied for this paper. The principal interview was conducted with someone who was recently named educator of the year for his district and has been working in

the education field for seventeen years; this interview provided insight and perspective from an independent, credible source. The goal is to find out if the ideas of Duckworth and Tough are included as a part of local teacher's curriculum or not, also, if these ideas are included, what influence they have on student participation in academically related after school activities. Further, to find whether or not the interviewed teachers put any importance behind these non-cognitive student skills.

All individuals interviewed were informed that they shall remain anonymous. The research that follows also consists of current information and data that was gathered from peer reviewed articles or books, and makes up a large part of the paper. It explores not only current academic knowledge about NCLS, but also a few different viewpoints on what constitutes student success and what they mean to the people who achieve them. Some first-hand experience from three years of working as an elementary school tutor by this researcher has been included.

It is important to note that all the research was exploratory in nature, and if it proves to be viable then perhaps this researcher will expand upon it sometime in the future.

The research addresses the following three questions:

1. How do teachers foster a love of learning in children that will stay with them as they grow?
2. What is the importance of non-cognitive learning skills in relation to student success or involvement?
3. What constitutes student success in the United States public education system? The answer to this will help answer the first two questions.

### **Hypothesis**

The research suggests that time spent enforcing non-cognitive learning skills in the classroom would lead to more student involvement in academically related extra-curricular activities. The teachers who rated the importance of non-cognitive skills at a higher level, would hypothetically instill a better love of learning in their students, which will lead to a higher rate of student involvement.

The literature about non-cognitive learning makes this researcher believe that, when interviewed, the teachers will say they spend at least some time every week talking to their students about these things. Will time spent teaching non-cognitive learning skills instill a love of learning in children? In order to measure this, the teacher responses to questions about how much time they spend on NCLS as part of their curriculum is compared to how many of their students participate in after school activities related to learning. While interviewed, teachers were asked to rate what they felt was the importance of NCLS.

A valid measure for student involvement would be how many students in each classroom participate in after school activities related to education and learning. The after-school activities included in this study are Chess Club, Math Club, and Spell Bowl team.

On a scale of one through ten, if an interviewed teacher rated the importance of non-cognitive learning skills at an eight or above, then I hypothesize that forty percent or more of their students will participate in one of the above listed clubs during the last school year (2015-16).

This may seem like a conservative estimate; however, it is thought that a normal level of participation is in the ten to twenty percent range, and a level of forty percent participation will show a significant increase. The internalization of the non-cognitive learning skills enforced by

the teachers will lead to this rise in participation of after school learning activities, and will indicate that the teachers have successfully fostered a love of learning in their students.

### **Findings**

What has been an interesting finding in this research is a recurring theme throughout the teacher interviews was that they all discussed the extreme challenges and difficulties of being an educator. Yet they all simultaneously discussed a passion for their work, and how they became an educator because of a desire to make a difference in the lives of others. The other thing found, was that all the teachers did not agree with formally teaching non-cognitive skills in the classroom, yet they all hinted at the importance of teaching children to grow not only academically but as individuals. The teachers also differed when discussing their methods of teaching and how much they included NCLS into their teaching.

The interviewed principal differed from a few of the teachers in the ideology of what is important to the growth and education of children. He stated, “I believe it is absolutely critical to implement non-cognitive learning skills into the educational experience we provide our kids. I believe our work as educators is to grow our kids’ ‘head smarts’ (cognitive) and ‘heart smarts’ (non-cognitive).”

A few of the teachers agreed with the principal that non-cognitive learning skills were important to include time teaching it in their classroom, but a few did not. They instead talked about the importance of basic manners and having them grow as individuals, while learning to function with others in society. Overall, all teachers seemed to agree in the importance of classroom management and teaching children the rules and norms of society, while also showing children their actions have positive or negative consequences. Almost all the teachers also

discussed how the importance of testing in education can become harmful to the learning process because of the stress and pressure it places on both the student and those teaching them.

The chart below summarizes the findings from the interviews, and examines if teachers giving more importance to NCLS leads to higher participation. Each teacher ranking the importance of teaching NLCS is included, along with the three different extracurricular clubs related to learning activities and the number showing how many of that teacher’s students participate in those clubs. One important thing to note is that there were a few students who participated in more than one of the clubs being examined, and these students were only counted once; this will be discussed further when the results are evaluated.

	<b>Interviewed Teacher</b>					
	Teacher One <sup>1</sup>	Teacher Two <sup>1</sup>	Teacher Three <sup>1</sup>	Teacher Four	Teacher Five <sup>2</sup>	Teacher Six
<b>Grade Level</b>	4 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Number of students in class</b>	19	20	20	22	22	21
<b>Number of students in Chess Club</b>				2	15	5
<b>Number of students in Math Club</b>	2	2	1	5		3
<b>Number of students in Spell Bowl</b>	1	1	3	2	1	
<b>Extra-Curricular Participation Percentage (at least 1 of the 3 clubs)</b>	16%	15%	20%	40%	73%	33%
<b>Teacher rating on importance of teaching NCLS (scale of 1-10)</b>	3	10	7	5	10	8

<sup>1</sup> Teachers one, two, and three were all club advisors, but there is no noticeable influence on student participation for these teachers

<sup>2</sup> Teacher five was advisor to the Chess Club and this may or may not have influenced the participation rate for that teacher’s students

### **Analysis**

The results show a large dispersion in the percentage of club participation among the students. When making the hypothesis, the level of significance was set as forty percent class participation. As shown in the chart, only two of the six classrooms involved in this research met the forty percent or higher mark, which means the hypothesis is rejected. What can be seen, though, is most teachers rate NCLS on the higher end of the scale, while a minority does not consider it to be important. For some teachers, their higher rating of NCLS shows in their participation rate, and for others it does not. It is also possible that if a student likes a certain teacher they are more likely to participate, as can be seen in the high level of teacher five's student participation rate.

Looking at the different grade levels results also shows a higher level of student involvement for the fifth-grade classes than for the fourth grade. This might be because the students have had a longer time to internalize NCLS, or it may be that the fifth-grade teachers did a better job of engaging their students in the learning process. It is difficult to determine exactly why without further study.

### **Evaluation**

By setting the classroom participation rate at forty percent, it was assumed this was a low goal and would be met easily. The question was then, how would this be seen as a significant measurement? This hypothesis of forty percent was set because it was assumed normal class participation rates were somewhere around ten to fifteen percent, and the influence of non-cognitive learning skills would have noticeably increased the participation rate.

In this case, the hypothesis - teachers rating the importance of NCLS at an eight or above would lead to forty percent or more of their students participating in one of the learning related

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clubs during the 2015-2016 school year - was not met. Not only was it not met, but two of the classes studied hovered right around the fifteen percent participation rate, which was assumed to be a standard participation rate before the influence of NCLS. Another issue with the hypothesis was only half of the teachers interviewed claimed the importance of NCLS to be at an eight or higher on the scale of one to ten. This wasn't originally a problem, for it was thought that those who ranked it lower would have a lower participation rate. However, the findings show that the second highest participation rate was met by a teacher who ranked the importance at a five out of ten. Not only that, but there was another teacher who ranked these skills at the highest level of importance and still ended up having one of the lowest classroom participation rates.

A much stronger relationship was expected, but with the small sample size there are strong outliers which might have been reduced if the study was done on a larger scale. The relationship may also have been weaker because students who participated in more than one of the clubs were only counted once, leading to the the results being more on the conservative side. It was decided to only count the multiple club participation once to avoid any possibility of a negative argument against the results, and because the measurement was organized by classroom rather than the entire pool of students. Doing multiple extracurricular activities does have the possibility to show an even stronger internalization of non-cognitive skills, but it does not match the exact factors being looked at. This is one of the things that could be looked at in more depth with further research.

While the hypothesis was not confirmed, the findings were such that it suggests there might be a different result if the research was expanded upon. Because there were a couple cases with a high correlation, it suggests that this correlation might appear more often if further

research was performed while using a larger sample size, such as using more classrooms or multiple schools.

Based on this research, it is also suggested that a multiple year longitudinal study using the same teachers may lead to more significant findings. This is because every school year, a teacher works with all new students than the previous year, and studying multiple sets of students can better display any possible correlation. A multiple year study would also provide a chance to look at student's participation rate as they progress through different grade levels, which would help to better compare the fourth and fifth grade teachers.

### **Further Research**

Student success needs to clearly be defined in order to complete any study about education, and will help to answer any other questions. Therefore, the different ideas about what defines student success are discussed and compared below, along with further discussion about NCLS.

It can be said that the end goal of public education is to finish and enter either the workforce or college. It is common that well-defined things such as graduation rates or test scores will be used to measure the success or failure of public education. This is the case in a research study about taxes and school funding with the claim, "Student achievement in a public school is linked to his/her Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) score; the mean of SAT scores is a widely-accepted measure and reliable indicator of average student performance in public schools in a school district" (Lin and Couch, 2014: 221) The focus here is on school funding and how it affects student success. They are using SAT test scores as their measurement for whether school funding is successful or not. Therefore, they are placing importance on the process and results of testing, which the interviewed teachers did not agree with.

In another study, test scores and graduation rates are not as important as what happens once schooling is over. This different viewpoint on the goal of education is taken with the claim, “Public schooling is one of many public services that depend on local wealth and affects the ability of the residents to become wealthier” (Roithmayr, 2014: 95). Roithmayr is stating that student success is tied to wealth. The problem with this argument is that the focus is on public schooling instead of college, when generally it is education beyond high school that leads to more wealth. It assumes that the more educated someone is, the better chance they have of having a wealthy career path; and someone with a college degree generally has a higher income than someone with a high school diploma.

Still, there are the standards of education that seem to be universally recognized, such as reading ability, mathematical skills, and test taking skills. Once the building blocks of learning are established, there is then a shift in the way students learn. “When students reach fourth grade and are required to ‘read to learn’ rather than ‘learn to read’, they need considerable vocabulary and background knowledge to make sense of required reading material in classrooms and on standardized tests” (Delpit, 2012: 36). This switch in learning and standardized tests may happen slightly sooner or later than fourth grade, but the point remains. That point is, during the first three to four years of public education, it is necessary to lay down basic reading and mathematical skills on which all other learning will build. The ability to read and write is something many people take for granted, but it is a very important milestone for a young child. These basic skills will stay with someone throughout not only their school years, but their entire lives.

As a child learns, grows, and gains knowledge, they will become a different person when they graduate high school than when they started kindergarten. So far this discussion has been

about what and why they learn, but there has been lack of discussion on how. There are things children learn every day that does not come from a textbook. Things such as how to interact with adults and each other, what behavior is acceptable and which is not, and the need to treat each other with respect. These things have the ability to change their personalities, attitudes about life, and their viewpoint of the world.

Grade school years are the formative years of education; and a quality education is the foundation that children need to succeed at whatever life choices they make. This means that basic skills learned in elementary school can stay with students throughout their entire lives. This researcher wanted to find out not only if the previous statement is true, but also whether it should be equally as important to foster a love of learning during grade school.

During the first few years of school is when educators hopefully instill a desire to learn, and a sense of wonder that will stay with children as they get older. This is done not only through traditional forms of education that can be graded, but by teaching students how to function as a member of society, along with a few basic values that they will hopefully carry with them as they become adults. “Together, school communities help their students understand the world around them, the talents within them, and how understanding both the world and their individual talents will open doors to college and career opportunities” (King and Arnold, 2016).

While the industrial age is over and we are living in an age of information and technology, we are still teaching the same ideas and concepts. The tools used to teach have changed, but the things being taught are still the same while the world around us is changing. The way students currently learn is largely based on memorization and the ability to recount information. If the student does not understand why the information they are learning is

important to them or how it relates to the world around them, then it is possible they will not care to learn it.

A fifth-grade teacher who was interviewed as part of this research further illustrated the need to make learning relatable. A summary of what this teacher talked about is as follows, “The philosophy of education I came to is that ultimately it has to be relevant, and the student needs to know the answer to the age-old question which is, ‘how I am going to use this information?’ Not only that, but ‘how are people currently using this information today?’” Over the course of several different teacher interviews, this became a recurring theme, and is possibly something that could help students succeed though their entire lives.

The recurring idea from teachers can be summarized as such; if students have a basic enjoyment and passion for learning, this will hopefully lead to is a higher rate of success. “No one denies that ability is an important factor in development of talent, but the way non-cognitive factors are related to giftedness and talent has been misunderstood and misused,” and “Many children follow interests enthusiastically” (Coleman and Guo, 2013: 158). So, by increasing children’s interest in education and making it relatable, they should increase the amount of effort they put into it.

Along with making learning relevant, new ways of thinking, looking at things and working with others are also important. Schools must, “help students learn how to think critically and learn for themselves, so they can use knowledge in new situations and manage the demands of changing information, technologies, jobs, and social conditions” (Darling-Hammond,2010: 4). Computer knowledge is extremely important for the future. Not only is it important to know how to use technology, but how to manipulate or design it to fit a current

need. The age of technology can also lead to distractions, and there are many things that could take time away from learning. These distractions have the ability to become more important than the hard work of learning. Whatever holds the most interest in a child is likely what they will focus on. So, it is evident to this researcher that a high interest in learning is important, especially because the significance of education has been established.

When children are in the first few years of grade school, this researcher has witnessed that they are filled with an imagination and a desire to learn and grow. While in grade school, children learn more than basic reading and math skills; they learn how to socialize and behave in society, not only with others their own age, but with adults and people older than them. Many of the social skills children learn are from each other along with the need to follow the school or classroom rules, NCLS can also be taught and learned, only it is difficult to test them and assign a grade.

Traditional learning such as math, writing, and reading are considered standard skills needed to succeed in a capitalistic society. “The concern about world-class education tends to be focused less on its importance for civic behaviour or cultural leadership than on its impact on future economic viability” (Levin, 2012: 269). Levin is arguing why traditional learning skills alone are not enough for a student to succeed in the world after high school. Levin later argues, “To meet the economic, political, social, and personal demand for competency, much more is required of students and adults than just cognitive proficiencies as measured by test scores. Individuals must develop interpersonal skills that enable them to relate to others in many different societal situations” (Levin,2012: 270). These interpersonal skills are, as mentioned, automatically learned from interacting with other students and teachers on an almost daily basis throughout the school year.

Students learn when they do something that is slightly harder and builds on what they already know. Over time, they build up more knowledge and skills, which is based on their current age level. Throughout the learning process, there is a need for children to focus, pay attention to the teacher, and concentrate for long periods of time. Students who have trouble learning may get frustrated, discouraged, and want to give up, but sticking with it and trying hard will eventually get the work done, and in a better way. “Children need the support, time, resources, and love which make persistence possible” (Socal, 2014).

### **Reflection**

This paper is the culmination of seven months’ worth of research, organization, reflection and writing; and has revealed several things to this researcher. During these seven months’, time spent working on this paper was done on a weekly basis. It is difficult to estimate the total amount of time spent working on this project, but it was significant. This is not said to give more validity to the research, for it will stand or fail on its own, instead it is a self-reflection based on this writer not realizing the magnitude of what he was getting into when this was started.

Besides the time spent specifically for this research paper, the last three years have been spent working as a in-class tutor at an elementary school. During these three years, time was spent working in every grade level from kindergarten through fifth, and this researcher witnessed daily the importance of classroom management and a system of learning with minimal distraction for the children. From the first-hand experience in different grade levels and classrooms, this researcher learned that children can have a difficult time focusing on learning if they are not held accountable for their behavior.

This research has developed over time; when it first started, the intention was to somehow tie it into the experience of working with kids in a learning environment, and it still wasn't clear on what part of education to specifically focus on. After much research and multiple times changing the focus, the research of Duckworth and non-cognitive learning was discovered. There is much known and discussed about core learning skills such as mathematical and reading skills, and there is also ample research about student success. So, it was decided to try and do original research about non-cognitive learning. This is because NCLS seems to hold just as much importance to the learning process, yet is often not the goal of the education system.

While this research is currently in a better place than where it began, it was learned that it is important to have a clear understanding of the focus for the research before beginning the process. This is because if the focus of the research changes over time, the paper will also have to change to go along with the new goal. If anything is written and the main idea of the research changes, then it will have been wasted time, and what was written may no longer fit within the new focus of study. The way to change and better define the aim of the study, though, is through the process of research, so that can stay the same. Just make sure to have a clear and concise goal before putting together the writing.

Including a hypothesis as part of the research process, and how to measure it, was also a difficult part to accomplish because this researcher has never done a scientific study of this sort before. Because of the experience with this project, formulating a hypothesis related to a research question will hopefully become easier to do in the future.

No matter the outcome, this researcher is glad to have spent the time doing this project, even with all the stress that has been associated with it. A large writing project does not always get completed easily, but when it is finished there is always a sense that it was worth it. This

researcher's opinion is that so much more can be learned from doing a large research project than from online discussion boards, or memorizing information to take a multiple-choice test. While this researcher has completed a fair amount of papers during his time spent as a college undergrad, this has by far been the largest and most complete research paper he has ever written.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, there is no denying the importance of public education on our youth and not only their future, but our future as a society. Education is socially constructed, and breaks political barriers for both sides agree in the importance of education, their only argument is how to implement education to its full potential. As part of the American idea, the potential for a good education is always there, and it is up to the student on how to fully achieve. This may not always be true depending on the individual's socioeconomic status, and this is an argument for a whole different type of research about education. All this researcher is trying to say though, is that, as discussed, the goal of a successful public education is a student achieving their full potential. And the non-cognitive life skills a student exhibits are a path towards them reaching their full potential.

After spending the last three years working in a grade school in an official capacity, it is safe to say that these life skills are taught in primary school, only not in an official letter grade capacity. This was also confirmed in interview responses from most of the teachers. Certainly, children are taught and learn Math, English and other important things that will be used throughout their lives; but the school environment in and of itself leads to children also learning social skills that will have the potential to become extremely valuable to a student's future.

As previously discussed, there is the widely-accepted idea about how graduating high school makes a student successful. However, after this entire study, there still does not seem to be enough knowledge about what constitutes success in elementary school, especially when it comes to the students' growth and transition onto higher grade levels.

Nobody knows what the future holds for the current students in the kindergarten classroom. It is known that a goal for educational success has been set for them and laid out before them. But as this paper has hopefully shown, that is only half of the equation for their future, while the half that helps them interact with others and the world around them is often overlooked.

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Purdue University Northwest

The Radicalization of the Other: From Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* to  
Contemporary Islamophobia in the United States

Annika Durinck

adurinck@pnw.edu

Shakespeare wrote *The Merchant of Venice* in 1593, an era in which Jews were routinely ostracized. A systematic analysis of Shylock's actions in the play reveals the intensification of his hatred towards the Christians as the result of a capitulation to his Jewish identity. This then leads to and helps consummate the radicalization which leaves Shylock with nothing in the end: he is defeated by the gentiles and forced to abandon his Jewish identity. In his play, Shakespeare makes a strong statement that is still significant today: the acts and motivations of one ought not to be used to condemn an entire "tribe." Through an application of Eco's perspective on how enemies are created and why, Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* provides the instant recognition of the innate human desire to inculcate "otherness" upon individuals who differ from us. An extension of this analysis to include contemporary 'Islamophobia' in the United States reveals an American aversion to Muslims as caused by the radicalization of a few. An implementation of Eco's theory to both *The Merchant of Venice* as well as current Islamophobia will unfold a better understanding of humanity's aversion to otherness.

In his essay "Inventing the Enemy," Umberto Eco declares that people and societies need enemies to strengthen feelings of personal and national identities. This idea is reiterated by Montserrat Guibernau in his book *Identity of Nations*, where he explains that identity is defined by both continuity and differentiation, whether it is regarding an individual, a religion or a nation. The differentiation from others advances as the identity strengthens. While this differentiation helps to develop identity, it will also "lead to the distinction between members and 'strangers', 'the rest', 'the different' and sometimes, 'the enemy'" (Guibernau 1923). It is human nature to find a common enemy, and usually these enemies are defined merely through their differences, rather than through an actual threat. In his book, *Shakespeare's Freedom*, Stephen Greenblatt points out that the distinction between friends and enemies is often arbitrary,

however for the parties involved it seems entirely justified. Greenblatt suggests that the parties “all too readily fill in the blanks created by the structural opposition with a host of highly specific charges” (Greenblatt 53). Eco echoes this thought, stating in his essay that enemies are not usually defined through legitimate threats but rather by “highlighting the way in which these enemies are different from us, the difference itself becomes a symbol of what we find threatening” (Eco 3). These differences that we identify and internalize as threats help us to determine and exemplify our individuality but even more so, it “provides us with an obstacle against which to measure our system of values” (Eco 2). This is portrayed in *The Merchant of Venice* through the antithesis between the Christians and the Jews.

In Act 1 Scene 3, Bassanio seeks out Shylock to request a loan for 3000 ducats to allow him to go to Belmont and court Portia. The loan is requested with Antonio as the guarantor, causing him to be bound to the consequences if the loan were to go unpaid. Upon his request, Shylock remarks that “Antonio is a good man,” to which Bassanio replies “Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?” (1.3.12-14). Shylock goes on to say that he was not referring to Antonio’s character but rather was implying that he is a man who has sufficient wealth to be a reliable guarantor for the requested loan. This scene presents the first interaction between the Christians and the Jews in the play, and within the first fifteen lines of this interaction it is acknowledged that their value systems differ completely. In these lines, Shakespeare cleverly points out that a ‘good man’ suggests a disparate implication within Jewish values than it does in the Christian values, and therefore Shylock cannot attest to Antonio being of ‘good character.’

In the same scene, Bassanio invites Shylock to dine with him and Antonio. Shylock rejects the offer, saying “I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you” (1.3.35-38). Here the

divide between the Christians and the Jews becomes even more apparent. Shylock, as a Jew, is differentiated from the Christians through his customs, which include a different diet and different religious practices. Through the individuality offered to him in Judaism, Shylock is separated from the Christians. By emphasizing these differences, Shylock is also emphasizing his ‘otherness’ and increasing the divide between him and the Christians. From the first interaction between the Christians and the Jews, Shakespeare provides two separate systems of values. Since Jews were not allowed to live within a 50-mile radius of London during Shakespeare’s time, the play would be viewed mostly by Christians. Therefore, Shylock is automatically set apart as the enemy through this presentation of two differentiating systems of values.

As Shylock’s Jewish identity is strengthened throughout the play, so is his desire for revenge. By consequence of the escalated differentiation between him and the Christians through the bond set between him and Antonio, Shylock increasingly alienates himself from the ruling gentiles. Shylock’s motives for hating Antonio stem from his hate for Christianity. Upon seeing Antonio in Act 1 Scene 3, Shylock says as an aside “I hate him for he is a Christian, / But more for that in low simplicity / He lends out money gratis and brings down / The rate of usance here with us in Venice” (1.3.45). Shylock partly hates Antonio for lending out money without charging interest rates, because money-lending is the only form of employment available for the Jews during this time. Through this action, which the gentiles saw as good Christian behavior, Antonio is spurning the Jews, and Shylock in particular. Shylock tells Antonio “suff’rance is the badge of all our tribe...you call me misbeliever, cutthroat dog, and spit upon my Jewish gabardine” (1.3.120-122). At this point, while being joined to his Jewish identity, Shylock still sees his individuality within it. He mentions his community but follows this by discussing himself and his personal grievances.

Act 3 Scene 1 presents a turning point in Shylock's character. In this scene, Shakespeare presents Shylock's full capitulation to his identity in four simple words: "I am a Jew" (3.1.57). With this consummation to his Jewish identity comes his radicalization. In this same scene, Shylock is asked why he is pursuing the bond, what use will he have of a pound of Antonio's flesh? Shylock replies he will use it "to bait fish withal. If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge" (1.3.44-45). He is not interested in the bond for anything but revenge. He will have no use for a pound of Antonio's flesh. Besides showing the depth of Shylock's anger, Shakespeare is making an important statement with these words: Shylock's radicalization sets him apart from his tribe and from his Jewish identity. His villainy is not related to the usual stereotypical acts associated with Jews at the time. During the renaissance, the aversion to Jews ran deep. This aversion, as much else in society at the time, stemmed from superstition. It was believed that the Jews used Christian blood in their religious rituals, and Shakespeare could have made Shylock's intent mirror these superstitions. Instead, Shylock wants the pound of flesh for no reason other than to feed his revenge. Through Shylock's capitulation and radicalization, he is pulled out of his larger sociological category and his villainy is no longer related to his Jewish identity. Therefore, while Shylock's behavior is certainly *driven by* his Jewish identity, it is not *caused by* his Jewish identity.

In the penultimate act, Shakespeare presents the denouement of the conflict. Shylock refuses any monetary reimbursement, saying "I crave the law / the penalty and forfeit of my bond" (4.1.213-14). Shylock clings to the law, because it is the only piece of society that is equal for both the Jews and the Christians. However, his adamancy for the justice of the law becomes his downfall. While the law is equal for Jews and Christians alike, the execution of the law is carried out by the Christians. As Portia examines the bond between Shylock and Antonio, she

finds the loophole which will exonerate Antonio while simultaneously condemning Shylock. She states, “if thou dost shed / One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods / Are by the laws of Venice confiscate / Unto the state of Venice” (4.1.307-310). She goes on to declare that under the same law to which he appealed for his revenge, Shylock will be persecuted for plotting to take the life of a Venetian citizen. Shylock is forced to relinquish half of his fortune, and to convert to Christianity. Through this conversion, Shylock’s character is stripped of all that composed him. With the seizure of his Jewishness, Shylock’s entire being is diminished. After his acquiescence to conversion, Shylock asks for the court’s leave and is not seen for the remainder of the play. Just as the Christian identity was strengthened by villainizing the Jews, Shylock’s identity was strengthened by the enmity displayed towards him by the gentiles. In Act 3, he fully capitulated to his Jewish identity and gained strength from it. Here, this identity is diminished to naught, and with it Shylock’s entire character is decimated.

Shylock is the villain of *The Merchant of Venice* because he insisted on taking Antonio’s heart to feed his revenge against the Christians. From the beginning of the play, he was ostracized and put into the category of “other” due to his Jewish identity. As he began to accept and welcome this disparity, his desire for revenge, and thus his villainy, was heightened and radicalized. Greenblatt emphasizes that “the criminal drive always exists in some relation to its possessor’s whole life, a life that invariably includes group identifications, [however] the hatred that impels these characters is what pulls each of them out of the larger sociological category and makes them distinctive” (57). Shylock’s radicalization pulled him out of his ‘larger sociological category,’ and put him into the distinctive ‘criminal’ category which caused him to be sentenced to give up his fortune and his faith. While Shylock’s actions undeniably stem from his Jewish identity, the weight of his actions rest on his shoulders alone, and not on his tribe.

Shakespeare's ability to address problems in a timeless manner brought his works to renown throughout the centuries. The issues discussed in *The Merchant of Venice* are still applicable in today's society, particularly to the flourishing Islamophobia in our country. Particularly in a country where a Republican nominee for presidency said that, if elected, he would "call for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States" – and went on to become the president of the United States even after uttering these words (Trump qtd by Sargent). The American animosity towards Islam is largely congruent with Christian animosity, as the United States, in its majority, is a Christian nation which operates under the validation of religious freedom. Current political belligerence in relation to Islam can broadly be traced back to Allen Dulles, the first director of the Central Intelligence Agency and the mind behind the deposition of Mohammed Mossadegh. Once again, contrasting systems of values bred enmity, as "Mossadegh's opposition to Western privilege made him the sort of leader the Dulles brothers instinctively mistrusted" (Kinzer 124). After a bloody coup, removing Mossadegh from power, the CIA installed the American approved Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi as leader of Iran. The Shah ruled for 25 years before being "overthrown in a revolution that brought fanatically anti-Western clerics to power" (Kinzer 146). The continued Western interference in the Middle East has contributed to the cultivation of radicalization within Islam. Terry Eagleton, in his book *On Evil*, goes as far as to stipulate that "without those humiliations, terrorism would never have got off the ground" (Eagleton 8). Just as Shylock's identity was strengthened by the enmity displayed towards him by the gentiles, the Islamic State gains its clout from the hostility of the West towards Muslims.

The term 'Islamophobia' started appearing in the 1980s, "when Muslims in Western countries – people of starkly different racial and ethnic backgrounds – began to notice

similarities among their experiences with hate, intimidation or discrimination” (Lalami 20). Christianity has been the preeminent religion in Western society for millennia, and their identity was strengthened through the categorization of other religions as threatening. Greenblatt stated that Islam and Judaism “were already linked in the vision of enmity and in the representation and expression of hatred” and therefore “it can hardly be an accident that the two principal historical enemies of Christianity, Judaism and Islam, succeed each other so easily in the imaginative structure created by Shakespeare’s comedy of friendship and enmity” (Greenblatt 53). Both the Jews in Renaissance Europe and the Muslims in the contemporary Western world have been construed to be inimical through religious propaganda. They are linked by zealous Christians to the ultimate Christian pandemonium: Satan. Jews were often believed to partake in Satanic rituals and blood libels, in which they supposedly used Christian blood for religious sacrifices. Douglas Johnston, in his article “Combating Islamophobia,” exposes the “onerous correlation that is often drawn between Islam and the anti-Christ,” based on a belief that Mohammed is a “false prophet of revelation” (Johnston 170). This characterization of the Jews and Muslims creates an ultimate distinction, allowing for the extremity of aversion that was, and is, felt towards them.

The animosity towards the contemporary Muslims and Renaissance Jews has created an ‘us vs. them’ mentality which only aggravates the issue. Laila Lalami, in her article “Islamophobia and Its Discontent,” refers to a speech given by Herman Cain, a GOP candidate for the 2012 elections. The speech was given at a rally against the building of a mosque in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Cain stated that “they’re using the church part of our First Amendment to infuse their morals into that community” (Cain qtd by Lalami 21). Lalami reflects that “exactly who the pronouns ‘they’ and ‘our’ referred to in that sentence he did not specify –

or need to specify” (Lalami 20). Just as Shakespeare created an antithesis between the Christians and the Jews in order to emphasize the foundation of their enmity, so are Islamophobic leaders creating an antithesis between Americans and Muslims through their use of vague pronouns and statements that indicate that ‘they’ could not possibly understand ‘our’ values.

Eco underscores that enemies are not created through genuine threats, but rather are “those whom someone has an interest in portraying as a true threat even when they aren’t” (Eco 3). Just as literature, folk-stories, and superstitions taught the Christians in Shakespeare’s time to view the Jews as enemies, there are active campaigns in modern society that fuel Islamophobia. Johnston pointed towards a study which revealed that “no fewer than seven conservative foundations collectively contributed over \$42,000,000 to exploit the fears and ignorance of Americans about Islam” (Johnston 169). While there are Islamic militant groups that pose a definite threat, this should not extend to fear for the entirety of a religious denomination. As Shakespeare shows through Shylock, the radicalization of a few does not justify malignancy for all. However, there has been a systematic dehumanization of Muslims in the United States. They are often portrayed as “irrational, intolerant and violent” due to the belief that Islam is antithetical to “our American way of life” (Johnston 166). Similarly, Shylock is referred to as “Jew” or “dog” more often than he is called by name, which effectively dehumanizes him and furthers his outcast status. This dehumanization is necessary because it provides societal justification for their treatment. Eagleton points out that Shakespeare often shapes his villains around autonomy, they are “those who claim to depend on themselves alone, claiming sole authorship of their own being” (Eagleton 12). He continues, however, by pointing out that human beings can achieve self-determination “only in the context of a deeper dependence on others of their kind” (Eagleton 12). By creating a villain whose motivations stem from his

inclusion in a larger group, Shakespeare is asserting Shylock's humanity while simultaneously exposing the danger of dehumanizing an enemy.

By folding the issues of a few under the banner of an entire religion, we are creating an irrational trepidation which results in real systematic discrimination. In *The Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare constructs a villain who is rooted in a hated religious minority. The Christian rancor towards Shylock escalates his hatred, intensifies his desire for revenge, and seals his radicalization. While this radicalization is intensified by his Jewish identity, it causes Shylock to be set apart from the Jewish community, and results in an excommunication from this community due to the court sentence. Through *The Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare exposes the nature of enemies born out of repression and society's eagerness to alienate the Other. Shakespeare presents his audiences with a mirror replica of their behavior towards those who differ from us, and his message has been repeated for centuries. In our contemporary political and social milieu, it is as important as ever that his message be heard, and implemented so that we can perhaps finally shatter the image of the Other.

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Purdue University Northwest

Tolkien and His Critics: How Ideology Shaped *The Lord of the Rings* and Its Responses

Annika Durinck

adurinck@pnw.edu

J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* has often been described as an epic high-fantasy novel and with its complex internal structures, it can certainly be regarded as a literary masterpiece. Since its initial publication, it has drawn the eyes of many critics. Some critics, such as Edmund Wilson, wrote the book off entirely, labeling it "juvenile trash" and describing it as "an impotence of imagination" (Wilson 327). Fortunately, critics such as Wilson were a minority and the majority of critics revered Tolkien's brilliance. Criticisms on *The Lord of the Rings* are widely varied, as can be expected for a text which encompasses an entire fantastical world, complete with its own languages and creatures. Drawing on Tolkien's background as an Old and Middle English scholar, some critics have found parallels between *The Lord of the Rings* and medieval literature, as Margaret Hiley said, "[i]n Tolkien's Middle-earth, myth and history converge," and Pritha Kundu stated that the work is reminiscent of "several Anglo-Saxon themes and ideas" in addition to revoking the "old war-culture" which is so often presented in medieval works (Hiley 845, Kundu 2). Other critics have taken a completely different direction, claiming that the text presents a Christian allegory, such as Kathleen O'Neill, who states that "the light of the Gospel shines back over this world [Middle-earth]" (O'Neill 294).

In the prologue to the first installment of the *Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien stated that he has created "the story without, need I say, any allegorical significance or contemporary political reference whatsoever. It has indeed some basis in experience, though slender" (FotR, xiii). Therefore, I will argue that while Christian critics have continuously sought after Christian allegory within *The Lord of the Rings*, this is the result of personal ideologies rather than an actual allegorical significance within the work. Furthermore, upon an examination of the structures and metaphors of the work, it is possible to conclude that Tolkien instilled his own particular ideologies within the text. If we take Louis Althusser's definition of ideology as being

a representation of “the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence” then we could say that authors bring their ideologies to life through their works (Althusser 1502). Works of fiction are shaped by the imagination of their creators, and if an ideology is indeed an “imaginary relationship” to “conditions of existence,” then novels are the manifestations of ideologies. Furthermore, we can say that any analysis of a work is based on the ideologies of the critics: they see what they want to see within the works based on their own frames of reference. This is certainly evident in the criticisms of *The Lord of the Rings*, which seem deeply divided. While Christian critics seek allegory within the text and draw parallels between its characters and the bible, humanist critics are drawn to the complex metaphors presented as well as the aesthetic beauty of the text. An exploration of the text’s internal structures reveals Tolkien’s literary ideologies as closely related to Northern mythology. Through an examination of the analyses of the Christian critics we can discover the deep roots of ideology within their arguments and dispel the need for any allegory, for as Tolkien himself said, an allegory is too rigid a form for such an exquisite text.

Christian critics examine facile and recognizable themes within the text and shape them to fit their ideologies. The themes of good versus evil, for example, are taken by these critics to represent the classical Biblical notions of heaven and hell. Edmund Fuller describes Sauron as a character “who is unmistakably a Satanic figure” and Kathleen O’Neill describes Gandalf as an “angelic being” (Fuller 18, O’Neill 303). While each of these characters has an indisputable semblance to either good or evil, it would be a discredit to Tolkien to fail to recognize a more complex moral structure. Gandalf is undoubtedly a character operating on the side of good, but to describe him as an angel is to ignore the diversity of his character. Tolkien provided a vast historical background for his fictitious universe and explained in the appendices to the text that

the wizards, or *istari*, “were sent to contest the power of Sauron, and to unite all those who had the will to resist him” (RotK 1059). More than once, Gandalf shows a darker side of himself. When Bilbo questions his decision to give the Ring away to Frodo, Gandalf attempts to convince him that this is the right decision. Bilbo becomes angry, and he accuses Gandalf of wanting the Ring for himself, and doing so thoroughly vexes Gandalf: “Gandalf’s eyes flashed. ‘It will be my turn to get angry soon,’ he said. ‘If you say that again, I shall. Then you will see Gandalf the Grey uncloaked.’ He took a step towards the hobbit, and he seemed to grow tall and menacing; his shadow filled the little room” (FotR 33). Gandalf has a dark side to him, a side which is governed by a fear of the power of the Ring. He is afraid of the power that the ring could exert over him and does not want to be in possession of it, and being accused of wanting the Ring for himself brings out a fear that he might actually want it. His anger brings depth to his character, while simultaneously introducing the reader to the power of the Ring. As Gandalf is faced with the possibility of wanting the Ring for his own use, he grows ‘tall and menacing,’ a foreshadowing of the influence of power upon a moral character. Tolkien describes Gandalf’s shadow filling “the little room” of the cozy hobbit hole in order to juxtapose the consequences of the Ring’s domination upon a mere hobbit with its forces being the hands of a powerful wizard. This scene shows us the instability of the moral characters in the book and that nobody is safe from the influences of power. By describing Gandalf as being “in effect an angel” one would be belittling the moral complications of the story and deeming the character to be shallow and predictable (O’Neill 318).

Another Christian critic, Raymond Laird, examines the roles of the weaker characters and their accomplishments and parallels them to the biblical themes of humility. Laird points out Gandalf’s observation that “help oft comes from the hands of the weak when the Wise falter”

and compares this statement to 1 Corinthians, “God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise” (Laird 83, NIV Cor. 1:27). While the theme of ‘underdogs’ is apparent in the text, unlikely heroes can be found throughout all literature; Viola in Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*, Mowgli in Kipling’s *The Jungle Book* and even in contemporary fiction such as Harry Potter in J.K Rowling’s *Harry Potter* Series, or Arya Stark in George R.R. Martin’s *A Song of Ice and Fire* series are all examples of unlikely heroes. Tolkien’s representation of the hobbits as heroes in *The Lord of the Rings* ties into the greater theme of good versus evil rather than a Christian allegory. The hobbits are described as a “remarkable people,” who are “good-natured” and “hospitable” (FotR xvii-xviii). Karen Sullivan points out that the text presents a metaphor in which “good is associated with plants and evil with animal vermin and manmade artifacts” (Sullivan 90). This metaphor can be seen throughout the text, one example being when the Fellowship arrives in the elven forest of Lothlórien, Frodo observes “no colour but those he knew, gold and white and blue and green, but they were fresh and poignant...On the land of Lórien there was no stain” (FotR 341). The beauty of Lothlórien lies in the splendor of its natural surroundings, the colors of the forest and the vitality of the plants. The elves are obviously a force of good, often being described as “that fairest folk” who speak the “fair elven tongue,” and they are continually associated with nature (FotR 77-78). Following this observation, the hobbits, out of all the characters in the book are the ones who are associated with plants and nature the most. In the prologue to *The Lord of the Rings* Tolkien points out that “well-farmed country-side was their [the hobbits’] favourite haunt” and that they “do not understand or like machines” apart from basic farming tools (FotR xvii). Even in their physical characteristics they are associated with nature, being “notably fond of yellow and green,” the colors of nature, and “seldom wore shoes, since their feet had tough leathery soles and were clad in thick curly hair,” always

touching the ground with their feet directly, and having no need for shoes (FotR 2). The hobbits are untainted by man and society, and while they are “relatives of ours,” their main characteristics involve being “apt to laughter, and eating and drinking” (FotR 2). The hobbits are “as a rule, generous and not greedy” and their affairs “tended to remain unchanged for generations” (FotR 9). Tolkien chose the hobbits to be the heroes of his story because they are free from the corruption of the outside world and therefore most adept to resist the power of the Ring.

There are indeed many instances in which the wise falter and the weak thrive within *The Lord of the Rings*. Neither can it be argued that there is no clear theme of good versus evil in the book. However, linking these instances and themes to fit a Christian allegory seems close-minded. Christian values have become so deeply imbued into society that they can easily be referred to simply as Western values. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that while the moral structures of the text reflect the contemporary society, they do not align with the contemporary literary movement. In the 1950’s, modernism was in full swing and was characterized by stream of consciousness prose and a cynical outlook on life. Tolkien seems to employ an entirely different framework for his book; instead of cursing humanity he evokes a nostalgic longing instilled by the fantastical nature of the text. Additionally, many parts of the book which are outlined by the Christian critics can also be attributed to the fantasy genre in general. The battle of good versus evil is recognizable in many fantasy novels, and in literature in general, whether it is Homer’s epics, or Jane Austin’s classics, the ‘good’ characters are all faced with ‘villains,’ and evil rarely prevails.

Amongst the multitude of critics responding to *The Lord of the Rings* was C.S. Lewis who commented on the text, stating that it was myth rather than allegory since “there are no

pointers to a specifically theological or political, or psychological application. A myth points, for each reader, to the realm that he lives in most. It is a master key; use it on what door you like” (qtd in Timmerman 7). Tolkien did not want his story to be seen as allegorical because he viewed allegories as constricting. John Timmerman comments that in Tolkien’s story, while there might be paths provided to “certain such doors” as Lewis describes, it is up to the reader to decide what is behind that door, through their own personal experiences with the story” (Timmerman 8). Allegories, Timmerman claims, provide one door only, and offer no flexibility in interpretation. It is therefore certainly an extreme disfavor to *The Lord of the Rings* to describe it as an allegory. There is, however, no denying that there are certain aspects which allude to Christianity, but as I remarked before, this can easily be attributed to the intrinsic values of the author’s contemporary society.

If it is evident that Christian critics instill their own ideologies in their analysis of the text, it is also evident that Tolkien instilled his ideologies into his work. As a scholar of Anglo-Saxon literature, his own analysis of Northern mythical structures, outlined in his essay on Beowulf, have been deeply imbued into the text. As a work of narrative fiction, Tolkien’s ideology is instilled into *The Lord of the Rings* through the structures presented within the story. Multiple examples of this can be seen throughout the text, from the major theme to the metaphors presented. Building off of Tolkien’s background in Anglo-Saxon literature, Patricia Meyer Spacks points out the distinction between “the Christian imagination and the northern mythological imagination” as it was defined by Tolkien himself. Spacks says that “[t]he archetypal Christian fable...centers on the battle between the soul and its adversaries. In this struggle, the Christian is finally triumphant, in afterlife if not on earth” (Spacks 54). In the northern mythological view, however, there is a “characteristic struggle between man and

monster” which must ultimately end “in man’s defeat” (Spacks 54). This view can be retraced in *The Lord of the Rings*, when Frodo leaves Middle-earth with the elves after the battle has been concluded. Throughout his journey to destroy the ring, Frodo becomes more and more impacted by the weight of the Ring, and when Frodo and Sam are in Mordor, Frodo remarks that “no taste of food, no feel of water, no sound of wind, no memory of tree or grass or flower, no image of moon or star are left to [him],” and goes on to say “I am naked in the dark, Sam, and there is no veil between me and the wheel of fire. I begin to see it with my waking eyes, and all else fades” (RotK 916). The Ring carries out a profound influence over anybody who wears it, touches it, or even is near it. Frodo began his journey with some excitement for adventure, but throughout his expedition he has become increasingly impacted by the weight of the ring, both physically and metaphorically. While Sam tries to remain optimistic and attempts to cheer Frodo up with some well-meant nostalgia while they are in Mordor, Frodo is unable to retain hope. While Frodo is not completely defeated physically, he is wavering mentally. The evil of the Ring has penetrated his mind and is controlling his thoughts.

At the end of the story, after the Ring is destroyed and the hobbits are home in the Shire, Frodo cannot find happiness again. He explains to Sam why he must leave with the elves, saying “I have been too deeply hurt, Sam. I tried to save the Shire, and it has been saved, but not for me. It must often be so, Sam, when things are in danger: some one has to give them up, lose them, so that others may keep them” (RotK 1006). Aligning with Tolkien’s description of Northern mythology, man (in this case, hobbit) has been defeated in his ultimate struggle against monsters. While Sauron and the Ring have been destroyed, so has Frodo. The fight took everything out of him and he can no longer go on and enjoy the very place which he had set out to save. This

classic structure brings an extra sense of reality to the reader, within the fantastical world. The hero is not indestructible but rather is presented as bearing the consequences of his journey.

Tolkien's ideological ideas regarding literature, shaped by his expertise in Anglo-Saxon literature, can be seen in precise details as well as in the overarching themes. Returning to the idea of plants as a metaphor for 'good,' Sullivan remarked that "[t]he description of warriors as trees is likely to have been inspired by the Norse kenning tradition" (Sullivan 90). Aragorn is described as "tall and fair" and Gimli as "stout and strong" (FotR 343, TT 526). According to Gary Holland, trees were often used in Norse kennings, with terms which translate into expressions such as "'trees of battle'" (Holland 126). Holland argues that kennings such as these were employed in order to recall "perhaps an earlier time, when forests dominated the natural landscape of northern and central Europe, when groves were worshiped as emanations of divinity, and when trees were perceived as animate beings" (Holland 126). Tolkien actually personifies trees in the text and transforms them into these animate beings of the Norse tradition. The battle of Helm's Deep was abruptly won when a forest of trees appeared out of nowhere, "[g]reat trees, bare and silent, stood, rank on rank, with tangled bough and hoary head,; their twisted roots were buried in the long green grass" (TT 529). Gandalf explained that the trees were "not wizardry, but a power far older" (TT 531). This once again relates back to the theme of nostalgia which permeates Tolkien's ideology for the use of trees in the Norse mythology represented reminiscence of better times. The trees in *The Lord of the Rings* are living, cognizant beings whose existence stems from ancient powers and therefore are quintessential examples of Norse mythology.

Tolkien was a scholar of Anglo-Saxon literature and published highly recognized articles discussing fairy stories, *Beowulf*, and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. The encompassing body

of Anglo-Saxon literature shaped Tolkien's literary ideology and molded the singular creatures and remarkable characters of *The Lord of the Rings* into the marvelous work that is still widely read today, more than 60 years after its initial publication. Christian critics instilled their ideologies upon the text, and shaped it into an allegory. After an examination of their arguments, it can be concluded that imposing allegory on the text would be constricting its expansive content to fit only one possible interpretation, which would be an immense disfavor to its artistry. Ideologies are extensively discouraged and painted as abominable by-structures of capitalism by Marxist writers, and while, to an extent, this can be agreed upon by the common man, works such as *The Lord of the Rings* show that ideologies can also become fantastic manifestations of literary imagination and therefore, should by no means be discouraged.

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*Frankenstein: An Autobiographical Fiction*

Rebecca Graham

Western Illinois University – Quad Cities

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Daniel Malachuk

[rn-graham@wiu.edu](mailto:rn-graham@wiu.edu)

*Frankenstein: An Autobiographical Fiction*

Many authors have used events in their lives as the basis for their work, or based parts of a character's personality on a friend or family member, but rarely is this so purposefully done as in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. *Frankenstein* is known for the big questions it asks: How far should scientific research go? Does the fact that one *can* do something mean that one *should* do it? Can one have too much ambition? and the especially difficult question of: What constitutes personhood? These unanswered, and perhaps unanswerable, questions are the reason *Frankenstein* has become part of the cannon and why so many, students and scholars alike, continue to read and interpret this work. However, a closer reading reveals a secondary layer of themes and ideas regarding the nature of family, the definition of marriage, and the way that intertextuality reflects the complex web of relationships in our lives. When one reads the novel with these themes in mind, it becomes clear that "*Frankenstein* is a family drama" which "reads like the imaginative reworking of experience" (Butler xiii). This life experience reworked into fiction becomes all the more clear the more one learns about the details of Mary Shelley's family life, "scholars have determined that the connections existing between Mary Shelley's [family] life and her book *Frankenstein* are far more than simple coincidences" (Morales 106). The unique family life of Mary Shelley can be found in her novel *Frankenstein* in the similarities of the *Frankenstein* family to Mary Shelley's own family and more directly in her use of poetic quotes, and the presence of these auto-biographical elements serves to express her thoughts about the nature of family, the definition of marriage, and the intertextuality of life.

In order to understand the ways in which the *Frankenstein* family represents Mary Shelley's own family, one must first be familiar with the historical details of Shelley's unique family situation. Shelley was born into a contrived family, her mother having given birth to her

first daughter out-of-wedlock (Fanny Imlay) and marrying Mary's father, William Godwin, only after discovering that she was again pregnant (Butler ix). Mary Shelley's mother rejected the idea of marriage and only agreed to it as a necessity for the well-being of her children. Her mother died shortly after giving birth due to complications and Godwin remarried, expanding the family to include Mary, her half-sister Fanny, and two step-siblings William and Claire (Butler ix). From the very beginning, the lesson that Mary Shelley learned, and that she included in her novel *Frankenstein*, was that a family does not necessarily need to be linked or defined by biological ties. She carried this lesson with her in her life and applied it to her concept of marriage, when on July 28, 1814, she, "accompanied by her step-sister, Claire Clairmont, elope[d] with [Percy] Shelley" (Butler ilx). Percy Shelley, while choosing to marry Mary, was also involved with her step-sister Claire, who was "often [Percy's] constant companion" (Lovell 40). This was not a secret affair; the three lived together as a family for several years and "Percy remained deeply attached to Claire" (Mellor 34). In 1816 during a break in Claire's "affair with Percy, [she] had determined to capture her own poet" (Mellor 33) and began to pursue a relationship with Lord Byron. Claire became pregnant by Byron (Butler xiii) and convinced Mary and Percy Shelley to accompany her to Geneva to stay with him (Butler ilx). During this stay, Mary Shelley developed an "affinity" and an "attraction to Byron" (Lovell 36) and he became "the fourth point in [their love] triangle...balancing the relationships" (Lovell 39). This "Mary-Byron-Claire-Percy line-up" (Lovell 40) continued as they lived and traveled together periodically over the next three years. The unique, contrived family units in which Mary Shelley lived greatly influenced the way she portrayed the idea of family in her novel *Frankenstein* and these details are clearly represented in the structure and relationships of the Frankenstein family.

The Frankenstein family reflects both the family Mary Shelley was born in to, and the family she created for herself as an adult, in its contrived nature and rejection of the necessity of biology to the family unit. The Frankenstein family was an artificial or pieced-together family, similar to the Godwin-Imlay-Clairmont family in which Mary Shelley grew up. Victor had two biological brothers, Ernest and William, who were joined by their cousin Elizabeth when her father remarried and no longer wanted custody of her (Shelley 20). Victor's mother also took on an orphaned girl, Justine, as a servant, but she was educated and raised, as a sister, with the other children (Shelley 46). The final member of this patchwork family is Henry Clerval, the son of one of Mr. Frankenstein's friends, who "was constantly with [them]" (Shelley 22). Victor describes this group as his "domestic circle" (Shelley 22) and while Henry did not actually live with the Frankenstein family, he was counted among them because they "were never completely happy when Clerval was absent" (22). This contrived family not only reflects the type of family Mary Shelley herself grew up in, but each member represents, to one degree or another, Shelley's own "domestic circle" (22). There are four members of the Frankenstein family, two male and two female, which correspond to Shelley's family, made up of Percy, Byron, Claire and Mary. Various scholars have pointed out the numerous similarities in name, personality and biographical details of Shelley's four characters and her actual family members. Katherine Morales links Victor to Percy Shelley both because "Victor was the pseudonym [he] used during his boyhood" (106) and their shared "interest on science" (107). Henry Clerval can be compared to Lord Byron, both being the non-biologically related friend welcomed into the family, and Elizabeth and Justine can be compared with both Claire and Mary. Mary Shelley uses the Frankenstein family, and its parallels to her own life, to show that a family does not have to be

based on biology, and further, that a chosen family, pieced together out of love, is inherently better than those based on chance and genetics.

The Frankenstein family also reflects Mary Shelley's adult family life in its unconventional romantic relationships which call in to question the very definition of marriage. Both the members of the Frankenstein family and the members of Shelley's family had romantic relationships which complicated the family unit. The complex and interwoven relationships of Percy, Mary, and Claire as well as Byron, Mary, and Claire are reflected in the complex relationships of Victor, Elizabeth, and Justine. Victor's mother, in an attempt to "bind as closely as possible the ties of domestic love" (Shelley 20) decided that Victor would marry his cousin "who ha[d] been brought up in the same house like a sister" (Butler xliii). Victor and Elizabeth never clearly express any issue with the idea of marrying their foster-sibling. The presence of Justine serves to further complicate the relationships within the Frankenstein family as Elizabeth recalls that "Justine was a great favorite of [Victor's]" and that "one glance from Justine could" brighten his mood (Shelley 46). It is never made clear if this is merely a sisterly affection or a romantic attraction; Shelley, neither in her life nor in her works, ever truly makes a distinction between the two. She herself lived with Claire Clairmont, her step-sister, and they carried on relationships with the same men (Percy Shelley and Lord Byron). The complicated romantic ties of the Frankenstein family and their similarities to Mary Shelley's own family serve to highlight her ideas about the definition of marriage and her rejection of the societal concept of monogamous marriage.

Another, more direct, way that *Frankenstein* reflects the life of Mary Shelley is the way in which she incorporates and quotes poetry written by her family members and friends, linking the intertextuality of her novel to the relationships in her life. There are several occasions

throughout the novel when Shelley has one of her characters quote a stanza of poetry, or allude to a line from a poem. In several of these passages, the poem being referenced is one written by Percy Shelly, Lord Byron, or one of their friends. “The autobiographical dimension of *Frankenstein* is most conspicuous in the novel’s manifold references to Shelley’s immediate family and friends” (Morales 106) in the form of direct quotations from their poetic works. Victor Frankenstein, while hiking through nature and musing on the volatility of human emotion, the way that man is “moved by every wind that blows” (Shelley 75), quotes an eight line stanza from Percy Shelley’s poem “On Mutability” which addresses the same concern. That same poem is alluded to later by the creature when he says “‘The path of my departure was free;’ and there was none to lament my annihilation.” (Shelley 104), the first phrase of that sentence being a line from “On Mutability.” Lord Byron’s poem “Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage” is also alluded to by Victor when he and Clerval are on their way back to Geneva and Victor finds that the lake, mountains, and the other natural wonders of his childhood are still as awe inspiring as he remembers. Victor says that “‘the palaces of nature’ were not changed. [And] by degrees the calm and heavenly scene restored [him]” (Shelley 55). “The palaces of nature” is a quote from “Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage” by Lord Byron. The only member of Shelley’s immediate family unit that is not directly quoted in *Frankenstein* is her step-sister, Claire. While there are some surviving letters and journals written by Claire, there are no known poems or short stories from which Mary could have quoted.

Mary Shelley does not limit her poetic references to those within her family unit, she also quotes and references poems written by friends of the family. Victor, talking about Henry Clerval describes him as “being formed in the ‘very poetry of nature’” (Shelley 130), alluding to a poem by Leigh Hunts entitled “The Story of Rimini.” Leigh Hunts was a publisher and friend

of Lord Byron's, and so it is quite likely that Mary Shelley knew him personally. Another poet who was part of Lord Byron's circle, and thus possibly a personal acquaintance of Mary Shelley, was Samuel Coleridge. Coleridge and Byron wrote several letters to one another during "the period between Easter 1815 and April 1816" (Griggs 1085) which is during the time when Byron was engaged in a relationship with Claire Clairmont and just before Mary, Percy, and Claire went to stay with Byron. Victor quotes a full stanza of Coleridge's most famous poem, "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" as he is manically pacing the city trying to escape from the creature he has just created (Shelley 41). While it is quite common for authors to quote famous pieces of poetry in their novels or plays; these are typically not poems written by one's friends or family. They are typically works far enough in the past to be known by readers, and famous enough to be easily identifiable by a wide audience. This is not the case in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

The fact that Mary Shelley includes poems written by her own family and friends is unusual enough to point to a purposeful planting of autobiographical information, but the anachronistic nature of the poems in relation to the time period of the novel and their likely obscurity to readers serves as additional evidence that Shelley included these poems to purposefully invite parallels between her novel and her life. Mary Shelley opens her novel with letters written from Walton, an explorer trying to reach the North Pole, to his sister in London, designed to act as a framing device for the story of Victor Frankenstein and his creature. These letters are dated "17--" (Shelley 1) which leaves some room for interpretation as to exact year in which the action is set. The letters could not be written any later than 1799 and in order to allow for the years which elapse between when Victor creates his creature and when Walton rescues Victor (and thus, when the letters were written), the reader must assume that the events of the story take place, at the latest, in the mid 1790's. The poems which Mary Shelley has her

characters quote were all published between 1798 and 1816 and are therefore anachronistic to the characters themselves. There is no way that her characters, living in the mid-1790's could possibly know, let alone quote, poems which were not published at that time. Mary Shelley either created this inconsistently in error (in which case she could have corrected it in her 1831 edition), or she included these poems purposefully to point to the importance the members of her family play to the secondary themes of her novel. This idea is further supported by the general failing of these poems as allusions for contemporary readers. An allusion "is used to swell the importance or gravity of some point" in a literary work, and "in order for the allusion to work, the reader must naturally recognize the reference" (Oliver 74). Percy Shelley's "On Mutability" and Hunt's "The Story of Rimini" were both published early in 1816, the same year that Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*; Lord Byron had published a version of "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" in 1812, but was still "writing the third canto" in the summer of 1816, according to Mary Shelley's introduction to her 1831 edition of *Frankenstein*. This makes it unlikely that contemporary readers of the 1818 edition would have had sufficient time to become acquainted with these works well enough to recognize the references. If the poetic references were unlikely to be easily recognized by most readers, and were impossible for the characters within the novel to have known, it stands to reason that they are included for a higher reason: to illustrate the way the tangled web of relationships in her life is reflected in the texts she cites in her novel.

Mary Shelley's allusions to and quotes from poetry written by her friends and family, as well as the various similarities between the *Frankenstein* family and Mary Shelley's own family, serve to show that she purposefully included autobiographical details in her novel *Frankenstein* in order to highlight a second layer of themes in the novel. "Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* [is] a puzzle in which she has secretly embedded her own life" (Morales 106), but it is a puzzle that

can be solved, to reveal a whole other layer of meaning in this classic novel, once one is aware of the details of Mary Shelley's family dynamics.

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Noah's "Nakedness": Nudity, Sodomy or Incest?

Rebecca Graham

Western Illinois University – Quad Cities

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Everett Hamner

rn-graham@wiu.edu

### Noah's Nakedness: Nudity, Sodomy or Incest?

The narrative of Noah's sons is a mere ten verses long, but it holds a key to understanding many other events in Israel's history. This short section from Genesis 9:18-27 has varying interpretations depending on the translation of the phrase "nakedness of his father" however, when one considers the translation of similar phrases elsewhere in the Torah and the history of the descendants of Canaan, the proper interpretation is revealed. Ham's sin, which led to a multi-generational curse on his son Canaan, was not the sin of seeing his father naked and acting disrespectfully but was rather a sexual sin against his father.

The narrative begins at some length of time after the flood; Noah has had time to plant a vineyard and produce wine. Noah drinks the wine, becomes drunk, and passes out naked in his tent. The next line of the narrative is the key event in the story, "Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers" (NRSV Gen 9:22). Shem and Japheth then cover their father, being careful not to see his nakedness. When Noah wakes up and learns what has happened he pronounces a curse, not on Ham, but on Ham's son Canaan. This event, whatever it is, and its subsequent curse, affect the history of all of the people in the region for generations to come. A close examination of the following chapter commonly known as the "Table of Nations" (Gen 10) reveals that nearly all of the descendants of Canaan will be destroyed either by God directly, or by Israel at the commandment of God, and that nearly all of Israel's enemies come from the line of Ham. This raises a few very important questions: What did Ham do to warrant a curse that would divide the people of the region for generations? Why did Noah curse Canaan, an apparently innocent bystander, for the sins of his father? And what impact does a story that lasts only ten verses have on the national narrative of Israel? The answer to all of these questions can be found in the proper translation of the phrase "the nakedness of his father" (NRSV, Gen 9:22).

Varying translations of this key phrase have led to three significantly different interpretations of this narrative. The first, and most traditional, interpretation involves the literal reading of the word naked, such as that found in the New International Version which states that Shem and Japheth “covered their father’s naked body” (NIV, Gen 9:23). In this version of the story, the events occur exactly as they are described: Noah has passed out naked in his tent, Ham saw his father drunk and naked, and went and told his brothers, who covered up their father. Reading the story in this way provides no clear answers regarding why Ham’s disrespect (telling his brothers, who presumably would not have known about it otherwise, since Noah was passed out in his own tent) deserves a multi-generational curse and not a mild reprimand? Or why Noah curses Canaan, the son of Ham, who seems to have played no role in the event at all. It also provides nothing of lasting impact on the rest of Israel’s story. Christians of various denominations have attempted to rectify this problem, and answer some of these questions, by noting that “Honour thy father and thy mother” (KJV, Ex 20:12) would later be one of the 10 commandments given by God and therefore disrespecting one’s father is, in fact, a serious matter. Or referencing Numbers 14:18, which states that God visits “the iniquity of the parents upon the children” and so Noah is not out of place in cursing Canaan for the sins of Ham. While these are reasonable answers to some of the questions raised in Genesis 9:18-27, they leave the question of historical impact unaddressed. Better answers can be found by considering a less literal translation and interpretation.

Three commonly used English translations of the Bible, the King James Version, the New American Bible, and the New Revised Standard Version, all use the word “nakedness” each of the three times it is repeated in Genesis 9:22-23. Only the New International Version changes the word to “naked body” (NIV, Gen 9:23). The word for “nakedness” is translated in other parts of

the Torah, namely in Leviticus 18:7-18, to imply a sexual act. Throughout the passage of Leviticus 18:7-18, both the KJV and NRSV maintain the use of the word “nakedness,” whereas the NIV translates the same word as “sexual relations” and the NAB lists it as “intercourse”. Using this translation of “nakedness” as a sexual act leads to a very different interpretation of the story of Noah’s sons. In this version, when the text says that Ham “saw the nakedness of his father” (NRSV, Gen 9:22), what it is really saying is that Ham committed some sexual act against his father while he was passed out. He then goes and tells his brothers about it, either to brag about what he has done, or to encourage them to engage in the same behavior. They, however, “did not see their father’s nakedness” (NRSV, Gen 9:23) and instead carefully covered their father to prevent further shame. The history of the descendants of Canaan, as told from the Israelite perspective, supports the reading of Ham’s sin as a sexual sin. The two groups of Canaan’s decedents which get the most coverage in the Torah are those inhabiting the cities of Sodom & Gomorrah and the Canaanites. Both groups were notorious for their sexual sins, running the gambit from adultery and rape to incest, and from sodomy to bestiality. Both groups of people were destroyed by God because of their sexual sins: Sodom & Gomorrah by the hand of God in Genesis 19 and the Canaanites at the command of God in Leviticus 18:24-25 and Deuteronomy 20:16-17 (where the Israelites are commanded to kill everything that breathes in Canaan because they have all been defiled by sexual sins). Reading the narrative of Noah’s sons in this light provides reasonable answers to each of the questions raised. While a sin of disrespect may not warrant a multi-generational curse, a sexual sin against one’s own father certainly does. In order to answer the question of why Ham’s son Canaan is punished, when he did nothing wrong, we must consider what type of sexual sin Ham committed.

Of the five sexual sins specifically cited as performed by the descendants of Canaan (adultery, rape, incest, sodomy and bestiality), Ham is guilty of three of them: adultery (Ham is married, so any sexual intercourse he has with anyone other than his wife, is adultery), rape, and incest. The text references his “father’s nakedness” (NRSV, Gen 9:23), so we know the sexual sin is against his father, yet the key to answering the question of why Canaan is punished lies in determining with whom Ham performed the sexual act. Did he sodomize his father or rape his mother? Both interpretations might be valid however, only Ham’s rape of his mother is supported both by the similar context in Leviticus 18:7 and by the cursing of Canaan. The context of Leviticus 18:7 (where “nakedness” is shown to mean sexual intercourse) refers to having sex with the wife of your father as “uncover[ing] your father’s nakedness” (KJV). Therefore, Ham’s “father’s nakedness” (NRSV, Gen 9:23) may refer to Noah’s wife, Ham’s mother. Given this translation, Ham doesn’t sodomize his father, he rapes his mother “and the accursed fruit of that union was Canaan” (Hahn, 18). This would explain why Ham is not cursed (and therefore does not pass on the curse to his other sons), only Canaan, the son born of incest, is cursed. The main issue with this interpretation of events is that the narrative reads as though Noah curses Canaan right after he wakes up from his drunken slumber. There are many places throughout the Hebrew Bible, in the Torah especially, where the timeline is not given literally, so one cannot disregard this interpretation for that reason. Furthermore, reading the story of Noah’s sons as a story of incestuous rape that results in a multi-generational curse on the descendants of Canaan, the product of that incest, has important implications to the national narrative of Israel.

The Hebrew Bible as a national narrative of the people of Israel serves to help them to understand and explain how they saw themselves as a people, and how they were different from the peoples around them, especially the Canaanites. The Israelites viewed themselves as the

chosen people of God, and that implies that God must have chosen them (and not anyone else) for a reason, either because of the goodness of Israel or the sinfulness of their neighbors. It was especially important for the Israelites to show that the Canaanites, in particular, were a cursed people, descended from the product of sexual sin. This allowed the Israelites to justify the destruction of the Canaanites, and taking of the promised land, as the just punishment of a sexually sinful people. It also helped them to preserve their own sexual morality, which was quite strict when compared to their neighbors. This understanding of the Canaanites as sexually deviant and cursed played a vital role in helping the Israelites to make sense of God's commands for the destruction of Canaan and for the strict purity of Israel.

This small, ten-verse passage near the beginning of Genesis holds a key to understanding much of Israelite history. When properly translated it brings the sexually deviant nature of Ham's actions to light, and that allows the story to play a big role in shaping the Israelite's view of their world, their place in it, and the events of their history.

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C.M. Howell/Spring 2017

# The Rise of Instrumental Reasoning

A History of Enlightenment Rationality

## I. Introduction

Throughout history there has been a relationship between theology, philosophy and the sciences in which all three faculties influences each other, and occasionally shift in importance. Much of western culture's history is developed with theology being the "queen of the sciences," and philosophy the "handmaiden," while natural philosophy (the precursor to modern science) was merely an aide to exploring these deeper truths. If the Enlightenment has a defining characteristic, it is the exchange of these roles. Philosophy becomes the new religion. As Immanuel Kant will argue in the eighteenth century, philosophy is to be the "torchbearer" of the faculties, guiding both theology and science in the Age of Reason (*Conflict of the Faculties*).

This argument from Kant, however, shows how unsettled the atmosphere was in regards to the relationship between the faculties. Theology was grasping to maintain control. Philosophy was arguing for autonomy. And science was all the while making diligent progress in other areas, unknowingly paving the way to assume the position of first faculty. Just as the Enlightenment exchanged the roles of theology and philosophy, by the end of modernity philosophy and science exchanged roles. Modern science, founded on an instrumental epistemology developed by philosophy (which has held authority in this relationship for the last two centuries) is now being challenged by a new transition into the postmodern disposition.

Many contemporary explorations of the transition into postmodernity attempt to legitimate the deconstructive movement by focusing on the malaise left in the wake of modernity. The majority of these narratives follow Max Weber's narrative of the "disenchantment" of the world at the hands of modern science (Weber 35). This shift has recently been explored most notably by Charles Taylor, offering developmental theories of both the individual and the cultural identity. Taylor's argument, although including the existential crisis of postmodernity, attacks the modern Cartesian epistemology at a much deeper, more fundamental level (*Retrieving Realism 2-5*). The

question I wish to address is how did the modern worldview become adopted in the first place? Why did our modern predecessors deem this method of inquiry valuable? How did science become the standard for truth, propagating the “disenchantment” of the world? In short, *what was driving the reshuffling of the faculties?*

Taylor explains that science did not come to be the most plausible system of truth *solely* on its explanatory merit, but rather because the “whole package: science, plus a picture of our epistemic-moral predicament in which science represents a mature facing of hard reality, beats out another package: religion, plus a rival picture of our epistemic-moral predicament in which religions, say, represents try humility, and many of the claims of science unwarranted arrogance” (*A Secular Age* 366). Louis Dupré describes this transition as a “search for a new cultural synthesis [beginning] at the end of the Middle Ages when the traditional cosmological, anthropological, and theological one had disintegrated” (Dupré 1). These perspectives can be summarized simply as: *an instrumental epistemology was not accepted on the merits of observational discovery alone, but in combination with a multitude of other theological, philosophical and sociological factors.*

Any clarity to this question, therefore, must be sought with the complex web of all spheres of life in view. Culture is just as important as philosophy; theology is just as important as science; and economics are just as important as politics — both in critical study as well as in existential relevance. It is only with an exploration of historical events, and the philosophical outworking of these events, that we can come to terms with a full understanding of the modern worldview. I will approach this question by applying Charles Taylor’s theory of the “social imaginary” to the historical approach of Peter Harrison, who argues for the importance of theology in this acceptance of the modern social imaginary. This presentation will take two steps: the first is to explain the concept of the social imaginary; the second will be to apply this concept to the modern social

imaginary, follow major trends in the modern milieu. The combination of these approaches will offer a new perspective on the development of a modern instrumental epistemology, arguing that any shift in the social imaginary must be initiated by the controlling faculty at the time of the shift.

## II. The Modern Social Imaginary

What is a “Social Imaginary?” There are several key points to be offered for clarification. First, it should be distinguished from a social theory. A small elite hold to theories, while large groups of people hold to the social imaginary. It is not a pedantic projection that floats over the top of a cultural milieu. The social imaginary is the way ordinary people express their “social surroundings...in images, stories, legends, etc.” Explained further, it “is that common understanding which makes possible common practices, and a widely shared sense of legitimacy” (*A Secular Age* 172). It is the cultural imagination which influences and produces changes in the way people think, and at least in some part influences what is held as truth.

Second, theories cannot be imposed on the social imaginary. Any particular way of thinking must arise naturally from within culture (For instance, “If a minority could force all others to conform to their orders, it would cease to be a democratic decision”) (*A Secular Age* 172). Following the prior clarification, theories are often rejected upon initial interaction but are adopted later in time. However, social seeds *can indeed* become planted, germinating and causing the epistemic soil to loosen for theories to take root. An example of this is the initial rejection of modern scientific advancements, such as those proposed by Francis Bacon and Sir Isaac Newton, which were later embraced nearly wholeheartedly (Berman 25-131). This germination happens through the conversations a culture holds of high importance. As will be explained, religious debates held this position during the enlightenment, but Taylor also mentions political and moral conversations as influencing the modern social imaginary.

Third, Taylor explains that social imaginaries are largely influenced by social practices, which allows visible marker signs when a social imaginary begins to shift. A key illustration presented by Taylor is the modern economy understood as an objectified reality. Following the Enlightenment's anthropocentric turn, society began to become secularized in various ways. One way is the loss of "sacred" and "profane" categories in life. This is helped along immensely by a Protestant view on work as a Providentially orchestrated vocation. All vocations can now be deemed "sacred." Further, this produced a destabilization of categories, a sort of social malaise, and a subsequent growing tendency to find a new structure of life. Science was seen as the answer. Economics advanced the utility of the modern scientific method, allowing the scientific theories of Bacon and Newton, and the new categories attached to them, to find a toehold in Enlightenment culture (Berman 57-65). The economy began to become the means to the end in systems which continued to rely on a hierarchically structured society and had further social consequences, but only while working *within* contemporary theological discussions. This collapse of the cosmos thus created a new category in the social imaginary, the public sphere, which fertilizes the cultural soil for a surplus of new theories.

The public sphere is "a common space in which the members of society are deemed to meet through a variety of media: print, electronic, and also face-to-face encounters; to discuss matters of common interest; and thus to be able to form a common mind about these" (*A Secular Age* 185). It is a central feature of modern society and was "crucial to the development of modern society" (187). This is a construct that is not entirely new, but one that changed alongside the social imaginary by its independent identity from the political and its force as a benchmark of legitimacy. Political identities get mixed in with other identities, such as cultural or religious, thereby developing new forms of old practices. A contemporary example is the way conservative voting

trends have created a certain picture of conservative Christian lifestyles, such as the near assumed desire for every American Christian to advocate for gun ownership. Now, it is true that many conservative Christians are for guns, but that is the entire point. They feel it *necessary* to subscribe to certain political stances in order to maintain their religious identity. Among all of these cultural circumstances is the social imaginary, which shapes how we even *understand* particular identities. It not only shapes, but can redefine certain identities, both past and present.

The forcing of entities, either individual or collective, into a select few positions is a major feature of the modern social imaginary. It is by the understanding of how new positions become introduced, accepted and developed that allows a deeper understanding of the major shifts in the social imaginary. Remembering that the social imaginary is, at least in some way, removed from the modern worldview, we can begin to trace the major trends of the modern social imaginary, and further expound on the initial question of the acceptance of a modern instrumental epistemology.

### **III. Major Trends of the Modern Social Imaginary**

I have summarized the modern social imaginary in light of four movements, or underlying currents: *the turn to the subject, the reliance on rationalism, the progress of humanity and the rise of naturalism*. These trends appear in various ways in the various arenas of modern thought and society, and are intimately linked to form the foundation of modern thought. While each trend will be presented individually, it is important to understand that all essentially stem from theological disputes in the sixteenth century.

The exchange of the faculties of theology to philosophy, then eventually philosophy to science, did not come about by the latter ones discerning more substantial “truth” than the prior ones, as some modern narratives argue. At any point in history, when one faculty is in command, it must *relinquish* authority to the other in some way. Here, at the beginning of modernity, the shift

in faculties came about by a rupture in theology. According to Peter Harrison, “The key contribution of Reformation thought is that it focused attention on the human mind and its limitations. Indeed, partly because of this emphasis, the sixteenth century witnessed the emergence of the study of human nature as a distinct domain” (65). This theological rupture was mixed with political movements, and both was influenced by, as well as had, an important impact on philosophical discussions.

According to Harrison, the major contention point in these debates was *anthropology*. The reintroduction of Augustinian conceptions of humankind into theology tilled the soil of the turn to the subject. “The main fracture lines of early modern debates over the sources and reliability of human knowledge can be understood in terms of these competing anthropological commitments” (54). Anthropological debates functioned socially in a similar way to the faculty fragmentations mentioned above in contemporary conservative religious/political identities. A relatively small number of theological positions were presented, and other influencing factors exploded the situation into what Taylor calls the “nova effect,” which he describes as “the steadily widening gamut of new positions” (*A Secular Age* 423).

The positions available in this new anthropology were essentially threefold. First, humanity is totally depraved, beyond capacity to grasp any truth from the natural world. As Harrison clarifies, “Total depravation, in this context, means that no faculty of the human mind, will, imagination, or intellect — retained. its prelapsarian perfection” (Harrison 59). This position is a major break from the ancient thought that truth is obtainable by observation and reflection of the natural world, and thus challenged the existing anthropologies built on Aristotelian thought (this is a theme that adds another layer to the narrative). Second, humanity is only *morally* corrupted. The rational faculties of humans remain, at least to some extent, intact and absent of sinful

corruption. Included in this group would be Aristotelian notions of a virtuosic development of rational capacities. Third, and arguably most important for this narrative, is a middle group between the previous two. Conceding that reason is depraved, but finding stability on certain discoverable, fixed laws located *in* nature, humanity has a new method to ground the shifting social imaginary. Both the human mind and human morality can be guided by objective observations of nature, society, or even humanity as a whole. It is this strand that begins the four-fold description of the modern social imaginary.

### *The Turn To The Subject*

The first of these defining aspects is the *turn to the subject*. The initial move took place in Rene Descartes' skepticism, reflecting the third available position described above. Descartes, an important voice in this narrative, states at the beginning of the *Meditations* that "All the basic principles of the sciences were taken from philosophy, which itself had no certain ones." He continues by stating his intentions in the work: "My whole purpose was to achieve greater certainty and to reject the loose earth and sand in favor of rock and clay" (Descartes 325-326). He ultimately finds the Archimedean reference point in the maxim *cogito ergo sum*, and established an instrumental epistemology founded on mathematics as the certain guide to truth. Mathematics consequently allows humanity to comprehend the fixed natural laws embedded within nature.

With his system, though, Descartes consequently challenged the Aristotelian category of substance. As Dupré explains, "Early Scholasticism had referred to God, soul, and the world, as substances. Descartes continued to apply that term to the conscious self (*res cogitans*), but because for him consciousness functions as the source of meaning of all substances, that denomination created a problem" (Dupré 46). Descartes's dualism forced a choice between what Paul Ricoeur

distinguishes by the latin terms *ipse* (Descartes *mind*; or the inner “self”) and *idem* (Descartes’ *body*; or physical substance).

This same distinction is addressed by Immanuel Kant, who defines *ipse* as the “transcendental unity of apperception,” thereby making the *idem* unknowable. “I do not know myself through being conscious of myself thinking” (Kant A349-50). Kant’s *ipse* is the product of the actively applied subjective categories. “In all our thought the *I* is the subject, in which thoughts inhere only as determinations; and this *I* cannot be employed as the determination of another thing. Everyone must, therefore, necessarily regard himself as substance, and thought as [consisting] only [in] accidents of his being, determinations of his state” (B 476-477). Kant’s *ipse* thereby correlates the *idem* as the thing-in-itself.

Any Cartesian epistemology has an inherent feature that will be a main link in the shift to a postmodern disposition: it necessarily distances the subject from the object. While the premodern mind understood the individual as part of the world, morally, politically and even theologically bound to it, the modern mind stands apart from the world, in a perspective capable of studying it. Jurgen Habermas refers to this as the “critical distancing” of the subject from the object. Taylor explains that this disengagement from the world, as the result of an instrumental understanding of knowledge, which requires/assumes a mechanistic world, neutralizes “the cosmos, because the cosmos is no longer seen as the embodiment of meaningful order which can define the good for us” (*Sources of the Self* 148). This conception can be clearly seen in Kant. For Kant, the *ipse* can never be the *idem*; the self is constrained to subjectivity. As Roger Scruton explains, in regards to Kant, “I can become an object for myself only by ceasing to be a subject: only by losing my essential character as self-conscious observer” (Scruton 482). The subject, in the modern role of critical-investigator, cannot at the same time be the object, or that which is investigated.

Sociologist Peter Berger offers a helpful analogy in understanding this *ipse-idem* interchange. He says in the sociological study of another culture, say an African tribe studied by a white European, there are certain boundaries that must be crossed, and certain boundaries that must be held in order for the very possibility of study. The boundaries that must be crossed are those of emotional and cultural behaviors (Berger 8). If these boundaries are not crossed, the observer is at too great a distance to make any intelligible claims on the culture — the *idem* is too greatly embraced. However, while cultural engagement (and even participation) is necessary, there must remain a cognitive boundary. If the observer begins to accept the “knowledge” of the foreign culture, she will lose the trans-subjective vantage point, obtained by critical distance, required to study the culture.

This is a direct parallel to Taylor’s work. Taylor refers to this as the “buffered self” (*A Secular Age* 42); a self disengaged from the world, entrenched in subjectivity. Shifts in the subjective “perspective” are akin to accepting the “knowledge” of the tribe as object-of-investigation, and are, thus, ultimately teleological shifts. This brings to light another feature of the modern attack on Aristotelian logic — teleology begins to be redefined. Efficient and final cause are connected. “Purpose” is intrinsically linked to “goal.” “Why” we are asking questions has a great influence on the “whats” we come up with. Consequently, in light of this development culminating in Kant, turn to the subject now takes on a new form, no longer following the theological anthropologies but embracing a new humanistic autonomy (this theme is developed below).

This Kantian version of the turn to the subject, at least in part, is a continuation of John Locke’s empiricism. For Locke, the human mind was a simple *tabula rasa*, a blank slate. Impressions were made by sensory experience. However, due to an attack on efficient causation

and the implementation of a mechanistic universe as a replacement for final causation, the mind was completely passive for Locke, where in Kant's transcendentalism the mind is active, shaping these perceptions by space, time, and the twelve categories. "Perception, considered as a process in material nature, could best be conceived as the impression created in the mind by surrounding reality.... From this point of view, the idea is the first effect that this process of impinging makes on the mind, prior to any combinations or connections which the mind itself sets up" (*Retrieving Realism* 9). This becomes important in how modern thinkers began to view nature. If nature is what shapes the mind, as Locke says (following the third available anthropological position), then in order to change the rational capabilities of humankind, humankind must change nature. What had been historically God's task, discerned in theology, was now firmly in the human domain. The anthropocentric substitution for divinity is compounded in Kant's philosophy. For humans are not only capable of changing the phenomena, or physical realm, but their minds also play a part in this creative role by actively, unconsciously and automatically shaping the precepts which derive from the physical world. The subject continues to gain importance over the object throughout modernity, especially as teleology becomes less and less defined by classical approaches.

G.W.F. Hegel picks up on this problem, and gives one of the earliest philosophical attempts at a union between the subject-object division. "Then in the final stage of its development, Kant's philosophy establishes the highest Idea as a postulate which is supposed to have a necessary subjectivity, but not that absolute objectivity which would get it recognized as the only starting point of philosophy and its sole content instead of being the point where philosophy terminates in faith" (Hegel 67). Hegel, however, slips in his own metaphysical assumptions in the process. Kant's transcendental idealism creates a divide between the subject and object, the *ipse-idim* gap, due to the active characteristics of the subject's mind (νοῦς), which contains the necessary

categories to produce a synthesis of concepts and precepts that we interpret as ideas about the world. While this system seems to create a region of unknowability, it in no way challenges the possible existence of such a region. The objective “thing-in-itself” is presumed to exist independently of a subjective νοῦς, even if it cannot be known. Objective reality exists without regard to subjective epistemology. Therefore, when Kant proclaims a “progression” in reason (a concept which will be expounded below), he is referring to an subjective-epistemological movement.

Hegel, however, moves the synthesizing categories from the subject’s epistemology into the object’s ontology. He does so by introducing the concept of a world-spirit, or world Νοῦς or Geist, which is external to the subject qua subject (“external” here should be read in a Cartesian understanding of time and space). The categories that produce a synthesis consequently reside in this objective Νοῦς, instead of Kant’s subjective νοῦς. This change in epistemological postures has ontological consequences. Much the same as Aristotle’s reaction against Plato made the forms dependent on the substance, Hegel’s Νοῦς is dependent on the community of collective individuals. Consequently, when Hegel calls for a progression, he is referring to an objective-ontological movement. This is a movement in which truth ontologically moves through time and space from potentiality towards actuality, because it is in human consciousness that truth is developed and in human action that it is realized. In effect, the individual is creating truth for their unique place in history by a progressive-mechanistic worldview directed by a new teleology (a theme developed below).

### *The Reliance on Rationalism*

This brings us to the second defining concept of modernity, *the reliance on rationalism*. Hegel’s theory is based on objective-ontology, but needs to “start with an [ontologically] realized

goal or standard,” (i.e. a metaphysical presupposition) (*Hegel and Modern Society* 63). This metaphysical presupposition becomes Hegel’s own thought, for “Reason rules the world” (65). Rationalism, in the sense being used here, is not referring to a certain school of epistemological thought, but rather to the modern idea that our rational faculties, working with knowledge that we have gained in either an a priori or a posteriori manner, can be trusted above all else. In regards to the third available anthropological position, this is largely in accord with the latter definition. Reason can be trusted if strict observational guidelines prescribe the method of observation. Modern science is built on this system. Others, such as Kant and Hegel, follow more closely with the second available anthropological position. Humanity is fallen, but not completely, and is continually processing towards a new, “better,” state. The credibility of this move has attracted much debate, however it is undeniable that we see in Hegel’s thought a new trend firmly planted in the modern identity, which is the third defining concept of the modern period — *the progress of humanity*.

### *The Progress of Humanity*

This idea could only take place with the combination of two important shifts in the modern social imaginary. The first is that causation becomes defined as natural laws, as modern science continued its attack on Aristotelian science. In a subtle shift, the universal forms of Aristotle, discovered by empirical observation, were replaced by fixed laws of nature, discovered by a mathematical application placed onto empirical investigation. These laws were constant and unchanging, corresponding nicely to the Cartesian emphasis of mathematical certainty. It is these laws that allow depraved reason to be grounded, and subsequently built upon. The result of this first shift is a mechanistic worldview. While some thinkers, such as Hegel, held to Idealism as the metaphysical category needed to progress humanity to the next phase in the dialectic; others held

solely to the physical realm, allowing modern science a voice that will ultimately become more appealing, due to the interaction with more tangible objects of study. This can be seen in the philosophical idea of Darwinian evolution, or even in Karl Marx's materialistic dialectic.

The second shift in this aspect of the modern social imaginary is the realization (or re-realization) of humanity's role in this mechanistic progress. As Kant would articulate, the mere concept of an "ought" implies a "can" from the agent. Freewill must exist if morality exist. Thus, humanity only escapes the mechanistic world by ethical imperatives. Drawing on the previous strands of the modern social imaginary, the turn to the subject has distanced humanity from the world, and the reliance on humanity's rational capacity opens the door for new social teleologies. Humanity now has enough distance from nature to understand and manipulate it for the benefit of society. This has reverberations of the implications of Locke's theory discussed above, but also ties back into Harrison's argument of the role of theological debates in the early modern period.

The Protestant Reformation's distrust of Catholic doctrine, which at the time was inseparably infused with Aristotelian concepts, provided an ally to new scientific theories. The voice of Martin Luther holds the clearest example of this, such as his statement that "Aristotle taught that he who does much good will thereby become good" ("Sunday after Christmas" 6). This clearly contradicted the Augustinian notion of human depravity, as Luther makes clear: "The will is impaired, the intellect depraved, and the reason entirely corrupt and altogether changed" (*Lectures on Genesis 1-5* 166). Scientific voices began to reverberate these theological ones. Francis Bacon says Aristotelian logic "is idle," and continues by saying that "to expect any great advancement in science from the superinducing and engrafting of new things upon old" is the same (Bacon Book I, Aphorism XXXI). This quote is found in Bacon's his great work *Novum Organum*, which itself is titled as an attack on Aristotelian logic, at the time organized under the title *Organon* (Berman

29). This new scientific movement generated a mechanistic worldview. But this could not be done without the aide and encouragement of philosophy.

Charles Taylor calls this new view of history and its emphasis on process “the great disembedding,” which involves “the growth and entrenchment of a new self-understanding of our social existence, one that gave an unprecedented primacy to the individual” (*Modern Social Imaginaries* 50). While, to some extent, there was the idea of flourishing in the ancient world, Taylor explains that what “makes modern humanism unprecedented, of course, is the idea that this flourishing involves no relation to anything higher” (i.e., metaphysical categories) (51). In other words, it is not a deity helping along this process towards perfection as in the ancient world. In the modern world, humanity is pulling itself up by its bootstraps.

### *The Rise of Naturalism*

The progress of humanity, however, is indeed largely justified by advancements in modern science, for the most part resting on the technological developments of modernity. Just as human reason was depraved, the senses were depraved as well. However, instruments of observation, such as the telescope, were invented allowing a recovery of prelapsarian states to be achieved. This further entrenched the idea of progress in the modern social imaginary.

Returning to science, the mechanistic understanding of nature shows up in a variety of ways, most important here is the challenge to Aristotelian causation. The most significant effect of these changes is the loss of belief in final causation. For example, no longer could the question “why does it rain?” be answered, “to make the crops grow.” Causation must be descriptive instead of prescriptive. Newton is a main character in this development. His theory began to assign causation to the result of forces.

The main business of natural philosophy is to argue from phenomena without feigning hypotheses and to deduce causes from effects, till we come to the very first cause, which certainly is not mechanical; and not only to unfold the mechanism of the world, but chiefly to resolve these and suchlike questions. (Newton 96-97)

With this point we see the relationship between philosophy and science, both built on theological concerns. This instrumental reasoning found additional ready allies in scientific and religious voices. Bacon, for instance, embraces a Cartesian epistemology, saying that “in mechanical arts, which are founded on nature in the light of experience, [the sciences] are continually thriving and growing, as having in them a breath of life” (Bacon Book I, Aphorism LXXIV). While from the philosophical side Immanuel Kant employs a scientific method to his transcendental epistemology, saying in the first preface of the first *Critique*, “This experiment of pure reason has a great similarity with that of the *chemists*, which they sometimes call the experiment of *reduction*, or the *synthetical process* in general” (*Critique of Pure Reason* Bxxin4). All of these spheres held importance in the social mind, and thus held social influence. All of these disciplines were engaged in dialogue, which means understanding the dispositional shifts can only be achieved by studying the whole of culture, and not reducing it to single strands. Thus, it was the theological debates of Augustinian anthropology that both influenced and was influenced, both propelled and was propelled, along with the Scientific Revolution and the Philosophical Enlightenment.

Charles Taylor speaks of this *rise of naturalism*, the final defining aspect of modernity, as another facet of the modern social imaginary. This ancient platonic world was an enchanted cosmos, where each individual was open to the influence of non-physical realities, which dictated life in a very real way. This disenchantment is linked to the change in metaphysics, as well as providing new ways of idol worship in both the modern and postmodern world. An enchanted cosmos helped not only to sustain a semiotic, Platonic world, but also is a critical variable in the

equation of a sustainable identity. All of these four trends — *the turn to the subject, the reliance on rationalism, the progress of humanity and the rise of naturalism* — created reactions in every sphere of life, from the academia to public spheres to pop culture, which place the individual in a disorienting location. These movements merged together to develop a modern identity entrenched in a mechanistic, reductionistic, instrumental frame of reference. This is then driven with a new force of progressivism which bears a tremendous ethical weight on the individual's relationship to a post-metaphysical world. Thereby encouraging action, while at the same time minimizing the importance of the validity of any particular course of action. A malaise is produced in the modern social imaginary.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

We live in a world full of “posts.” Labels such as post-modern, post-metaphysical, and even post-secular, all point to a crucial observation: an important shift has occurred, and we are trying to make sense of it. This is Taylor's nova effect presented in new particularities. Avenues begin developing according to pragmatic value rather than transcendent truthfulness, and results in an “utter flatness, emptiness of the ordinary” (*A Secular Age* 309). This malaise of modernity can be felt in several ways in postmodernity, which helps explain the shifting disposition through the modern period (*A Secular Age* 309).

This has been simple a description of the modern social imaginary. A survey of key markers that offers clarity of the period. Through the Enlightenment, and the development of the modern social imaginary, these discussion were centered around theology, leading to the reshuffling of the faculties. The reshuffling of the faculties did not come by modern science discovering more truth than epistemological methods built on Aristotelian thought. It rather came by offering a point of grounding following the rejection of Aristotle.

However, as the malaise of modernity highlights, this grounding is unsustainable. Modern science, and the instrumental reasoning presupposed in it, may have answered some problems brought to light in modernity, but it fails at offering a truth that is robust to the extent needed to sustain everyday life. The disengaged society we live in is a product of the modern instrumental epistemology. G.K. Chesterton once remarked that the man who bowed to idols did so because, though inanimate and comprised of all but conceptual fiction, “He not only felt freer when he bent; he actually felt taller when he bowed” (Chesterton 103). The search for grounding Taylor speaks of in the loss of ecclesiastical categories was founding on science out of desperation. An immediate epistemology took precedence of an adequate one. In effect, the Enlightenment offered “undercutting” defeaters to the premodern social imaginary, without adding a sufficient constructive system to replace what had been lost.

Cartesian epistemology and the modern science built from it does offer humanity a new sense of dignity, but at a price. To reiterate in Taylor’s words, this concept of knowledge and truth “is not only an epistemic stance; it is part of a broader ideal, that of freedom and personal responsibility, which determines a way of being in the world in general, and not just a way of practicing science” (*Retrieving Realism* 24). The postmodern disposition of audacious autonomy and authoritative skepticism found its stance in the disengagement of modern instrumental reasoning. The fracturedness of our society and personal lives must begin by at least understanding how we think, if not changing it altogether.

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Decline of Due Process: A Case Study of Blackwater

Patrick Sean Irwin Jr

Purdue University Northwest

Author Note

Correspondence concerning this article should be sent to:

[PSIRWIN@PNW.EDU](mailto:PSIRWIN@PNW.EDU)

### **Abstract**

Armed conflict predates recorded history. Over the course of time, both formal and informal practices of conflict developed. A certain due process, also known as Rules of Engagement, emerged in warfare over the last 100 years. In a post 9/11 environment, private security contractors, specifically Blackwater, emerged to fill the void for governmental security and military needs. With the emergence of private security contractors, society witnessed a steady decline in the due process afforded to civilians in both active conflict / post-conflict war-zones and natural disaster areas such as post Hurricane Katrina New Orleans.

The following study introduces a brief history of private military contractors, the Geneva Convention with its lack of application to private security contractors, and the rise of Blackwater, resulting in the deterioration of due process both in the United States and abroad. Sources include eyewitness accounts of Blackwater encounters, court cases, and assorted publications.

The research demonstrates Blackwater is a little known, but far reaching organization that actively skirts the judicial process while raking in obscene profits for stockholders. Blackwater represents a marriage of military contractors with Wall Street investors to form for-profit private armies with no accountability.

*Keywords:* Blackwater, private security contractors, private military contractors, industrial military complex, Nisour square, DynCorp

## Acknowledgments

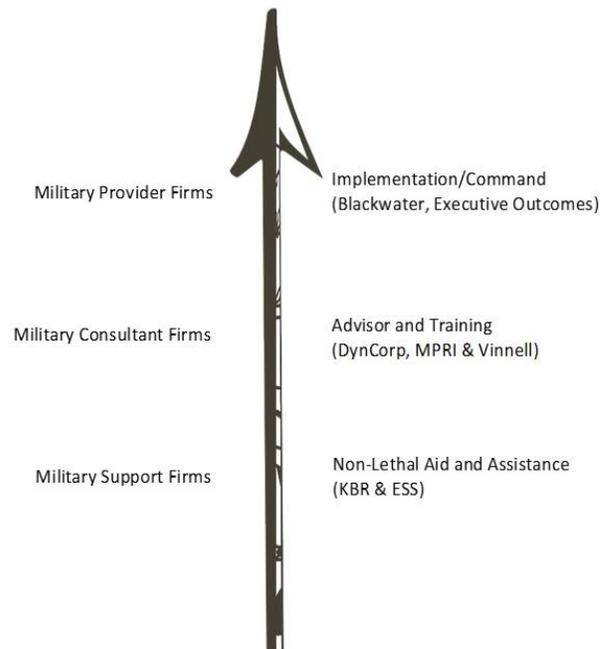
This study would not have been possible without the academic guidance and support of Alan Spector, PhD. For 10 years, Dr. Spector is my oldest academic mentor, advocate, and dear friend at Purdue Northwest. In addition, I am especially indebted to Adam Raven, M.A. at Calumet College of Saint Joseph who, in two years, supported my academic pursuits, career goals, fitness regimen, and personal development. Dr. Spector and Mr. Raven have and continue to guide my academic curiosity and rigor. For that, I am forever in their debt.

I am grateful to all of those with whom I have had the pleasure to work with during this and other related studies. Each of my academic colleagues, specifically Amanda Stinnett B.A. who provided extensive professional support and managed to turn my lump of writing into a polished diamond. I would especially like to thank Jessica Klemz, M.A. from the Communication Department and Karen Schmidt, M.A. from the English Department for assisting with my abstract and research proposal. In addition, my deepest gratitude to Jon Borodine, Susan Brown, Joe Conn, Daveed Holmes, Alyssa Jones, Sarah Perez, and Kyle Young who served as my sounding board for my midnight brain storming. Also, I thank Mike Taylor for his role as a Microsoft Office wizard for assistance with Word and PowerPoint. Furthermore, I thank the team at the Schererville Starbucks for keeping me caffeinated while I worked on this study.

Saving the best for last, nobody has been more important to me in the pursuit of this project and my Ph.D. goals than the members of my family. I thank my parents; whose love and guidance are with me in whatever I pursue. They are the ultimate role models.

During the modern era, the role of the state (a single political structure and government, sovereign or constituent), was to issue currency, manage infrastructure, law enforcement, as well as to raise and command armed forces. The state also regulated the use of lethal force to limit casualties and collateral damage. Furthermore, due process was implemented to protect property and vulnerable populations, including women, children, the elderly, and disabled. However, with the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and an end to the Cold War with the United States (US) resulted in a rapid reduction in the size of the American military. As a result, the US turned to the private sector to complete tasks previously performed by its military. P. W. Singer in 2003 coined the term “tip of the spear”. The analogy is useful inasmuch that a visual aid is presented so that one can grasp a basic concept of how contracting works in active conflict zones (Singer, 2008).

Zones of conflict, however, evolved rapidly since the fall of the USSR in 1991. Governments scaled back military spending at home and abroad. Proxy armed forces were no longer needed which resulted in defunding foreign military aid that was justified in the struggle between the two superpowers. In addition, stockpiles of conventional and nuclear weapons maintained by the USSR (Rasor & Bauman, 2007) flooded the post-Cold War black market. As the world transitioned from being dominated by two superpowers to one of multiple states and non-government actors struggling for influence and power. Without a stable police / military force, many developing nations broke down into low



intensity conflicts. Such conflicts emerged primarily along ethnic and sectarian divides. With ready access to the former USSR's arsenal, low intensity conflicts, irregular warfare, and terrorist attacks redefined the methodology of warfare. Maps featuring clearly defined borders no longer existed, but, instead, are replaced with choropleth maps featuring degrees of intensity in conflict actions. The shift from traditional battlefields and front lines to fluctuating hot zones created regional conflicts that embraced guerrilla warfare tactics and ignorant of national borders and international laws.

Functions previously performed by the state and military were outsourced to private contractors. Frequently, contracts were awarded to corporations with little or no experience. Contracts were often patronages for political friends and influential special interests (Carney, 2007). The market for security personal to protect fixed positions, convey, and provide principle protection resulted in the explosion of several non-state actors in the form of private security companies (PSCs). PSCs, largely staffed by former special operation personnel from the United Kingdom (UK), the US, and South Africa (Percy, *Regulating The Private Security Industry* ). Intelligence operatives from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Military Intelligence, Section 6 (MI6), Mossad, and specially trained former law enforcement officers (LEOs) supplemented the roster for PSCs (Scahill, *Blackwater*, 2008).

PSCs allowed non-state actors to obtain cutting edge military advice, training, intelligence, and frontline support based on the ability to pay (Singer, 2008). Nation-states' ability to effectively regulate conflicts diminished with increasing influence and independence from PSCs. Since the internet revolution of the 1990s, PSCs developed databases of applicants who were formally employed and trained by a nation state's military force at taxpayer expense (Avant, 2005). The internet revolution also allowed for the creation, dissolution, and movement

of companies involved in military contracting and weapons sales. An example of this fluid business practice is the South African firm Executive Outcomes (EO) (Singer, 2008). South Africa passed the *Regulation of Foreign Military Assistance Act* in 1988 regulating PSCs like EO (Republic of South Africa, 1998). Instead of abiding by the laws of South Africa, EO ended operations and dissolved (Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, 2002). As a result, several PSCs headed by former EO executives oversaw an increasingly privatized system (Uessler, 2008). Such legal and corporate transitions reduce a nation state's ability to hold military contractors accountable for actions and potential crimes committed abroad. PSCs often have multiple headquarters located in different parts of the globe. A lobbying headquarters based in or around a nation's capital, such as Washington D.C. or London. Regional headquarters were based in or near an active contract area such as Baghdad or Dubai. Furthermore, PSCs' legal headquarters were located in tax havens such as the Cayman Islands to shield itself from government investigations (Uessler, 2008).

Not since the War of 1812, when British armed forces set fire to the White House had a foreign entity successfully attacked Americans on American soil the way *al-Qaeda* did on September 11, 2001. With a mandate from Congress in the form of the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) (107th Congress, 2001), President George W. Bush unleashed the full wrath and fury of America's armed forces upon *al-Qaeda*. Within three months of the U.S. led North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) invasion of Afghanistan, a new government had been established (BBC, 2008). After NATO forces occupied the nation's capital, Kabul, the coalition worked behind closed doors to have Hamid Karzai appointed president (BBC, 2008). The PSC DynCorp, not the American military, was charged with protecting President Karzai (Beaumont, 2002). With Afghanistan firmly under new leadership,

President Bush declared an “Axis of Evil” (Bush, 2002) consisting of Iran, Iraq, and North Korea in his 2002 State of the Union address to Congress. As a result, the military industrial complex went into overdrive to prepare for war.

### **Cry 'Havoc!', and let slip the dogs of war**

To support the invasion of Iraq, the US government turned to the private sector to fill the roles needed for America’s war on terror (Ortiz, 2010). Functions such as logistics security and transportation, facility management, interrogation, and principle protection were outsourced by the government into the private sector. The US government contracted with PSCs to provide protection for government installations and principle security (Singer, 2008). Such tasks were historically performed by LEOs, intelligence services, or military specialists. The most well-known PSC is Blackwater, founded by Erik Prince, a former Navy Seal (Simons, 2010). The operational history of Blackwater is directly linked to the personal history of Erik Prince. The following paraphrased timeline weaves the history of Erik Prince with the milestones of Blackwater (Falconer, 2007):

- June 6, 1969: Erik Prince is born.
- 1992: Erik Prince earns a commission in the U.S. Navy. He goes on to become a Navy SEAL and serves in Haiti, Bosnia, and the Middle East.
- July 22, 1996: Erik Prince retires early from the U.S. military.
- December 26, 1996: Erik Prince's Blackwater Lodge and Training Center Inc. is incorporated in Delaware.
- January 30, 1997: Blackwater purchases property in North Carolina.
- January 1998: Blackwater gets its first paying customer, a Navy SEAL team. The company specializes in firearms training, but soon receives requests from Spain to train presidential security details and from Brazil for counterterrorism instruction.
- October 12, 2000: After the bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen, Blackwater gets its first long-term federal contract to train sailors for the U.S. Navy.
- 2001: Blackwater's federal contracts total \$736,906.
- September 11, 2001: Terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, DC.
- 2002: Blackwater's federal contracts total \$3.4 million.
- 2002: Blackwater Security Consulting is founded, moving the company into the private security business.
- 2003: Blackwater's federal contracts total \$25 million.
- March 20, 2003: The U.S. invades Iraq.
- 2004: Blackwater's federal contracts total \$48 million.
- March 31, 2004: Four Blackwater operators are killed in Falluja; their burnt bodies dragged through the streets and hung from a bridge. The incident sparks a major battle in the Iraq War. The public takes notice of Blackwater for the first time.

- April 1, 2004: Blackwater engages Alexander Strategy Group to do damage control. Within days, Erik Prince has private meetings with senior Republican members of Congress.
- April 4, 2004: U.S. Marines lay siege to Falluja, while to the south in Najaf, Blackwater operators defend the Coalition Provisional Authority's headquarters from Mahdi Army attack.
- June 28, 2004: CPA Order 17 provides private contractors with immunity from Iraqi law.
- 2005: Blackwater's federal contracts total \$352 million.
- January 5, 2005: Families of the four Blackwater contractors killed in Falluja in March 2004 file a wrongful death suit against the company.
- May 2005: A Blackwater-owned company called Greystone Limited is incorporated in Barbados.
- August 29, 2005: Hurricane Katrina strikes New Orleans. Blackwater operators arrive within hours with weapons and combat gear. It is the company's first foray into the U.S. domestic security market.
- 2006: Blackwater's federal contracts total \$593 million.
- 2007: Blackwater's federal contracts total \$1 billion.
- February 7, 2007: House Oversight and Government Reform Committee holds hearings on the use of private security contractors in Iraq, focusing largely on Blackwater.
- September 16, 2007: Seventeen Iraqis are killed and 24 wounded when Blackwater operators open fire in a traffic circle in central Baghdad.

### Fallujah

With the explosion of PSCs performing military roles, the question of accountability and due process arises. In short “*privatizing sovereign services a strong state is likely to lead to some functional loss*” (Avant, 2005). By which judicial authority do contractors such as Blackwater and its operatives fall under? US law? The Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ)? Iraqi law? The International Criminal Court (ICC)? Under which rules of engagement must contractors abide by? Does the Geneva Convention apply? How can families of victims killed by contractors receive recompense? Is it possible for families of slain contractors to file wrongful death lawsuits? These questions still linger.

To support the invasion of Iraq, the US Army outsourced mundane tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and building living quarters for troops to Kellogg, Brown, and Root (KBR) under the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) program (Rasor & Bauman, 2007). In 2007, the US government employed 180,000 contractors to support the mission in Iraq compared to the 160,000 American soldiers deployed in the same theater (Lardner, 2007). At the time of the LOGCAP contract, KBR was a subsidiary of Haliburton, the same company Vice President Dick

Cheney ran for five years (Chatterjee, 2011). As the main primary contractor, KBR subcontracted food preparation services to Eurest Support Services (ESS) (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008). ESS then contracted the transportation security to Blackwater (Pincus, 2007). In turn, Blackwater hired Wesley Batalona, Scott Helvenston, Michael Teague, and Jerry Zovko to serve as convoy security for ESS's transportation personal (Waxman, 2007).

On March 31, 2004, an under-staffed Blackwater team led by Scott Helvenston were to provide vehicle security for three flatbed trucks owned and operated by ESS (Waxman, 2007).

The terms of the contract required the following (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008):

- 1) Three contractors per vehicle
- 2) Armored sport utility vehicles
- 3) One squad automatic weapon (SAW) per vehicle.

The result was four men armed with nothing more than M4 carbines and pistols required to escort three slow moving flatbed trucks through Fallujah (Waxman, 2007). The escort was not under Coalition Provisional Authority's (CPA) control while driving under-armored vehicles without the required SAWs (Johnston & Broder, U.S. Military to Supervise Iraq Security Convoys , 2007). The contractors went ahead with the mission despite the shortcomings (Waxman, 2007). While the ESS convoy was in-route to pick up kitchen equipment, the convoy was ambushed by insurgents using small arms (Waxman, 2007). All four Blackwater contractors were killed by the Iraqi opposition (Glanz & Rubin, 2007). In addition, the Iraqi opposition burned and mutilated the bodies of the slain contractors before stringing the bodies up on a bridge (Hersh, 2004). Within hours, photos and video of the bodies appeared on television screens around the world (Waxman, 2007). To contain the public relations nightmare, President Bush launched Vigilant Resolve to retake Fallujah on April 4, 2004 (Waxman, 2007). When military operations concluded on May 1, 2004, approximately 36 US service members and

women, 200 Iraqi combatants, and an estimated 600 civilians lost their lives (Waxman, 2007).

Following the ambush, families of the four contractors in Fallujah filed a lawsuit against Blackwater for wrongful death on January 5, 2005 (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008). On January 19, 2007, Blackwater countersued the families for breach of contract, demanded for \$10 million in damages, and requested the court to move the case to arbitration (Baker, Iraq Security Contractor Countersues, 2007). In February of 2009, Blackwater rebranded itself Xe (Aamoth, 2010). On January 26, 2011, a federal judge dismissed the lawsuit involving the families of the deceased contractors and Blackwater (Baker, Washington Post, 2011). In December of 2011, Xe, formally known as Blackwater, rebranded again under the name, Academi (Ukman, 2011). On January 6, 2012, Academi and the four families agreed to a confidential settlement ending seven years of back and forth litigation between both parties (Sizemore, 2012).

### **CPA Order #17**

The legal status of contractors working abroad is murky and causes additional concern. Armed contractors such as the four Blackwater operatives in Fallujah operate in a legal grey area. Unlike their counter-parts, security contractors are not non-combatants under the Fourth Geneva Convention because they carry weapons and act as agents for the US government (Stanger, 2009). Per the Third Geneva Convention, security contractors are not lawful combatants either since contractors do not wear uniforms or answer to the US government (Singer, 2008). In addition, contractors are not bound by the American UCMJ (Stanger, 2009). Armed contractors are not even mercenaries under international law: mercenaries fight for a foreign government when the contractor's parent company is not party to the conflict (Stanger, 2009). The US invaded Iraq, and Blackwater is based in America, thus, according to (Stanger,

2009), legally, Blackwater is not a mercenary outfit. Technically, defense contractors can be subjected to the Military Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Act (MEJA) which was signed into law by President William J. Clinton in October of 2000 (Xe Services Alien Tort Litigation, 2010). The DOJ is empowered to prosecute crimes under the MEJA if the contractor was working under contract for the DOD, while excluding contractors working under the State Department (Avant, 2005). Finding the political willpower to do so remains a problem.

With the fall of Saddam Hussein in December of 2003, the US transferred the government of Iraq into the hands of the CPA (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008). The head of the CPA was Paul Bremer, an American diplomat from May 2004 to June 2005 (Stanger, 2009). As head of the CPA, Bremer was responsible for all coalition personal, contractors, sub-contractors and foreign mission liaisons, as well as the general governance of Iraq (Coalition Provisional Authority, 2003). Like Afghanistan's President Karzai, PSCs protected Bremer instead of the American military. However, Blackwater protected Bremer instead of DynCorp (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008). Bremer was empowered by the United Nations (UN) to issue CPA orders to direct legislation and government (Hedahl, 2012). CPA Order #17 deals with the legalities of non-Iraqi personal in post invasion Iraq and is broken down into several sections.

"Section 1: Coalition contractors" means non-Iraqi business entities or individuals not normally resident in Iraq supplying goods and/or services to or on behalf of the Coalition Forces or the CPA under contractual arrangements (Coalition Provisional Authority, 2003)

Section 2:1) Coalition contractors and their sub-contractors, as well as their employees not normally resident in Iraq, shall not be subject to Iraqi laws or regulations in matters relating

to the terms and conditions of their contracts in relation to the Coalition Forces or the CPA (Coalition Provisional Authority, 2003)

To summarize, non-Iraqi contractors or sub-contractors (such as Blackwater) shall not be subjected to Iraqi laws or regulations while being immune from Iraqi legal process when engaged in actions relating to their contract (Coalition Provisional Authority, 2003). In addition, non-Iraqi contractors or sub-contractors are immune from Iraqi civil court proceedings for any damages done while engaged in actions preformed under contract (Coalition Provisional Authority, 2003). Furthermore, any sort of legal action must be taken in the Parent States legal system from which the alleged offenders hail from (Coalition Provisional Authority, 2003). Such requirements present an undue economic and legal burden upon victims' families in Iraq. Families must obtain legal counsel in the Parent country, pay for said legal counsel, then undergo years of back and forth in the court system.

### **Nisour Square Massacre**

September 16, 2007, 12:08 PM local time: A convoy of four large armored vehicles owned and manned by Blackwater were driving through the Mansour district of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008). Within fifteen minutes, of what started out as a normal mission by Blackwater resulted with Blackwater becoming a household name overnight. A corporation that operated in the dark recesses of government military contracting emerged as the face of contracting abuse, decline of accountability and cost overruns (Stanger, 2009). Nisour Square was not an isolated incident; however, Nisour Square was the straw that broke the camel's back.

*“Iraqi officials alleged that there had been at least six deadly incidents involving Blackwater in the year leading up to Nisour Square. In all there were ten known deadly shootings involving Blackwater from June 2005 to September 2007. Among these was a February 4, 2007, shooting allegedly resulting in the death of Hana al-Ameedi, an Iraqi journalist, near the Foreign Ministry; and a September 9, 2007, shooting during which five Iraqis were killed near a government building in Baghdad. There was also a September 12, 2007, shooting that wounded five people in eastern Baghdad”* (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008).

By the end of the day, Blackwater killed 17 unarmed Iraqi citizens, the youngest victim being a nine-year-old child (Scahill, Blackwaters Youngest Victim , 2010). Furthermore, Blackwater injured at least twenty-four Iraqi citizens during the bloodbath (Glanz & Rubin, 2007).

Within days, the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior moved to revoke Blackwater’s license to do business within Iraq (Tavernise, 2007). However, Blackwater had no such license to begin with. Next the Ministry of the Interior threatened to kick Blackwater out of the country (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008). Removing Blackwater from Iraq was not simple due to Blackwater’s lucrative \$1 billion contract, including its provision to provide principle security for American dignitaries, Congressional Representatives, Senators, visiting American governmental agents and VIPs. The Blackwater’s contract to protect American personnel was funded by the US State Department (Daskal, 2007). Since Blackwater was working under a State Department contract, Blackwater would not be subject to the MEJA (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008). Blackwater is composed of former military personnel in a civilian capacity, thus the UCMJ cannot be applied. As such, how can the State Department investigate Blackwater which is paid to protect State Department personal in the middle of an active conflict zone? Multiple parties investigated the Nisour Square massacre. Two weeks went by before the FBI sent a 10-agent investigation team to inspect the Nisour Square (Stanger, 2009). Blackwater was initially tasked with the security of the FBI investigation team (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008). However, the decision to use

Blackwater as security was overturned (Waxman, 2007). The State Department interviewed members of the Blackwater security detail offering immunity for anything disclosed to the State Department (Johnston, Immunity Deals Offered to Blackwater Guards , 2007). The State Department offered the victims' families \$10,000 to compensate for the loss of life (Daskal, 2007).

By 12:39 PM local time, the US military arrived on scene to start documenting what happened, who did what, and what was done (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008). The investigation was handled by Lieut. Col. Mike Tarsa, the Army would directly contradict later statements issued by Blackwater to the press:

*Col. Tarsa “bluntly concluded there was “no enemy activity involved,” determined that all of the killings were unjustified and labeled the shootings a “criminal event.” (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008). Additionally, Tarsa’s investigation found that many Iraqis were shot as they attempted to flee, saying “it had every indication of an excessive shooting.” Combing the scene, Tarsa’s soldiers found no bullets from AK-47 assault rifles or BKC machine guns used by Iraqi military and police. But they did find an abundance of evidence of ammunition from U.S.-manufactured weapons, including M4 rifle 5.56-millimeter brass casings, M240B machine gun 7.62-millimeter casings, and M203 40-millimeter grenade-launcher casings” (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008).*

The FBI noted that at least 14 of the Iraqis posed no threat to Blackwater and that their deaths could have been avoided (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008). Blackwater’s behavior in Nisour Square “directly affected the reputation of the American state from which Blackwater is based.” (Avant, 2005). In the end, the use of PSCs to provide security for the State Department was suspended (Johnston & Broder, U.S. Military to Supervise Iraq Security Convoys , 2007). Instead of using PSCs to secure State Department personnel the military would be utilized instead (Johnston & Broder, U.S. Military to Supervise Iraq Security Convoys , 2007). By reverting to the use of military forces, the justification for using PSCs to provide security was

undermined (Johnston & Broder, U.S. Military to Supervise Iraq Security Convoys , 2007). At the same time, legislation was drafted by the Iraqi Cabinet in which PSCs would no longer have legal immunity from Iraqi law under CPA order #17 (Rubin, 2007). The legislation passed the Iraqi cabinet and was sent to parliament for a vote (Rubin, 2007). The legislation would also require all firearms to be officially licensed by the Iraqi government and all foreign workers would need visas (Rubin, 2007). However, any such legislation signed into law cannot be retroactively applied to the Blackwater contractors for the Nisour Square massacre.

### **Litigation**

Shortly after the Nisour Square shooting, Iraqi families contacted the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) to sue Blackwater. CCR had previous experience in suing PSCs when the Abu Ghraib abuses emerged (Emmons, 2016). On October 11, 2007, CCR filed a lawsuit in Washington DC under the Alien Tort Statute (ATS) (Center for Constitutional Rights , 2013). The following is a short history of the ATS:

*“Adopted as part of the Judiciary Act of 1789, the Alien Tort Statute (ATS) has been part of U.S. law for more than 200 years, and allows non-U.S. citizens to sue for violations of the “law of nations” or customary international law, or of a treaty of the United States, in U.S. courts. It has been used to bring claims for human rights violations against government officials, private actors and multi-national corporations.”* (Center for Constitutional Rights , 2013)

CCR alleged that up to a quarter of Blackwater contractors were abusing controlled substances, thus the government could not contract with Blackwater under the Anti Pinkerton Act (Xe Services Alien Tort Litigation, 2010). CCR goes onto say “Despite Blackwater’s claim that it is a defensive force”, its “mobile armed forces” are “consistently referred to by Blackwater management and employees as ‘shooters’” (Xe Services Alien Tort Litigation, 2010). However,

CCR and Blackwater reached a private settlement, resulting in the case being dropped on January 6, 2010 (Xe Services Alien Tort Litigation, 2010).

In the end, after eight years, the families of the Nisour Square massacre had their day in US federal court on April 13, 2015 when a judge sentenced four Blackwater contractors to lengthy prison terms (Apuzzo, 2015). The defendants are Nicholas Abram Slatten, 31, of Sparta, Tennessee; Paul Alvin Slough, 35, of Keller, Texas; Evan Shawn Liberty, 32, of Rochester, New Hampshire; and Dustin Laurent Heard, 33, of Maryville, Tennessee (FBI, 2015). A fifth shooter, Jeremy Ridgeway, entered a plea bargain and pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter in 2008 (FBI, 2015). Ridgeway served as a government witness and testified against his former coworkers (FBI, 2015). Slatten, who was accused of firing the first shots, was sentenced to life in prison after the jury found him guilty of one count of first-degree murder (FBI, 2015). Slough, Liberty, and Heard were each sentenced to prison terms of 30 years and one day (Apuzzo, 2015). The jury found Slough guilty of 13 counts of voluntary manslaughter, 17 counts of attempted manslaughter and one firearms offense (FBI, 2015). Liberty was found guilty of eight counts of voluntary manslaughter, 12 counts of attempted manslaughter, and one firearms offense (FBI, 2015). Heard was found guilty of six counts of voluntary manslaughter, 11 counts of attempted manslaughter, and one firearms offense (FBI, 2015).

*“The 30-year sentences, while significant, could have been much longer. For using machine guns to commit violent crimes, they faced mandatory minimum 30-year sentences under a law passed during the crack cocaine epidemic. Prosecutors had wanted the judge to hand down sentences of 50 years or more”* (Apuzzo, 2015).

The federal judge issued the shortest possible sentences. Would these men have received any prison sentences had the massacre remained in the shadows? The sentences and settlements will

not bring back the deceased family members, or heal the damage done to the Iraqi citizens wounded at Nisour Square.

### **Conclusion**

Blackwater represents everything that is wrong with government outsourcing: cost overruns, lack of accountability, and reduced quality. Blackwater is the focal point of government outsourcing that began under President George H. W. Bush, ramped up under President William J. Clinton and was perfected under President George W. Bush. The government outsourced everything from parcel delivery, tax collection, toll road oversight and, finally, use of lethal force. Conflict is profitable, and business is booming. Blackwater is in the business of using private military force to do the jobs formerly performed by the state at greater cost to the treasury and less accountability. Blackwater now serves as the body guards for US congressional representatives, building security for US government installations in Iraq, and force multipliers to train irregular forces abroad (Cole & Jeremy , 2016). All previously mentioned roles were normally performed by state sponsored military forces at a fraction of the cost that Blackwater bills. The use of PSCs by the American government “reduces the range of consequential control mechanisms by removing direct state authority over the setup of violent institutions” (Avant, 2005).

At the height of the Iraq war, Blackwater was charging the American government \$1,222 per contractor, per day (Waxman, 2007). These contractors were composed primarily of former UK, US, and South African military force (Uessler, 2008). Meanwhile, a married sergeant in Iraq was paid between \$50,000 to \$70,000 per year (Waxman, 2007). The figures will vary based on length of service, stipends, rank and other variables. Also, the cost of training the

deployed personnel, and contractors are paid for by the taxpayers. “In 2007, Blackwater had two-thirds as many operatives deployed in Iraq as the U.S. Bureau of Diplomatic Security had in all other countries in the world combined” (Scahill, Blackwater, 2008). In the event of professional misconduct at most, the contractor will lose his or her contract with Blackwater. However, that contractor can sign up with Armor Group, DynCorp, Triple Canopy or Vinnel. Often, one contractor is in multiple databases to be tapped for deployment. If US military personnel commits a crime, that service person would be subject to the UCMJ, punished up to and including the death penalty (Stanger, 2009). That is not the case with Blackwater.

Erik Prince has never been convicted in either civil or criminal court for criminal negligence in Fallujah or the Nisour Square massacre. Erik Prince and his sister Betsy DeVos have firmly embedded themselves into President Donald J. Trump’s administration by advising Steve Bannon and serving as President Trump’s Secretary of Education (Scahill, *The Intercept*, 2017). Erik Prince now heads a Hong Kong based company “Frontier Services Group”, which offers the same sort of military capabilities as Blackwater provided (Scahill & Cole, *The Intercept*, 2016).

Blackwater, now Academi, represents the marriage of Wall Street corporations with military personnel. The result is the emergence of corporations that are not legally mercenaries but instead armed conflict profiteers. Operatives working for such corporations are often trained by the former government that the corporation is under contract for. The firms that these operatives contract under are often based in Washington DC or London. These contractors are working on behalf of their parent state under contract. Legally these operatives are not American soldiers and thus expendable. However local citizens don’t separate American contractors from the American military. To the local citizens, the contractors **are** the American military. The

American government and military suffer the blowback for misdeeds committed by contractors overseas.

Unfortunately, the American government is directly dependent upon the private sector to wage war. It is easier to cut a check to a private company than to mobilize and deploy thousands of young Americans to wage war. Americans do not want to see soldiers come home in coffins, and thus the American public is willing to accept increased expenditures. Blackwater keeps the official government numbers low in unpopular conflicts. The government can factually state that there are only X number of soldiers in a country such as Libya. However, such statements skew what is really going on. During the September 11, 2012 Benghazi attack, private soldiers and not the American military were the ones who defended the consulate (Risen, 2012). Many people assume that the Americans who defended the consulate were American military personnel instead of for-profit soldiers. The use of PSCs allows the American government, and the executive branch to have plausible deniability when things go wrong.

PSCs remain cloaked in an administration maze away from the prying eyes of Congress. The contracts of PSCs often bar the corporations from publicly disclosing the nature of the contract's provisions (Stanger, 2009). In addition, the US State Department, the agency that contracted Blackwater during the Nisour Square massacre, declined numerous opportunities to comment on PSC contracts for "commercial proprietary" reasons (Stanger, 2009). Furthermore, both the President and State Department are not bound to report contracts smaller than \$50 million (Singer, 2008). The DoD can bypass the State Department's regulations by selling services globally under the Foreign Military Sales program (Stanger, 2009). This loophole requires the DoD to pay for contractor services offered to a foreign government, which then turns around and reimburses the Pentagon (Stanger, 2009). The only way for the public to obtain any

information about these contracts is by submitting a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. Contracts awarded by the CIA are exempt from normal contracting requirements (Stanger, 2009). The oversight gets even murkier when subcontracting is introduced, like the case of the Blackwater Fallujah incident.

In the end, companies like Blackwater cost the American government more money and political capital for roles that could be performed by a government employee. The government invests massive amounts of time and money into the training of various soldiers only to have the private sector steal them away. Blackwater then turns around and charges the Federal government for tasks performed by former government soldiers. Blackwater is a shadow army parasite that is accountable to only its shareholders. The American taxpayers serve as Blackwater's parasitic host. The American military serves as an infinite supplier of taxpayer trained soldiers to replenish the ranks of Blackwater's shadow army. When the state utilizes private contractors, the state loses its ability to perform oversight functions, quality control, and hold management accountable for the misdeeds of the rank and file personnel. The use of contractors might get the job done, but shoddy contracting cripples the ability to win the hearts and minds of local citizens.

The families of the dead Fallujah contractors as well as the Nisour Square victims are fortunate that those two incidents were so widely publicized. Because of the widespread publicity, the government had to act to retake Fallujah. Blackwater had to settle with the families of the dead contractors. The government prosecuted the five Blackwater soldiers because of the widespread publicity. The fact that the federal government found the political willpower to prosecute American contractors serves as an example of the end of the cowboy

contracting era. Unfortunately, the federal judge issued the shortest possible criminal sentences to the four Blackwater operatives.

Only one Blackwater operative (Nick Slatten) was found guilty of first degree murder, the remaining operatives were convicted of either attempted or voluntary manslaughter. The manslaughter convictions diminish the atrocities of the war crimes that had occurred. It was the court of public opinion, and not the American or Iraqi legal system that exposed Blackwater. It took the death of 17 Iraqi citizens to compel the Iraqi government to overturn CPA order #17.

It is of my opinion that the government didn't pursue Blackwater out of a sense of justice. Instead the American government had to make an example out of Blackwater to protect future endeavors. Why would a foreign government retain Blackwater (or any other American PSC) if the agents of Blackwater got away with the public execution of 17 Iraqi citizens? The families of the slain Iraqi citizens deserve more justice than what was doled out. The Nisour Square massacre is a prime example of the decline of due process when governmental functions are outsourced into the private sector.

### **Reforms**

Contracting is here to stay. Going forward the American government can learn from the painful lessons of the past failures and implement key reforms to regulate both the private military companies and the personnel on the ground doing the shooting. I believe that the government must expand MEJA to include the following reforms: Revamping the tax deduction policies so that corporations can no longer write off litigation expenses, criminal punishments and civil settlements. Implementation of a 366-day cooling off period for military personnel between leaving the military and joining a PSC. Contract personnel will undergo an extensive

physical review, psychological review. Failure of either review or drug test will result in the denial of contract participation. Once personnel arrive in the host country the contractors will be required to wear police body cameras.

By accepting a contract from the American government, the private military contractor, and contract personnel are acting as agents on behalf of the American government. As such, the private entities will be subject to MEJA and the host countries judicial system. Personnel working under contract for a PSC must be held liable for the misdeeds that are committed while working under contract. The government must end the use of no bid contracts that serve as political patronage. Congress shall be notified of any contract involving a PSC. Legislative oversight must be enacted to allow for congressional oversight of contractors working for the American government.

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**The Movement against Misogyny:  
A Study of Misogyny in 21 Century Korea Society**

**Soyeon Kim**

**Sociology**

**Purdue University Northwest**

**Clement S. Stacy Undergraduate Conference 2017**

### **Abstract**

This study examines the history of misogyny and the women's movements against misogynistic sentiments, as a major social problem of the contemporary Korean society, in connection between social media and popular culture. Recently numerous misogynistic hate speeches have been found on Korean social media, resonating the values of the Confucian culture in Korean society. The emergence and development of the Internet and online communication, create the context where hate speeches starting to drastically pervade and to become accepted in the society. However, by the accidental occasion in the online community, women's movements against men's hate speeches started, and it helped women to emerge their inner resentment on the horizon. Mirroring is the unique strategy women developed in their fight against men's hate speeches. Furthermore, the murder case which targeted women, dragged out the feminist movement from online to the larger society. After this specific case, women are stronger marching forward, in the hope of breaking down the patriarchal values in the Korean society. As a result, the paper argues that following the history of misogyny and the feminism movements which occurred in the past, women can find some inner power for further effective feminism movements and genuine women's liberation in the contemporary Korean society.

This research is trying to analyze misogyny in 21c Korea society and find the movement which is called feminism is against misogyny. Misogyny is not a new phenomenon in modern society. It has been together with a long history of humankind. However, as misogyny arguments are popularly produced and consumed through wireless internet, the contempt and acts of violence toward women has been justified (In-Gyeong Jung, 2015, p.219). There were plenty of cyber sexual abuse and harassment toward women since early 2000 when cyber spaces were begun in earnest to extend. Nevertheless, since the second half of 2000, the target of hatred was changed from women who have unusual characteristics which people dislike, to all Korean women. This shift resulted in economic crisis and the fear under the new liberalism which made men hard to plan a patriarchal life cycle. Men's anger and hatred toward women are a blame to women who do not want to constitute family with men and also is a trial to shift the patriarchal responsibility to women (Soo-Ah Kim, 2015). Hate speeches from men to women were over the online world and pervaded in society, and also made strange phenomenon in the society which symbolize all women as a '~girl.' Furthermore, women adapted themselves into the patriarchal society, and they even went so far as to endure condemnations toward them (Soo-Ah Kim, 2015). However, the movement which is created by the accidental occasion in the online community starts to against to misogyny and help women to emerge their inner anger on the horizon. On the online, women use a strategy which is called 'mirroring' to against to men (In-Gyeong Jung, 2015). This strategy is that change subject of hate speech from men to women, and show this speech to men again. Furthermore, the murder case which had occurred in Kang-nam, Korea dragged out the feminism movement in online to the sunshine. This case which is remembered as 'Post-It Democracy' clarified the murder was intended and targeted to women (Jeong-Hwan Cheon, 2016). Women expressed their anxiety that they could have been the target

of murder through post-it, and posted on the subway exit of Kang-nam. This flow became a new feminism movement, and the majority of the movement were 20~30 year old women who are most active in political determinations and cultural consumption in Korea. Moreover, they are going forward to big goal that breaks down patriarchy in Korean.

Misogyny has been seen through the history of humankind, and the form of misogyny has been changed with the development of technology and human. Before analyzing the phenomenon, we should ask ourselves 'what is misogyny?'. Chizuko Ueno, the author of "I Hate Misogyny," tried to make a definition of misogyny based on the samples which have occurred in Japan society(In-Gyeong Jung, 2015). According to his analysis, the misogyny is revealed in the ironical existence of 'worship' and 'hate.' To men, women are needed instrumentally to fulfill their sexual desire. Therefore, men try to objectify women as mysterious and captivating objects (In-Gyeong Jung, 2015). Meanwhile, men come face to face with women in reality and reality, women are independent subjects who can think and speak for themselves. Therefore, men trying to abscond from women that are different with their thinking and this phenomenon has revealed a form of 'hatred of women.' Also, men who are at risk to make patriarchal norm due to the fact that crisis of new liberalism and economic instability, blame women simply because they did not fulfill men's sexual desire (Hee-Jeong Son, 2015). Furthermore, men define themselves as a socially disadvantaged class and justify their hatred toward women. According to men's view, women are in existence just for an instrument of reproduction and sexual means (Hee-Jeong Son, 2015). Furthermore, women get involved in this conservative gender order instead of challenging men to get advantages (Soo-Ah Kim, 2015).

As the evidence shows, the hatred of women has become a huge problem since the world gets into a new digital world which enables people to talk anonymously, freely on the online.

This is because of the digital world is distributed to anyone in the world, and anyone can access to this without limitation on certain place or time (Soo-Ah Kim, 2015). However, individuals should concern that misogyny has become visible to anyone because of development of technology, it is not a new phenomenon. The point to analyze intensively is misogyny in online ‘public spear’ since the second half of 2000(Soo-Ah Kim, 2015). From front to back of 2000, there was an increase of cyber sexual abuse and harassment, and those are based on misogynistic emotion and attitude which are considered in these days briskly. Besides, entering to late 2000, this flow made new words that slander women, such as ‘dog dung girl’ ‘new product girl’ ‘genital girl.’ Especially ‘Kim chi girl’ shows the uniqueness of Korean misogyny. In western society, there are several words to blame women such as ‘Gold Digger,’ but it does not represent all women in the society (Soo-Ah Kim, 2015). Unlike western society, ‘Kim chi girl’ uses a word, Kim chi, which represents Korean culture to abuse all women in the Korea, and this word result to the explosion of blame, harassment and violent stigma toward women (Soo-Ah Kim, 2015).

This process shows that cyber blame towards women has a role to take the individual woman into ‘online public sphere’ and punish as a group like a witch-hunting (Hee-Jung Son, 2015). Besides, online misogyny arguments were widespread since the unification of anti-feminism organization by men who involve in men’s online community club. This unprecedented unification of men’s anger toward women is construed as the meaning of crisis of Korean masculinity (Soo-Ah Kim, 2015). Young men in Korea have been through difficulty on the loss of stability of labor market, economic crisis since late 2000. Furthermore, the gradual rise of women’s rights in society and labor market made men to aim their arrow of anger to women (In-Gyeong Jung, 2015). Men cannot make a plan for their life-cycle based on patriarchy

anymore. The explosive within young generations makes worse the gender conflict composition, and the men's anger became a huge misogyny.

However, the movement against misogyny began with an accidental chance(Soo-Ah Jung, 2015). May of 2015, as MERSC had pervaded in Korea, 'DC Inside' which is strong with common topic made a page for MERSC. However, different with original intention that made this page, users made many hate speeches toward women on this page, and this touch off a boom of the movement against misogyny. In August of 2015, women made an online page called 'Megalia' and this name shows they were deprived of page of MERSC and they stand for feminism movement because they used the name of feminism book "Egalia's Daughters." The Megalia is based on a special strategy which is called 'mirroring.' This method tries to change the subject of existing hate speeches and show it to misogyny consumers (Hee-Jeong Song, 2016). This method is strategically similar with means of post-colonial cultures. This 'writes back' strategy aims to find out the functionality of empire's novel and reorganized this novel to reveal colonial ideology (Ashcroft, 2002). However, the uniqueness of 'mirroring' is 'parody'. Women who use Megalia express not only just imitation of hatred speeches but also ridicule and heckle to men through this strategy. The numerous speeches by mirroring have original text which is misogyny, and the recipients of mirroring speeches that mainly men had experienced to get into 'DC inside'(Soo-Ah Kim, 2015). This point shows that the recipients can easily understand the meaning of mirroring speeches because they had been done before the exactly same thing like that. Also, the reason why those parody by mirroring strategy was enthusiastically accepted by women is the counterevidence that the original text of misogyny was extremely usual in society. However, there was a limitation of this flow of online feminism movement. The problem is 'Parody' cannot change the original context itself. This point made

people think about the matter of power, and the phenomenon that men who had hatred speeches toward women got into this mirroring speeches and had fun with that also shows the exclusiveness and integrity of men who have the original text of hatred speeches (Soo-Ah Kim, 2015). Furthermore, as this movement remain in online parody, it has been considered as improper flow like DC inside (Soo-Ah Kim, 2015).

Meanwhile, the online feminism movements seemed like suffer an eclipse, and there was a shocking murder case in Korea. This case was occurred on May of 2016, and the place was the public toilet of a bar in Kang-nam which is a core of young people. The suspect was a man, and he waited for a woman victim in the bathroom. He passed five men who enter the toilet and murdered the first women who get into the bathroom. He struggled with schizophrenia, but he stated that he was very stressed out because of women's ignorance, so the criminologists analyzed this case as a misogyny crime (Jeong-Hwan Cheon, 2016). Many women felt anxiety about that they could be a victim just because they are a woman, and this case confirmed publicly that all women are sharing the anxiety about misogyny. Women who agreed with anxiety and nervous, started to post a 'post it' in front of the subway gate of Kang-nam (Jeong-Hwan Cheon, 2016). The 10th subway gate of Kang-nam was filled of sentences "I am just survived" and this phenomenon means uprising of women and creation of new arguments about feminism movements. After this case, the feminism movement is becoming increasingly systematized through both online and offline. Women are trying to go the sunny place of society and take off their 'corset' which have constricted women as a socially normed 'women'.

Those phenomenon is bringing a unprecedented flow to Korea society. Women who accustomed with Confucian concept which has come down with 500 years history of Cho-Sun Dynasty, were trying to take off the Confucian concept themselves. The idea 'corset' that was

mentioned means women's value of Confucian norm. Korean women started to search their values not as an object but as a subject. Through this process, they criticized the phenomenon that made women as a product and beyond that, they started to erase the value of traditional norm as a woman.

This is based on the flow of feminism which was already started since modern democracy revolution. The feminism tried to recognize critically about the society that divided men and women dualistic, and the modern concepts that constructed feminine as a symbolic thing (In-Gyeong Jung, 2015). However, the most important thing is now, feminism is pervading drastically in Korea. In addition, ironically, this could happen through internet which made misogyny rush into extreme. Women counterattack to men by using a strategy of mirroring and made a new key word 'Hatred men' in Korean society (Soo-Ah Kim, 2015). And also, after the murder case of Kang-nam, they went out of online for feminism movement and used the online place to establish strategies. Furthermore, women who felt the anxiety to go out for movement started to feel warm camaraderie with other women, so they got into feminism movement and helped to pervade feminism in society (Jeong-Hwan Cheon, 2016). They tried to learn women's movements in western society to contribute to Korean women. Those movements brought belief of un-marriage beyond to just erase the Confucian concept of women.

Those are beyond conception five years ago, and those compressive feminism movements seem like modern industrialization of the 70s in Korean. In the 70s, Korea experienced extremely compressed industrialization for ten years which has proceeded in western society for several decades and got a nickname 'The miracle of Han river'. However, the differences of feminism revolution with industrialization are it is based on the internet, and the revolution has resulted from women's voluntary uprising. Korean women attacked men by

organized strategy through the compressed period and finally they could bring arguments of misogyny and feminism into the sunshine (Hee-Jeong Son, 2015). Besides, they experienced limitation of online movements, but the cumulation of experiences helped those revolutions now. Therefore, it is important to learn the history of feminism in Korea society to prepare new flow of future society.

As we can see, the movements of Korean women were very dynamic (Hee-Jeong Son, 2015). Some say this due to the Korean's quick-tempered personality, but it was not that short. The movements were shown quiet recently, but it undergo many trial and error till now it came out in the sunshine. The reason why try to analyze feminism movements focus on Korea society is the abnormal confusion culture of Korea society. The radical feminism could be happened in Korea due to the development of wireless internet and the voluntary organization of women. Women looked into misogyny itself to against it cleverly. They analyzed men's speeches to penetrate the nature of misogyny. Furthermore, they brought out those speeches to women, and they strategically use it for feminism movements (Soo-Ah Kim, 2015). Besides, women organized feminism movements through online and offline, and finally, they made a new flow in Korea society. Those observations about the dynamic of women's revolution in Korea society will suggest to society the way where feminism movements have to go.

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## Navigating a World Without David Foster Wallace

Mikayla Marazzi

Indiana Wesleyan University

[mikayla.marazzi@myemail.indwes.edu](mailto:mikayla.marazzi@myemail.indwes.edu)

The world is left an emptier and less comprehensible place since David Foster Wallace's suicide in 2008. Wallace's genius offered a comprehension and analysis of contemporary American life that few authors have achieved; and his writing style, the blend of casual conversation with academic formality, breaking down generation and class barriers, proved Wallace capable of capturing and commenting on the entire American experience. He could write about any subject with an unparalleled eloquence and probity, fiction or non-fiction, whether the subject was the Maine Lobster Festival, the tumultuous tornado weather in the Midwest, the 1993 Illinois State Fair, the professional tennis player Roger Federer, drug addiction and recovery programs, or a conspiracy group within the IRS. After the 1996 publication of his 1,079-page novel, *Infinite Jest*, the pronouncement of his literary success and peak of his career, Wallace quickly became a figurehead for his generation and the promise of hope—a salvific possibility to a world swirling in chaos and confusion.

Thus when Karen Green-Wallace returned to her California home the night of Friday September 6<sup>th</sup> to find her husband's limp and lifeless body suspended in a noose from their garage ceiling, an entire generation was left bereft and grieving (Max 301). And for those whom Wallace was a symbol of hope, an holy icon of salvation, his death punctures a great gaping hole in their reality, shaped and consumed by his presence. Now, eight years past his death, family, friends, students, colleagues, and fans continue to grieve and navigate his absence, attempting to reconcile his suicide with his ideologies.

In 2005, just three years prior to his death, Wallace delivered a commencement speech to the Kenyon College graduation class that has since gained immense popularity and wide circulation on YouTube, The Wall Street Journal, and recently, as a paperback booklet published by Little Brown and Co. In this speech, Wallace speaks of the consciousness and awareness

required to survive the “day to day trenches of adult existence,” proclaiming that the point of a liberal arts education resides in the old cliché: to teach you how to think (“This is Water” 9, 12). “What is so real and essential,” Wallace reasons to the 2005 Kenyon College graduates, “is making it to thirty, or maybe even, fifty, without wanting to shoot yourself in the head,” as if verbalizing his own internal combat to not capitulate to the “trenches of adulthood” (“This is Water” 130). “I wonder,” Mary Karr, Wallace’s former lover, and panel member at The New Yorker’s festival *Rereading David Foster Wallace* asks, “Does [Wallace’s] death feel like a failure to everyone who had ever loved [him]?” (*The New Yorker*). In light of Wallace’s suicide, the speech—thought to be one of the best commencement speeches ever delivered—has become a particularly haunting reminder that an author’s writing does not always transcribe to reality or placed in more prosaic terms: not everyone is capable of practicing what they preach.

Learning to exercise control over *how* we think and *what* we pay attention to is one solution Wallace offered his generation—a way to mitigate the isolation of being a self and survive the tedium of adulthood. Ultimately, Wallace’s mental illness and addictions precluded him from successfully exercising such control and eventually he reached the limits of medication and sanity; even all the solutions he sought—the things that become the very possibility of salvation for so many—were not enough to keep him on this earth. Understandably, scholars, fans, and intimates of Wallace are left feeling confused and somewhat betrayed by the theoretical and philosophical implications of his suicide. Wallace, though, did not leave us without answers or at least tools to navigate the tragedy of his death; he left behind a novel, *The Pale King*, that grants insight into one of the solutions Wallace sought and the hope that still lingers in a world without Wallace. An unfinished novel to help us comprehend an unfinished life.

Though Wallace wrote an abundance of journalistic projects, magazine articles, non-fiction essays, and even a philosophy thesis, writing frequently for *The New Yorker*, *GQ*, and *Harper's Magazine*, his passion lay in the work of writing fiction. It was not until his undergraduate experience at Amherst College, around his sophomore year, that Wallace became captivated by fiction writing, finally breaching his fears entangled in the prospect of identifying as a writer (Max 23). Over his career, Wallace wrote three novels: *The Broom of the System*, *Infinite Jest*, and finally, *The Pale King*. These three novels, all written with about a decade in-between each other, chronicle the progression of Wallace's mental illness and the methods by which he attempted to combat it.

Wallace wrote his first novel, *The Broom of the System*, eventually published in 1987, for one of his two undergraduate theses, a novel he later came to dismiss as juvenile and unoriginal, the work of a "very smart fourteen-year-old;" yet, as biographer D.T. Max argues in *Every Love Story is a Ghost Story: A Life of David Foster Wallace*, this is too harsh of Wallace—this novel is significant because it marks Wallace's first ambition to use fiction to communicate in a serious and meaningful way (Max 48). Though Wallace's first novel is not representative of his best prose and ideas, it stamps an important step in his literary and philosophical timeline. A trade magazine, *Kirkus Reviews*, proclaimed the novel "a puerile Pynchon, a discount Don DeLillo," voicing the general criticism *The Broom of the System* received, as it was thought to overly mimic the style and structure of the writers Wallace admired most: Thomas Pynchon, Don DeLillo, and Donald Barthelme, all forerunners of the postmodern movement (qtd. in Max 81). Yet, Wallace does not go on to write *Infinite Jest*, and even later, *The Pale King*, without the publication of *The Broom of the System*. In an interview with *Rolling Stone's* journalist David Lipsky, Wallace himself remarks on the significance of writing his first novel, as it cemented his

vocation as a fiction writer, clarifying the work he wanted to dedicate his life to: “Writing [The Broom of the System],” Wallace reflects, “I felt like I was using 97 percent of me, whereas philosophy was using 50 percent” (Keillor).

Nearly a decade passed before Wallace published *Infinite Jest*, his second novel. By the time of its publication in 1997, Wallace had graduated from University of Arizona with an MFA in Creative Writing; published *Girl with Curious Hair*, a collection of short stories, and variety of essays in *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*; enrolled and swiftly dropped out of Harvard’s graduate philosophy program; broke off an engagement to Gale Walden, a young poet he had met at his Arizona MFA program; and endured a series of severe mental breakdowns, including an extended stay in the psychiatric unit at Carle Hospital and later at McLean Hospital, a six-course treatment of electro-convulsive therapy, and a few months of living at the Appleton House, a recovery house for substance-abuse addicts (Max 52, 74, 117, 135). Wallace’s time in Carle Hospital, McLean Hospital, and Appleton House would appear to be the culmination of his struggle with mental illness—the peak after which he would gradually learn to heal, recover, and lead a depression-free life—and yet this episode was only one more peak, insurmountable and treacherous, on Wallace’s own personal 7,000 km long Andes mountain range. Likewise, *Infinite Jest*, though it was written to make sense of his mental illness, proved to be just another bump along his long road to healing—a failed effort to administer hope to inner turmoil.

Categorized as a North American dystopia novel, *Infinite Jest*, bumbles and roars through the lives of the Incandenza family, who own the Enfield Tennis Academy; former addict and thief Don Gately, the counselor at the Ennet House; members of the A.F.R (Les Assassins des Fauteuils), a Quebecois separatist group; and many other tennis prodigies, family members,

addicts, and agents. Wallace poured his best self and best work into the pages of *Infinite Jest*. He had constructed a masterpiece out of the ugliest years and most difficult years of his life, transcribing his pain into a meaningful and salvific work of art. Despite the turmoil of Wallace's twenties and early thirties, he created a "gargantuan, mind-altering comedy," as the novel's back cover suggests, of momentous success and reception ("Infinite Jest"). The eloquence, probity, and scope of the novel, paired with its received public readership and scholarly acclaim, stamped *Infinite Jest* as Wallace's triumph over the throes of depression and addiction—an art work of personal redemption. *Infinite Jest* peaked Wallace's literary career and for the years to follow, he would grapple with the aftermath of literary success. Writing *Infinite Jest* was an emptying of himself, an exchange that left Wallace more limp and hollow than he had been at the project's beginning; as he writes to fellow author and friend Jonathan Franzen, "I'm sad and empty as I always am when I finished something long" (qtd. in "The Unfinished"). What would Wallace do after he had given himself so fully, so absolutely to one project?

In the pages of *Infinite Jest*, Wallace had sought to present the chaos, fragmentation, chaos, pain, and uncertainty of his inner life as accurately as possible. He strove to present his world exactly as it was—testing sincerity as a potentially source of salvation. It was in *Infinite Jest*, as Max recounts, that Wallace became a "full-fledged apostle of sincerity," an exemplary of what it meant to lead an honest, authentic life in the pages of a novel (Max 178). Wallace, thus, was not shy about the novel's obvious autobiographical groundings, as he openly admits to the plot and characters being deeply influenced by the men and women he rubbed shoulders and stories with during his stay at Appleton House and throughout his long list of rehab and hospital stays, recovery groups and alcohol anonymous meetings. His battles with alcohol and drug addiction and recovery, depression, family relations, loneliness, and media over-saturation are

written all over the novel. Even *Infinite Jest*'s uncanny structure, filled with acronyms, text-message abbreviations, television allusions, technical and pharmaceutical jargon, and endless endnotes, Wallace described as a "structural representation of the way the world operated on my nerve endings, which was a bunch of discrete, random bits" (qtd. in Heller).

Yet, even after the novel's publication, Wallace's mental illness raged on. Evidently, *Infinite Jest* did not provide the salvation he had hoped for; sincerity, as a potential solution, had failed. In her essay "The Shaping of Storied Selves," Shannon Elderon rejects the idolization of Wallace as a champion of sincerity, arguing that the "rush to uphold Wallace as an unambiguous proponent of directness and sincerity" is inaccurate, especially considering the trajectory of *The Pale King* (Elderon 509). Any attempt to promote oneself as sincere is impossible, contradicting the word's very definition. As Andre Gide summarizes, "One cannot be sincere and seem so," for in the endeavor to embody sincerity one becomes dishonest and hypocritical in their intentions (Elderon 509). Sincerity has its limits.

An abundance of problems had arisen from the pages and publication of this "bible-sized," genre-bending novel *Infinite Jest*: alcohol and drug addiction, broken family relations, media over-saturation, tenuous USA-Canada relations, Quebec separatism, loneliness, the fractured self, and at the forefront, Wallace's inability to solve to his mental illness (Lipsky). If Wallace's mental illness was a puzzle, *Infinite Jest* had dumped all the disjointed puzzle pieces, sprawling them out on the table for all to see—what Wallace needed was to fit the puzzle back together. A few years after *Infinite Jest*'s publication, Wallace began a new project: *The Pale King*, a novel of new and recursive ambitions. This novel would solve the myriad of problems *Infinite Jest* had painfully exposed; it would, affectively, put the puzzle back together—finally solving Wallace's mental illness. Compared to the infinite and jam-packed scope of *Infinite Jest*,

filled with an abundance of technical and pharmaceutical jargon, complex characters, terrorism, drug addiction, playfulness, the grotesque, and broken family lives, the scope of *The Pale King* would be simple, more focused and synthesized, as if Wallace was finally granting his readers permission to breathe.

Scholarship on *The Pale King* focuses nearly exclusively on the subject of boredom or dullness, which Wallace explicitly alludes to in the actual pages of the novel. In his “Author’s Foreword,” he states that the main point of the novel is about his “time with the Service...about negotiating boredom as one would a terrain, its levels and forests and endless wastes” (“The Pale King” 87). Yet boredom as the novel’s main subject, especially with a mind as complex as Wallace’s, seems over-simplified, stripping the novel of its nuances and depth. Wallace had different and larger ambitions for *The Pale King*; it would be more accessible, more transformative, and surprisingly redemptive—*The Pale King* would seek a remedy to Wallace’s life-long battle with mental illness and addiction. As Max writes, Wallace did not want to write yet another post-modern novel, echoing the style and noise of *Infinite Jest*, but a “pre-modern novel about tax code...one that took tax-code as a holy writ” (Max 292). Not only did *The Pale King* seek a solution to this cluster of problems but the novel itself became a living sacrament—a space in which the author (i.e. Wallace) and reader alike could partake in a salvific process. The three overlapping—*Infinite Jest*, *The Pale King*, and Wallace—would offer a remedy to the perils of living well in a world as perplexing and broken as twenty-first century America.

Writing, specifically fiction-writing, had always been the crux of Wallace’s sanity, the glue that kept his two feet stuck to the earth. Max, in Wallace’s biography, describes time and time again the anxiety that tormented Wallace whenever he felt himself unable to write. For

example, after leaving the Appleton House, Wallace resolved to stay clean of alcohol and drugs as he “was no longer writing successfully,” which agitated him greatly, and he desperately hoped that a sober version of himself would (Max 136). Through language and grammar, characters and syntax, themes and plot, Wallace had found a purpose for his pain. Yet *The Pale King* faced Wallace with a task more frustrating and laborious than he had ever encountered before. The words did not arrive as effortlessly and smoothly as they had in composing *Infinite Jest* or in the various nonfiction piece he published. He wrote in frenzied spurts, with agitation and passion, and then fell into long stretches of time where he could not work at all. Writing *The Pale King* was like “like wrestling sheets of balsa wood in a high wind storm,” he described in despair to his editor Michael Piestch (Raban). The crisis of writing *The Pale King* began to zap the joy out of fiction writing for Wallace, and eventually he nearly abandoned it all together, considering focusing only on his nonfiction or opening a dog shelter instead (Max 296).

As writing *The Pale King* grew increasingly arduous, the task stretching over the span of almost a decade, the distance between Wallace’s career and personal life diminished. Writing and living became synonyms in Wallace’s world, as he wrote to Franzen. The difficulty of writing *The Pale King* lay somewhere in the “connection between the problem of writing it and of being alive” (Max 289). To write meant to stay alive, and the adverse offered obvious and alarming implications: the inability to write permitted a slow death, a perishing of himself and the purposes of his existence. Writing was catharsis, purpose, life—everything wrapped up in what it meant for Wallace to live. *The Pale King*, while it presented Wallace with an intensely difficult task, became the space in which he confronted himself and his mental illness in a more direct, radical, and constructive way than he had done in his previous two novels.

*The Pale King* proposes the existence of an underlying psychic pain shared amongst all human beings. The novel's narrator Dave Wallace, a fictional clone of Wallace himself, postulates that the reason "we recoil from the dull" is because "dullness is associated with psychic pain" ("The Pale King" 87). In dullness, the soul emerges bare and raw, and becomes conscious of its pain. Wallace's language—psychic pain—suggests that the experience of pain occurs in the mind, a suggestion founded in the basic biology of pain: the sensation of pain is activated by triggered neuron endings which send a message to the spinal cords (Oley and Haase). All his life Wallace had known pain intangibly; it focalized in the swirling chaos of his mind, in his inability to perceive the world without fear, turmoil, or agitation. Wallace had written through this pain and now he was writing *about* this psychic pain, seeking to expose it and to eventually liberate himself from it, and he would do this through addressing dullness and boredom. The problem with dullness, Wallace writes, is that it "fails to provide enough stimulation to distract people from some other, deeper type of pain that is always there;" thus, it exposes the underlying layers of intrinsic pain that lies within all human souls ("The Pale King" 87).

One of *The Pale King's* characters, Lane Dean Jr., especially illustrates the experience of psychic pain. Lane Dean Jr. is a young Christian boy who married to remedy an unplanned pregnancy, the consequence of engaging in the sin of pre-marital sex, according to his religious values. In an earlier chapter, the scene depicts Lane Dean Jr. and his girlfriend seated at a picnic bench, debating what to do with the unwanted child stirring in her belly. Lane Dean Jr. wants to do "the right thing," but, being "broken and split off like all men," he is not sure what constitutes as "right," "good," or even "best" ("The Pale King" 44). When we catch up with Lane Dean Jr. latter in the novel, we see that he is now a father, a husband, and an IRS employee withering

away in the chasm of his subconscious. The thirty-third chapter shows him in an expansive white room, seated at a wooden desk, filling out tax return after tax return, checking for misinformation or suspicious numbers. In his job at the IRS, Lane Dean Jr. is forced to analyze one similar-looking form after another, to continuously write the same words and pen the same marks or scribbles—all of this he must repeat “again and again and again” (“The Pale King” 381). Lane Dean Jr. chose to do the “right” thing, to father his child, marry his girlfriend, and get a responsible adult job, yet the tedium of his life and work causes him unbearable pain.

As Lane Dean Jr. “[fights] with his mind,” the monotony of the work forces Lane Dean Jr. to become acutely aware of himself and his relation to other elements such as time, place, purpose, or existence (“The Pale King” 380). This awareness manifests itself in a ridiculous yet tormenting preoccupation with the passage of time, the clock inching forward agonizingly slow; the flexing of his buttock, which begins to ache due to over-exertion; and the crackling sound of machinery and the creaky file-carrying cart (“The Pale King” 380). As Lane Dean Jr. continues to fill out tax returns and succumb to the distractive forces of the noise and space around him, he begins to feel despair, which arrives in the sense of “a great type of hole or emptiness falling throughout him and continuing to fall and never hitting the floor” (“The Pale King” 380). Lane Dean Jr. considers suicide and contemplates a conception of hell, which he decides has “nothing to do with fires or frozen troops” but rather being “locked windowless room to perform rote tasks”—a space in which man is left “to his mind’s own devices” (“The Pale King” 381). Hell, in Lane Dean Jr.’s world, is our own psychic pain, a supposition that greatly intensifies and adds urgency to the perils of tedium. As Lane Dean Jr. experiences despair, suicidal feelings, and hell on earth while working with tax-code, Wallace demonstrates that tedium indeed exposes some

sort of underlying pain. Lane Dean Jr. embodies Wallace's postulation that "dullness is associated with psychic pain" ("The Pale King" 87).

One worker meets his fate in the hands of tedium, finding the demands of being an IRS employee not only unbearable but unlivable. IRS examiner, Frederick Blumquiest, age fifty-three, died while working at his desk, and nobody noticed until four days later, when an office cleaner inquired as to how an examiner could continue work without the lights on ("The Pale King" 29). Another character, David Cusk, experiences psychic pain as a sharp and painful awareness of his flawed self. Cusk suffers from intense sweating, the sort that drenches the entire body, and ironically, each sweating attack is brought on by his terrible fear of an attack—an ultra awareness and paranoia of its horrors, a sort of psychic pain. On one occasion, for example, Cusk is sitting in his World Cultures class, listening and scribbling notes, when he suddenly hit with the awful, recursive thought: "What if I all of a sudden start sweating?" ("The Pale King" 95). The horrors of such a thought overtake his body "like a hot tide, [making] him break instantly into a heavy, unstoppable sweat," and after this unfortunate day, the dread of repeating this incident plagued every detail and instant of his life. In Cusk's world, an attack is always looming, an always impending threat, so that his mind—agitated and distressed—becomes an unbearable place to live. Eventually, Cusk will become an employee in the IRS, where he will seek repose and sanctity in tax-code; and yet, once again, in the repetitive, dull task of filling out form after form, he will face intense psychological discomfort as his fear of sweating overtakes not only his body but his entire mind.

"In the quiet study of tax form," Lane Dean Jr. and David Cusk "seek peace," only to uncover a new sort of pain, deeply imbedded in their minds (Max 293). Yet, it is precisely this discovery that empowers them with the possibility of overcoming it. While *Infinite Jest*, in its

display of sincerity, only illustrates the *sense* of this psychic pain—forcing the reader through an overwhelming number of fragmented, complex, and obscure storylines—but *The Pale King* goes far beyond this. In the ordinary and tedious world of tax-code, *The Pale King* strips of the world from the noise of *Infinite Jest*—thereby exposing, identifying, and remedying this psychic pain. Wallace, to demonstrate this, attempted something in the pages of *The Pale King* that differed wildly from the techniques of *Infinite Jest*: He placed himself as actual fictional character within the novel's pages. In the ninth chapter, Wallace introduces Dave Wallace, a forty-year-old IRS employee, the character that ends up serving as the narrator throughout *The Pale King*. Here Wallace seeks his solution: dullness generates awareness, exposing underlying psychic pain and thus bringing the self into a state of malleability, a state where the fractured self can be shaped and reconciled into a whole. If Wallace was to absolve the mental illness that had gripped his life for so long, he would have to deal with his own psychic pain—the most dangerous and complex pieces of himself.

Throughout his career, fiction had provided a space where Wallace could create, analyze, and expose the world around him through characters, plot, and themes that were not himself. In a sense, fiction allowed Wallace to keep a safe distance from himself...until *Infinite Jest*. Though scholars had long since identified Wallace's endeavor to keep a stringent (and intentional) distance between his writing and his personal life, *Infinite Jest* marked an unmistakable departure from this. Split between an addict's halfway house and a tennis facility, the novel proved to be remarkably autobiographical in character; few could dismiss the striking correlation between the novel's characters and plot to the events of Wallace's personal life. Wallace crammed ten years of information, research, personal anecdotes, and a lifetime of addiction and mental illness into the pages of *Infinite Jest*.

In *The Pale King*, however, Wallace went beyond the autobiographical impulse—creating characters that embodied his personal struggles—and put himself directly and unmistakably in the framework of the novel. “This right here is me as a real person, Dave Wallace, age forty, SS no. 975-04-2012,” the opening paragraph of the ninth chapter reads (“The Pale King” 68). With this gesture, not only were the days of distancing himself from his writing over but Wallace showed himself to be attempting something altogether new: a rejection of his past philosophies. In making himself a dynamic fictionalized character in *The Pale King*, Wallace demonstrates the insufficiency of sincerity—a philosophy he had spent his career progressing.

Wallace’s distilling of his most painful experiences onto the pages of his writings may suggest sincerity (the courage to present himself in a vulnerable and honest way) but it only achieves precisely that—sincerity. *Infinite Jest* accurately and honestly illustrated the chaos and pain of Wallace’s world, but that is all it offered its reader; it does not offer a practical way to remedy the turmoil or piece the puzzle back together. But when Wallace becomes an actual character in the pages of his story, he becomes someone who can be shaped and molded at the author’s will. Sincerity demands the self to be portrayed exactly as it is, flawed and wounded and unremittingly vulnerable; but with the self as a character, the author reclaims a sense of esteem and control within the small space of the novel’s pages. Wallace can *choose* the self he displays, and it is in this act of choosing that Wallace moves beyond the limits of sincerity—and the novel becomes a means of “compos[ing] modes of attention,” as scholar Charles Alteria suggests (qtd. in Elderson 509). Fiction becomes the kiln, the machine in which the self undergoes a rigorous process of being invented, shaped, and molded according to the intentions of the artist.

Wallace, by creating a fictional self, adopts the belief that the self is fluid: as mouldable

as soft clay. Fictional Dave Wallace allows Wallace guide himself through stages of selfhood, proceeding, ultimately, towards the better, more composite self. And this fluidity is essential to selfhood, twentieth century French philosopher Paul Ricoeur suggests, as is the “kind of discourse that says ‘I believe-in,’ some form of conscious choice (Pellauer and Dauenhauer). Selfhood is a matter of convictions that transcend the limits of logic, certainty, and in Wallace’s world, sincerity. In a chaotic and perplexing world, selfhood requires more than mere sincerity; it necessitates the capacity to choose, to volitionally reconstruct or rearrange the fractured self.

Wallace first introduced the importance of choice in “This is Water,” his 2005 Kenyon College commencement speech. After offering the scenario of a tedious excursion to the grocery store, with a “fat, dead eyed, over made-up” lady and screaming child in the checkout line, Wallace suggests that “if you’re aware enough to give yourself a choice” then the scenario’s tedium and frustration can shift into empathy: both the lady and the child can become complex narratives briefly intertwined with your own. (“This is Water” 89). In “This is Water,” Wallace proclaims that learning how to pay attention (i.e. choosing to become conscious and aware) undergirds the composition of one’s best self. This idea is filtered unmistakably through the pages of *The Pale King*, as fictional David Foster Wallace proves to be an evident and overt act of choosing. Paying attention as well as being conscious and aware is essential to the development of fictional Wallace.

Half-way through the novel, narrator Dave Wallace recounts his “emergence...from the fuzziness and drift of [his] life” when he got high off Obetrol, a brand of amphetamine (“The Pale King” 184). Obetrol intensified Wallace’s awareness of his participation in reality, making him “aware of the awareness,” which, to him, felt “alive” (“The Pale King” 185). Dave Wallace nicknames this “Obetroling,” making this ultra, other-worldly sort of consciousness a verb—as if

it is an action one can chose to participate in, rather than a temporary state of being. But awareness, too, has its limits. Obetroling became insufficient and even harmful for Dave Wallace when awareness “explode[d] into a hall of mirrors of consciously felt sensations and thoughts and awareness of aware of awareness of these,” in which he completely lost touch with “the element of choice of attention” (“The Pale King” 190). When it reaches a certain meta-level, in which modes of awareness are layered one on top of the other, the capacity for choice drifts out of reach.

When the character of Dave Wallace is first introduced, he, being the narrator, insists that “The book is really true,” even going as far as to assert that the book’s legal disclaimer that “the characters and events in this book are fictitious” is actually the only “bona fide ‘fiction’ here” (“The Pale King” 69, 70). *The Pale King*, according to fictional Dave Wallace, is “more like a memoir than any kind of made up story” (“The Pale King”). Wallace obliterates the line between fiction and memoir, between the true and the made-up, thereby causing the reader to experience intense confusion and disquiet. Yet Dave Wallace promises that “the very last thing this book is is some kind of clever metafictional titty-pincher,” as if to reassure readers that they need not worry and distress over the blurred lines of fiction and truth. Wallace is playing with words, with characters and plot lines, to demonstrate that the selfhood is amply complex and varied. Just as the narrator, Dave Wallace, argues that “there is no longer any kind of clear line between personal and public...between private vs. performative,” so the lines between the actual self and the fictional self are blurry and indefinite (“The Pale King” 82). Sincerity presents the actual self, naturally flawed and fraught with imperfections, and fiction presents a different self, chosen and improved, according to the author’s intentions. Both selves are grounded in reality: the actual self exists on a default setting and the fictional self emerges in the reach for improvement. The

actual self and fictional self are just variations of truth residing on different places of the same pendulum swing: Wallace and his character Dave Wallace are both true representations of himself, only the first is a sincere and broken self and the other is an invented and improved self.

It is significant, too, that Wallace establishes “himself,” i.e. fictional Dave Wallace, as the narrator of the novel. The narrator’s voice unfolds the story, introduces characters, gives information and explanation, and progresses the plot line; they exercise power and control, the jurisdiction to bend and shape, alter and shift, the course of the novel—all these elements that Wallace lacked. In placing Dave Wallace as *The Pale King*’s narrator, Wallace remedied the deficiencies and weaknesses in his life: He gave his fictional self the power and self-efficacy he lacked. And no one was more aware of his own deficiencies and weaknesses than Wallace himself. He knew, all too well, that he was a fragmented and divided self; and the despair that accompanied this sort of self-awareness was crushing and at times unbearable. Wallace longed for reconciliation in his fragmented inner life, for a way to absolve the distressing divide between vice and virtue in his life.

As Wallace wrestles for inner reconciliation, composing and improving himself like soft clay on the pages of *The Pale King*, he “struggles[s] against [his] own weakness,” which, David Brooks suggest in his book *Road to Character*, “is the central drama of life” (Brooks 10). Brooks even draws on Wallace’s 2005 Kenyon College commencement speech to demonstrate the importance of “acute awareness” as well as “humility” in the “great effort to magnify what is best in [the self] and defeat[ing] what is worst, to become strong in the weak places” (Brooks 10). The road to becoming a whole, grounded, and composite self is not smoothly paved nor easily travelled, but Wallace is a character-in-progress, attempting to shape himself into a better character through the pages of *The Pale King*.

Thus, the relationship between the novel and the self is amply important, as Wallace proves. Perhaps the old adage “fake it until you make it” rings more than just cliché, as Wallace confesses that often the most banal platitudes actually turn out to be true (“This is Water” 14). In composing a specific version or caricature of oneself that may not be natural or consistently authentic (i.e. “faking it”), these characteristics begin to mold into one’s makeup and structure; and if enough time is spent taking on these unnatural or “fake” characteristics then they become the natural (i.e. “making it”) and the person is permanently altered, hopefully for the sake of the better.

Wallace spent so much of his life battling the hazy, dangerous, agonizing, and paralyzing consequences of what it meant to be himself. Wallace’s natural and authentic self too often tended towards arrogance, addiction, depression, womanizing, and carelessness; yet other innate parts of himself longed deeply for stability, clarity, truth, hope, and love. Wallace was a paradoxical self, as all of us humans are. Through rehab and recovery groups, nonfiction pieces and fiction writing, Wallace was attempting to cultivate a better—more livable and peaceable—self. Wallace’s methods in *The Pale King* suggests a movement away from sincerity and plain old self-awareness, which had been the trademark of his literary career, and the attempt of a new solution, a new way of saving himself from the consequences of being himself: intentionally *choosing* the self he desired to become. By composing a better, more holistic self in the pages of *The Pale King*, Wallace could perhaps exercise the same mastery over himself in his day to day existence. By establishing himself as the novel’s main character, someone who shifts, changes, and develops on *The Pale King*’s pages, Wallace indicates the importance of dealing with our selfhood. Thus, concurring with Brook’s theory that “the struggle against sin and for virtue is the

central drama of life,” Wallace places an imperative on confronting our selfhood: wrestling with the darkest and most complex aspects of the self (Brooks 263).

Fictional Dave Wallace, as he sits in his dorm room watching the T.V. program “As the World Turns,” is struck, suddenly, with the realization that the world is turning at this very moment in time, spinning and spinning in its spherical loop, and he decides, that if he wanted his existence to matter that he would have to “[decide] to choose in some sort of definite way” (qtd. in Max 294). Even Wallace, with a mind ravaged by mental-illness, believed in choice. Though the self may be fractured, fraught with paradoxes, complexities, struggle, and chronic pain, it can be molded and shaped into a composite whole. He believed the self was fluid, not forever bound to its vices and fragmented state.

When Wallace quit taking Nardil, the anti-depressant he had been taking his entire adult-life, his health and consequently his capacity for choice quickly diminished. Nardil had been balancing and rebalancing the chemical makeup of his brain for over two decades, and without it, Wallace’s head soon became an unbearable place to live (Max 298). In *The Pale King*, Wallace established a paradigm in which choice was necessary to mend together the fractured self—to successfully bear our psychic pain. But Wallace’s unbalanced illness, no longer regulated by the help of Nardil, stripped him of his consciousness, awareness, and ultimately, his choice to stay on this earth. In the end, Wallace no longer had the capacity to choose, and his suicide illustrates the danger of the human mind when it is robbed of its volition. Wallace’s death reminds us over and over and over again—staying alive requires a conscious choice. For Wallace, it wasn’t about choice anymore. “Its not that you wake up one day thinking that you are going to kill yourself, its that you wake up every single day thinking: how can I not,” author Dana Spiotta, responds to the question of the Wallace’s suicide in “Rereading David Foster Wallace festival” (*The New*

*Yorker*). “It was not an act of career advancement or getting more fans, this was about mental illness” (*The New Yorker*).

*The Pale King* embodies Wallace’s final attempts at survival, at finding a solution out of the problems of his chaotic and messy Infinite-Jest-world. On its pages, Wallace confronted his selfhood—diving headfirst into his own psychic pain, attempting to decipher it, depict it in his characters, and eventually, seek a solution to it. Though *The Pale King* did not save Wallace, it extends the possibility of salvation to his beloved readers, who, as Max recounts, Wallace loved and cared for profoundly at the end of his life (Max 294). Wallace may have capitulated to his demons but that does not render the salvation he sought invalid.

Wallace’s demonstration that tedium strips us bare and thereby enables us to evolve in the ever-fluid process of selfhood—these solutions he wrote into *The Pale King*’s pages—continue to offer hope in a world without Wallace. Though ultimately an unfinished project, the novel’s ambitions ring strong and clear—even now, eight years after Wallace’s suicide, as “capital ‘T’ truth,” Wallace’s coined term, lingers far past its communicator’s death. Hope, truth, love, kindness everything Wallace left behind, are not destroyed along with his life. We may grieve the absence of a man who brought so much clarity, so much promise, so much hope to this world, but we ought not to grieve the loss of hope in its entirety. Wallace’s impact is not lost; his hope is permanently inked into a billion fiber pages, tucked in library corners and bookstore shelves, and sitting on YouTube pages, Twitter feeds, and atop kitchen counters. The legacy of David Foster Wallace—our dear DFW—lingers on.

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# **Is spanish in the United States a threat or an asset?**

Vanessa Melero

Purdue University Northwest- Hammond

[vmelero@pnw.edu](mailto:vmelero@pnw.edu)

Hello, my name is Vanessa Melero. I am a second generation Mexican-American, meaning I am the daughter of two Mexican immigrants, I am a Spanish major at Purdue University Northwest hoping to forward my education in the future with a Master's degree in linguistics. I am here to pose this question in front of you all today: is Spanish in the United States a threat or an asset?

It is a classic misconception that Spanish should be eliminated because it is foreign to the country. However, such claims are distant from the truth. Spanish is foundational language of this country. The Spanish language has been in North America since the 16th century. In 1513, Juan Ponce de Leon was the first Spaniard to arrive in what today is known as Florida. One of the first cities that was founded by the Spanish colonizers was in St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565 — which was well before the English set up Jamestown. When Spanish colonizers first set foot in the area that would become the United States in the 16th century, they set up the missions. The expansion of Spanish colonization advanced towards the southwest and the Spanish language became an instrument of great importance for the transmission of information which also allowed for Catholicism to be spread through such a large region so quickly.

Many people would be surprised to know that Spanish is the most non-English language spoken in the United States. According to a 2011 paper by U.S. Census Bureau Demographers Jennifer Ortman and Hyon B. Shin, the number of Spanish speakers is projected to rise through 2020 to anywhere between 39 million and 43 million, depending on the assumption one makes about immigration and reproduction of Spanish-speaking Americans.

Spanish is the second language with the highest number of speakers in the United States, after English. This country boasts the second largest Spanish-speaking community in the world,

after Mexico. Then there are those of Spain, Colombia, Argentina and Peru. It is the second most spoken language in 43 states and in the District of Columbia. New Mexico is one of the few states where there is a nonimmigrant population whose mother tongue is Spanish. Spanish is one of the most important characteristics of the state's cultural personality. However, despite what is often said, Spanish is not the official language of the state. In addition, most institutions have bilingualism (English-Spanish) as a standard on their official websites, such as the Government, the White House, the FBI, Medicare and the National Library of Medicine.

After the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), Mexico lost nearly half its territory, which was annexed by the United States, including parts of the modern states of Texas, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and Wyoming, and the Set of California, Nevada, and Utah. Subsequently, the thousands of Mexicans residing in those territories acquired American nationality. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) made no explicit reference to the rights of the Spanish language. The first constitution of California approved an important recognition of the rights of the Spanish speakers: "all the laws, decrees, regulations, and provisions that emanate from any of the three supreme powers of this state, which by their nature require publication, will be published in English and Spanish."

Before 1870, the Anglo-Americans were majority in California. In 1879, California promulgated a new constitution under which all official procedures were to be conducted in English; this clause remained in force until 1966. In 1986, California voters, by referendum, added a new constitutional clause stating that "English is the official language of the State of California." However, today, Spanish is widely spoken throughout the state, and in many government activities, documents, and services are available in Spanish and English.

Spanish has been spoken around northern New Mexico, southern Colorado and on the border with Mexico since the 17th century. In Texas, English is conventionally used, but the state has no official language. Texas inherited a Hispanic population since the Mexican-American War, in addition to having a constant influx of Mexicans and other Spanish-speaking immigrants.

The United States, which as I have explained has such a rich Spanish history, has a history with two aspects of the language: Spanish in the United States and Spanish of the United States. The first one refers to the Spanish that has been preserved from the time the Spaniards arrived to the territories that now belong to the United States, which is what I have previously spoken of. The second refers to Spanish brought by immigrants from Spanish-speaking countries, particularly Mexico, which is the category which the phenomenon of Spanglish falls under.

The mixture of cultures that are set to be right next to each other are going to mix. That is absolutely inevitable. The same thing happens with languages, which is what brings on what we know as Spanglish.

Many see Spanglish as the death of two languages that are perfectly competent on their own, some see it as the birth of a new language, and others just see it and use it because well it seems to feel like no one wants to come up with an English word for piñata. However, that is an entirely different topic for a different day.

It is clear that the board of education sees it important for students to study another language; otherwise, why are there dual language schools or why would it be a requirement in

both high school and college to take a foreign language course or two? Sure, there are usually a few languages to choose from, but Spanish is one of the main ones available.

The state of New York, for example, argues that school districts have the obligation to take the necessary measures for the education of children with limited English proficiency (LEP students). Districts receive state support through the Office of Bilingual Education (Bilingual Education Department), which was established in 1969, and that in New York it must guide the education of almost 200,000 children who speak more than 135 different languages, among which Spanish is the one with the greater number of speakers.

Texas states that the goal of bilingual education is the development of reading, writing and other academic skills both in English and in the language of the home (or primary language of the child). Each district shall offer bilingual education in English and another language each time it is the primary of twenty or more LEP children in one course. Instruction programs in English as a second language, in change, aim to develop English proficiency only. In Texas Spanish is also the language in which a greater number of children receive education bilingual.

Obviously, the Departments of Education of the different states have assumed the central responsibility in the development of educational policies that regulate the preparation of bilingual or English as a second language teachers, bilingual education, etc. With regard to Spanish, after several years of experimentation with different models of bilingual teaching (Fishman & Keller, 1982) who aspired to offer more or less parallel attention to the two languages, during the last fifteen to twenty years a model of transition to English, in such a way that as from the third or fourth year of school, the Spanish as a language of instruction is reduced to the subject of “Spanish language.”

These programs are available to bilingual families as well as monolingual families who wish for their children to become bilingual. And these programs are important because though the number of Spanish-speakers has become more noticeable in the United States over the past decade, the language does not pose as large of a threat as many have come to think that it does. It actually is growing in the career paths of education, interpretation, customer service, sales, medicine, law, social work, journalism, and even linguistics just to name a few.

And although it is difficult to detect what role the language of Spanish will play in this country's future, it is important that we respect it enough to honor it as a grand part of this country's past.

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Cultural Understandings Through the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

Miranda Mihalic

Purdue University Northwest

[mihalicm@pnw.edu](mailto:mihalicm@pnw.edu)

Humans have a limited perception, thought process, and understanding of the world based on the languages they speak and the cultural environments they are predominantly surrounded by. The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, also referred to as the Language Relativity Hypothesis, states that language categories are arbitrary and dictates how one perceives reality. This hypothesis has an extensive background, dating back to Aristotle's time. While there is much information on the hypothesis, it has been of great controversy since the beginning of its proposal. There have been extensive case studies to prove the truth of this hypothesis, such as a color experiment done with the Himba tribe of Namibia. This and many other studies have proven that one's lexicon and grammatical formation has set a deterministic tone to their perspective.

For the purpose of keeping this paper on topic, only three of the linguists who laid down the principles of the hypothesis will be highlighted. Beginning in 1820, a German linguist named Wilhelm von Humboldt proposed a hypothesis that is translated to English as the "World-View" hypothesis. In this, Humboldt states that every individual who speaks a different language perceives an entirely different world; and that no two people who speak a different language will see the same world (HE, 2011). Humboldt was a key figure in Edward Sapir's work who originally set the stage for the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. After reading Humboldt's work, Sapir wrote a paper in 1929 titled "The Status of Linguistics as a Science" (Sapir, 1929). Within this essay, Sapir writes that linguistic symbolism outlines a culture (1929). This means that the words that make up a specific language one speaks will hinder them from being able to perceive a world outside of their language. Linguistic symbolism includes verbal communication, as well as body language, signs, social norms, and cultural behaviors. Sapir also mentions that the "real world" is made from communication, and communication is not a cause of the physical world

(1929). We have altered our environments to adapt to our needs based on our means of communications. It is also from that same communication, culturally, that forms a specific world. Lastly, Sapir expresses how each language has a different world entirely, not just different labels (1929). Some are under the false notion that different language speakers have the same perceptions of the world, the only difference is the names they ascribe to an object. It is because of their different cultural and linguistic backgrounds that individuals will not view the world as the same. Benjamin Whorf explains more of why later in time.

Benjamin Whorf was a student of Sapir's, so he had a lot of the same approaches to cultural perception as Sapir did. In 1940, Whorf wrote his own essay, formulated from the works of Sapir with some alterations. Whorf took a more grammatical angle versus Sapir's lexiconic approach. In addition, Whorf's changes to the hypothesis were more flexible and less concrete, as was Sapir's. Whorf begins his essay by stating that speaking is due to communication (Whorf, 1940). Speaking is a part of communication's evolution, and from years of communicating with signs or symbols, we now communicate through speech. In order to speak, one must form their own individual ideas (1940). Each person's ideas are unique because of their cultural, ethnic, environmental, etc. background. Given the language one speaks, there will always be a level of unconscious per speaker (1940). He uses a hypothetical race as an example. If this race does not have a word for "door," then that object will not be perceived by this race; it will fall as a background object. Since each individual has a different path of formulating ideas, in order to come to an agreement with someone, knowledge of the linguistics must be met (1940). For example, when having a conversation with someone, if Person A was telling Person B a story, and Person B was not understanding the message, Person A would not continue to repeat the story in the same lexiconic form as before. Instead, Person A must alter their grammatical form

in a way Person B will understand. Lastly, Whorf highlighted the fact that speech is not free, it is restricted by grammar (1940). Grammar is the logical order of words put together so that they make sense. Lexicon, on the other hand, is simply the word itself, with no idea or thought assigned. Before someone even speaks, they must formulate the correct strain of words into a systematic order. This process is what hinders thinking and speaking as free; it is already planned out and given an order.

Since the beginning of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis' time, it has been of great controversy. There has been a clear division of its believers who form two groups: those who follow the strong version, and those who follow the weak version. The strong version is more associated with the beliefs of Edward Sapir, and is referred to as linguistic determinism (HE, 2011). This is the notion that people of a certain culture who speak their native language cannot break the confines drawn by those characteristics. As for the weak version, referred to as linguistic relativism, it is the notion that language is only an influence to how a person interprets reality and their behavior towards it. This version is more associated with Benjamin Whorf. While both side may seem appealing to adhere to, the case study on the Himba tribe of Namibia overwhelmingly proves the factual evidence of linguistic determinism.

Jules Davidoff and a group of researchers traveled to Namibia to study the Himba tribe, who only have five words in their native Otjihimba language to describe all colors (Davidoff, Goldstein, and Roberson, 2009). The English language only has one word for green, but the Himba tribe classifies both green and blue as one color, burou. They also have dumbu for a yellowish-green, and a darker green as zoozu (Loria, 2015). While researchers were there they wanted to see how differently the Himbans saw the world because of the different categories they saw colors as. Tribe members were given two different pictures to look at, each with twelve

squares. In the first image, all the squares were green, but one of the squares were a slightly different shade of green. This ever-so-slight difference is extremely difficult for a non-Otjihimba speaker to see, but when the tribe members saw it, they were able to distinguish it within milliseconds. On the other hand, the second picture shown to them had eleven green squares and one light blue square. To a non-Otjihimba speaker the blue square is the obvious different object. When given to the tribe members, they all stared at the picture in confusion and could not tell which square was the different one. The researchers concluded this was because they had a different language for the color spectrum (2015). Since the Himbans saw blue and green under the same category, they could not differential the two.

As previously stated, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis has brought controversy since its proposal. Harry Hoijer, a linguist and anthropologist, criticized the hypothesis and has said it exaggerates how language impacts human culture (HE, 2011). The notion that language draws a thin line of a speaker's perspective of the world eliminates the concept of interpreters and cross-cultural communication. It objectifies a culture as if each individual strictly follows the norms and does not stray from them. Sub-cultures are prevalent in many cultures and they may even have their own adjustments to their language. In addition, Julia Penn, author of "Linguistic Relativity Versus Innate Ideas: The Origins of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis in German Thought," (Penn, 1972) criticized the hypothesis by saying it is written strongly in some places, and weaker in others (HE, 2011). This suggests that the points brought up in each creator's essays are irrelevant and weakly verify their hypothesis. A weak platform cannot create a strong conclusion.

While there are many to stray from the ideas of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis there are still many who find its findings highly notable. Still being taught in collegiate courses, the Sapir-

Whorf hypothesis has an extensive background and continues to leave its audience curious.

Culture and language unconsciously plays a crucial role in how one will perceive the real world and interpret it. Cross-cultural examination will bring an abundance of information and exemplifications to this hypothesis.

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Derek Parfit: Personal Identity and the Teletransportation Thought Experiment

Brenda Schilling  
Phil 499-1: Philosophy Capstone  
October 26, 2016

In *Reasons and Persons*, Derek Parfit puts forth the teletransportation thought experiment as a means to ground ethics. Thought experiments are important in analytical philosophy as imagined cases help to add clarity to our intuitive truth. Our intuitions can greatly influence our beliefs, and ultimately our actions. In Parfit's case, the teletransportation thought experiment is meant to reveal our intuition and our belief in personal identity, that we are persons who exist and persist over time. However, Parfit will argue that our belief in personal identity is wrong. Persons, like nations, do not exist. Persons are reducible to physical facts, subject to continual change or what Parfit terms an event. Survival then, the survival that we care about this is, is the transfer of those physical facts (i.e., molecules) from one event to the next that allow for psychological continuity and connectedness (i.e., "Relation-R") regardless of cause (i.e., teletransportation). In this Parfit concludes that replication is a good as ordinary survival. While the teletransportation thought experiment is successful at both revealing our false belief in personal identity, and capturing the essence of ordinary survival, psychological continuity and connectedness require physical survival, meaning body continuity also matters.

The teletransportation thought experiment has two parts: the first part being where teletransportation is seamless, which will be referred to as either seamless teletransportation or the seamless case, and the second part where teletransportation is interrupted, which will be referred to as divided teletransportation or the divided case. Though divided teletransportation is a continuation of the seamless case, each iteration of the thought experiment touches on a specific aspect of an overarching theme. Because of this, each thought experiment will be discussed separately.

We begin first with seamless teletransportation. Imagine, Parfit tells you, that teletransportation is the newest way of traveling to Mars. Needing to travel there you choose

teletransportation, which takes roughly three minutes compared to traditional spacecraft, which takes weeks. You have been briefed on what to expect—you are to step into the teletransporter, hit a button, and wait patiently while your entire body, down to the placement of your molecules, is copied and sent to Mars by the speed of light. The scanner on Earth destroys your body while the scanner on Mars rebuilds your body out of new matter, molecule by molecule. Although you are nervous, you hit the button, lose and gain consciousness almost immediately and find that you are in a different cubicle. You examine your body and notice that “even the cut . . . from this morning's shave, is still there.”

Before moving onto the divided case, it is important to reflect on your intuitions and beliefs from the seamless case. Although Parfit leads you to the conclusion that you traveled to Mars (you woke in a different cubicle), you may not agree. You may believe that since your body was destroyed in the scanner on Earth, you were destroyed. Regardless of what you believe, Parfit only wants to show that the seamless case in his words “arouse[s] in most of us strong beliefs . . . what we believe to be involved in our own continued existence.” In other words, your wrestling with this imagined case, reveals that you believe in personal identity over time. You believe that you are a unified entity who faces two possibilities, you live, you wake in the cubicle on Mars, or you die, the scanner on Earth destroys your body. Living and dying are meaningful.

Living and dying are meaningful because persistence is a fundamental intuition, and as Hume explains, we are certain that our intuition is true because it is felt; i.e., we are intimately connected to our own intrasubjective experience that always seems present to us. In other words, we believe we exist as unchanging selves that remain the same from birth to death. Both the past and the future are ours, and it seems to matter to us. Our persistence not only seems to matter on

an individual level, but it also seems to matter on a social level. We trust that others, like us, also persist. We believe that our parents, family, friends, etc., are the same people who existed yesterday and the same who will exist tomorrow. Our parents, family, and friends believe that we are, and will continue to be, the same person. Out of this social relation stems ethics. Meaning, we are held accountable, and we hold others accountable, for actions and promises made. Our commitments, vows, education, employment, rearing children, friendships, etc., function as they do because we believe in persistence.

Much resides on our believing that we are the same persons that persist over time. That is the very reason Parfit knows that we will wrestle with the above seamless case. Since we apply our persistence toward every faculty of our lives, we will undoubtedly carry our beliefs over to such an imagined case as the teletransportation thought experiment. However fundamental persistence may seem to us, Parfit argues that we are wrong, and the following divided case is meant to show why.

In the divided case, you have been using the teletransporter for some time now, and are about to make yet another trip to Mars. As in the first scenario, you step into the teletransporter, press the button, but this time nothing happens. After a few moments of waiting you get out of the cubicle and search for a technician. Finding one, you express your concern to her that the teletransporter is broken. She tells you that the scanner has been updated and that the new model does not destroy your brain and body. She tells you that you have in fact traveled to Mars and that if you would like to wait about an hour, that you can talk to yourself on Mars. “Wait”, you say, “If I am here I cannot also be on Mars”

An assistant then asks to speak to you in private. He takes you to his office and asks you to sit down. After a long pause, he tells you that they are in fact having a problem with the new

scanner. Although it recorded your blueprint accurately, it also began to destroy your cardiac system. He assures you that the Mars you is fine, but that on Earth you will die of cardiac failure within days.

The you on Earth is then lead to a monitor where you see yourself just as you would see yourself in a mirror, though you notice two incredible differences. You are not a mirror image, you are not right-left reversed, and while you stand speechless, the mirror image is speaking. Understanding that you are going to die in a few days, your Replica, “tries to console [you] with the same thoughts with which [you] recently tried to console a dying friend. It is sad to learn, on the receiving end, how unconsoling these thoughts are.” You are assured that your Replica will pick up where you leave off, having the exact same intentions toward loved ones and projects. These facts are a little consoling because even though you are about to lose consciousness forever, “hav[ing] a Replica is not quite as bad as, simply, dying.”

Unlike seamless teletransportation, where you may have been unsure as to whether you traveled to Mars or not, Parfit makes it clear that you did not travel in the imagined divided case. Speaking with your Replica makes this fact apparent; it is as if you are speaking with another person. Your Replica may, in fact, be identified as you, but you do not have the intrasubjective experience of your Replica. You both have had separate experiences upon replication. Unlike your Replica, you did not experience waking on Mars, and your future does not feel unlimited (you await heart failure in a number of days). Knowing that your Replica will continue the life that you had planned may be a bit consoling as Parfit suggests, but it does not relieve the despairing thought that you will soon die.

Though you are clearly not your Replica, your Replica is you. The fact that your Replica is you, but you are not your Replica points to two forms of identity, numerical and qualitative.

Numerical identity is the object of personal identity since it is a one-to-one relation, it “only hold[s] between a thing and itself.” If we were to list all of the facts concerning your properties, down to the most intricate details, we would be talking about one person, not two. At the moment of replication, your Replica cannot be numerically identical to you. There being two of you violates the reasoning of numerical identity.

Qualitative identity, or exact sameness, however, can hold to various degrees. Where numerical identity is strictly a one-to-one relation, qualitative identity can hold many relations, and does not require that you hold everything in common. For example, twins would be qualitatively identical. By the time you speak to your Replica, it seems you are more qualitatively identical than numerically identical since you and your Replica have had different experiences since replication. Although you seem to be qualitatively identical with your Replica by the time you speak on the monitor, upon replication your Replica is more than qualitatively identical to you. Your Replica, upon replication, held everything in common with you. It was only the fact that you have each had different experiences after replication that lead to you each being more qualitatively, then numerically identical.

That both you and your Replica changed since replication brings up an important point about each of your numerical identity over time. It could be argued that each of you is not numerically identical to your past selves. Both you and your Replica have physically changed since you each exited the teletransporter. For example, you both lost some atoms, and you both have had different experiences. And it gets worse the further you delve into your past. There is little resemblance between you now and you at the age of six. If numerical identity is the object of personal identity we must answer as to what it is that remains numerically identical in spite of change.

Descartes argued that the self remains numerically identical. The self, for Descartes, is a separate substance from the physical body so it does not undergo change. Descartes' position is termed nonreductionism (i.e., the self is a further fact outside of the physical). Parfit takes nonreductionism seriously because he is sure that we approach the teletransportation thought experiment as nonreductionists, even if we are not aware of doing so, because it is intuitive. However intuitive nonreductionism may be, philosophically it fails on the grounds of interaction (i.e., how a nonphysical substance interacts with a physical substance). Parfit, however, overlooks the problem of interaction, and dismisses nonreductionism only on the grounds of evidence. If nonreductionism were true, we would have evidence of past lives. We would also find that in cases where brain hemispheres are severed to heal epileptic patients, there would only be one stream of consciousness, not the reported two. Until there is evidence of nonreductionism, Parfit believes we must become reductionists.

Until there is evidence, Parfit believes we must become reductionists; meaning that only the physical world is real and we reduced to matter in motion. As reductionists we can either believe that personal identity is reducible to body continuity (the physical criterion) or psychological continuity (the psychological criterion). If we believe in the physical criterion, we are not able to move to the divided case. In seamless teletransportation your body is destroyed in the scanner on Earth and your Replica is made out of completely new matter.

The psychological criterion, however, shows promise in the divided case. Your Replica is psychologically continuous with you. However, we are still faced with the same problem that began this investigation, the idea of the requirement of numerical identity as the basis of personal identity. Two numerically identical psychological continuous persons cannot exist. So either psychological continuity is right, or personal identity is right, but both cannot be right. Since it is

possible to have two psychologically continuous persons, as shown in the divided case, we are to reject personal identity.

Rejecting personal identity means that there is nothing about you that remains numerically the same over time. You are only qualitatively identical, or exactly similar, to your past. Life and death are completely empty because you do not persist. Your belief in persistence is like a nation or a club, it is only an illusion. Nations and clubs do not exist. They are merely ideas, and their survival is dependent on certain rules, not the individuals involved. So too is it for you. You being a unified, persistent entity is merely an idea, and your survival is dependent on rules, not the molecules involved.

That is why Parfit's seamless case mimics ordinary survival— Parfit leading you to believe it was you who woke in the Mars cubicle was no accident. Your body, being both destroyed and replicated, matches your ordinary, moment-to-moment survival. Every moment your molecules change, you are both destroyed and recreated. Replication is analogous to the rules; i.e., if enough of your physical layout or your blueprint is copied into the next moment, you survive, meaning there is psychological continuity and connectedness, what Parfit calls "Relation R".

Continuity is possible when the copies are more similar, when they are strongly connected. At the moment of replication, you were "R-related" to your Replica; your Replica was continuous and connected with you, like you are from moment to moment. When copies begin to diverge there is no longer continuity, but there still remains connectedness. Meaning, when you speak to your Replica on the monitor, you are no longer continuous, but you remain connected, much like you remain connected to you six year-old self.

Because we are not unified, persistent entities, the “R-relation” extends beyond ourselves. We are “R-related” to all of those we meet, and connected to all of those we have never met. Our physical structures are literally changed by each other. It is plain to see how teletransportation grounds ethics for Parfit—because there is no definite metaphysical distinction between the self and others, self-interest must include others.

Although the teletransportation thought experiment is successful at illustrating ordinary survival, Parfit must consider the importance of the physical criterion and the issues that arise from physical continuity. After all “Relation R” is dependent on the physical blueprint of the mind. If the blueprint is not dependent on physical matter, then it exists outside of the physical and we are back to nonreductionism.

Parfit must emphasize that some aspects of physical continuity matters in survival and some that do not. In other words, there are physical aspects beyond the “Relation R” that are completely necessary, physical aspects in which the “R-relation” depends. Parfit’s own divided case illustrates this fact. In divided teletransportation you on Earth were told that the scanner had begun to destroy your cardiac system. Whatever happened while you were being scanned altered the state of your heart (altered the physical continuity of your heart), and your heart will continue to decline until it eventually stops. The physical continuity of your heart in the divided case is just as important as your “R-relation” since your “R-relation” is dependent on the physical continuity of your heart. Meaning physical continuity certainly matters.

However, not all physical continuity matters. We have physical features that are, and are not, essential in physical survival. While one can certainly survive without a baby toe, for example, it is not possible to live without a heart. Also, if we imagine that teletransportation were a viable way to travel, physical continuity must allow for uncommon matter. Your Replica

may have not been physically continuous with you, but your Replica must be made from physical matter; there must be a physical requirement even if there is no direct continuity. And finally, the fact that the “R-relation” is dependent on the physical criterion shows that there may be exceptions to the “R-relation” mattering. If one is suffering at the end of life, for example, it is doubtful that the “R-relation” matters up until the very end. It may be more beneficial for that particular individual to not be aware of the pain.

Although the physical criterion must be explored and rectified to strengthen Parfit’s theory, the teletransportation thought experiment is successful at revealing our false belief in personal identity, and capturing the essence of ordinary survival.

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Erin Belieu's "In the Red Dress I Wear to Your Funeral":  
Conveying Emotion by Manipulating Form

Josie Seach

University of Indianapolis

[seachj@uindy.edu](mailto:seachj@uindy.edu)

Part of what differentiates poetry from prose is the obvious change in form with the use of metrics: stanzas and lines in, usually, a pattern or meter. There are recognized forms of poetry which must follow specific structures such as sonnets, sestinas, and the like. Free verse poetry, however, does not stick to a rigid, by-the-book structure or predetermined patterns. Though the stanzas of a free verse poem do not follow a specific metrical pattern, free verse poems typically keep some sort of resemblance to proper form, using stanzas, meter, line breaks, and such to convey tone and emotion, to tell the reader what parts to focus on, how fast to read, and so on, just as formal verse poetry with a regular meter and rhyme scheme would. Then, there are more experimental free verse poems which may appear unorganized, even sporadic, on the page. Erin Belieu's "In the Red Dress I Wear to Your Funeral" is a poem which at first follows the conventions of more standard free verse poetry and then tosses convention to the side, progressing from tidy verse to more chaotic verse. The poem relies heavily on this alteration of form as a technique to convey emotion, particularly the extreme emotions following the disintegration of a marriage. Originally published in Belieu's book *Black Box*, the poem epitomizes the general theme of the collection. The publisher notes that the poems within the collection were "written in the aftermath of a destroyed marriage" (Copper Canyon Press). With this in mind, Belieu plays with form by deconstructing and reconstructing the integrity of the poem, manipulating it beyond convention; in doing so, the poet reinforces the theme and tone of the poem to convey the strong emotions experienced in the aftermath of marital disloyalty.

A precedent for the use of structure to enhance the subject and tone of a poem can be seen with the work of E. E. Cummings. According to Isabelle Alfandary,

Far from disregarding classical prosody, as some critics have argued, E.E. Cummings exploits the potentialities of poetic form and plays on linguistic differences, either maximalising or minimalizing them – always dramatizing ungrammaticality (111).

We see this technique in Belieu's work. Clearly she has familiarity with standard poetic form, as "In the Red Dress I Wear to Your Funeral" begins with conventional structure, but then manipulates it for effect, just as Cummings manipulated the structure of his poems.

In describing a set of notes written by Cummings, consisting of words scattered across a page, Richard S. Kennedy writes, "Cummings' notes indicate that he was speculating about the relationship between the visual appearance of the words on the page and the sounds of syllables as they would be placed on a sound-frequency scale" (29). Though Belieu does not follow exactly the same technique as Cummings in this regard, she recognizes the importance that the spacing of words on a page can have on the reader's interpretation of a poem, as witnessed especially in the later sections of her poem. Rather than spacing words for musical effect like Cummings, she spaces them to set the reader at unease as is appropriate for current tone; however, she still integrates the visual and verbal elements on the page to accomplish this.

Belieu's poem, which chronicles the narrator's emotions in the aftermath of a falling-out with a lover, apparently driven by infidelity, is divided by numbered sections. The poem begins with a typical form; the first section uses neat, tidy stanzas as is conventional. It consists of four stanzas that do not have a syllabic pattern but do fit to a line pattern: four lines in the first stanza, then two, five, and back to four. This first section marks the beginning of a rumination, when past memories first start to trickle into one's mind.

The rest of the sections of the poem leading up to the climax feature other variations on standard poetic form. Though the poem as a whole is free verse, there are still recognizable stanzas and line patterns in these beginning sections, even if the same line pattern is not maintained throughout each separate section; they all, however, serve to illustrate the patterns of memory or an emotional state. For example, in the second section, Belieu uses one large stanza with lines that grow and shrink in a rhythmic pattern with the waxing and waning of emotion; then, one small stanza follows with just two stark lines: “What electrified me / but your good doctor’s hand alone?” This couplet, with its position in its own stanza separate from the only other stanza in the section, commands more attention from the reader, and therefore is reminiscent of the focus one might place on one particular instance in one’s past. The fourth section also features a notable use of regular form: though enjambment at this point has made punctuation appear irregular, this section has perhaps the tidiest form of all sections in this poem as far as stanzas are concerned, with a regular pattern of six stanzas with two lines apiece and only one break from that pattern at the end; to illustrate, these are the last three stanzas of the section:

as randomly as the thunderheads pass, and yet, how strange,

how many of us loved you well. So tenderly, I’ll return

what you gave me—a bleached handkerchief, a Swiss army knife

bristling with pointless blades. Tenderly, I return everything,

leaving my best evidence in your bloodless lap

The pattern of this section, choppy with its small stanzas but still in a regular, predictable pattern, illustrates a steady flow of memory and emotion, with the one line standing in its own stanza at the end to show a particular focus on it, mirroring the particular focus one might place on an especially unpleasant memory.

This method of playing with form continues until the poem's climax in section eight, where suddenly, the poem devolves, or rather explodes, into frantic, furious non-sequiturs and malapropisms scattered unevenly across the page, filled with bitter language and ominous imagery, as demonstrated in these lines:

EYE AM THE PROMISED VISITATION

PRIESTESS OF BLACK POPLARS

MY TREES R HUNG W/ BRAZEN BELLS

EYE HAVE AUGURED THE PREGNANT SOW'S INTESTINES

RORSCHACHED

THE PICKLED WORM

GLUED TO THE BOTTOM OF YR SHOT GLASS

EYE BRING U NEWS OF

THE UNIVERSE

AND THE NEWS

AIN'T GOOD

DEAD MAN

## B-HOLD!

This chaotic arrangement of words on the page conveys pure, unbridled fury, the sort that accompanies an unpleasant memory wherein one feels wronged, combined with the desire for retaliation. Though certainly this sort of tone can be recognized from speech, there is also a literary precedent for the use of jumbled language to communicate strong negative emotion. The introduction to one particular edition of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* states of the character Leontes, "He is at times incoherent as a jealous man in a state of mad uncertainty must be. His speech is tangled because his mind and emotions are tangled" (Shakespeare and Pafford lxxxiv). We see a similar use of tangled language in this poem used to similar effect; however, the language alone is not what is particularly notable. The same introduction also notes, "Shakespeare's words are material always for the stage: they are used and complemented by the actor's art" (Shakespeare and Pafford lxxxv). Obviously, Belieu's words were not written for the stage and therefore lack the opportunity to be brought to life by an actor. Rather, it is the form, the arrangement of the language on the page alongside the pervasive capitalization of the letters and the lack of punctuation which, alongside this frantic language, works especially to underline the narrator's anger.

After the eighth section, the poem begins to rebuild itself. The worst of the narrator's fury is spent, but the residual anger and other emotions must run their course. The ninth section attempts to return to a neat and tidy poem as before, and indeed, stanzas are recognizable. However, there are awkward spaces in the text, making it feel jagged and unstable, as one might shake, exhausted, after an outburst, still filled with emotion but having spent the majority of it, as in these lines:

Turn your head and I'll kindly cut it off Yes Yes the best reason I am  
left only the mother of a great sun you would go blind and blinder to look  
upon its number and for finally I am not of your being being Queen  
of the flat kingdoms what crop your emptiness I do not admit these nor  
I lied nor I betrayed nor I am starving for you nor can you make me  
never Will I disappear

By the tenth and final stanza, the poem has reconstructed itself to a more stable form. Though the lines are short and jagged, the more standard, tidier form of a poem has returned. This marks the resignation after ruminating on a past conflict, wherein the wounds are still sore, still open, but have faded, for now, into the background, leaving only a lingering, seething anger. The regular stanzas return, with only the first stanza possessing any sort of irregularity—a dropped line—other than run-on sentences and copious enjambment:

I peel myself  
and wherever these rubied  
feathers drop, a poppy unfurls  
in the graveyard, each head plush  
as a stitched lip.

You're right,  
it gets me high, how thin I am, my

love, the substance uncontrolled.

But this molting becomes me,

“In the Red Dress I Wear to Your Funeral” is an emotionally charged work, but the poem does not jump straight into the heaviest emotion; rather, the emotion slowly builds to a tumultuous climax. Writing for Bookslut, Jason B. Jones states, “It’s possible to overstate the ‘raw’ elements of Belieu’s poetry, especially given the attention to form evident here.” Indeed, Belieu did give a great deal of attention to form while writing the poem. The rawness and the tangled language of the poem are not simply a product of the author’s raw anger, but are carefully crafted by Belieu, who harnesses anger to compose poetry that imitates and conveys raw emotion. This is further evidenced by the careful use of language in even the most chaotic sections of the work. In section eight, Belieu replaces the pronoun “I” with its cognate, “EYE.” At first glance this malapropism may seem intended simply to add to the chaos of the section—and it does add to the chaos—but the use of the word “EYE” has another function. It implies a sort of knowing on the part of the narrator, a watchful eye cast over the unfaithful husband. A malapropism with a double meaning can be seen in section nine with the phrase, “the mother of a great sun.” This, again, does add to the disjointed feel of the section, but it also refers to the poet’s child. Belieu has a child (Poetry Foundation), whom she invokes with this malapropism as not only her son, but her sun, the light that her unfaithful husband has elected to leave through his infidelity, as she writes: “I am / left only the mother of a great sun you would go blind and blinder to look / upon its number...”

Throughout the course of the poem, the disintegrating and reintegrating form allowed by the freedom of free verse mimics the emotions one may go through while caught in a memory,

ruminating over a significant past interpersonal conflict: slowly, with a climax of fury, followed by a sort of seething resentment. It is this manipulation of form, this integration of verbal and visual elements, this progression from stable verse to chaos, which reinforces the subject matter and plays a major part in creating the jealous, bitter, furious tone of Belieu's poem.

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The Formation, Function, and Dangers of Stereotypes in Society: What We Can Do to Help

Megan Taylor

Central Michigan University

[Taylo2me@cmich.edu](mailto:Taylo2me@cmich.edu)

For many people, stereotypes are methods of categorization that they use every day to help them understand the world around them. However, they may not realize how they learned these stereotypes, and the impact that these stereotypes can have on their lives, and the lives of other people. Stereotypes of other people can be positive or negative, and can have major consequences for those who are being targeted. This paper examines the formation/function, dangers, and a possible method of reduction of stereotypes that are present in almost everyone around the world. Through the careful examination of the work of Robert Lifton, Ernest Becker, Elliot Aronson, and Robert Rydell, this paper explains the foundations of stereotypes in our culture, why these stereotypes can be harmful, and what we can do to help reduce stereotypes between groups.

This paper uses four main sources to explain the formation/function, dangers, and a possible method of reduction of stereotypes. First, the textbook *Social Psychology* by Elliot Aronson, Timothy Wilson, and Robert Akert will be used to define stereotypes, and explain how they are learned and formed in culture. Second, *The Denial of Death* by Ernest Becker will be used to examine how stereotypes function in society, focusing on his idea of “hero systems.” Third, Robert Lifton’s *Living and Dying* will be used to also examine how stereotypes function in society, focusing on his ideas of “ideological totalism” and “victimization.” Fourth, the article “The Effect of Negative Performance Stereotypes on Learning” by Robert Rydell, Michael Rydell, and Kathryn Boucher will be used to explain the concept of “stereotype threat,” a negative effect of stereotypes on members of a group, including the cognitive deficits that occur. In addition, Becker will be used again to introduce one theory as to why stereotype threat affects members of a stereotyped group so strongly as to cause cognitive deficits, focusing on his idea of the “vital lie of character.” Next, Aronson et al. will be used again to explain the six conditions

that may be able to reduce the stereotypes that are learned between two groups. Finally, Becker will be used again to explain how using measures, such as his idea of “objective hatred,” follow most of the six conditions that Aronson lays out; therefore, perhaps Becker’s idea may be a good way to help reduce learned stereotypes between two groups.

Stereotypes are a basic organization system that people use to categorize object, experiences, and even people in order to make them easier to remember, and compare them to the other objects, experiences, and people they see. On the surface, stereotypes are not inherently harmful; it is only when these stereotypes assign traits to people that are negative or untrue, and the people in these groups are treated differently because of the stereotypes that they become a problem. Stereotypes can affect many people from a specific group, and whether or not all people fit these “assigned traits” of a stereotyped group does not matter; people who do not fit these “assigned traits” are usually seen as the exceptions to the rule, and therefore the rule does not need to change. This shows just how rigid and long lasting stereotypes are in our society; consequently, many people question whether stereotypes can even be eliminated altogether, especially because they are based on our natural tendency to categorize things to make them easier to remember and define in the future (Aronson et al., 2013). However, as discussed before, it is not the stereotypes themselves that are inherently negative; it is the way that we treat a person based on these stereotypes that is negative. The negative consequences of stereotypes are discussed later, as well as possible ways in which we may be able to reduce the negative effects of stereotypes.

Stereotypes can be both negative and positive, and both can be equally destructive for members of a group who may confirm or may not confirm the stereotypes about their group (Aronson et al., 2013). Aronson et al. define a stereotype as “a generalization about a group of

people, in which certain traits are assigned to virtually all members of the group, regardless of actual variation among the members” (2013). People who do not fit these “assigned” traits of a stereotyped group are usually seen as exceptions to the rule, and therefore the rule does not need to change. Aronson et al. go on to explain that stereotypes are formed within our culture, such as the tendency to organize people into in-groups and out-groups based on our perceptions of those different from us from media, parents, friends, etc., and the tendency to attribute people’s behaviors to individual attributes more than outside influences. The tendency to make attributions about a person’s individual negative (or positive) behavior and then generalize to their entire ethnic, racial, or religious group or gender is called the ultimate attribution error (2013).

Stereotypes are used to classify groups of people who are different from us, and sometimes this classification is used to our own benefit. Becker states that the world is terrifying and that “the basic motivation for human behavior is our biological need to control our basic anxiety, to deny the terror of death” (1973). One way in which we control our anxiety is to create hero systems that allow us to feel a sense of immortality, by participating in something of lasting worth. This “lasting worth” can be felt through the passing of values and traditions onto our children, working in such a way that contributes to the rest of society, or through our religion; it can also be felt through protecting one’s own family, culture, or beliefs from the “evil of the world” (1973). When we are faced with people who are different from us, our “hero system” is created by discriminating against or trying to eliminate those who are stereotypically “evil,” or those who seem to threaten our own group’s survival. A real life example of this can be seen as the stereotype in American culture that all Muslims are “terrorists” and a threat to America’s survival, so many Americans take it upon themselves to harass, deport, or even try to kill

Muslims in the United States. After engaging in this hero system that discriminates against those who are “evil,” we feel a sense of righteousness in the fact that we helped save our own culture, and therefore we feel a sense of immortality in that our contribution to helping our culture will last on after we die (1973).

When our modes of symbolic immortality have become impaired and we are not able to gain a sense of immortality to help our anxiety, desperate measures are made in an attempt to master our anxiety. Lifton describes one measure known as “ideological totalism, in which a system of ideas is held with absolute conviction, regardless of how well or badly these ideas fit the complexity of reality” (1974). Since our ideas are held with such conviction, anyone who does not believe these ideas or do not fit in the ideas are seen as outsiders, the enemy. This enemy then must be destroyed if one’s own group is to remain alive. Stereotypes about a certain person’s group – whether or not the person actually fits the stereotype – fuels this enemy mentality, as this stereotype adds to the perceived differences between the victimizer and the victim. In order to gain a sense of immortality and protect one’s own beliefs, the victimizer “elevates themselves above the threshold of death only by reducing the status of another group” (Lifton & Olson, 1974).

One known effect of stereotypes on members of the stereotyped group is “stereotype threat.” Rydell et al. defines stereotype threat as “the arousal, worrying thoughts, and temporary cognitive deficits evoked in situations where a group member’s performance can confirm the negative stereotype about their group’s ability in that domain” (2010, p. 883). An example of this that the group explains in their article is there stereotype that “women are worse at math than men.” In their study, Rydell et al. exposed this stereotype to women learning math equations and then performing with the math equations, and their results showed that women did do worse on

the math problems after the stereotype threat was presented. This showed that the stereotype threat actually caused physiological arousal in the women who were presented with the stereotype, and this arousal prevented the women from being able to encode and retrieve the mathematical information as well as women who did not receive the stereotype threat (2010). Other studies have been done with other stereotypes, with many receiving similar results.

Although the results of this study showed that stereotypes do negatively affect people at physiological level, there is not much of an answer as to why these stereotypes affect people so strongly. One theory is offered from Becker, with his idea of the “vital lie of character.” As previously mentioned, the basic motivation for human behavior is our biological need to control our anxiety, and that one way in which we protect ourselves is through hero systems. Another way in which we protect ourselves is through the vital lie of character. This vital lie of character is formed from birth through our society, which tells us how to act, dress, behave in order to feel safe, and feel like the world is manageable. We look to those who we see as “immortal” and powerful, and create personalities from their qualities in which we ourselves can feel “godlike” (1973).

The stereotypes that are formed by other groups about our own groups lie outside the vital lie of character. We take on qualities that are seen as “godlike” from figures in our culture, but when we are presented with a negative stereotype from our culture, this threatens what we deem to be “immortal” about our culture. For example, when women see other women who are successful, intelligent, creative, they strive to be like them, take on qualities of those they idolize. Although society has formed the negative stereotype that “women are worse at math than men,” it is disproved internally by the women they idolize. However, when a woman is doing math problems and is told “women are worse at math than men,” this may threaten the vital lie of

character that they have built within themselves, as their qualities in the vital lie of character are being questioned. When one's character armor is threatened, their mode of anxiety control is compromised; as a result, this basic anxiety may be the cause of the arousal seen in Rydell et al.'s study that caused the cognitive deficits in the women who were exposed to the stereotype. If one's own method of anxiety reduction is compromised, then it can be inferred that this anxiety can cause detrimental effects in their life.

Almost everyone uses stereotypes to categorize the world around them (which includes people), so finding ways in which we can reduce the negative stereotypes that target certain groups of people is essential. However, because stereotypes are so engrained in culture and in our brain's own categorization system, it may seem almost impossible to eradicate all of them. Consequently, it would be nearly impossible to try to destroy all stereotypes, so finding a way to reduce them may be a more efficient method to help the groups of people who are being targeted. Aronson et al. describe ways in which prejudice, which is described as "a hostile or negative attitude toward people in a distinguishable group, based solely on their membership in that group," may be able to be reduced (2013, p. 362). Stereotypes are the cognitive generalizations we make about groups of people based on our prejudices; therefore, the tactics that Aronson et al. describe to reduce prejudices may then be able to help reduce stereotypes as well (2013). Aronson et al. do not suggest ways in which we can eliminate stereotypes altogether, but they do explain the criteria necessary to help reduce stereotypes between two groups. Known as the contact hypothesis, Aronson et al. explain that the most important way to reduce stereotypes between racial and ethnic groups is "through contact, bringing in-group (my own group) and out-group (your group) members together (2013, p. 386).

There are six conditions in which prejudice and stereotype reduction can be successful: mutual interdependence; a common goal; equal status; informal, interpersonal contact; multiple contacts; and social norms of equality. Mutual interdependence refers to the need of both groups to depend on each other to accomplish a goal that is important on both sides, a common goal. Equal status refers to both groups being equal in terms of status and power. Informal, interpersonal contact refers to members of both groups interacting on a one-to-one basis. Multiple contacts refers to more than one representative from each group being present; if this is not done, then the one representative is only seen as the “exception to the rule,” and the stereotype is not reduced. Finally, social norms of equality refer to rules and regulations that are created to foster acceptance and tolerance (2013).

As mentioned before, hero systems are ways in which we feel a sense of immortality through participating in something of lasting worth, such as eliminating those who are “evil” and threaten our culture’s survival. Stereotypes facilitate this “evil others” thinking, and cause instances of victimization for the stereotyped group, in turn creating more evil in the world. We project the problems of the world onto a person or one group of people, and rather than trying to eliminate the actual problem, we eliminate the people we think are responsible for the problem. One way in which Becker suggests we can eliminate this evil is by developing a concept known as “objective hatred.” Becker describes objective hatred as a method in which the hate object is not a person or a group of people, but something impersonal, like poverty, disease, oppression, or natural disasters. By turning our hatred from something destructive to something creative, we are able to eliminate the real evils of the world, rather than those who we think are responsible for them (1973). By eliminating the actual evils of the world, we may be able to reduce the stereotypes that cause us to blame others for the evils in the first place.

According to the standards of condition set by Aronson et al., the method of objective hatred may be an effective way to reduce stereotypes between groups. Objective hatred follows several of the criteria necessary for stereotypes to be reduced. The first criteria that objective hatred can include is mutual interdependence. Let us use example of poverty; one stereotype about Group A may be that “people in Group A are poor,” and one stereotype about Group B is that “they are greedy and rich.” Group B may blame Group A for using resources such as food stamps because they are poor, in turn abusing the welfare system; Group A may blame Group B for being greedy and unhelpful for those who are poor, as they have the money to do so. Both groups want to eliminate poverty, but individually, they seem unable to do so from their point of view. However, if they were to work together and rely on each other to help end poverty, they may be able to achieve their goal. This also satisfies the second criteria, as both Group B and Group A have the common goal of eliminating poverty. Since Group B and Group A are working together towards this objective, common goal, and depending on each other, the stereotypes (poor vs. rich) between the two groups may be able to be reduced (Aronson et al., 2013).

The third criteria that objective hatred can include is equal status. In order for stereotypes to be reduced, everyone from both groups must be seen as equal in terms of status and power when working towards eliminating the objective hatred (Aronson et al., 2013). In terms of Group B and Group A again, each member must be seen as equally helpful in eliminating poverty; no one group or person from a group is doing more/less than the other group. In addition, every member of each group must be seen as equally “human,” with no group being seen as less or more worth than the other. In objective hatred, the fact that the hatred is turned on the objective problem rather than the group who is thought to have caused it allows for equal status to happen,

as no one group is being blamed for the problem anymore. Since each member of both groups is being seen as equal in terms of eliminating the objective evil, objective hatred may be able to reduce stereotypes from both groups in this condition as well.

The final criteria that objective hatred meets is multiple contacts. Since every member of the group is working towards eliminating a common goal, or a common objective hatred, all members of the group are being represented. Therefore, members of the other group are able to see that any stereotypes about the group are actually false; if the opposite happened and only a few members from the other group helped, the few members of the group working towards to goal would only be seen as the exception to the rule (Aronson et al., 2013). For example, if only a few Group B people helped the members of Group A eliminate poverty, the Group B people who are helping would be the only Group B people they considered being generous, opposite of the stereotype, and exceptions to the rule. However, if many, if not all Group B people help eliminate poverty, the stereotype can then be reduced, as the stereotype no longer holds up to the actions of the group. Since objective hatred calls for multiple contacts, it is another reason as to why this method may be a good method in stereotype reduction.

Although there are several reasons as to why objective hatred may be a good method of stereotype reduction, it is definitely not a perfect method. One reason is that it simply does not contain all of the six conditions necessary for stereotype reduction. While a friendly, informal setting and social norms of equality can be included, the model of objective hatred does not *cause* these conditions to occur, much like the other conditions. For example, just because both groups work together towards the common goal, this does not automatically mean that this work is done in a friendly, informal setting. Although both Group B and Group A may be working towards ending poverty, this does not automatically mean that they are coming together in a

friendly, informal manner to do so. They may work together to solve the problem, but they may do so in separate venues, organizations, or corporations. All members of each group may not meet one on one with all members of the other group in a venue where dress is casual and snacks are provided; a lot of the time, work is not done this way (p. 388). However, even though the objective hatred model does not contain all six conditions, it does not mean that it is automatically a bad way to reduce stereotypes; because stereotypes are so engrained in society and hard to therefore practically impossible to eliminate altogether, any methods that at least attempt to include some of the six conditions is definitely a step in the right direction.

Through the analysis completed in this paper, many key points have come to light about stereotypes and their implications. It is important to recognize just how prominent stereotypes are in our everyday lives, and how negatively they can affect those in stereotyped groups. The normal stereotypes that we may believe everyday may be effecting others through victimization and discrimination, without anyone in the out groups knowing what is happening at all. It is tremendously important to recognize just how harmful these stereotypes are to those in targeted groups and the impact that the stereotypes can have on their lives. More research should be done to find methods that help reduce stereotypes; although this paper explored one possibility (objective hatred), there are some flaws in this method. More research should be completed on how to influence the formation of negative and potentially harmful stereotypes that children learn from society and stop it then, rather than trying to reduce or eliminate the stereotypes once they are already learned.

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