



**2018 CLEMENT S. STACY MEMORIAL
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH
CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS**

**PURDUE UNIVERSITY NORTHWEST
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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 26th consecutive year on April 20th and 21st, 2018. This year we received 117 submissions which were reviewed by a faculty panel, and 81 presentations were selected for the conference. Students from 13 institutions presented their research on a wide range of topics in literature, political science, gender studies, gender and family, psychology, philosophy, and global issues.

Research is an essential part of a university's mission, and Purdue Northwest places great emphasis on affording undergraduates the opportunity to engage in research and disseminate their findings. At the conference, the students presented their research; they honed their skills in public speaking and scholarly presentations; and they responded to vigorous questioning from attendees. In the proceedings, students become authors, polishing research writing skills such as analysis, synthesis, and citation of evidence. I am very pleased their work is published in this electronic proceedings, and I hope you enjoy reviewing the outstanding papers contained herein.

To the faculty mentors, friends and family of the students, I send a heartfelt thanks for your support of the students and their important work. I would also like to publically acknowledge Purdue Northwest's Graduate Assistant Sonja Dimovski and Web & Events Coordinator Rachel Pollack, who were the principal conference organizers. Their efforts were absolutely crucial to the success of this year's event. Valuable assistance was also provided by Ms. Elizabeth Rodriguez, Administrative Assistant to the Dean and Graduate Assistant Kirsten Markusic.

This year we welcomed a new committee, to them I express my sincere gratitude.

I would also like to thank the moderators, Dr. Mary Beth Connolly, Dr. Renee Conroy, Dr. Nicky Jackson, Courtney Hardin, Dr. Bethany Lee, Dr. Yu Ouyang, Dr. Christina Ragan, Dr. Cindy Torres, and Dr. Kelly Vaughan 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, education, and social sciences.

Sincerely yours,

Elaine K. Carey

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The Forgotten Olympic Villages

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The Forgotten Olympic Villages

Every two years in either summer or winter we celebrate the Olympic Games. For these events, the host countries build Olympic Villages with big stadiums and spend millions of dollars for only a few weeks. The countries use the Olympic Games to show their best side to the world and hide all their problems instead of using the Games for long lasting improvements. The Olympics should help the countries to get tourism and improve their infrastructure. They should be planned for financial advantages, but most hosts do not use them that way. After the games the expensive Olympic areas are often unused and post-Olympic plans are missing. Even if plans exist, they are often abandoned and the “show” stands in the foreground instead of the sport.

One of the biggest problems is that the hosts are not planning well and creating financial problems. The study of Flyvbjerg and Stewart from 2012 shows in table 2 that the average budget overrun for winter games is 135 percent and for summer games over 250 percent (10). One of the reasons for the overrunning is the fixed deadline. To get everything ready on time, the planning has to be perfect; if not, the plans have to change, and this brings more costs (Mueller, 6). Often countries are not realistic in their financial planning; they only try to be good hosts and do not save any costs. The stadiums become bigger and the Olympics become more and more a show stage. We should not forget that “Sport facilities are not the metropolitan economic development engines that they are purported to be” (Chapin, 193). The hosts should know how much they can invest in the sport facilities, because they can’t expect a financial gain from them. With the wrong investments, the Olympics can leave countries in a difficult situation, like Athens.

Athens hosted the Olympics in 2004 and invested a lot of taxpayer money to put on a modern, well-designed event (Kasimati, 167). Athens had big and expensive plans for their Olympics and they formed a government-controlled organization responsible for the post-Olympic use, but even with this company the plans failed (Kasimati, 178). In the beginning Athens held a lot of parallels to the very successful games with long-lasting benefits in Barcelona. But Athens' plans brought only financial problems and abandoned facilities, which also caused economic problems in the following years (Kasimati, 168). In fact, the financial problems caused by the Olympics affected the whole European Union in the following years, and Greece is still working to restore its economy. The investments were big and the jobs created for the games were not long-lasting; the plans were not realistic. This shows how important the planning of the event is; without good planning you can destroy your country instead of building it up.

Bad or unrealistic planning can bring the host trouble, but even worse is the waste of resources and money. The last Olympics in Pyeongchang unfortunately brought the construction of throw-away buildings. Travis Waldron writes that they will tear down a \$109 million stadium after its ceremonial usage without any sport events. Waldron sees the “largely unnecessary construction projects with little promise of future viability” as the reason for the high costs of the events. The next Olympic Games won't show a big change. The official Olympic homepage describes that Tokyo wants to build a new stadium to replace an already existing one instead of using it. The homepage also presents the plans of the “most modern Olympic Games” with robots, social media, and other technologies. Japan wants to use the situation when the whole world looks to the country as a stage. With all the money invested in this “show,” a country could work a lot on their future and the Olympics would have long lasting impacts. Every

Olympic event's stadiums and other sport facilities built but unused after the Olympics are only a waste of resources. Furthermore, Jason Ponc shows in his article pictures of abandoned and dilapidated areas and buildings from Olympic Games since the Games in Paris in 1924. This is the result of all the wasted money, since the countries let the venues like they are without any use or work on it. In addition, a lot of the expensive buildings are too big and too specialized for Olympic events. The hosts should look more toward the future. Of course, the planning for a post-Olympic usage is costly but is paying off.

Even if there are post-Olympic plans, the operation of the plans is too often missing. Linda Poon shows there were no people in Brazil who were responsible for the plans after the Games were over. The plans to transform Olympic buildings into schools and other necessary buildings failed (Drehs and Lajolo). Responsible people are necessary for the operation of the plans after the Olympics, even if the world isn't watching the country anymore when the games are finished. A lot of countries cannot see the possibilities of positive impacts on the future of the nation after the Olympics. A lot of plans are only made to get the games or to avoid criticism of the Olympic committee or the public, before or during the Games, but after the Olympics nobody cares about them anymore. The plans for modern urban areas in the Olympic Village never happen. The problems are building on each other; bad financial planning leads at the end to scrimping in the budget for the post-Olympic plans and so they will not work. An event like the Olympics requires perfect planning of everything, or they could be a disaster instead of a long-term success.

The most important change is to assign the Olympic Games only to countries with realistic economic long-term planning. The pre- and post-Olympic planning is much more important than the actual planning of the Games. The Games are not that different each year.

Much more different are the location, what is actually available, what is needed, what the budget is, and what is possible after the games. So, the planning of London's Games in 2012 for example started long before the official Olympic status with the end of the Beijing games in 2008 (Smith and Stevenson, 101). Financial planning should have the priority because the Games should not bring financial problems; the hosts must know how much the Games will cost and if they are affordable. There are a lot of costs. For the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, for example, the costs for security and police alone were around \$1 billion (Molnar, 237). The hosts need good calculations, not only for the games but also for the plans after the Olympics, or they will never become reality. Moreover, Heidberg, Chairman of the successful Lillehammer Winter Olympics, believes that the plans before the games are most important and made the success in Norway possible (Hyun-woo).

The post-Olympic planning begins before the event; it is important that the hosts have plans for the venues after the games and there has to be a committee for the operation of the plans. For example, Brazil and Lillehammer used temporary architecture. This technology is very interesting and helpful for these events because they can transform the unnecessary venues into buildings they need after the games. Of course, no country needs five stadiums in one place, so they can transform the buildings into more necessary buildings, like schools, apartments, or whatever the city needs most. We should use the technologies we have available for events like this so we won't waste money or resources. If the host can afford this, they can make their area more interesting for people who live there and tourists, too. The hosts will not only avoid abandon venues but will create other useful buildings. For all of this, the host should know what they want to do with the venues before and construct them from the beginning for an

uncomplicated transformation. Unfortunately, too often the mega-event priorities displace long-term urban development priorities (Mueller, 10).

Not every country has done everything wrong. Many countries have used the Games to better themselves. Megan Barber shows some good examples of successful reuse of the areas. Lillehammer, a little town in Norway, held the Winter Olympics in 1994 and still uses almost all of their Olympic venues (Barber). With this good work, the town with under 30,000 inhabitants got also the Winter Youth Olympics in 2016 (Barber). It is also host of a lot of other winter sport events and a popular practice place (Hyun-woo). Lillehammer was also working with temporary houses, so most of the Olympic village and hotels were moved to other cities, and the permanent houses were mostly sold after the event (Hyun-woo). The international media center built for the games is now a university and Lillehammer became an internationally-known town, though nobody knew anything about the little town in Norway before. The only problem is that they do not get as many tourists as they had hoped. Most hotels closed in the years after the games, but Lillehammer is without financial problem and has used facilities. That is a big success compared to other countries after their Olympics.

On the other hand, other countries got a lot of tourism from the Olympics. For example, Atlanta got a big park in the downtown and Barcelona got a beachfront with an improved subway system which gave the city a new beachfront culture (Barber). Smith and Stevenson were working on a plan for London's tourism and they used the examples of Barcelona and Sydney. London created the project *Winning- A tourism strategy for 2012 and beyond* (Smith and Stevenson). Like every new host, London was orientating itself on the successful former countries, but every country is too individual to do exactly the same. Sydney worked on their cultural activities and reached thirty percent more international tourists after the Olympics. Most

importantly, Sydney created the “Brand Australia” (Smith and Stevens, 98-99). Another important point is that each country needs additional tourists, beyond the Olympic ones and the existing, so you should concentrate on tourists’ different target groups (Smith and Stevens, 99). Furthermore, the host should create interesting tourist areas between the places where the events take place, so the tourists can use the opportunities to see more of the country during their stay for the Olympics. Most important of all this is that the Olympic sector is working together with the tourist sector (Smith and Stevens, 99 and 101).

For Clifford, the best reuse of Olympic venues is the Olympic Park in Munich; he sees the park as New York’s Central Park with better buildings. In Munich you can reach everything easily with the subway, and in the park, everyone finds something to enjoy his day. In the park you have a nice stadium and you can swim in a pool, rent a boat, or enjoy your time in nature (Clifford). Furthermore, you can climb the Olympic tower for a great view of the Alps. The description is like a perfect park you can spend every day in summer. Munich’s Olympic village was transformed into apartments and so they made the best out of the Olympic Games (Clifford). There are some good examples of hosts who used the games in a good way, but Munich seems to be one of the best. All depends on good planning, so you can construct the buildings like you need them during and after the games. The Olympic village is easy to transform into apartments, boarding schools, or hotels. The arenas and sport facilities are often more difficult, but we are so innovative that we already have temporary architecture, so we can build buildings and change them into others. Some of the facilities could be still used: stadiums for sport clubs if needed, swimming halls for the public, and others for sport centrums, universities, or school sports. Only if the facilities are too large or too specialized it will be difficult to find a way to reuse them (Alberts, 25).

Furthermore, you can look for a new hotspot in the town, like the examples of the park in Munich, Atlanta, or the beach in Barcelona. A lot of cities use sports facilities as redevelopment factors without a big event like the Olympics; in North America cities spent \$18 billion in the 1990s (Chapin, 194). The sport facilities itself does not bring economic advantages, but it can help to bring life back in urban areas so restaurants and shops have more customers (Chapin, 194). Investments look sometimes like a waste of money, but with a second look you will see the advantages. Furthermore, the infrastructure should change during the games. For instance, hosts can construct more public transportation to increase their tourism and improve life for the inhabitants after the games. A lot of hosts are only looking for tourism, but they should use the games also to improve lives in the place. Athens built a new airport, subway system, and all new venues, all paid for with taxes. Despite new jobs and improved infrastructure, the Olympics destroyed the lives of most Greeks. It is important that the host's priority is their own country.

Another important point is a realistic budget. It is not that bad to have a high budget from the beginning when you still stay under your limit. Too often the hosts could not manage the games with the initial budget and this lead to financial problems. If the calculations are directly realistic, the country can look for sources of the required money so no plans will fail because of funding or because they could not find alternatives. Furthermore, the plans should also stay in the budget; the games need not to be the most modern, the biggest, or the grandest. A modest event with benefits for the host could be much more respected. We should not waste so much money and resources on the Olympic Games only for the show. The hosts should also look at what is already existing, but the countries think they have to present something new and hope the benefits will outweigh all these costs (Alberts, 25).

Finally, after the Games the areas should be used. In Berlin, for example, the Olympic venues are almost completely unused after over 80 years, though the area is protected. Now the city plans to create a new living area in the former Olympic village, and only the important used houses like the museum will stay (Ehlering). This is a good solution, because only protecting areas without using them does not bring any advantage. Now, it is already too late to use the buildings. It is only about the area there, but for the future events, there are possibilities to plan the buildings from the beginning for reuse.

The World Cup of Soccer is a comparable event with the Olympic Games, but in the World Cup nobody talks about the waste of money. The requirements of a World Cup are also very strict, so hosting the World Cup requires stadiums which seat up to 80,000 people (Infantino). The big differences are the requirements of places; the World Cup is distributed on a whole country and not in one city. A lot of hosts already have big stadiums and so new construction is not needed. It would also make sense to use this for the Olympics, though the atmosphere of the Olympic village would be lost. Furthermore, some countries use also the World Cup as a show stage. In Brazil, for example, they built six new stadiums and worked on some reservation. Brazil had costs of over \$3.5 billion, but they could expect a tourism income of over \$10 billion (Hutchins). Compared with the \$50 billion of Sochi Games, the World Cup is such a good deal and the Soccer is much more watched on TV, so the World Cup is maybe the bigger show stage (Hutchins). If the World Cup countries start now to spend a lot of money, they will face problems. With the World Cup, it is much more difficult to get long-lasting tourism, and so it is without any sense to organize the World Cup in a country without any usable stadiums. In countries where the stadiums were not necessary before, they will not need them after the event, so they will become abandoned for sure.

With an innovative, realistic plan addressing necessary costs, new buildings, profitable investments, and finally the operation of the plans, we can avoid wasting money and resources. We will not have abandoned Olympic buildings and the hosts can benefit from the games long-term instead of facing financial problems. Instead of trying to have the greatest Olympic Games, the hosts should be more modest and use them to help the future of the country, because that deserves more respect than anything else. The Olympic committee should choose the hosts after creating good plans for the budgets and what happens after the Olympics. If we will continue like we have, we will see every two years another wasteful event and will find more and more abandoned former Olympic areas. Tokyo will hopefully use the games not only for showing their technological development but rather for their country's improvement and to show the world sport can connect all of us and it is not all about money. Hopefully, the sport will be the big show again and not anything else around it.

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Career Choice Influencers:

A Look at Which Factors Dominate Honor Students' Career Paths

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Abstract

Many studies have been conducted to find out the factors that make an individual well suited for one specific career field (Galliot, Graham, & Sweller, 2015; Geldenhuys, Laba, & Venter, 2014; Jackson & Wilton, 2016; Nyamwange, 2016). However, very little is known on what influences majorly affect an individual's career path across multiple disciplines. Finding and understanding the influences that deeply affect an individual's career path is an essential step towards finding a suitable career path that'll increase the wellbeing of society and the individual (Geldenhuys et al., 2014). I wanted to better understand how these factors influence across multiple fields by looking at Purdue University Northwest (PNW), a regional comprehensive university in northwest Indiana. So, I conducted a survey on PNW honor students, that asked students a series of questions, some open-ended, some multiple choice, that gave a look into these influencers. Similarly to research done by Galliot et al. (2015) and Nyamwange (2016), the data collected from this survey shows career benefits, individual self-interests, and family factors as the biggest influencers. However, some key differences were discovered when comparing majors side by side: engineering and science students generally cared more about the benefits of their respective careers, while education majors generally cared less about the prospective benefits. When looking at family influences, engineering and science students generally felt that family had a smaller impact on their decision, while education students felt that it was very important.

Career Choice Influencers:

A Look at Which Factors Dominate Honor Students' Career Paths

Every person must figure out what occupation they are going to pursue, whether it's simply out of necessity or if it's when a student is deciding which program to study in school. Finding a career that fits a particular individual is essential for both society as a whole and on an individual level. Having a sense of fulfillment within an occupation boosts productivity for both the organization and individual. A sense of fulfillment increases retention rates, loyalty, and the well-being of the employee (Geldenhuys, Laba, & Venter, 2014). Determining a suitable career path for an individual is very important so that the individual can be successful and productively contribute to society. Therefore, understanding how these influencers work is vital to help individuals choose the most suitable path. However, it can be very difficult to find the most suitable career since the decision is affected by a multitude of factors. Many scholars agree with a core set of factors that attribute to an individual's decision (Chartrand & Nutter, 1996; Galliot, Graham, & Sweller, 2015; Jackson & Wilton, 2016; Nyamwange, 2016). The above cited scholars generally categorized these factors into two groups, extrinsic and intrinsic factors. The main intrinsic factors are a person's personality, self-image, interests, passions, attitudes, and cultural identity. The primary extrinsic factors are social interactions, availability of resources, previous educational experiences, and role models (Chartrand & Nutter, 1996; Galliot, Graham, & Sweller, 2015; Jackson & Wilton, 2016; Nyamwange, 2016).

While many career choice influencers are generally accepted, the majority of studies done in this area are field specific. In order to better understand how these factors affect a more diverse population, a survey was conducted on Purdue University Northwest (PNW) honors students, which includes students across multiple disciplines. To compare previous research with

PNW honors students were asked several questions about their career/college decisions and the factors involved. Eighteen students were surveyed, but only seventeen answered the survey completely. From this survey, similar factors were found to previous research done by Galliot et al. (2015), Jackson and Wilton (2016), and Nyamwange (2016). However, the importance of each factor was different with PNW honors students when compared to the previous research, and when compared between different majors.

Most scholars agree that family majorly impacts an individual's career choice. A person's family affects their socioeconomic status (SES), their attitude towards certain fields, and perhaps most importantly, the resources made available. A student coming from a middle-income family has many more resources available to them than one from a lower SES, thus changing how that person views the world and changes how they will make their final decision. It also changes the amount of information they have access to, a person that doesn't know a particular career exists can't pursue that career. It also majorly changes the mindset an individual has. For example, research done by Galliot et al. (2015), Jackson and Wilton (2016), and Nyamwange (2016) show that individuals from a lower SES is often much more uncertain about their future career. Even though these three studies were conducted on different populations, each of them came to a common conclusion: that generally individuals from a lower SES focus less about following their passions and care much more about just getting by taking jobs that can get them by (Galliot et al., 2015; Jackson & Wilton, 2016; Nyamwange 2016). In contrast, the study by Jackson and Wilton (2016) showed that individuals from higher SES often feel much more secure when choosing their career path, due to the safety net that their family's income provide. Because of this security, they often focus much more on their passions and self-interests rather than purely the pay of their prospective career (Jackson & Wilton, 2016). According to similar research by

Nyamwange (2016), family also has a large impact on an individual's attitude toward certain fields. For example, generally when an individual is much more likely to look into and pursue a particular career if one or both parents are within the same field (Nyamwange, 2016).

To see how family affected PNW, students were asked to rate how important family factors were in deciding their particular major on a scale from one to five, one being not important at all and five being extremely important (therefore the higher the average, the more important the factor is). The average from all completed responses (one survey was not fully completed and is excluded from the statistics) was a 2.59, being the average was moderately important to very important. An interesting correlation appeared when responses were grouped by major: education and medical students tended to feel that family had a higher importance than the overall population did (averages of 2.75 and 3.25 respectively). On the other end, science students tended to feel that family had a lesser importance (average of 1.75). While this survey did not attempt to determine participants SES, it seems that family does play an important role within their decision to follow their respective career paths.

Another huge factor that comes in when deciding on a career is the common benefits provided by that occupation. These benefits can take on many forms, retirement funds, health insurance, the work atmosphere, but perhaps the most significant is the salary. In the study by Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons (2010), income within a particular field was found to be the single most important motivational factor for Generation Y (otherwise known as Millennials) when deciding which career to pursue. A study conducted by Puspanathan et al. (2017) found that Millennials will often outwardly pursue a certain career because of their personality or interest or some other factors, but that pay still heavily influences which career they choose. A recurring trend is that often careers with salaries significantly less than what their family makes get

rejected by an individual despite other factors that might have made that career a good fit (Galliot et al., 2015; Jackson & Wilton, 2016; Ng et al., 2010; Puspanathan et al., 2017).

The survey conducted on honors students displays similar results to the commonly accepted theories on how salary affects career choice. Participants were asked to rate how important was in the pay in their chosen field when deciding their major on a scale from one to five, one being not important at all and five being extremely important. The average from all completed responses was 2.12, meaning that pay was considered moderately important, but not the single most important factor. A significant comparison can be made when dividing responses by their respective major. Participants within engineering and science majors, on average, felt that pay within their field was more important than the overall average (engineering students had the most significant difference with a mean of 3.33, science majors had a smaller difference with a mean of 2.25). Meanwhile, education majors tended to care less about the pay within their respective fields (education students had a much higher average of 1.25). The main difference was that the survey showed that pay was one of the most important criteria, but not the single most important, like several studies have suggested (Ng et al., 2010; Puspanathan et al., 2017).

Finding something that an individual both enjoys and is proficient in is one of the most important things when determining which field to pursue. Having a career that utilizes a person's strengths and skills can lead to a sense of purpose and well-being. On a larger scale, employers and businesses see higher retention rates, better motivation, and a reduction of turnover expense with employees that feel like their skills are being used effectively (Raj, 2010). Similar results were found in a study by Vosh and Schauble (2014); they found that individual goals and interests drive motivation and a personal sense of self-worth. This motivation persuades people to participate in activities that center around their own interests and provide fuel for a person to

follow their own passions and help them feel accomplished. From these studies, along with an abundance of other research, most scholars agree that an individual's passions and interest have one of the greatest impacts when determining a career path (Galliot et al., 2015; Puspanathan et al., 2017; Raj, 2010; Vosh & Schauble, 2014).

Just like with the previous factors, the survey conducted on honors students produced similar results to those of previous research. Students were asked which single influence affected their decision to study their current major and the question was phrased as an open-ended question, so that any factors left out of the multiple-choice questions could be analyzed. Despite the open-ended nature of this question, a very large portion of participants responded very similarly. 71% of students responded by saying that their interests and strengths played the largest role within their decision. Unlike family influences and career benefits, interests and skills did not have a significant difference among majors.

One other factor that shows up across many studies is an individual's self-image, often analyzed as a person's self-assessment of academic achievements (Galliot et al., 2015; Jackson & Wilton, 2016; Ng et al., 2010; Puspanathan et al., 2017). An abundance of research, from the above cited sources, shows that when a person's self-assessment is high, they often have much higher aspirations and aim for careers that are generally more prestigious. In a study done by Galliot et al. (2015), it was found that almost half of career certain students that they surveyed considered themselves to be in the top third of their class. While those that considered themselves in the bottom third of their class were over seven times more likely to be considered career uncertain. Research across many fields has found that those with a lower self-image often have less career aspirations and are not as willing to follow their interests as fully as those with a high self-image (Galliot et al., 2015; Geldenhuys et al., 2014; Nyamwange, 2016).

Unlike the other factors discussed, the survey conducted on honors students found no correlation between self-assessment and career choice. Only 5% of participants said that their previous academic performances were a motivator for their respective career path. All of those that did say that academic experiences were an influencer also said that their own self-interests and passions outweigh their self-assessment. However, this doesn't disprove any previous research that shows that self-image is an important factor in determining a career. This survey was only conducted on honors students, all of whom had grade point averages above 3.0. Since the honors college has a holistic application process, Honors College students are generally high achievers academically and therefore generally have a high self-assessment of academic achievements. Since all participants are considered in the high self-assessment category, this neither supports nor disproves previous research that shows self-image as a primary influencer of career choice.

The conducted survey found similar results to previous research with a few key differences. The survey found that the single most important factor when determining a career within the Honors College is a person's self-interests, in contrast to other research that found the career benefits to be the most important influencer for Generation Y (Ng et al., 2010; Puspanathan et al., 2017). Another difference is that the survey found a significant difference within certain fields, engineering and science students generally cared more about the pay of their respective fields than the other majors, while education majors generally cared less about the prospective pay. When looking at family influences, almost the exact opposite is true: engineering and science students generally felt that family had a smaller impact on their decision, while education students felt that it was very important. The final key difference is that

the survey results could not be used to determine whether or not self-image plays a significant role in decision making.

There's an overabundance of research looking at how these and other factors affect an individual's career choice and feelings once in the workforce, however there is a lack of studies that look across disciplines and try and find the common set of factors that affect the majority of people on a much larger, national, or even global scale. This study was completed to look at how these factors work interdisciplinary considering the honors college, which contain students from every other college located at Purdue University Northwest. In the future, more research is recommended to look further into how these influencers work on a much larger scale, allowing a better understanding of the numerous factors and decision making that goes into deciding which career to pursue and ultimately what career makes a good fit for a certain individual.

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**Reading Fanfiction as World Literature: an Examination of Multilingual Acronym Usage
within Fan Spaces**

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Fanfiction is a rather new method of writing and distributing creative stories to be read worldwide. It contains characters or settings from an original work of fiction, whether that work be a musical, anime, television show, or even a boyband such as One Direction. These fictional works are created by fans rather than the original creator, almost never for profit. It is the product of fandom, “fan” and “domain” - essentially groups of people who gather together to talk about a piece of media they particularly enjoy. Since the invention of the Internet and creation of websites specifically for fans, fanfiction has gained more popularity. It can be consumed or produced by anyone with a word processing machine and Internet access, which is to say that it is easily accessible for a large majority of the world’s population. Fanfiction has been written and translated into many languages, and it has been read in nations far outside of its origin. Since it is such a different form of writing, it must be carefully considered and approached with new expectations and standards. By using these new standards, I sought to answer the following questions: Does fanfiction count as literature? If so, to what extent does it count as world literature? How can it be read and appreciated as world literature? How does the language used to talk about fanfiction contribute to its identification as a literary genre? Which rules of fanfiction translate across cultures? How do they translate? Are there elements of fanfiction specific only to German or English communities? If so, what do they say about these communities or about this literary phenomenon as a whole? To answer these questions, I examined three major websites for fanfiction: ArchiveOfOurOwn.org, Fanfiction.net, and Fanfiktion.de. Additionally, I turned to scholars such as Wolfgang Iser and Hans Robert Jauss. These works and ideas were all used in accordance with David Damrosch’s concept of world literature.

In order to read fanfiction as world literature, we must first determine its literary status. Anne Jamison, author of *Fic: Why Fanfiction is Taking Over the World*, overwhelmingly supports the idea of fanfiction as literature. She calls fanfiction writing a new “model of authorship” (Miller). Discounting today’s fanfictions from the canon of literature ignores modern stories that started out as fanfiction, including *City of Bones* by Cassandra Clare, which started out as a fanfiction depicting the romance between Ginny Weasley and Draco Malfoy from *Harry Potter*. It has been expanded into a five-book series, a five-book prequel, a movie, and a television show. Meg Cabot’s *Avalon High* pulls directly from Arthurian myths and legends. Dante’s *Inferno*, in fact, is a self-insert Bible fanfiction with an RPF (real person fiction) between himself and Virgil. It is easy to dismiss this phenomenon as passionate purple prose from immature and inexperienced teenage girls, but neither is originally published literature inherently better. At the heart of it, fanfiction is a creative mess: it confuses intellectual property rights, subverts societal norms, and blurs the lines between reading and writing, creating and absorbing (Miller). Yet it is precisely this ‘mess’ that creates an infinite source of diverse literature. Often written by women or other disenfranchised minorities, works of fanfiction provide readers with the ability to see themselves represented in ways they would otherwise not have in “classical” literature. It is my firm belief that an author need not create something entirely new in order to count as an author, nor must their work be completely original, especially if this work is transformative in nature.

The transformative tendencies of fandom and fanfiction are inherently linked to its inclusion in ‘literature’. Wolfgang Iser states that literary texts include societal and cultural norms along with traditions of past literature: “It may even be said that the proportions of this mixture form the basis of the differences between literary genres” (376). Iser highlights the

importance of literary reactions to historical problems and how critical this is to the development of literature and literary genres. To me, this is the crux of fanfiction itself: transformative and modern reactions to social and historical problems. The subversion and transformative roles of fanfiction are its key features. Fanfiction is generally written by minorities who are eager to see themselves represented within works. Trans, asexual, and neuro-atypical characters were features of fanfiction long before mainstream media included them. In fact, being transformative is a quintessential part of literature, according to Iser. “The [social] norms and [literary] allusions selected for the repertoire are rarely equivalent to one another – and in those few cases where they are, the text will cease to be informative because it will merely repeat the answers offered by an existing text, even though the historical problems will have changed” (377). Iser uses Joyce’s *Ulysses* and its mixture of Shakespeare, history, and modern society to describe the “imaginary correction of deficient realities,” but this is essentially what an alternative universe fanfiction does as well (380). With this understanding from Iser and Jamison, we can now conclude that fanfiction is literature. This begs its continued exploration of literary values and to what extent it meets Damrosch’s criteria of world literature.

On this subject, Damrosch defines world literature as “all literary works that circulate beyond their culture of origin, either in translation or in their original language. [...] A work only has an *effective* life as world literature whenever, and wherever, it is actively present within a literary system beyond that of its original culture” (*What Is* 4). Fanfiction is transnational, perused by readers worldwide. Some are translated to make them more widely available; but a majority are written in English. With the advent of the Internet, works of fanfiction easily circulate beyond their culture of origin. The two most popular fanfiction websites, Archive Of Our Own (Ao3) and Fanfiction.net (FF.net), boast over 3.3 million user accounts and 60 million

unique web visitors monthly (ToastyStats). If we regard these websites as literary systems, then fanfiction is both actively present within these literary systems and widely distributed – making fanfiction effective world literature. However, to read this world literature and to truly appreciate fanfiction as such, one must acclimate one’s self to the expectations, rules, and cultures of a work. Damrosh illustrates this point by using Murasaki’s *Tale of the Genji* as an example – within this work, “Murasaki shows relatively little interest in such staples of Western fiction as character development and plot” (*How to Read* 22). Her main characters die two-thirds of the way through. The point of this is to show that different bodies of literature can only be valued after learning the context and values that drive them. Similarly, fanfiction has many specific values that govern its reading and writing, many of which do not match up with typical Western literature. A quote from Tumblr user UpAgainstABookCase poignantly describes this subversion: “Fic has its own rules around the expectation of conflict. You can write a 70 000 word fic in which there is no conflict. I never have but it could be done. I have a 40 000 word smut fic where NOTHING happens but it flies as fic because the rules for fic are different.”

The most important standard for reading fanfiction is the language used to talk about it, because it helps foster shared expectations and reading experiences. Without knowing terms such as “ao3” and “OOC” (‘out of character’), a reader would be lost. This jargon is used to sort stories according to reader preference, to talk about the stories, and to talk about the characters. These terms, acronyms, and abbreviations make up the “common fund of expectations” that Damrosh says is necessary to “read different kinds of composition, and experienced readers can approach a work with a shared sense of how to take it” (*How to Read* 7). These expectations can signal an almost infinite amount of information to the would-be reader and disseminate it very quickly.

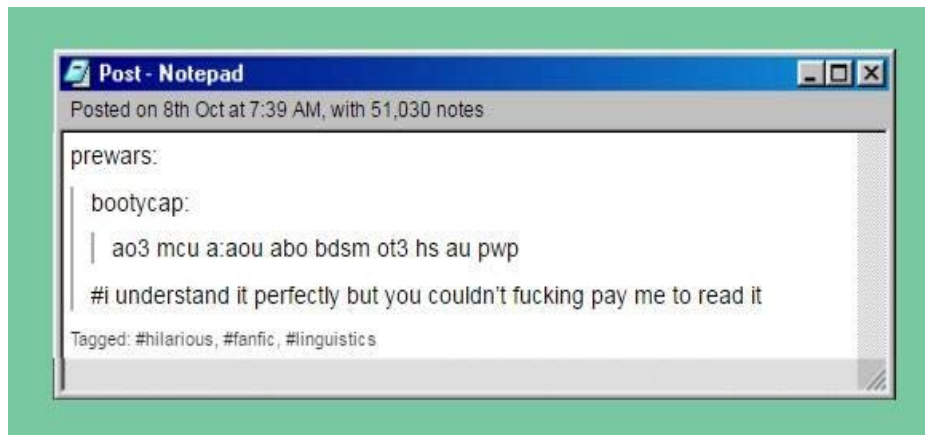


Image 1: Screenshot from tumblr.com. First poster writes “ao3 mcu a:aou abo bdsm ot3 hs au pwp.” Second person responds “I understand it perfectly but you couldn’t fucking pay me to read it.”

For the above example, this string of forty-four characters can tell a reader the following information: the website location of the work, what fandom and movie it belongs to, the ages and relation of the main characters, and its explicit sexual nature. (See appendix for explanation). I was inspired in the past to do a linguistic study about memes and the power dynamics at play within these abbreviations and tags. But for now, I will use them only so far as to share their importance in signaling information to the reader, therefore allowing them to become easily acquainted with it and create a shared expectation of the work. The tags used on Ao3 are one of its most vital aspects in the role of literary host. These tags add additional information about the story, allow for sorting preferences, and, as I mentioned earlier, foster a standard expectation for the reader. However, the German stories on this website are aided with German summaries, but almost exclusively use English tags. See the example below:



Image 2: Screenshot of a work from ArchiveOfOurOwn.org. Work is titled “Das Portrait” (in German). Tags for the work include “Severus Snape, Sirius Black, Portrait Magic, Bookstores, Self-Insert, Humor” (in English). Summary of the work is “In einem Londoner Trödeladen ...” (in German). Final sentence reads “Warning: narration in German, dialogue

Since so much of the language used to tag and describe fanfiction is in English, it leads me to believe that while fanfiction may be world literature, it falls into habits of Western dominance and sociological pitfalls. For example, online author Charizard complained of sexism and Mary Sues, a female character who can do no wrong:

Oder könnt ihr mir erklären, warum alle Mary Sue-Beispiele, die ich gefunden habe, weiblich waren? Natürlich könnte man auch damit argumentieren, dass die meisten unerfahrenen Autorinnen, die meistens weiblich sind, demnach auch idealisierte Self-Inserts erschaffen, aber weshalb sind sie in allen Kolumnen, alle Internetseiten, etc... egal ob Englische, ob Deutsche, immerzu und zu hundert Prozent weiblich?

Translation: Can you tell me why all the Mary-Sue's I've seen are feminine? Of course, you could argue that most of them are the idealized self-inserts of inexperienced authors, many of whom are women, but why, in every column, every website, etc - whether they're English or German, why they always and 100% are women?

This sexism of which user Charizard complains is, unfortunately, prevalent in Western society, and it transfers across books and other methods of writing. It is important to ensure that world literature is an equal exchange of literature and cultural values. From the evidence I have gathered so far, fanfiction seems as if it is Western literature imposing its values onto other nations and cultures.

Furthermore, English dominates fanfiction just as it dominates other literary and social spheres. Only 0.3% of fanfiction on Ao3 and 1.3% of fanfiction on FF.net is available in German. If a work is popular enough, it may be translated. The work “Midnight Doesn’t Last Forever,” written by Ghostystarr on FF.net, is over 40 000 words long and has two authorized translations into German. Both translations were written by the same person and posted on two different accounts. However, the translation on FF.net only has one chapter, of which a forlorn reader noted: “Wie kommt es, dass es bei dem einen Kapitel geblieben ist? Wenn mein Gedächtnis mich nicht trügt, dann ist die englische Version ca. 30,000 Wörter lang” (“Reviews”). *Translation: How come this is only a chapter long? If my memory serves me correctly, the English version is around 30,000 words long.* The translation on Ao3 made it to a noble four chapters before the translator stopped. It was noted in the introduction that this translation was written so others could “practice their language skills” (Anouschka912). This is not the first time that fanfiction has been used as a form of world literature for others to practice their language. In fact, the current longest piece of literature in existence is a Super Smash Brothers fanfiction – with over four million words, it is three times longer than all of Proust’s works and six times longer than *War and Peace* (Romano). The author, Christian, is a Mexican-American immigrant who started writing in 2008 as a way to practice his English skills (Bernstein). This cross-cultural and linguistic exchange is part of the beautiful diversity of

fanfiction as world literature. However, when over 70% of authors are from the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada – which are predominately English-speaking countries - it lends to the creation of a hierarchy in which English and Western values reign supreme (“Fan Fiction Statistics”). While we do not yet experience an equal cultural exchange across fandoms, its globalization certainly marks it as effective world literature.

However, a current effective cultural exchange does exist in the form of universal themes and experiences, which governs the writing and reading of fanfiction. Damrosh emphasizes common worldwide literary concerns (political upheaval, romantic loss) yet states the methods and vehicles for expressing these universal themes are “linked to elements from [authors’] lived environments” (*How to Read* 23). This approach to understanding world literature can be applied to fanfictions as well: within fandom, there are common tropes of writing alternate universes (AUs), specifically stories revolving around high schools or coffee shops. The prevalence for these AUs, I would argue, is due to their abundance in their authors’ lives. A teenaged school setting, whether it be high school, a lycee, or a Gymnasium, is something everyone can relate to. Liminal societal gatherings are also universal, whether they take the form of a coffee shop in America or a pub in England. Fanfiction authors are expressing universal themes of love and loss through their current lived experiences of high schools and coffee shops.

The subjects and plots of German fanfiction continue to support Damrosh’s ideas of world literature. There is not much difference in subject matter between German stories and their English counterparts; both nationalities tend to write equal amounts of high school aus, breakups, and love stories. Such similar plots suggest German and English authors draw from their own common experiences, yet their fanfictions become unique vehicles for expressing these global emotions. In particular, the Advent Kalender trope was created by Fairy143 in 2012; this trope

consists of twenty-four winter-themed words to inspire authors during the month of December and to stave off writer's block ("Beitrag"). Since this was posted on the German fanfiction website (Fanfiktion.de), this trope has tended to stay within the German community online. These types of stories have transferred to Ao3 and FF.net (primarily English websites), but the Advent works remain in German, suggesting that this trope has not yet crossed into the mainstream English-speaking territory.

Perhaps the single most definitive element about German fanfiction is its distinctive relationship to English. The first German *Harry Potter* fanfiction published on FF.net in 2001 was "Harry Potter und der Pudelmütze" (*Translation: Harry Potter and the Winter Beanie*) - and it was available in both English and German. The writing style, however, "suggests that the author is not a native speaker of German but an American testing her skills in German" (Cuntz-Leng). The first German *Star Wars* fic was written with an English title, summary, and disclaimer; and the first *Star Trek* fanfic was called "Star Trek Zurruck in das Gegenwart," which is an "onomatopoeic malapropism of Americans trying to speak German" (Cuntz-Leng). One would translate it as "Star Trek Back to the Future," but this is worded as a common mistake that a German-learner would make, not something a native German speaker would say. All three of these examples display an awareness of the prevalence of English and American culture; they also create a sub-culture of assumed secondary status as a German-speaker. These stories, whether intentional or not, demonstrate the struggles that German-speakers face in an Anglo-American dominated sphere. There is little incentive for German authors to remain creating works in their native language, especially when there is an abundance of material immediately available in English. The German equivalent of Ao3, called Fanfiktion.de, is the main website for fic-writing youth, yet Cuntz-Leng makes note that this website has inferior

search tools and stricter copyright laws, which makes it a less attractive alternative. She hypothesizes, and I agree, that Germans may tend to prefer writing in English since they are used to consuming media in its original language – delayed, non-existent, or lower quality dubbed or subtitled works discourage a transnational exchange of language and culture. It is simply easier for Germans to assimilate to the Anglo-American majority.

While an exchange of cultures and languages is encouraged, it can become increasingly complex when copyrights and authors are taken into account. The tag “Do Not Translate” has been used a total of 77 times on AO3. After asking the authors why they chose to use this, I received answers that generally revolved around concerns of copyrights and credit. One author said she felt “violated” that some other authors had been “translating it into other languages with the intent of posting it” and had not asked her for permission (RiseOfTheFallenOne). Both authors who responded to me were concerned with whether their own particular literary style would translate well. And, finally, one author was in the process of publishing her work, and she did not want to ruin her chances of being published by having multiple copies of her story appear online (Winchester-With-Wings).

These, of course, are all valid concerns, but Damrosh easily refutes those regarding mis-translations, stating that “literature is often distinguished from film and television by the fact that the reader is required to fill in the scene, which is not given outright as it is on screen” (How to Read 292). All literature, whether translated or not, requires readers to create their own understandings of the text; and each understanding will differ according to the life and experiences of the reader. It helps, as mentioned previously, to have a standard expectation for a piece of work. Yet no two readers will walk away from a text with the exact same response. It is precisely this ambiguity and individuality that makes literature a form of art.

However, the unique direct communication between author and reader that exists within fanfiction helps to overcome some of this potential ambiguity. Readers can leave reviews and comments on fanfictions, and authors can respond back almost instantaneously. In fact, one of my current best friends and I met because I read her fanfiction and talked to her about it. I cannot easily get ahold of J K Rowling or Quentin Tarentino, but fanfiction enables a casual dialogue between creator and reader. Iser stresses the correlation between intended images from author with the received image by the reader and how essential it is to literature (374). The straightforward communication between author and reader allows for these sent and received images to easily be clarified, if need be. By these standards, Iser would deem fanfiction as some of the highest literature available. Indeed, Jauss, had the following to say about reader-author interaction:

In the triangle of author, work, and public the last is no passive part, no chain of mere reactions, but rather itself an energy formative of history. The historical life of a literary work is unthinkable without the active participation of its addressees. For it is only through the process of its mediation that the work enters into the changing horizon-of-experience of a continuity in which the perpetual inversion occurs from simple reception to critical understanding, from passive to active reception, from recognized aesthetic norms to a new production that surpasses them. (165).

Jauss in no uncertain terms states the importance of this interaction when it comes to the canonization of literature. For a work to be considered literature, there must be interaction between creator and consumer. It makes me wonder how current pieces of literature became this

way without the immediacy of online interaction. I am impressed with the emphasis placed upon this relationship, especially regarding its formation of history. Jauss's quote gives me a new appreciation for the comments section on Ao3 and FF.net – it leads me to believe that fanfiction will become something more in the future. Perhaps it truly will be viewed as an important development of literature.

To conclude this essay, fanfiction is a remarkably important development within the field of literature. The prevalence of technology has aided greatly in the spread and reception of fanfiction. Authors and readers can easily engage with one another, an aspect that is vital to all forms of literature, according to Jauss. These works of fanfiction, after entering literary spheres worldwide, can be viewed in accordance with Damrosh's definition of world literature: they are both sufficiently widespread and remain actively used and read. There are, however, still problems regarding the exchange of cultural information. So far fanfiction has been regarded as a literary movement spreading east from Anglo-American areas, which brings Anglo-American values with it. The dominance of English can be discouraging to the inclusion of other languages; additionally, technological issues such as lower-quality websites and media translations inhibit authors from embracing and adding to the canon of literature within their native languages. Germans in particular are keenly aware of the sub-par status their language faces on a worldwide media scale, and they face this challenge with a sense of biting humor in their works. As technology and translations improve, there is room to hope for a more equal exchange in media among languages and cultures. Fanfiction, regardless of its author's language, has unique standards and expectations that must be understood before reading and judging fanfictions as literary pieces. Even though fanfiction remains a worldwide literary trend, fanfictions and their authors have a unique amalgamation of culture and language that does not

belong to any one nation. Authors who join this trend of diverse literature join a new canon of literature to be read and appreciated internationally.

Appendix

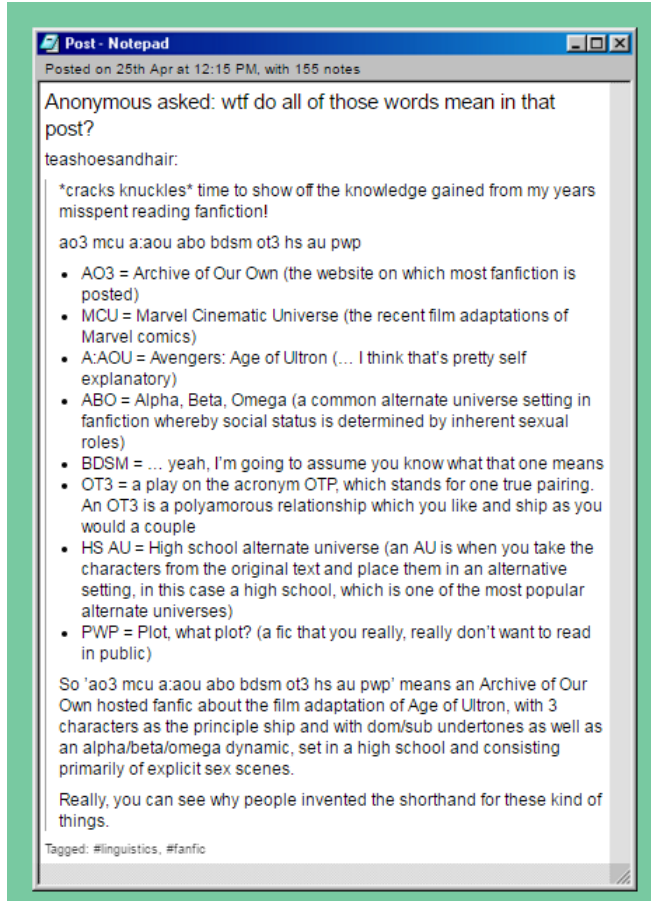


Image 3: Screenshot from tumblr.
“Anonymous asked: wtf do all of those words mean in that post?”
Teashoesandhair responds with the following:

AO3 - Archive of Our Own

MCU - Marvel Cinematic Universe

A:AOU - Avengers: Age of Ultron

ABO - Alpha, Beta, Omega

BDSM

OT3 - play on the acronym OTP, “one true pairing,” but with three people.

HS AU - high school alternate

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Blind by Pride

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Gulliver's Travels in popular media is often presented as a source of humorous entertainment when in reality it is a satire against the ideals of the Enlightenment and Britain. Jonathan Swift, its author, was of Irish and British descent, and his novel in many ways broke apart the British ideals. Swift's novel attacked human pride. T.O. Wedel in his article, "On the Philosophical Background of *Gulliver's Travels*," remarks that during Swift's time "Evil and good, once set over against each other as equivalent to Nature and Grace, now oppose each other within the natural realm alone. Pride has become a virtue" (13). The Enlightenment preached that man was inherently good, and if he was logical, he could do nothing wrong. This led to a rise of pride in human capability, and Swift's novel questioned it greatly. To deconstruct pride, Swift uses Lemuel Gulliver's adventures as a two-pronged attack on the flaws of the British Empire and the Enlightenment thinking, but Gulliver never admits that he has faults because of his pride.

Part One: Lilliput as an Imperial Power

In the beginning of *Gulliver's Travels*, the titular protagonist shipwrecks on an island called Lilliput inhabited by small people "not six inches high" (Swift 17). As Gulliver learns about them, he starts to see how the Lilliputians parallel Britain's imperial might. Gulliver spends a chapter describing the culture and how they view the world. He explains that "they see with great Exactness, but at no great Distance" (Swift 51), or in other words, the Lilliputians are short-sighted which does not enable them to make long-term goals. This explains why they keep Gulliver around even though it is a great financial cost to feed him. The Lilliputians view themselves as the center of the world and refuse to believe that the world is bigger than themselves. When trying to explain where Gulliver came from, they say, "that [Gulliver] dropt from the Moon, or one of the Stars . . . our Histories of six Thousand Moons make no Mention of any other Regions, than the two great empires of *Lilliput* and *Blefuscu*" (Swift 41-2). They

believe themselves to be a mighty kingdom. The fact that the rulers of Lilliput call themselves *emperor* and *empress* imply the idea of total control over their world.

They also feel that they have power over the “man mountain” Gulliver, but he confesses that if they “[having] roused my Rage and Strength, as to enable me to break the Strings wherewith I was tied; after which, as they were not able to make Resistance, so they could expect no Mercy” (Swift 21). Even though Gulliver admits that the arrows the Lilliputians shoot at him hurts, if Gulliver was determined enough, he could easily crush Lilliput. He proves his capabilities as he steals Blefuscu’s ships with arrows being shot at him. He does not hurt the Lilliputians because he has no good reason to hurt them. In this way, he represents Britain’s position as they are the biggest, strongest country. Capable of good, they have the power to take down nations but choose not to because it would not benefit them, just as it would not benefit Gulliver to destroy the Lilliputians.

Gulliver represents Britain in more ways than one. Gulliver explains his story as the middle son from the middle of Britain; in other words, Gulliver is an average Englishman. This makes Gulliver the perfect man to represent his country. Because Gulliver is a British representative, it is easy to see how the readers can join him as he journeys into the world and slowly loses his faith and pride in his home country. In his article, “Bowel Motion: Gulliver’s (E)sc(h)atological *Travels*,” Nolbert Col explores the possibility of Gulliver being the one representing pride in Lilliput. He explains that “[Gulliver’s] accounts of bowel, and bladder, motions oscillate between macho overtones and childish embarrassment at being caught, dirty-handed, in some ‘uncleanly Action’ (I, ii, 2), his own worldly rendering of Augustinian explorations into pride and guilt” (Col 117). He continues to describe how Gulliver prides on his ability to stop the palace fire by urinating on it and does not comprehend why the Lilliputians

would be offended by his actions. Yet Gulliver always uses euphemisms to explain when he is “pressed by the Necessities of Nature” (Swift 24). He can never bring himself to admit that he needs to use the toilet but is confused why he was not appreciated for doing so on the royal palace. For the Lilliputians, their government is the most important aspect of their empire, which Gulliver would know as he spends ample time in the politicians’ presences.

While the novel discusses politics in each part, Lilliput is most famous for its scenes devoted to politics because of its parallels to Britain’s at the time. David Bywaters in his article, “Gulliver’s Travels and the Mode of Political Parallel During Walpole’s Administration,” discusses how Swift writes the first book to attack the political systems of his day. He determines that Swift creates “a series of partial parallels so delicately stated and so carefully placed that they suggest that far more is going on beneath the surface of the text than plainly appears” (Bywaters 726). He continues to discuss several passages which Gulliver mentions in passing to point out flaws within the British system. Since Swift slyly implies the corruption, the officials of Swift’s time miss what he is truly saying. By Swift attacking the government system and pointing out the corruption, Gulliver starts to notice the flaws in his own politics. For instance, when Gulliver is describing how the Lilliputians get into office, he explains they must do rope dances and jump through hoops which can lead to broken limbs or death. He mentions that “I was assured, that a Year or two before my Arrival, *Flimnap* would have infallibly broke his Neck, if one of the *King’s Cushions*, that accidentally lay on the Ground, had not weakened the Force of his Fall” (Swift 34). Gulliver quickly changes the subject about how the emperor rewards his officials with silken threads, but the quote hints at the idea of corruption. The emperor has a favorite with Flimnap, and while the Lilliputians can see with great exactness,

Gulliver can see the larger picture that the Lilliputians cannot which allows him to notice the corruption easier.

Gulliver might see himself as different from the Lilliputians, but he notices similarities between his culture and theirs. Brian McCrea explores how Gulliver manages to adapt from culture to culture on his journeys. In his article, “Lemuel Gulliver’s ‘Treacherous’ Religion: Swift’s Redaction of Ecclesiastes,” he notices that “Gulliver communicates much more haltingly with the Brobdingnagians, before he learns their language, than he does with the Lilliputians. Even while he is bound down, Gulliver can see that he and the Lilliputians share ‘Laws of Hospitality’ (8), and this sense of community guides his conduct” (McCrea 468). For Gulliver to recognize some familiarity in this foreign culture, his faith in his country with their superiority and politics slowly begins to crack. This is represented when he discovers that the Lilliputians want to blind him for “high treason.” Gulliver remarks he “never expected to have found such terrible Effects of them in so remote a Country, governed, as I thought, by very different Maxims from those in *Europe*” (Swift 60). This comment reveals that Gulliver has found his treatment by the Lilliputians to be similar to how a European country, such as Britain, might treat one of their “traitors.” While he does recognize that Lilliput is different from Britain, he still manages to find similarities between them; these similarities help Gulliver to open his eyes and see the flaws in his own country.

Part Two: The Horror of Being Small

The second book features the island of Brobdingnag where the giant natives do not parallel Britain like Lilliput does. Gulliver still represents Britain, but he is the one that becomes belittled by the Brobdingnagians. They try to explain how Gulliver can be smaller compared to

them determining several theories such as “an Embryo, or abortive Birth” (Swift 93). When Gulliver is first discovered, they act “with Caution of one who endeavors to lay hold on a small dangerous Animal in such a Manner that it shall not be able either to scratch or to bite him; as I myself have sometimes done with a *Weasel* in *England*” (Swift 79). Laura Brown in her article, “Reading Race and Gender: Jonathan Swift,” makes an interesting point about Gulliver’s small position. She states, “Gulliver is dressed by his little nurse, Glumdalclitch, in a manner that would have evoked a common contemporary female image” (Brown 130). She continues to discuss how in Swift’s time that fashion dolls were becoming popular. Since many of the Brobdingnagians view Gulliver as a piece of entertainment, it would be no surprise to see Gulliver being treated like a living doll to Glumdalclitch, and in the beginning, her father works Gulliver to exhaustion to entertain others with his small stature. Gulliver’s own pride is attacked on this island as others see him to be some form of animal or mistake of nature. Throughout his time on the island, he is treated as a freak show and eventually is sold to the Brobdingnagian queen.

Gulliver has a chance to tell the king about Britain, believing that he told the king everything that was glorious about his home country, but the king “[protests that] it was only an Heap of Conspiracies, Rebellions, Murders, Massacres, Revolutions, Banishments; the very worst Effects that Avarice, Faction, Hypocrisy, Perfidiousness, Cruelty, Rage, Madness, Hatred, Envy, Lust, Malice, and Ambition could produce” (Swift 120). The giant king finds that Gulliver’s countrymen are people he would not like to meet. Afterwards, Gulliver tells the king the secrets of gunpowder only to be turned down again because the king finds that such a weapon is a cruel and dangerous creation. This reaction compares differently with how Gulliver

viewed the royalty in Lilliput. On the island of tiny people, they looked up to Gulliver and were awed by his feats, but in Brobdingnag, Gulliver is a curiosity of small stature.

Gulliver's conversation with the king also causes him to question his home country further and why he has pride in Britain. In his article, "Proper Words in Proper Places: *Gulliver's Travels*, the Subtractive Fallacy, and the Colonialist Linguistic Nightmare," Zack Rearick makes an important point about Gulliver's conversation with the king. Arguing that as Gulliver masters more foreign languages he becomes less British, Rearick notices that "Gulliver is not up to the task of defending his country against the accusations brought forth by the King, and it is noteworthy that he does not appeal to his insufficient mastery of the language in reporting this failure to his English readers" (125). Rearick sees this as "a foreshadowing of the idea that the ability to communicate about his homeland in his native tongue would not suffice to make his listeners revere it" (Rearick 125). Gulliver's inability to make his home country appealing to the Brobdingnagians creates a break in Gulliver's pride for his country.

While Lilliput is greatly corrupt, Brobdingnag proves to have a king whose "Apprehension was so clear, and his Judgement so exact" (Swift 96) implying a much more morally sound king. John B. Radner in his article, "The Fall and the Decline: *Gulliver's Travels* and the Failure of Utopia," argues that "Gulliver, who is present in Brobdingnag as the typical Englishman, is again shown to have a totally secular perspective, repeatedly referring to Brobdingnagian religion without showing any interest in it" (Radner 57). In his article, he argues that Gulliver fails to pay attention to religion and thus misses the opportunity to see why the Brobdingnag king and his society is better than Lilliput. Swift tries to make a point about the importance of religion when it comes to the betterment of humankind while the Enlightenment thinkers wish to think humans on their own can improve themselves. Gulliver does not think

much about religion in Brobdingnag, mostly because he is too focused on his smaller position to them. He is still trying to understand how his country measures against this new world he is discovering. Compared to the giant Brobdingnagians, Gulliver and his country are nothing but tiny specks.

Swift continues his two-pronged attack on pride with the Enlightenment era; he uses Gulliver's perspective to point out the flaws of the human body. Gulliver makes several notes about how horrifyingly unattractive the Brobdingnagians' bodies are, especially women's bodies. The first instance is when Gulliver saw a woman breast feeding and confesses to the reader that "no Object ever disgusted me so much as the Sight of her monstrous Breast . . . so verified with Spots, Pimples and Freckles, that nothing could appear more nauseous" (Swift 82-3). When introduced to the Maidens of Honor, Gulliver remarks that "I was much disgusted; because, to say the Truth, a very offensive Smell came from their Skins" (Swift 107). He continues to describe that he found "their Skins appeared so coarse and uneven, so variously colored when I saw them near, with a Mole here and there as broad as a Trencher, and Hairs hanging from it thicker than Pack-threads; to say nothing further concerning the rest of their Persons" (Swift 108). Because of his small stature, he notices details of the human body while the Brobdingnagians would not be able to notice their physical flaws. For Gulliver, he starts to realize that the human body is not a perfect as the Enlightenment thinkers would desire it to be. For the readers, they realize that Gulliver's small size enables him to see flaws in the Brobdingnagians, who appear to be a good, peaceful society. While they appear to live well, the Brobdingnagians have flaws that they cannot fix as their bodies are not perfect.

Part Three: Breaking Down Enlightenment Thinking

In the third part of the book, Gulliver travels to several islands: Laputa, Balnibarbi, Glubbubdrib, Luggnagg, and Japan. In the island of Laputa, the people are solely focused on math and music. They are brilliant in their fields, but it is the only subject they know. Gulliver remarks that “I have not seen a more clumsy, awkward, and unhandy People, nor so slow and perplexed in their Conceptions upon all other Subjects, except those of Mathematicks and Musick” (Swift 150). Because they only focus on math and music, they have “flappers” who hit them with flattened bladders, which are filled with dried peas or pebbles, to get them to focus on what is right in front of them. The Laputans are often at risk of falling because of it, and this is dangerous because they are living on a floating island.

Even though they are smart in these fields, they are not good people. The Laputans “are very bad Reasoners, and vehemently given to Opposition, unless when they happen to be of the right Opinion, which is seldom their Case” (Swift 150), and when the island below them disobeys their orders, they have the last resort of “letting the Island drop directly upon their Heads, which makes a universal Destruction both of Houses and Men” (Swift 158). In other words, they are willing to destroy the lives of people who do not agree with them. This shows that the Laputans may have great intelligence but no true moral conscience. The Enlightenment era believed that there was link to great intelligence and good morality. They felt that if people were highly intelligent, then they would be morally good. Swift created the Laputans to show that morality and intelligence are two separate aspects of humanity.

One scene shows that the Laputans are not in total control of other islands. In Robert Phiddian’s article, “A Hopeless Project: Gulliver inside the Language of Science in Book III,” he discusses the different writing discourses that Swift engages. He argues that Swift is using three

discourses at the same time, and one of them focuses on the fact that Swift is Irish and is arguing against the British mistreatment of Ireland. He refers to the scene where Lindalino rebels against Laputa and succeeds. He argues that “this episode is normally and plausibly read as allegory of the Irish reaction to Wood’s Half-pence, and was consider so hot by Swift’s early publishers that it did not appear in any edition of the book until it was rediscovered in 1899” (Phiddian 57).

Phiddian reads a certain scene in the third book that represents rebellion against Wood’s half-pence. Gulliver describes how the Lindalino rebels got an upper hand on their overlords by “[erecting] four large Towers . . . Upon the Top of each Tower, as well as upon the Rock, they fixed a great Loadstone . . . hoping to burst therewith the adamantine Bottom of the Island” (Swift 159). With their towers, the Lindalino people received their freedom from Laputa because the Laputans could not lose their loadstone which kept their island flying. This act of rebellion cuts the Laputans’ pride as the Irish rebellion must have done to the British.

The island of Balnibarbi is under Laputa’s control, and Gulliver travels to it because “I thought myself too much neglected, not without some Degree of Contempt” (Swift 161). While on Balnibarbi, Gulliver’s host explains to him why the island is in horrible condition. The host states that “about Forty Years ago certain Persons went up to *Laputa* . . . came back . . . full of Volatile Spirits acquired in that Airy Region. That these Persons upon their Return, began to dislike the Management of every Thing below; and fell into Schemes of putting all Arts, Sciences, Languages, and Mechanicks upon a few Foot” (Swift 164). Gulliver describes the state of the island: “People in the Streets walked fast, looked wild, their Eyes fixed, and were generally in Rags . . . I saw many Labourers working with several Sorts of Tools in the Ground, but was not able to conjecture what they were about; neither did I observe any Expectation either of Corn or Grass, although the Soil appeared to be excellent” (Swift 162). Gulliver notices that

Laputa's ideals do not help the islands below them and even create societies that cannot function well. These men who are responsible for the islanding being in such a state work at the Academy of Lagado.

When Gulliver visits the Academy of Lagado, he finds “the Professors appearing in my Judgement wholly out of their Senses; which is a Scene that never fails to make me melancholy” (Swift 175). The experiments he sees: trying to get sunshine out of cucumbers, building houses by starting with the roof, and learning math equations by eating inked wafers. Eric Rothstein in his article, “*Gulliver 3; or The Progress of Clio*,” argues that Swift is breaking down the ideals of history for his society. When discussing the Academy of Lagado, Rothstein provides the background information that “Swift wrote parts of it with specific work of the Royal Society in view—is also an argument that the Laputans’ and projectors’ antics have a basis in an orthodox taxonomy and its logic, which is what the Royal Society presumably began with” (109). Rothstein explains that a reversal of values happens with “what is traditionally below, the material, replaces what is above, the mental, when books are written by mechanical accident, when dumbshow with objects ousts language, and when students literally swallow their mathematics on paper wafers inked with propositions” (109). Swift is making an argument that these “intellectuals” are putting the wrong emphasis on what it means to be intelligent. While they may be discovering much knowledge, they are not becoming wise.

In the island of Glubbdubdrib, Gulliver finds people who are necromancers who are willing to raise anyone back from the dead. He has a chance to meet people from “two or three Hundred Years past in [his] own and other Countries of *Europe*” (Swift 185), but he is appalled to find out that history was not what he was told. Gulliver explains that “for having strictly examined . . . an Hundred Years past, I found how the World had been misled by prostituted

Writers, to ascribe the greatest Exploits in War to Cowards, the wisest Counsel to Fools, Sincerity to Flatterers, Roman Virtue to Betrayers of their Country, Piety to Atheists, Chastity to Sodomites, Truth to Informers” (Swift 186). This review of history reveals to Gulliver that what he thought happened did not. The heroes of history were not purely good, selfless people; many people were of questionable character. Gulliver realizes that his own country’s history is not as wonderful as he thought it was. Meeting these famous people probably brought back to his mind about what the king of Brobdingnag said about his country’s history being filled with horrible atrocities. In the second book, Gulliver tries to deny the king’s disgust at his country, but when faced with the truth of his history, Gulliver realizes that Britain is not the country he thought it was.

One of the last islands Gulliver visits is Luggnagg which has immortals on it called Struldbuggs. Most people view the Struldbuggs as Swift’s way of showing that the Enlightenment’s ideas of achieving immortality are bad. In William Freedman’s article, “Swift’s Struldbuggs, Progress, and the Analogy of History,” he makes a different argument about the Struldbuggs according to his understanding of the third book. Freedman suggests that “[Swift] aims his weapons at the two heads of the monster progress that threatened his argument most ominously: progress through science and the cumulative advance of history” (458). He believes that the third book’s purpose is to attack Enlightenment’s ideas of progress because people at the time believed humanity would eventually perfect themselves. As time progressed, all the flaws Swift’s novel introduces would not matter, but if Swift attacks progress, then he makes his point. The third book argues that humanity cannot become better. Freedman argues that the Enlightenment thinkers would represent humanity through the aging of a man. As mankind continues in history, with age, he becomes better.

Gulliver reflects this idea as he explains to the Luggnaggians what he would do if he was immortal:

I should be a living Treasury of Knowledge and Wisdom, and certainly become the Oracle of the Nation . . . I would entertain myself in forming and directing the Minds of hopeful young Men . . . of Usefulness of Virtue in publick and private Life . . . [I would give] perpetual Warning and Instruction to Mankind . . . [and I] would prevent that continual Degeneracy of human Nature, so justly complained in all Ages (Swift 195-6)

The natives tell him that the Struldbruggs “commonly acted like Mortals, till about Thirty Years old, after which by Degrees they grew melancholy and dejected . . . they had not only all the Follies and Infirmities of other old Men, but many more which arose from the dreadful Prospect of never dying” (Swift 197). The Struldbruggs also age greatly and lose their memories by the time they are in their eighties. The people are terribly hideous, a burden to their government, and unable to communicate with others. Gulliver believes that immortality will give people a chance to become better versions of themselves, but by discovering true immortal beings, he sees that their worst features are brought out instead of their best. This reflects to Laputans as they have great intelligence but no sense of goodness. Gulliver sees this and slowly starts to lose his faith in humanity’s capacity for goodness.

Part Four: Either He’s a Perfect Horse or a Hideous Yahoo

The final island Gulliver visits is inhabited by two different groups: a race of intellectual horses called Houyhnhnms and a race of animalistic human-looking creatures called Yahoos. Both creature races attack or represent a form of pride. The Houyhnhnms are supposedly perfectly rational creatures. They act as if sin or the dark side of nature has never afflicted them. These horses were “[not] ashamed of any Parts of their Bodies,” (Swift 220), so they do not wear

clothes like Adam and Eve before the Fall. A clue to their purity is the fact that Houyhnhnms do not lie or have a word in their language to express lying. They simply say, “The thing which was not” (Swift 219). The fact that their language lacks words to describe negative traits is Swift’s way of getting his readers to understand that these horse creatures have an innocence about them, but he also manages to undermine that innocence.

Even though Gulliver by the end of the book tries to emulate them, the Houyhnhnms are not as virtuous as they appear. The Houyhnhnms show good will to their own kind; they do not do the same to other species especially the Yahoos. Their actions show that they think they are superior to other creatures, and their pride is used against Gulliver. When Gulliver presents his body, the horse master points out any physical thing he perceives to be in fault. He tells Gulliver that “my Nails were of no Use either to my fore or hinder Feet: As to my fore Feet, he could not properly call them by that Name, for he never observed me to walk upon them; that they were too soft to bear the Ground . . . That I could not walk with any Security; for if either of my hinder Feet slipped, I must inevitably fall” (Swift 225). The horse master made more remarks about Gulliver’s face and his inability to regulate his body temperature. The entire critical monologue has the horse master comparing Gulliver to Houyhnhnm standards which reminds Gulliver how he can never be like them. Because of this, the Houyhnhnms make him leave the island telling Gulliver’s horse master that to keep him was “such a Practice was not agreeable to Reason or Nature” (Swift 261). When Gulliver is leaving the island, he desires to kiss his master’s hoof, but “he did me the Honour to raise it gently to my Mouth” (Swift 264). In a sense, the horse master would have probably made Gulliver kiss his hoof even if he did not desire it, but Gulliver’s desire to be like the Houyhnhnms is too great for him to bear. His desire blinds him to the flaws of the Houyhnhnms which he eventually emulates.

His horse master calls Gulliver a “perfect Yahoo” (Swift 221). In his article, “Strange Dispositions: Swift’s Gulliver’s Travels,” Michael Seidel explores the identity and homelessness Gulliver experiences. He makes an important point about how the horse master calls Gulliver a “perfect Yahoo.” Seidel explains that “the epithet ‘perfect’ is synonymous with the name Houyhnhnm in Houyhnhmnese. However, *Yahoo* in the Houyhnhnm language is everything that Houyhnhnm is not. As perfect Yahoo, Gulliver is a living paradox . . . [at Britain] he betrays his status as a perfect Yahoo by prancing and whinnying like a horse” (81). The horse admits that Gulliver has rationality but does not have the physical perfection that is a Houyhnhnm. Gulliver finds himself not wishing to be a Yahoo even if it is a “perfect” one. He desires to become “perfect” like the Houyhnhnms, so when in Britain, he starts to behave like a horse to continue to imitate perfection. Shane Herron in his article, “Dark Humour and Moral Sense Theory: Or, How Swift Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Evil,” determines what Swift wants to say in Book IV about humanity. He states, “humanity does possess a faculty of rational choice or will, guided by an intuitive sense of right and wrong, and yet not only do they still act like Yahoos, but they seem to display a perverse delight in using reason to twist and distort their basic moral sense . . . for no other reason than the illicit thrill of doing wrong” (Herron 424). Gulliver becomes fully aware of this in-congruency which causes him to desire to be more like the Houyhnhnms. He applies the logical fallacy of “either or” argument; he feels that either he is a horrible beast of a Yahoo or the perfect, rational being of a Houyhnhnm.

The Yahoos represent a more bestial and animalistic side of human nature. The strange humanoids create a difficult image for the readers and Gulliver. Neither have any idea what to make of them except Gulliver notices how much he is “conceived so strong an Antipathy . . . full of Contempt and Aversion” (Swift 209). Once he understands that the Houyhnhnms view the

Yahoos as the scum of their island, Gulliver tries to wear his clothes all the time around them “in order to distinguish [himself] as much as possible, from that cursed Race of *Yahoos*” (Swift 220). Even after his horse master remarks that Gulliver must be a “perfect Yahoo,” Gulliver refuses to be associated with the Yahoos. He describes in detail how the Yahoos behave, and a few similarities between British societies and how the Yahoo herds function can be made. Referring to the leader of the herd, Gulliver describes “that, this *Leader* had usually a Favourite as *like himself* as he could get, whose Employment was *to lick his Master’s Feet and Posteriors, and drive the Female Yahoos to his Kennel . . .* This *Favourite* is hated by the whole Herd; and therefore to protect himself, keeps always *near the Person of his Leader*” (Swift 244). This suggests the many yes-men that follow around leaders of organizations. Gulliver makes other connections to Yahoos and humans in greed for shiny rocks, getting drunk, and having civil wars “without any visible Cause” (Swift 242). These similarities to humanity made an impact on Gulliver’s mind. He spends the beginning of Book Four trying to separate himself from the Yahoos, but his Houyhnhnm master has to point out the similarities between humanity and the Yahoos. The final event that convinces Gulliver that he is a Yahoo is when a female one tries to attach herself while he is bathing. Afterwards, he begins to become like the Houyhnhnms because they represent to him what is good and logical. In his mind, to be a Yahoo is to be a heinous monster.

Gulliver at His Wits End

The Houyhnhnms represent the Enlightenment ideal, but as determined earlier, they are not perfect beings. Gulliver is horrified to be considered a Yahoo and starts to view all humans as such. On his final trip back to Britain, he reflects “that by copulating with one of the *Yahoo-Species*, I had become a Parent of more; it struck me with the utmost Shame, Confusion, and

Horror” (Swift 271). Gulliver is determined that humans/Yahoos are the worst and denies his own humanity because he does not want to end up like them.

In every action, Gulliver finds himself hating humans including his fellow Englishmen. Keely McCarthy’s article, “The Problem of Cultural Reproduction in Gulliver’s Travels,” states, “Gulliver comes . . . [to view] colonial ventures as in line with natural Yahoo characteristics of greed and aggression, and aligning missionaries with conquistadors, naming them as destroyers of culture” (McCarthy 77). She emphasizes her point by saying, “the reference in *Gulliver’s Travels* to projects to ‘convert and civilize’ directly ties British missions to colonial oppression” (McCarthy 81). Gulliver describes his views on colonization: “the Natives driven out or destroyed . . . a free Licence given to all Acts of Inhumanity and Lust; the Earth reeking with the Blood of its Inhabitants: And this execrable Crew of Butchers employed in so pious an Expedition, is a *modern Colony* sent to convert and civilize an idolatrous and barbarous People” (Swift 275). Then he slyly mentions that Britain is exempt from these crimes, yet he writes about how Great Britain has treated other islands in a long paragraph filled with sarcasm. This shows that Gulliver has completely lost faith and pride in his home country which trickles into his hatred and disgust towards all human beings. When Gulliver rejects his humanness, he also rejects his homeland. Swift uses Gulliver’s rejection of humanity to reveal the flaws of Britain when it comes to the treatment of other societies. In the end, he states that he can tolerate many kinds of horrible people such as “a Lawyer, a Pick-pocket, a Colonel, a Fool, a Lord, a Gamster, Politician, a Whoremunger, a Physician, an Evidence, a Suborner, an Attorney, a Traytor;” but he cannot tolerate “Diseases both in Body and Mind, smitten with *Pride*” (Swift 276). In his mind, the worst flaw of humanity is its pride.

Throughout Gulliver's journey, it appears that Gulliver is slowly losing his mind, but Claude Rawson in his article, "Gulliver, Travel, and Empire," argues something different. He argues that "Gulliver's view of humanity is presented as unhinged but not untrue. It is, indeed, unhinged by the truth inherent in it." (Rawson 9). While some may disagree with the idea that Gulliver is not mad, what makes Gulliver's descent into such thinking proves to be frightful. As Rawson says, why Gulliver behaves the way he does is because of the revelation he gains on his journeys. Gulliver realizes that not only his country, but humanity is not the wonderful, amazing people who can progressively become better. His interactions with foreign lands has made him realize that humanity is more likely to degrade themselves and others around them than improve. He has become sickened with those around him whose flaws he sees so clearly that he does not realize how flawed he still is.

He claims to hate pride in others, yet he is as prideful as those he despises. Because he has met the "perfect" Houyhnhnms, Gulliver feels that he knows a truth that no one else does. In a letter written to his cousin, Gulliver expresses that "as I had Reason to expect: Behold, after above six Months Warning, I cannot learn that my Book hath produced one single Effect according to mine Intentions" (Swift 8). He believed that his book would convince people to change for the better, but he also expected that nothing would happen. While he denounces all of humanity, he separates himself from his family. He declares that "during the first Year I could not endure my Wife or Children in my Presence . . . To this Hour they dare not presume to touch my Bread, or drink out of the same Cup; neither was I ever able to let one of them take me by the Hand" (Swift 271). Instead he spends his time with horses. He claims that "my Horses understand me tolerable well; I converse with them at least four Hours every day" (Swift 271). Gulliver tries to become like the Houyhnhmns because he believes that they are what

enlightened perfection should be, but he cannot become like them because he is not capable of becoming a horse.

Consumed by humanity's horrors, Gulliver does not realize his own selfishness. His journeys have not helped him become a better person but a worse person who is as prideful as the people he despises. Gulliver's journeys have exposed him to the fact that all of humanity is not the good, perfect beings the Enlightenment era believes they can be. They also show him that his home country, Britain, is not leading the world into a better place. But Swift does not set out simply to reveal the flaws of Britain and Enlightenment pride. He reveals through Gulliver how easy it is for people to see the flaws of others but never to see that they themselves are flawed as well.

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The Perception of Success from People with Depression

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Abstract

Research has shown that Depression has become the world's leading cause of disability (Garvik, M., Idsoe, T., & Bru, E. 2014). For that being, there are a lot of studies on depression itself as a disorder and how you can try to treat it. However, there are not many studies on how depression can affect someone's view specifically on success for others and themselves. In the research that was conducted for this paper, five people with varying levels of depression were interviewed and asked how they view success and then how they think depression could have influenced their answer. Their answers were then analyzed and compared to medical studies that have to do with depression and academic achievement. The main theme that came out of this was that the people with depression view success as a whole the same as people who do not have depression, they strive for the same things. With this in mind, depression affects the way that they see their personal success and how depression can get in the way of the motivation to strive towards success.

Success is something that people strive for in life, it is something that needs to be attained. The way that success is measured is an interesting concept though, since everyone thinks differently. On the contrary, depression is one of these things that can make the way you view things change. The perception of success is different to someone with depression: in this sense, the way they think of success goes along with what the majority of people think, however the way they perceive their own success varies. This means that there is no definite way to measure success, however scientists have tried to do it and people in their everyday lives are looking for a scale to measure their success on. Everyone looks at things in a different way, and the same goes for success. A person who grew up poor may see success as having money one day, whereas a person who struggled in school as a kid may see success as graduating high school and being able to go to college. There are different factors that affect the way you view the world. Just as there can be different outside factors on how you view things, there are also inside factors. The chemical makeup of your brain is something that can change everything around you, in your own eyes and its own way. Where and how you grew up are just a couple of things that can change your perception on the world around you. The level of depression is different for every person and so is the way that they chose to handle it. Some people just keep pushing through and others shut down, it all depends on the person and their drive.

People who deal with high stress situations on a regular basis are more prone to depression. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines depression as a common mental health disorder that presents with depressed mood, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, low energy, and poor concentration (Garvik, M., Idsoe, T., & Bru, E. (2014). I have interviewed five different people who have dealt with different various stressful situations in their lives and who all now deal with depression at

varying levels. I asked them a series of questions about how their experiences have changed their views on success. All of them had similar thoughts however differed slightly as their severity of depression differs as well. A little background into my five sources. The first person I interviewed was someone named Sam who is currently a senior in high school and had dealt with depression since seventh grade (S. Runions, personal communication, November 20, 2017). The second person would like to remain anonymous, so we shall call her April for the duration of this paper. April is a freshman in college and has dealt with depression most of her life but can vividly remember it from the age of twelve until now (Anonymous 1, personal communication, November 21, 2017). The third person is Kelly and she is a freshman in high school. Kelly was diagnosed with severe depression and anxiety four years ago (K. Lahaie, personal communication, November 22, 2017). The fourth person is a thirty-seven-year-old mom of three named Mandi, she has dealt with depression her whole life, as far back as she can remember (A. Givens, personal communication, November 24, 2017). The last person I interviewed is a sophomore in college who wants her name kept secret as well, so we will call her Josephine. She started dealing with depression if she thinks about it probably the middle of her sophomore year of high school, but she did not really realize it until around the middle of her junior year (Anonymous 2, personal communication, November 25, 2017). All of these people have varying kinds of depression and how it affects their everyday lives. Three of these people are in the peak range for when depression first occurs, ages fifteen to twenty-one (Garvik, M., Idsoe, T., & Bru, E. 2014). The thing is that these three people have been dealing with depression before they reached that age.

Depression is something that is becoming more apparent at a younger age. Depression is the leading cause of disability (Garvik, M., Idsoe, T., & Bru, E. (2014). National Comorbidity

Survey – Adolescent Supplement (NCS-A), suggests a lifetime prevalence of 11.7% of 13–18-year-olds meeting the criteria for depressive disorders (Garvik, M., Idsoe, T., & Bru, E. (2014). This makes more sense for the people that I interviewed. There are different types of depressive disorders, but everyone that has one still deals with the symptoms that come along with it. The most common symptom of depression is disengagement (Garvik, M., Idsoe, T., & Bru, E. (2014)) which can make getting things done much more difficult. The struggle is to find the motivation to carry on (Anonymous 1, personal communication, November 21, 2017, & Anonymous 2, personal communication, November 25, 2017, & Givens, A., personal communication, November 24, 2017, & Haung, C. 22 October 2013 & Lahaie, K., personal communication, November 22, 2017, & Runions, S., personal communication, November 20, 2017). Each and every one of the people interviewed said that finding the motivation to do things is what they struggle with the most. As time goes on not finishing something can lead to stress resulting in more depression (Walkiewicz, M., Tartas, M., Majkowicz, M., & Budzinski, W. 2012). In order to move forward in life, you have to be able to complete certain tasks, and this can be a struggle for people with depression.

Success means something different to every person as does their view on it. Depression puts a damper on how things are viewed. Each person described their success in various ways. When I asked Sam if she considers herself to be successful she simply just said yeah (personal communication, November 20, 2017). April seems to see herself on the path to success as she is going to school to get her dream job (Anonymous 1, personal communication, November 21, 2017). Kelly does not consider herself to be successful (personal communication November 22, 2017). Mandi only thinks of herself successful in certain parts of her life, like being a mother for example (personal communication, November 24, 2017). Josephine said she considers herself to

be fairly successful, but she can see how that can change for her. She is happy right now, but she knows that there is a chance that that will change again (Anonymous 2, personal communication, November 25, 2017). The struggle to get things done along with the disengagement that goes along with depression affects how a person with depression views their personal success more than it affects what they think success is.

The view of success seems to be more a personal level for people with depression. They think that depression gets in their way. April said that, I think depression gets in my way with how I get to being successful not my view of success. “Depression slows me down and can damage my motivation” (Anonymous 1, personal communication, November 21, 2017). This goes along with what Mandi had to say as well, even if you are successful depression can make you feel like a failure (personal communication, November 24, 2017). Depression can make you feel helpless and give you negative believes (Garvik, M., Idsoe, T., & Bru, E. 2014). Sam thinks that having these negative thoughts makes her strive to be more successful (personal communication, November 20, 2017). Kelly’s view on it is a little different than the rest: she believes it can alter your opinion on success because you can realize that small things are successes in themselves. For example, having the will to live one more day is a success in itself (personal communication, November 22, 2017). Sometimes the only thing that matters is to feel happy again which is what Josephine said, it absolutely affects my view on success in my opinion, because where a lot of people view success as having a really well-paying stable job, or a nice house, I feel like my view on success hinges so heavily on me being happy because I spent so long struggling to be actually happy (Anonymous 2, personal communication, November 25, 2017). They strive to be better, whether that be better at something or to be mentally better is

something that all of these people have in common. Even though their motivation differs, they want to be successful in their own eyes and beliefs.

Even though someone is struggling with depression, which does not mean that they can overcome it to some extent. Many people who have depression are able to stay engaged in the things that they have to do (Garvik, M., Idsoe, T., & Bru, E. 2014). Sam feels that she has been able to overcome depression to be successful (personal communication, November 20, 2017). Both April and Josephine feel that they know how to handle their depression and push forward. They know that it is still a struggle, but they know how to live their lives know which they see as success on its own (Anonymous 1, personal communication, November 21, 2017, & Anonymous 2, personal communication, November 25, 2017). Not all who deal with depression are as lucky though, Mandi has some days where she feels like she is successful and others where she feels like she is a failure (personal communication, November 24, 2017). Some people still are really struggling to overcome their depression, like Kelly who says it will be a blessing to overcome her depressions and feel successful (personal communication, November 22, 2017). The level of struggle is different for every person. With that said it is possible for most people to overcome their depression. Even if they cannot fully overcome it they can still find a way to do well in what they want to. For four of the five of the people I interviewed are in school of some level right now and they all are doing very well.

To be successful you have to get to a certain point in your life where you feel you are successful in your own eyes. There may be many different ways to get there, and not all of them may be easy. You have to go through the hard times to see the better ones, and to make it through them is success (Runions, S., personal communication, November 20, 2017). If you make it through the small things then the bigger things in life may seem like they are easier to

accomplish and overcome (Lahaie, K., personal communication, November 22, 2017). Each person is different, and it is difficult to predict how they may react to a certain situation even if depression is not involved in their life (Givens, A., personal communication, November 24, 2017). Depression is a very hard thing to measure, and it cannot really be measured on a scale (Garvik, M., Idsoe, T., & Bru, E. (2014), Haung, C. (22 October 2013), & Walkiewicz, M., Tartas, M., Majkowicz, M., & Budzinski, W. (2012). The way depression impacts someone is very personal and can cause them to view themselves as less. This impacts their views and alters their feelings about their personal success.

None of this research was done specifically looking at the gender of the people with depression. There have been some observations made though that show that females have a higher rate of depression than males (Garvik, M., Idsoe, T., & Bru, E. (2014) & Haung, C. (22 October 2013). I interviewed only females, however not intentionally. These are people that I knew would be open to answering my question because they have been open to me about their depression before. Having the data personally retrieved from only females and other data pointing out that females reported 12% more for having severe depression (Garvik, M., Idsoe, T., & Bru, E. (2014). Within the five people I interviewed at least two of them struggle with severe depression. They are part of the percentage.

Depression is something that people have to deal with for their whole life. It is not something that goes away like a cold does after a few days. Depression is something that will always be there, you just learn how to manage it and move forward with your life. Depression can start from a very young age and continues to develop as a person gets older (Garvik, M., Idsoe, T., & Bru, E. (2014). There is no cure for depression, just ways to handle it. As a person gets older and their outlook on things changes we will never truly know how much of that may

have been affected by depression. Depression can destroy your life, you just have to learn how to deal with it and live day by day (Anonymous 1, personal communication, November 21, 2017). Just push through and you will come out the other end. Depression shapes who you are but it does not have to define who you are.

Success and depression are not two words that you would normally hear together, unless for the rare occasion that some medicine worked for a little while. Everyone has an outlook on life, and part of that is their success. How one achieves the idea of success they have set for themselves is what it means to be successful. Not everyone's idea of success is the same, some people think you have to have tons and tons of money to be successful, some think that if you don't have to worry about finances you are successful, and some definitions have nothing to do with money and those people just want to simply be happy. For some that is all they strive for in life. People with depression have the same general idea of how life should be carried out as everyone else. Depression just affects the way that they see themselves getting to that place. It can motivate them or knock them down, but it is a constant battle and it is something that comes in waves over time. Your view on the world and yourself can be turned upside but you get through. The view of success as a whole is the same however, how to achieve success is a much harder path for someone who is battling with depression.

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Free-will and Formation

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*“Midway along the journey of our life
I found myself in a dark wood,
For I had wandered off from the straight path”*

(*Inferno* I, 1-3).

With three lines, Dante Alighieri began changing the western world. His masterpiece, *La Divina Commedia* (or *The Divine Comedy*) is not only a chief cornerstone of the western literary canon, but it altered the broader western understanding of the afterlife forever. When we think of Hell—as a literary construct or otherwise— scenes of scalding sarcophagi and fiery sleet-storms readily appear, little pitch-fork-wielding devils soon to converge. This is heavily influenced by Dante’s *Inferno*, his most popular section. But Dante’s work doesn’t stop with the *Inferno*, it continues for two more books: *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*. Unfortunately, this stunted understanding of the *Commedia* misses out on much of the philosophical, theological, and existential insight that this work has to offer. The focus of this story is not merely the exploration of a sadomasochistic afterlife, this is a story of pilgrimage, of formation. As Dante the Pilgrim travels through Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven, his inner-being is transformed. Now, the substance being formed takes many names in the tale, but the most common is the Will. While this metaphysical title helps as a reference point, it does very little to describe the inner-architecture of how that Will functions. This poses a foundational question that must be encountered in order to understand the boarder story: How are we to understand Dante the Poet’s conception of the will? This paper attempts to answer that question. It has four parts: the first will map the three major philosophical perspectives of the will. The second, citing internal evidence, will argue that Dante’s understanding of the will is most similar to a Libertarian conception. The third will evaluate one possible counter-text, and the final section will demonstrate the implications of that understanding of the Will in the fictional *Commedia* and in the world we inhabit. Noting the

enormity of the book I'm exploring and the small amount of time that I have been allotted, I want to acknowledge that this argument is to function as an outline, laying out a basic framework for other more comprehensive arguments to fill out in the future.

Section One: Conceptions of the Will

In current metaphysical thought, there are three major categories that describe the nature of the will: Determinism, Compatibilism, and Libertarianism.

Speaking broadly, "Determinism is the doctrine that every event and state of affairs in the universe is caused by a prior event or state of affairs" (Jubien 114). From this claim many assert that every action in the world is determined by forces (external or internal) before it occurs. Because of this, determinists argue that there is no such thing as a choice because the action has already been determined by the causal chain; thus, there is no Free-will. There is one major philosophical implication of this view that should be noted: If determinism is true, then people do not have control over their actions and, therefore, cannot be held morally responsible for them.

Compatibilists believe that both Free-Will and determinism can be reconciled. In this view, humans freely act upon their own desires, but their desires are formed by internal determining factors. If free-will is the ability to choose what one wants, both determinism and free-will can be corroborated because, while humanity has no other possibility, they do chose what they want. This concept becomes truly complex when it is expressed in a dualistic world, like that of Dante's. In this view, God could determine the desires of humans, and, if those desires lead some humans to be bad—causing them to be thrown into Hell—God is justified in that condemnation because they chose what they wanted. I find this view to be highly

problematic because of its unsatisfactory explanation of a will that claims to be free, but whose freedom is little more than philosophical semantical games. If you share my struggle with this view, take heed, let us turn to the last view.

Libertarians believe that, “some human actions are freely chosen” (Crashcourse). This means, some choices can be made for reasons that are self-determined and founded upon one’s own free-will. Holding this view of the will does not ignore the influence of external factors, but it does aver that in the midst of those factors, choice is somehow maintained. This is where things get dicey, because a question quickly appears: what can maintain that freedom in the midst of all the internal and external determining factors?

This is no small question, and this is where I turn to Dante.

The Text Itself

In the 16th canto in *Purgatorio*, Dante the Pilgrim finds himself in a thick smoke unable to see anything around him. In the heart of the nebula, a man, Marco the Lombard, appears to guide him. This is the backdrop for our answer, and this passage is central to the Dantean argument for a kind of Libertarian Free-will. The flummoxed Pilgrim implores Marco,

“...there’s a problem haunting me:

I can no longer keep it to myself.

[...]

The world, indeed, as you have just declared,

Is destitute of every virtue known,

Swarming with evils, ever breeding more.

What is the cause of this? Please make it clear

That I may teach the truth to other men;

Some see it in the stars, some on the earth.

(Purgatorio XVI, 53-54, 57-63).

Dante the Pilgrim is trying to reconcile the evil in the world with the deterministic philosophies he has encountered on earth. Look closely at the last stanza. He uses the word “cause”. He seems to assume a deterministic frame. The mention of the stars confirms this. In the 14th century, the stars were seen as some of the main agents of divine omnipotence. As scholar Richard Kay puts it, “... [Dante] believed that the stars were God’s instruments for expressing his will through Nature” (Kay 9). Within this same astrological belief is the understanding that the planets dictate disposition and character which is a belief that Marco responds to in the next section, alongside his refutation of determinism:

*“You men on earth attribute everything
To the spheres’ influence alone, as if
With some predestined plan they moved all things.*

*If this were true, then our Free Will would be
Annihilated: it would not be just
To render bliss for good or pain for evil.*

*The spheres initiate your tendencies:
Not all of them— but even if they did,
You have the light that shows you right from wrong...*

(Purgatorio XVI, 67-75).

Marco the Lombard insists that while “the spheres” influence one’s disposition and character, but they do not dictate them. As Dr. Kay continues, “Thus, it appears that Dante is endowed with a certain character, but it can be used for either good or evil, and the moral responsibility is his alone” (Kay 6). Here’s an analogy that may help elucidate this worldview: most of us would agree that the internal tendencies toward alcoholism are often not a choice. Last summer, while I briefly stayed in a poorer part of in Fairbanks, Alaska, I had a conversation about with a community worker about some issues in his neighborhood. This worker explained that Native Alaskans have a much lower biological tolerance for alcohol. As he said it, “there is no such thing as social drinking in this community. After one beer, most are completely sloshed.” A question about moral responsibility hovers over this sad, unselected reality, and this question brings Marco’s statement directly into view. Regarding this situation, Marco would say that through the planets, God very well could have caused that biological reality, but that does not mean those Native Alaskans are without choice. They can decide whether they drink or not, even if their bodies’ ability to handle that alcohol is much less. I am not saying this to shame a community, we all have our negative traits, and I am saying this to explore a possible way that this philosophy exists on earth. Marco is speaking against both internal and external determining factors; he is rejecting both determinism and compatibilism.

But his reason for this rejection seems too simplistic: if there is no free-will, humans are not free, moral beings. If that is the case, then God would not be just in awarding for good action or condemning for ill-action. He appeals to the necessity of morality. This is a common argument, but it does not hold much weight in modern philosophical discourse, because not only does it assume an objective Christian morality as well as a Christian God, but also it is focused on Hell. The argument could be formulated something like this: 1. There is a heaven and hell to

which people are sent based upon their morality. 2. Their morality is based upon their choices. 3. If their choices were predestined by God, they would have no control over where they go. 4. This predestination would make God immoral. 5. God is moral. 6. Therefore, people must have a free-will. This argument has many assumptions, and because we don't share those assumptions, it becomes almost laughable. However, I would say it loses ground because it seems more like a reactionary polemic in defense of Hell, than a reasonable argument about the nature of the will. It can seem that Dante the Poet is saying through Marco, "If there's no free-will, then God can't throw people into Hell, and God definitely throws people into Hell." I want to momentarily break away this canto to look at another, more nuanced argument. One that still has its assumptions, but whose assumptions are predicted upon an idea that is much easier to palate.

In Canto V of the *Paradiso*, Dante's long-lost romantic crush, Beatrice, explains origin of the Will:

*"The greatest gift that our bounteous Lord
Bestowed as the Creator, in creating,
The gift He cherishes the most, the one*

*Most like Himself, was the freedom of the will.
All creatures with intelligence, and they
Alone, were so endowed both then and now"*

(Canto V, 19-24)

In this passage, Beatrice asserts that free-will is an ontological necessity to maintain human-ness. If there is no free-will, we are not humans. In this model, when God created

humanity in God's image, free-will was, at least, a part of the "God-ness" that was bestowed. This argues that God gave free-will because of love, not so that the moral requirements for fire and brimstone could be upheld. This argument goes something like this: 1. In creation, the Christian God created women and men in God's own image. 2. One of the fundamental aspects of that image was the existence of human free-will. 3. Therefore, we have a free-will. It should be noted that there are many similar, Christian assumptions in this argument, but those assumptions are much easier to stomach when compared to the previous one. Further, Dante is in discussion with a "Christian" worldview. He is not trying to respond to modern rebuttals. The possibility for frustration with this argument should be squelched by a warning against anachronism.

In closing, this passage furthers the argument for a Libertarian free-will in the broader philosophical discourse by providing a rational explanation of how a free-will could be maintained. In a world where possible determining factors come a dime a dozen, an appeal to God, while not a say-all-end-all in the matter, does create enough logical space for that free-will to be maintained.

Interestingly, the appeal to God is also found in back the 16th canto in *Purgatorio*:

*You are free subjects of a greater power,
A nobler nature that creates your mind,
And over this the spheres have no control.*

(Purgatorio XVI, 76-78).

One last word on this long discourse, earlier I mentioned that the 16th canto is central to the argument of the Divine Comedy, I meant that very literally. The Divine Comedy is divided into three major books, which are each subdivided into shorter sections of poetry called cantos (there are 34 cantos in the *Inferno* and 33 in both the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*). These total exactly 100 cantos in the Poet's book. It is at the center of this meticulously structured epic poem, the 50th canto, where we find the 16th canto in the *Purgatorio*, which longest exploration of the nature of the will in the Poet's work. This literary pedestal that this discourse is given in the Poet's tale cannot be overstated. Dante argues through his noble characters for an understanding of the Free-will that is most similar to Libertarianism, a will that is grown and guarded by God.

Counter-text

Let us turn to one text that could be interpreted as a counter-example to the model presented above:

In *Paradiso* VIII, the heaven-dweller Charles Martel explains further the role of the stars. Martel states things like, "One Mind perfect in Itself / there is foreseen not only every type / of nature but the proper goal for each" (*Paradiso* VIII, 100-102). Later he states, "...Nature cannot fail in what must be" (114). This seems problematic. What if that nature wants to be something else? In response, I argue that Martel's use of the word "Nature" should be understood both as a reference to the disposition and gifting that each person is given from the womb and maintained throughout life. This interpretation answers the question: it does not corrupt one's Free-Will to be given a certain nature. My Free-Will is not corrupted because I have been given the

disposition of alcoholism. Similarly, it is not corrupted if I have not been given the gift of singing (though, consequently, the ears of those around me may be corrupted).

There is another question that stems from the quote: If humans are created with a specific Nature and that specific Nature has a “proper goal” (102), isn’t free-will corrupted because humans must follow the preordained goal to achieve alignment with God? Again, this is a misplaced understanding of the necessary conditions for free-will within the story. In Dante’s world, the proper goal of any disposition or gifting is alignment with God; Martel’s statement doesn’t nullify free-will, it just acknowledges that God created people for a desired purpose; Humans can reject that purpose if they so choose.

New Perspective

In this paper, I have argued that within the world of Dante’s *Commedia* humans have a Free-will that is most like our modern category called Libertarianism. This paper may seem like an unnecessarily pedantic exploration of the metaphysics of Dante’s world, but I would argue that this understanding sheds light on the beautiful and challenging nature of the *Commedia*. For instance, the most bristling aspect of this series is obviously Hell. I don’t think anyone actually likes Hell, but with this understanding it’s clear that those who are in Hell are there because they chose to be. Listen to this quote about the people in Hell from the third canto in the *Inferno*:

*They are cursing God, cursing their own parents,
the human race, the time, the place, the seed
of their beginning, and the day of their birth”*

(Inferno III, 103-105).

As Dr. Kay explains, “This list amounts to a comprehensive catalogue of all the factors natural and supernatural that enter into Dante’s account of human generation, so the last souls are assuming that their fate was determined by something beyond their control; they don’t recognize

that they also have the gift of free-will” (Kay 6). In Dante’s world, the people who didn’t think they had a Free-Will used that belief as an excuse for their ill-actions, removing blame from themselves, precluding the need for true penitence, which is the only thing required to escape the frigid fires of perdition. This is a tragic and challenging revelation.

But it does stop there, with this view Dante is given a vital role to play in his own formation. It is only through an intentional co-operative pilgrimage that Dante believes one can be saved. This pilgrimage is one that he believes we all are on now, “Midway along the journey of *our* life”. One that, when followed with integrity, ends with joy and peace. One that finishes with the beatific vision, seeing face to face,

“The love that moves the sun and the other stars”

(Paradiso XXXIII, 145).

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Love and Longing in Las Vegas

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Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas by Hunter S. Thompson. The all American (and a little Samoan) story of a “doctor of journalism” (Raoul Duke) and his attorney (Dr. Gonzo) going to Las Vegas, Nevada in 1971 in order to find the American Dream. Oh, and cover the Mint 400 while hopped up on drugs. No biggie. What kind of drugs, you ask? Why, “...two bags of grass, seventy-five pellets of mescaline, five sheets of high-powered blotter acid, a salt shaker half full of cocaine, and a whole galaxy of multi-colored uppers, downers, screamers, laughers...and also a quart of tequila, a quart of rum, a case of Budweiser, a pint of raw ether, and two dozen amyls” (Thompson 4). But the question is, why the excessive use of drugs? Using reader response theory, I am going to explore the reasons why Raoul Duke decided to go on a drug binge. First, he wanted to to relive the Great Acid Wave of the Sixties, as well as his youth. Second, he wanted to make Las Vegas more entertaining and fun. Third, he wanted to numb himself from the possibility of not finding the American Dream.

The first and most blatantly obvious showing of this is in part 1, chapter 8. In this chapter, after finally getting some much needed sleep after dealing with Gonzo’s LSD overdose, Raoul Duke reminisces about when he first tried LSD. He mentions that this was back in the 1960s, also known as the “Love Generation” (Thompson 63), in San Francisco. The 1960s were a tumultuous time in United States history. A cultural revolution was taking place. The civil rights movement was gaining steam, as well as the gay rights movement. The 1960s were the era of free love, Vietnam, and the widespread usage of marijuana and psychedelics. Picture it now. “I have a dream” (Martin Luther King Jr.). Richard Nixon. “I get high with a little help from my friends” (Beatles). Oh, and “if you can’t be with the one you love, honey, love the one you’re with” (Stephen Stills). Raoul Duke also calls this period of time the “Great San Francisco Acid Wave” (Thompson 63). He decided to try LSD-generally being a pot smoker and a drinker-after

being at a concert at the Fillmore Auditorium. He then reminisces about how special it was to be a part of that moment in history. In fact, one of my favorite quotes from this book is, “We all had the momentum; we were riding the crest of a high and beautiful wave...So now, less than five years later, you can go up on a steep hill in Las Vegas and look West, and with the right kind of eyes you can almost *see* the high-water mark-that place where the wave finally broke, and rolled back” (Thompson 68).

To me, this shows that Duke longs for this time period. He holds the Great San Francisco Acid Wave in high regard, perhaps even as a peak or a highlight in his life. As a result, he spends the rest of this book, and maybe even his life, trying to recapture that special moment in his life, and his youth, with the excessive usage of drugs. Of course, the character of Raoul Duke was based on the life of the book’s author, Hunter S. Thompson, who late in life had a specific daily routine, first documented in 1994, involving consumption of copious amounts of cocaine and acid usage (Carroll). He dropped acid once a day, and used cocaine a whopping ten times a day (Carroll). That’s not even counting the marijuana and alcohol. Thompson seemed to keep himself in a permanently altered state of mind during most of his life after the 1960s.

Which brings me to my next point. Raoul Duke tries to relieve the Great San Francisco Acid Wave by binging on drugs. When he first began using drugs, he only smoked marijuana and drank rum. When he began using LSD in the sixties, that drug was obviously stronger than mere weed or drink. By 1971, the Great Acid Wave has ended by now, and a new era has dawned, the gold-plated decade of the 70s. Most of the political turmoil of the 1960s has ended, and a new zeitgeist has formed. Everything is not as it seems, and people put on masks, giving *Partridge Family*-like performances in the public eye, while acting like *All in the Family* behind closed doors. And Raoul Duke was having none of that whatsoever.

In order to relive the newness and strong sensation of being under the influence, Raoul Duke must get stronger and stronger drugs in order to recapture that feeling of youth and euphoria. Thus, he uses many strong and dangerous drugs, including mescaline (derived from the Peyote cactus), LSD, ether, and adrenochrome (derived from the adrenaline gland of a living person). It is interesting to note that most of the drugs Raoul Duke uses on this binge fall under the definition of hallucinogenic, exactly what he used during the Great San Francisco Acid Wave.

By the way, the film version adds to Raoul Duke's sense of euphoria and wonder towards the Great San Francisco Acid Wave by playing "Get Together" by the Youngbloods over black and white montage of protests, hippie gatherings, and civil rights demonstrations (*Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*). Johnny Depp's performance of Raoul Duke really conveys the passion the latter has towards the 1960s.

Raoul Duke's longing for the simpler times of the Great San Francisco Acid Wave of the 1960s is further suggested by the use of Bob Dylan's song, "Stuck Inside of Mobile with the Memphis Blues Again." Raoul Duke decided to come off the drugs after a particularly bad trip, and then discovers that Dr. Gonzo has abandoned ship, leaving him with the ungodly hotel bill. When Raoul Duke is completely sober, attempting to run away from the gigantic hotel bill, he is sitting in Wild Bill's Tavern. Suddenly, the jukebox starts playing the aforementioned song. In the book, the lyrics are drawn in the middle of the song, is "Awww mama, could this really be the end?" (Bob Dylan). Immediately after, Raoul Duke says, "No! Who played that song? Did I actually *hear* that fucking thing on the jukebox just now?" (Thompson 84).

This is significant because this song came out in 1966, smack dab in the middle of the Great San Francisco Acid Wave. This song could very well be attached to some drug related

memories for Raoul Duke. But why did Thompson choose those specific words as opposed to some of the other 1960s lyrics? “Could this really be the end?” (Bob Dylan) Raoul Duke thinks the singer is referring to the end of the Great San Francisco Acid Wave. Raoul Duke takes the line to refer to the end of that time in his life. The end of his twenties, and the end of one of the most revolutionary time periods in contemporary U.S. history. Of course he would be upset to hear the song on the jukebox.

However, reliving the Great San Francisco Acid Wave isn’t the only reason why Raoul Duke binges on the drugs. Maybe he just wants to make Las Vegas more fun and entertaining. Raoul Duke’s feelings on Las Vegas are obvious; he has no respect for it, and might even find it terrifying. He says about Circus-Circus specifically, “the Circus-Circus is what the whole hep world would be doing on a Saturday night if the Nazis had won the war. This is the Sixth Reich.” Raoul Duke goes on to describe the tackiness and capitalist consumerism of Las Vegas, then claiming that “no, this is not a good town for psychedelic drugs. Reality itself is just too twisted” (Thompson 46). Even Dr. Gonzo, Raoul Duke’s lackadaisical attorney, is becoming weirded out. He says of Circus-Circus, and Las Vegas in general, “this place is getting to me. I think I’m getting the fear” (Thompson 47).

So, if Raoul Duke did not like Las Vegas, why did he go there to use psychedelic drugs? My theory is that not only did he want to relive his youth, he also wanted a sick, twisted, adventure. Two of Thompson’s most famous quotes are “buy the ticket, take the ride”, and “life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well-preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and loudly proclaiming ‘Wow! What a Ride!’” It’s obvious here that Thompson was a thrill seeker, a man who sought adventure and stories to tell. A man who didn’t care what others

thought of him and what he did, and one who wanted to grab life by the proverbial testicles and make it his own. This was Raoul Dukes, and Thompson's own, special, way of doing just that. He bought the ticket, now he is going to take the ride.

Another possible reason why Raoul Duke took mass amounts of drugs on his excursion to Las Vegas is to numb himself from the possibility of not finding the American Dream. Throughout, the entire book thematizes the American Dream, making it out to be almost like some sort of religion. Have you heard about our lord and savior, the American Dream? The American Dream will save you from your sins. Even outside of the context of *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, the American Dream is a huge belief that many people still believe. Immigrants flock from all corners of the world to come to the United States. Why? Because they have heard about the American Dream, and they want to live it. The American Dream is a huge driving factor for many people, including Raoul Duke.

But, of course, Raoul Duke and his not-so-trusty attorney Dr. Gonzo find that the American Dream is dead. And Raoul Duke was partially expecting this to be the case. Towards the end of the book, Raoul Duke and his attorney, are at a place called Terry's Taco Stand. During this entire trip, Raoul Duke has been recording this adventure with a tape recorder slung around his neck. Taken directly from a transcript from the tape recorder of Thompson himself because he could not bear to write it down, Raoul Duke and Dr. Gonzo ask a waitress where the American Dream is. She mentions a place she calls "the old Psychiatrist's Club", which is a mental hospital. The two waitresses also show skepticism towards the concept of the American Dream, saying that telling people to look for the American Dream in Las Vegas is one of the oldest tricks in the book. Raoul Duke and his attorney go to the old Psychiatrist's Club, only to

find out that it had burned down three years ago. Raoul Duke then proclaims that the American Dream, is in fact, dead.

Raoul Duke knew that the American Dream was dead. He knew it in his heart all along, as suggested by his cynicism towards the American Dream throughout the text. To quote Thompson, “America is just a nation of two hundred million used car salesmen...” But what if it wasn’t dead? What if there was still some glimmer of hope, that it still might be alive and well? Raoul Duke might have taken drugs in order to open his eyes and show him that, no, the American Dream is deader than a worm on a sidewalk in Florida in the middle of summer.

Overall, the novelette *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* focuses on a lot of themes, one of them being Raoul Duke’s longing for the Great San Francisco Acid Wave of the 1960s. A beautiful, special time period in his life that he tries to relive on this quest to find the American dream in Las Vegas, Nevada. He sought a twisted, messed up adventure on his search for the American Dream, and he got what he was looking for. He came, he took drugs, he saw the painful truth, and he went home. We may never know the true reason why he decided to binge on all of those drugs on that little excursion to Las Vegas, Nevada, but one thing is for certain. To quote Thompson, “I hate to advocate drugs, alcohol, violence, or insanity to anyone, but they've always worked for me.”

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Crossing Cultural Borders or Living Transnationally

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In the movie Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi the use of black and white pictures and the less than modern approach to different nations and cultures changes the aspect of the movie with crossing cultural borders and living transnationally.

In the movie *Persepolis* little Marjane Satrapi was sent to Europe by her parents to be away from the Iranian Revolution. However, that just created a war within her due to the cultural differences she experienced while she was abroad. Satrapi did not feel like she belonged in Europe and felt that she needed to hide her heritage so she would not be questioned about her culture. From this part of the clip these people she met made it seem like she did not grow up seeing war and they basically downplayed it, which made it seem insignificant or trivial. This clip shows that Satrapi hid her actual heritage because the people she met either whitewashed what she has been through or made fun of her. Through the film *Persepolis* this is what happened to Satrapi for years.

Finally, her parents allowed her home. When she arrived home she tried so hard to fit in and belong again that she ended up trying so hard when she knew she had changed as well as Tehran has changed. Marjane had been away too long to be comfortable in her own hometown now. Even in today's society many who leave their countries to evade war or poverty do not feel like they belong because their culture is different than those around them. They feel like they need to hide whom they truly are to fit in which is sad because it does not expose us to new cultures and views. For those who leave their country behind hoping for a better future, could feel isolated because they "do not fit in". As with each person that has ever left their home country they may feel that they are not accepted. We will use 9/11 as a small example. Since 9/11 many Muslims have had that feeling. Those who are seeking new beginnings are sometimes hiding who they really are because they do not want to be considered a terrorist or anything besides who they really are. They left their country and moved somewhere they are unfamiliar with and some feel they need to

hide their culture and heritage while some do not care and make their culture and heritage known. Each person is different in expressing his or her culture and heritage.

When someone first moves to a new country and plans to stay there for a few years or the rest of their lives they notice the differences between their own culture and that in which they now live surrounded by. It is the smallest details that make the person sometimes uncomfortable with the world around them. In the case they move back to their home country after a few years like Satrapi had done. When one goes back to their country after some time, things have changed. It could be the atmosphere or the people. Either way, nothing is the same as it was when the person first left. That makes the person feel like they don't belong anymore because they are so used to not "fitting in" and following the "norms" of society that they try too hard to fit in and they realize that nothing is the same as it had been. Next time, think before you act because the slightest response to someone's stories or life could change how they display their life to others.

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Introducing the Gustatory System to a Group of School Aged Children

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During the fall semester of 2017 students Jenna Zubik and Taylor Mauger participated in an Outreach Project put on by Professor Hallock. The purpose of the Outreach was to educate children on topics regarding neuroscience. For this project we presented over the neuroscience of the gustatory system. Topics such as types of flavors, the myth of the tongue map, and conditioned taste aversion were covered. A large colorful poster board accompanied with a smaller board containing true or false questions was used to get the attention of the participants as well as to get them involved. They were additionally rewarded candy for their participation. We found it to be somewhat effective, but still thought that we could have done more. Though the children were interactive with us and answered our questions they were not completely attentive. In retrospect music and possibly even lights would have played an effective role in our presentation. To begin our presentation we outlined the definition of taste which is the sensation of flavor perceived in the mouth and throat on contact with a substance. Taste can be distinguished because of the microvilli, tiny sensitive hairs that send messages to the brain that help to identify taste, that make up the taste bud. Following this discussion we reviewed the type of tastes which were sweet, salty, sour, bitter, and umami. This was accompanied with the discussion of how smell, the olfactory system, and taste, the gustatory system, interact with one another. When we presented over our Outreach Project at the Clement Conference a graphic was used to further visualize the idea of how these two systems work together. This concept was followed up with the discussion on the idea of the tongue map, and the myth that surrounds it. We explained that tongue receptors are homogenous across the tongue and that there are not different receptors in different areas which seems to be a common misconception. The final concept that we taught the participants was conditioned taste conversion, which is the body's natural instinct to protect itself from a previous negative reaction. The example that we used was

if they were to get sick from eating pizza the next time that they were exposed to the sight, taste or smell of pizza it would lead to the sickness as well. As previously stated to help engrain these concepts we played a game of true or false. The statements presented were “The food does not have to cause the sickness”, “It is not conditioned taste aversion if you become sick hours later”, “It takes only takes one time to develop a taste aversion”, and “Taste aversions are permanent”. The participants were rewarded with candy whether or not they answered the questions correctly. For an activity the participants tasted a test strip with the chemical 6-n-propylthiouracil (PROP) if they were able to taste the chemical that indicated that they were supertasters.

In essence the participants learned what taste is as well as the different aspects of it. This regards concepts pertaining to how it works, the flavors that make up our taste system, and related concepts. As presenters and educators we were able to learn better and more effective ways to work with the younger population. By being more hands on and incorporating more media the presentation could have been more effective, fun and memorable for our participants.



Figure 1 Photo of Professor Hallock and students Jenna Zubik and Taylor Mauger at the Clement S. Stacy Undergraduate Research Conference.

The Dynamics of a Transracial Adoptive Family Through Foster Care

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Introduction

Children seeking adoptive homes through the foster care system have experienced severe emotional trauma. Aside from the experience of abuse and/or neglect, these children have experienced the break in family bond. There is an imminent need to belong, to be accepted, and to be understood. Children of color, who have traditionally been overrepresented in this broken population, have a unique place in this role. An astounding 59% of children waiting for adoptive placements are children of color, who wait upwards of five years to find a home that is suitable to provide for them (deHaymes & Shirley, 2003). In the 1970's the National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) established ruling that prevented African American children from being placed into white families who weren't skilled to provide the cultural and racial supports that a child of color would need to be protected in a racist society. Interviews with adult transracially adopted children of the 1950's and 1960's have described feelings of "isolation through experiences of racism and a lack of support in understanding their linguistic, cultural and religious heritage" (Wood, 2009). The National Council on Adoptable Children supports the NASBW acknowledging the difficulties in raising children of color would best be dealt with by same race adoptions (deHaymes, Simon & Shirley 2003). While race matching is an important priority, one must question at what cost. With the disproportionate growth of minority children experiencing long waits in foster care to find homes, President Clinton signed into act the Multi-ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) in 1994. This act minimized the stronghold of race matching and allowed children to be placed in transracial homes. Providing permanent families for children otherwise waiting in residential facilities is key for long term potential emotional health and ability to create secure familial bonds. Support for transracial adoption differs based on multiple facets of personal belief. While in theory, transracial adoption occurs

in all families who cross racial boundaries, the majority population of transracial families are that of white parents with minority race children. This paper will detail the lack of supports provided by child protective services, the stigma attached to transracial families, and the necessary adjustments required to provide the best potential outcomes for a healthy racial identity for children of transracial adoptions.

The Dynamics of a Transracial Adoptive Family

I. Failure to Provide Appropriate Supports for Family Preservation

While these foster children are seeking familial bond, there may not be a race matched foster or adoptive parent/family available or willing to provide the necessary home for the child. According to Jan Carter-Black (2002), there is a “Failure to effectively recruit, support, and maintain sufficient numbers of black adoptive and foster families”. The process of becoming a licensed foster parent is quite intricate. The aspect of divulging personal feelings, familial history, economic and banking information as well as offering access to ones home is daunting. When including these intrusive aspects of life with the perception into an already biased racist society it is clear why the numbers of black foster homes is lacking in our society. In addition to the lack of same race families available for children in need there is a disproportionate number of minority children who are removed from their homes with little chance of reunification for the family. When a child of an affluent family is removed, parents have more access to resources which assist in regaining custody of their child(ren). In more urban areas the ability to retain legal representation or even simple transportation needs for court ordered services differs significantly. J. Carter-Black (2002) cites a child protective service employee who stated, “I think that racism does play a part because when mothers are delivering in the hospitals, a lot of

who gets tested for drugs is up to the doctor's discretion, and you know black women are much more likely to get scrutinized and tested for drugs than whites are." There is a lack of development and financial support to offer programs that would benefit safe parenting for individuals in low income environments. Offering these types of programs could offer the potential to educate and maintain the familial bond for children prior to removal. R. Howe discusses how transracial adoption is simply "embracing and promoting a solution without accurately defining the problem" (2008). Another proponent that must be considered is the bias of white families who foster black children. Leathers, Spielfogel, Gleeson & Rolock (2012) cite the importance of a foster parents view of the birth parents' ability to care for their child, "Foster parents' perception was viewed as most relevant to their assessment of adoption likelihood". While one would hope that a foster parent had the child's best interest at heart, those with emotional attachment or adoptive mindset may express biased information when presenting their opinion on whether the birth family can potentially provide a safe haven for their children.

II. The Importance of Awareness and Ignorance of Color-blind Mentality

In addition to the discriminant actions that affect the black community, there is a lack of support when it comes to white families adopting black children. Rarely are white parents educated in issues that would pose potential hardships to them as parents or these children, raised outside of their birth culture. There is a concept that to love a child of another nationality one must be "color-blind". This idea is a gross mistake for the entirety of the family unit. The perception of "color-blindness" perpetuates the stereotype of treating all parties within the race and culture of the majority group; therefore, negating the cultural benefits and individuality of minority cultures. "To deny the reality that continuing racial hostilities and inequalities abound in our society because of a belief that society is 'color blind' is irresponsible and unethical" (R.

Howe, 2008). Rather than embracing the diversity of multiple ethnic ritualistic measures, the color-blind theorem focuses on de-racialization of an entire culture. Ultimately this process results in ignorance and confusion amongst those of minority ethnicity. The study orchestrated by deHaymes, Simon & Shirley (2003) interviewed multiple, middle-class, black, college aged individuals about their experiences in transracial adoptive, and both mono-racial and biracial biologically based homes. Most agreed that the lack of cultural exposure resulted in homes with at least one white parent resulted in an unawareness of positive racial identity. The lack of awareness resulted in a comfort of being identified as “white”. The complication in this results with the lack of acceptance from both the black and white communities, ultimately leading to long term issues with racial identity and self-esteem.

In a society that believes racism is progressive we’ve seen a significant increase in racially motivated crimes as well as institutional racism experienced by the black community (M. Wood, 2009). Transracial adoptive parents are rarely educated in manners to cope with these levels of racist experiences for their black children. While there is overwhelming evidence in support of transracial adoption, 50% of African American’s interviewed by Lee, Crolley-Simic & Vonk were not supportive of the process, expressing concern over “losing their cultural identity” (2011). Historically, private adoptions were established to provide white children to barren white individuals. Children of minority descent were placed into informal kinship adoptive situations within their geographic origin. It was the cultural norm for the black community to provide for their own. During a period of progression when abortions and birth control became culturally acceptable there was a lack of available white babies placed for adoption. Children of non-white ethnicity became a suitable substitution or the shortage of available newborns. As time has progressed the percentage of those who support transracial

adoption has dropped by 14% (Lee, Crolley-Simic & Vonk, 2011). There is a break in those who support transracial adoption, and the placement of minority children into white homes. This new phenomenon may be a result in the lack of awareness of cultural differences and appropriate preparation amongst those seeking to adopt.

III. Educational Opportunities

There should be a level of expectation when children of color are placed into transracial homes. Social workers need to be better educated on the barriers children experience when raised in homes where their cultural identity can be skewed. Providing education to workers who are placing children may provide homes where cultural competency is a primary goal for the family. There is an influx of incorrect racial perception in both white and black social workers, in their support or lack thereof towards transracial families. A transracial family can be successful if provided with the proper tools to provide a healthy, stable, environment for their children.

Social workers should provide training to families to gain cultural competence when dealing with ethnic barriers. The current consensus of education provided to transracial foster and adoptive parents deals primarily with the physiological differences between races. This is a gross misrepresentation in the need of societal education necessary for healthy long term racial identity for our minority children. In deHaymes, Simon & Shirley's (2003) article it discusses three areas that transracial parents should be educated: "racial awareness (sensitivity to racism and discrimination), multicultural planning (development of opportunities for the child to learn about and participate in his or her culture of birth) and survival skills (the ability of parents to prepare their child to cope with racism)." Mentorship programs would benefit the transracial

community. This would offer the potential for engaging in and embracing cultural diversity for themselves and their children. Another important aspect would be the education of white privilege and how its perception negatively affects the building of positive racial identity in non-white children. The vast majority of uneducated white individuals do not grasp the concept of their racial privilege and the power that can be used to benefit ethnic equality. Social workers should encourage parents seeking transracial adoption to reside in a richly diverse community and engage in social groups that offer positive reflections of their child's racial makeup. The importance of children being raised in environments that represent their cultural appearance can benefit the long term racial identity as adults. Transracial families would benefit with additional training on how to appropriately educate their children to deal with a difficult, racist society. Providing important resources and education for parents of transracially adopted children is key in providing an appropriate cultural identity for children of minority race.

Conclusion

There is a disproportionate number of minority children who are removed from their home of origin. There is a lack of recruitment and trust amongst the black community preventing the needed amount of same race foster parents to provide care for these children. Minority children wait significantly longer in custody for a family than that of their white peers. White people feel discriminated against when they're not able to provide for a child that has a different racial makeup than their own. Thus, in 1994 MEPA was enacted, providing for the transracial adoptive needs to come into focus. The barrier for transracial families is in fact that they are ill-equipped to provide a positive racial and cultural identity to the minority children they are raising. Unfortunately, MEPA lacked to provide training for social workers or families who went forward with transracial adoption. Children who waited for families were now

provided homes that continue being deficient in cultural identity and coping skills in a racist society. Research shows, (Lee, Crolley-Simic, Vonk, 2011) education and training for families could provide families the skills necessary to gain cultural competency in raising these children with a positive racial identity. If provided with the proper training these limitations can change and enhance potential acceptance and positive racial identity for children of transracial families. Transracial adoption can be a positive experience for both the child and the parents, with the right supports.

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Great Expectations: An Analysis of the Bildungsroman

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Charles Dickens' novel *Great Expectations* has been both praised and criticized. A criticism I find particularly striking is one made by George Orwell in his essay. Orwell claims, "As usual, Dickens' imagination has overwhelmed him... Every time this note ["inconsistency of characters"] is struck, the unity of the novel suffers... He is all fragments, all details—rotten architecture, but wonderful gargoyles—and never better than when he is building some character who will later on be forced to act inconsistently" (643-44). Does the seemingly "inconsistency" really make the novel suffer as Orwell says it does? I don't think so. In fact, I think Dickens' choices in what the characters do and say enhances *Great Expectations*. Brennan Manning once said, "When I get honest, I admit I am a bundle of paradoxes." Similarly, I think the same can be said about Dickens' characters. These "inconsistencies" of behavior are not, in fact, inconsistencies at all; rather, I think they demonstrate the humanity and authenticity of the characters. They grow; they change; they become the protagonist in their own kind of bildungsroman. Therefore, I disagree with Orwell's claim that Dickens' characters are forced to act in inconsistent ways; rather, I believe these "inconsistent" behaviors—really, characters' changes of heart—are intentional and necessary in that they are crucial to the arc of the characters' "bildungs" stories. This can be demonstrated through the lives of Magwitch, Estella, and Pip in their respective journeys.

As stated, Orwell believes that the characters of *Great Expectations* act inconsistently. Although Pip's moral development is probably the clearest to recognize—due to the story being told from his perspective—I think we can still outline an arc of transformation for the other characters. Magwitch is one of these. In the beginning, the convict seems to hold little importance in the plot overall. His "stage time" is minimal; he appears to be a flat character.

However, later in the text, we discover his crucial role. His return to Pip's life is subtle, coming in the dark of the night; yet shocking, as he reveals his identity as his benefactor. This return of Magwitch, and his shift in attitude between the first encounter and the second, is something Orwell applies his claim to. In response to Magwitch's interaction with Pip in the beginning of the story, Orwell explains, "...it turns Magwitch into a sort of Pantomime wicked uncle, or an appalling monster. Later in the book, he is represented as neither, and his exaggerated gratitude, on which the plot turns, is to be incredible" (643). What Orwell is trying to say is that according to how Magwitch acts at the marshes, he should not be acting as he does when he returns to Pip in London. It seems odd, or even inconsistent, that a scary convict would return with kindness and goodwill. Although I recognize the seeming inconsistency, I think this is an intentional move by Dickens.

Firstly, this difference isn't inconsistent—it's necessary. To become real, or become as close as possible to something like a real person, Magwitch must experience a transformation; he needs to change. Like the other characters, Magwitch's change of heart cannot happen in a vacuum. Peter Brooks agrees in his essay by highlighting, "The past needs to be incorporated as past within the present... in order for there to be difference, change, progress" (686). We *must* remember and reflect on Magwitch's past to see his transformation. Frankly, can there be a change without a place to change *from*?

In the marshes, we find Magwitch "before" the transformation; what he was like; what it appears he should be like at his return to Pip. Magwitch is a convict. He has shackles around his ankles; he is dirty and bloody; he's hungry. Furthermore, he is threatening and even physically rough with Pip by saying things like, "You bring' em both to me... or I'll have your heart and liver out" (Dickens 11). His ultimate motive in this moment is to use Pip to get what he wants: a

file and food. With this background knowledge in mind, it's no wonder why, like Orwell, we might be skeptical when Magwitch returns to Pip with the big news. What I think we must do is try and piece together what happened between that first encounter and the return based on Magwitch's dialogue. What, in other words, changed? Although I believe there are many factors that played a role, some of the most prominent are Pip's sheer behavior at the marshes and Magwitch's loss of his daughter, Estella.

We discover Magwitch's personal reactions to Pip's actions that day on the marshes through his dialogue later in the text. He reveals, "You acted noble, my boy...Noble Pip! And I have never forgot it" (Dickens 238). First and foremost, Magwitch was humbled by Pip's loyalty and kindness. Perhaps Magwitch didn't realize this right away, but it is clear he later reflected. Later in his conversation with Pip, Magwitch explains what brought him to the point of becoming a benefactor. Magwitch states,

When I was a hired-out shepherd in a solitary hut, not seeing no faces but faces of sheep till I half forgot wot men's and women's faces was like, *I see yourn...* I see you there, a many times, as plain as ever I see you on them misty marshes. Lord strike me dead! ... but wot, if I gets liberty and money, I'll make that boy a gentleman! (Dickens 241, italics added)

Ultimately, Magwitch can't shake Pip's kindness from his mind and is eventually humbled to the point of the desire to "pay it forward"—to return kindness to Pip.

In opposition to this, one might say that Magwitch isn't *completely* honest in his intentions to be Pip's benefactor. They might say that Magwitch is after fame glorified through

an individual in a way that he could never have himself. Although I recognize this hesitancy, I appreciate Brooks' observation about Pip's relationship to Estella in Magwitch's eyes. He points out that "Pip appeared originally to Magwitch as a substitute for the lost Estella, his great expectations a compensation for the impossibility of hers" (Brooks 686). In this light, I think we come to see Magwitch's intentions as genuine; at least more genuine in the sense that a father wants the best for his child; for his child to be successful out of a loving "pride." Overall, Magwitch experiences a transformation, and specifically that of humility. This shift only illuminates his authenticity and the human experience.

Not only does Magwitch undergo a "bildungs," Estella does as well. Although her transformation is subtler, and almost missed in the original ending, I believe there is evidence of a change. If we refer to Orwell's original claim, we might find a seemingly inconsistency in Estella from what she is like throughout the novel, and what she is like in the final moments. I think the hesitancy is more obvious in the revised ending, but the original ending hints at the same thing. When Estella meets Pip again, after several years, her attitude is different. Some fear that the revised ending, specifically, illustrates her in too kind of light; she seems warm and even sweet compared to what her personality has been for the entire novel. Instead of interpreting this as an inconsistency, I think we must see it as a transformation. To understand this, we must return to the beginning.

From the first encounter with Pip, we discover that frankly, Estella is a cold person. In fact, over the course of Estella's life, she seems to become colder and colder. What's interesting, I think, is Estella's recognition that Miss Havisham has cultivated this coldness of heart within herself. The text reveals a climactic moment between Miss Havisham and her adopted daughter. "“You stock and stone!” exclaimed Miss Havisham. ‘You cold, cold heart!’ ‘You should know,’

said Estella. ‘I am what you have made me’” (Dickens 229-30). Not only is Estella aware of her mother’s dominant contribution to her present state, but she decides to stay there. In other words, she chooses for *herself* to remain cold and marry Drummle. I find this fascinating. In dialogue with Pip later in the text, Estella reveals this very decision. She asks, “‘Why do you injuriously introduce the name of my mother by adoption? It is my own act... but I am tired of the life I have led, which has very few charms for me, and I am willing enough to change it’” (Dickens 271-72). This “act” of marrying Drummle is, what I believe, the crux of Estella’s own kind of “bildungs” story. Julian Moynahan agrees in her essay when she explains that “Estella treats [Pip’s] affections with cold contempt *until* her icy pride is broken by a brutal husband” (662, *italics added*). What’s important to recognize here is Estella’s humbling comes because of her personal choices, not Miss Havisham’s. David Gervais puts it another way by stating more generally that “*Great Expectations* owes some of its renown in our century to the fact that we have subscribed heavily to the notion that what we learn about life we learn— if at all—from experience, that self-doubt is the necessary prelude to self-knowledge” (693). According to this, Estella’s marriage to Drummle was intentional to truly come to terms with herself and with Pip. At the end of the novel, this is what I think we see in Estella’s dialogue. In the revised ending, she says “I have been bent and broken, but—I hope—into a better shape” (Dickens 358). In the original ending, which I’m personally fonder, this is revealed in Pip’s words: “In her face and in her voice, and in her touch she gave me the assurance, that suffering had been stronger than Miss Havisham’s teaching, and had given her a heart to understand what my heart used to be” (Dickens 359). As stated, I think that “suffering” was her marriage to Drummle. And this— this humbling of Estella through personal choices and pain—is what ultimately reveals the humanity of her character.

Lastly, and the most evidently, is Pip's "bildungs" experience. There are many aspects one could pinpoint when considering the protagonist's transformation; however, I will focus on one that Orwell himself takes notice of. He asserts, "Pip is conscious all along of his ingratitude towards Joe, but far less so of his ingratitude towards Magwitch. When he discovers that the person who has loaded him with benefits for years is actually a transported convict, he falls into frenzies of disgust" (642). I think Orwell is certainly right when he makes this observation; ultimately, though, Pip acts this way because of his humanity, rather than inconsistency. Regardless, Pip's ignorance concerning his ingratitude toward Magwitch while maintaining his feeling of guilt toward Joe, is an important stage in his transformative arc. Dorothy Van Ghent details Pip's specific guilt by commenting, "Pip himself conceives the tainted wish... to treat others as things. At the literal level, Pip's guilt is that of snobbery toward Joe Gargery, and snobbery is a denial of the human value of others" (653). Moynahan agrees by claiming bluntly, "Pip has certainly one of the guiltiest consciences in literature... [he suffers] for his sin of snobbish ingratitude toward Joe" (654). With this in mind, I personally, as well as other readers, can't help but tilt my head in confusion when I read Pip's harsh internal reaction: "The abhorrence in which I held the man, the dread I had of him, the repugnance with which I shrank from him, could not have been exceeded if he has been some terrible beast" (Dickens 241). The question is, how *can* pip behave in such conflicting, even seemingly inconsistent, ways?

To return to my original response to Orwell, the answer lies in understanding that Pip is experiencing a transformation. He is amid the journey; he has not quite reached the climax of his life. This dichotomy of ingratitude and his behavior is what continues to reveal Pip's humanity. I think the way in which Pip speaks is one of the most prominent ways we see this. In response to a reaction of Pip's like the one previously mentioned, Ricks believes, "Most of the time Dickens

gets exactly the right tone for Pip... At its best, such a confession has a briskness, and unwillingness to luxuriate, which renders it immediately authentic” (670-71). Gervais follows at Ricks’ heels in explaining, “Pip is so real because more than with almost any character in fiction, we feel in him the continued presence of the un-deciphered child on which his adult self has been built” (693). What I find so insightful about these comments is their acknowledgment of Pip’s humanity. Like a real person, Pip still has moments of unfiltered confessions just as he did when he was a child. His thoughts are vulnerable and raw, and demonstrate the kind of process we must go through to grow; to learn about ourselves and acknowledge our faults.

This process of thinking blunt thoughts; of being blind in his own hypocrisy concerning gratitude reaches its climax when Pip experiences the “Aha!” moment. G. R. Stange explains in his essay that “The last stage of Pip’s progression is reached when he learns to love the criminal and accept his own implication in the common guilt” (656). I agree with Stange and believe this is evident in the scene immediately following Magwitch’s capture. Pip states: “For, now, my repugnance to him had all melted away, and in the hunted wounded shackled creature who held my hand in his, I only saw a man who had meant to be my benefactor, and who had felt affectionately, gratefully, and generously, towards me with great constancy through a series of years. I only saw in him a much better man than I had been to Joe” (Dickens 332). Ultimately, Pip becomes aware of his ingratitude and personal pride. He is humbled, just as we are humbled as real people, through an honest experience of life.

In conclusion, it’s evident that these characters undergo transformations. Although some of their behaviors and actions are hypocritical, ironic, and even seemingly inconsistent, we discover that these are inevitable. Reading a novel like *Great Expectations* gives us insight to what the human experience is like. It reminds us, like Manning so beautifully said—we are a

bundle of paradoxes. It reveals our fears; our tendencies; our faults and failures. It sheds sacred light on our joy amid tragedy, our love in the midst of pain. It tells us, again and again, that this is what it means—this is what it means to be human. I think that literature, specifically the bildungsroman, is a transcendent window to our very lives. It allows characters to change. And if we give the literature permission, it might just change us too.

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You say “choclo,” I say “elote”: Hispanic Dialectology in Northwest Indiana

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The United States is a place where people of different nationalities and cultures meet. Immigrants from the Hispanic world bring along their particular use of the Spanish language. In his article entitled “Dialectología hispánica de los Estados Unidos,” (trans. Hispanic Dialectology of the United States) Francisco Moreno Fernández introduced the term superposition of dialects which refers to the coexistence of different Spanish dialects in the same space. According to Moreno Fernández, the United States presents a superposition of dialects which causes the decay of patrimonial languages, such as Mexican or Puerto Rican Spanish, out of which a new way of speaking and communicating emerges.

The purpose of my research is to focus on the different Spanish dialects from Northwest Indiana and explore how Spanish speakers accommodate their own regional dialect to improve communication with Hispanics from different places other than their own. My objective is to discover if the contact with a new way of “naming and saying” simply expands the lexicon of the Spanish speakers or if it causes the abandonment of the original dialect, causing the kind of changes that the dialectologist and Spanish Professor Francisco Moreno Fernández describes in his article “Hispanic Dialectology of the United States.” For my research, I interviewed people from a variety of Hispanic countries that inhabit this region.

First of all, let’s start with understanding what dialectology means. Dialectology is part of the study of a sociolinguistic phenomenon. It specifically refers to the treatment of dialects, as well as the disposition and characterization in a specific region. In this case, the dialectology that I will be focusing on will be from the Northwest Indiana region. Also, when speaking in regards to dialects, I am referring to the systematic difference in the way Hispanics groups speak the Spanish language. Additionally, different dialects result due to the manifestations that a natural language adopts in a certain territory.

In relation to Hispanic Dialectology, Francisco Moreno Fernández raised the following questions and thoughts: Is it possible for a Hispanic dialectology to develop in a country where the Spanish language is not official? And how can different Spanish dialects exist in a country in which English is the dominant language? According to Moreno Fernández, there has to be an existence of a stable community of speakers that communicate in the same language to have a dialectology present. There also has to remain an association of several sets of different linguistic features to certain geographical areas. Furthermore, there has to be a public and social presence of the language in addition to a configuration of linguistic attitudes typical of the community.

The question now is: Can a Hispanic dialectology take place in the United States? To start, the circumstances of Hispanics was analyzed. Currently, there is an existence of a well-established Spanish language due to the large immigration of people from different Hispanic countries (Moreno Fernandez, 2008). For that reason, Spanish is the second most spoken language in the United States, making it the first largest minority group of the country. In 2015, Instituto Cervantes Research Center declared that there are approximately 52.6 million Spanish speakers in the country (Perez, 2015). As a result, the United States has a presence of different specific Hispanic dialects in particular geographic areas. For example, the Cuban dialect is the dominant dialect in Florida, Puerto Rican dialect in New York and Mexican dialect in California (Moreno Fernandez, 2008). In the state of Indiana, 76% of the Hispanic population is of Mexican origin (Pew Research Center, 2014). This means that in the Northwest Indiana region, the Mexican dialect is the one that dominates. Therefore, it is clearly possible to have a Hispanic dialectology in the United States.





In order to understand why there is a variation of Spanish dialects in Hispanic Countries, one must take into account the history of the Colonial Period. During the 1520s through the

1540s, the founding of Spanish colonies took place. The Spanish Conquest imposed the Castilian language (Spanish from Spain). However, regional Native languages influenced the Castilian Spanish language that lead to the borrowing of words. One can observe the development of Hispanic dialects in different geographical areas, such as the Spanish dialects from Mexico and Ecuador. For instance, the word corn in Mexico is called *elote* and in Ecuador it is called *choclo*. The Spanish dialect spoken in Mexico has an indigenous influence of the Nahuatl language spoken by the Mexicas, also known as Aztecs. Whereas the Spanish dialect spoken in Ecuador has an indigenous influence of the Quechua language, spoken by the Incas.

What happens when different Spanish dialects intersect in one region? To test Moreno Fernandez's theory and explore the superposition of dialects in the Northwest Indiana region, I conducted a case study. In this case study, I started by interviewing ten people of Hispanic origin between the ages of 22-26. Four of them were females and six were males. As for their Hispanic origin; three were from Mexico, five were from Ecuador, one was from Colombia and one was from Puerto Rico. For the interview, I asked the questions in Spanish because I did not want to influence the interviewee's response with my usage of English. The interview method was divided into two parts. For the first part, I inquired for the following information: age, sex, Hispanic/Latino origin, number of years living in the United States, and Northwest Indiana region residence.

For the second part of the interview, I showed the interviewees twenty-two images of different items and asked for the following questions in Spanish: how she/he calls the item in their native/origin Hispanic country and, if they know a different name for that same item from another country. If yes, then why? In addition to this, which name of that item do they use more frequently in the United States and why? Figure 1 demonstrates a number of the images that

were used during the interview, along with the variation of names used to describe those items in the Hispanic countries of Mexico, Ecuador, Colombia and Puerto Rico according to the interviewees' response.

IMAGE	MEXICO	ECUADOR	COLOMBIA	PUERTO RICO
 <p>Picture 1 Popcorn Popcorn</p>	Palomitas	Canguil	Maíz Pira	Maíz
 <p>Picture 2 Beans Beans</p>	Frijoles	Fréjol	Fríjoles	Habichuelas
 <p>Picture 3 Chili Pepper Chili pepper</p>	Chile	Ají	Ají	Pimiento
 <p>Picture 4 Peanut</p>	Cacahuate	Maní	Maní	Maní


Peanut				
 Picture 5 Straw Straw	Popote	Sorbete	Pitillo	Sorbeto
 Picture 6 Friend Friend	Cuate/ Carnal	Pana	Parcero	Mis chicas/os

Table 1 Word Variations in Hispanic Dialects

Word Variation in Hispanic Dialects

Table 1

As a result of the interviews, I was able to uncover three main factors that occur when there is contact between the dominant Mexican dialects with the rest of the minority dialects. First, speakers of minority dialects adopted words from the Mexican dialect for two major reasons. The first major reason is due to having Mexican friends, which was the case for Interviewee 1, Female Ecuadorian age 23. When asked why she says *frijol* (bean in Mexican dialect) instead of *fréjol* (bean in Ecuadorian dialect), she claimed, “I started calling it the way my Mexican friends say it so they can understand me, after saying and hearing it often, I now call it that way too” (personal communication, March 28, 2018). The second major reason is that speakers of the minority dialect encounter a large amount of time with speakers of the dominant dialect within their environment, such as school or work. This was the case for Interviewee 6,

Female Puerto Rican age 22 who was lead to adopt words from the Mexican dialect because of work. She stated that, “[She] worked at a Mexican restaurant and that’s how they called it, then I started calling it that way so my coworkers and customers understood me” (personal communication, April 5, 2018). The same thing happened to Interviewee 3, Male Ecuadorian age 23 but at school. He stated that, “when talking to my Mexican classmates I learned the way they call it, now I call it that way so they can understand what I’m referring to” (personal communication, March 28, 2018).

The second main factor is that speakers of the minority use words from the Mexican dialect only when necessary. For instance, when interacting directly with a group of Mexicans. This is the case for Interviewee 10, Male Colombian age 23, who claims to use “the Mexican way” of naming certain items when he is spending time with his Mexican girlfriend and her family (personal communication, April 5, 2018). Likewise, interviewee 7, Male Ecuadorian age 22 asserted, “I say *choclo*, (corn in Ecuadorian dialect) but I only call it *elote* (corn in Mexican dialect) when I’m talking to my Mexican friends” (personal communication, April 5, 2018). Speakers of minority dialects tend to also use the Mexican dialect when visiting specifically Mexican restaurants to communicate. As Interviewee 4, Female Ecuadorian age 22 pointed out, “I only call it *chile* (Chili pepper in Mexican dialect) instead of *ají* (Chili pepper in Ecuadorian dialect) when I visit Mexican restaurants so the waitress can understand me” (personal communication, March 29, 2018).

Lastly, some Spanish speakers of minority dialects and Hispanics of Mexican origin occasionally use words in English rather than the word in their dominant dialect. On one hand, several speakers of minority dialects might not feel comfortable; therefore, they prefer to use the English word over the dominant (Mexican) dialect. Just as Interviewee 10, Male Colombian age

22 explained, “I don’t like the word *popote* (straw in Mexican dialect) and people don’t know what *pitillo* (straw in Colombian dialect) is, so I just call it straw because everyone understands me” (personal communication, April 5, 2018). On the other hand, when Mexicans are English natives and Spanish is their second language, they have a stronger English influence. Interviewee 9, Female Mexican age 26 explains that she only speaks Spanish at home and speaks more English to her friends, in school and work (personal communication, April 5, 2018).

With this case study, I was able to conclude that the United States presents a superposition of dialects, which causes the decay of patrimonial languages, such as Mexican, or Puerto Rican Spanish which then produce a new way of speaking and communication increases. In many cases, speakers of the dominant population do not know or do not learn the name of objects or “things” from other Hispanic countries. They tend to use the word from their own dialect or use the English version. For the most part, Spanish speakers accommodate their own regional dialect to improve communication with Hispanics from different places other than their own.

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An Evaluation of Tolerance in China and Ecuador: The Religious Factor

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In 1955 American sociologist Samuel A. Stouffer published his book *Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties: A Cross-Section of the Nation Speaks Its Mind* which was one of the first attempts to measure political tolerance in the United States. One of his many findings included the statement that “regular church attenders are less likely than other people to be tolerant of the kinds of nonconformists or suspected nonconformists about whom we are inquiring” (Stouffer). Since publishing this statement in 1955, many sociologists and political scientists have made their own contributions to this idea, but most of it in the United States. Therefore, it is interesting to consider whether or not this trend extends past the borders of the United States. I have attempted to add to this area of research by conducting an evaluation about whether or not Stouffer's findings apply to China and Ecuador.

Samuel Stouffer used the help of five hundred professionals to conduct face-to-face interviews of over six thousand Americans across the country. In order to measure tolerance, they asked Americans questions about how much freedom they felt should be granted to groups like socialists, communists, and atheists. Because it was 1955, these questions seemed to most represent tolerance. What he found was that people who attended church more often were less likely to be accepting of these lifestyles (Stouffer). Since then, sociologists and political scientists have continuously added to this area of study. In 1971, Steven Steiber found Stouffer's findings to be true after he conducted research in the Detroit area (reflecting earlier analysis done by Lenski) (Steiber). In 2006 Laura Moore and Seth Ovadia conducted research attempting to understand why people in the American South tended to be less tolerant and found that “residing in an area with a larger proportion of evangelical Protestants significantly decreases tolerance” (Moore).

This prior research proves that Stouffer's data holds true in the United States. In order to see if this is true globally however, I decided to compare tolerance in Ecuador and China because according to World Values Survey Data, these countries reach the extremities of religiosity. In China, only 2.6 percent of respondents stated that religion was very important to them whereas in Ecuador, 67.1 percent said that religion was in fact very important to them (WVS). In accordance with Stouffer's findings then, China should prove to be a very tolerant country and Ecuador the opposite.

The World Values Survey wave six asked respondents some questions that I felt directly corresponded to tolerance. Questions thirty-six to forty-four asked people to list groups of people that they would not like to have as a neighbor (WVS). Just as Stouffer used atheists, communists, and socialists as a "scale", I used these nine questions. China actually proved to be less tolerant than Ecuador in four of the nine categories.

In China, respondents were very intolerant towards drug addicts, heavy drinkers, people with AIDS, and homosexuals. In Ecuador, the people were more intolerant of people who are a different race, people who speak a different language, and people who practice a different religion, immigrants, and unmarried couples. In the categories where Ecuador is less tolerant however, the difference between the two countries is much less than where China is less tolerant. For example, ninety-seven percent of Chinese respondents said that they would not like to have a drug addict as a neighbor but in Ecuador only fifty-four percent said the same thing. Comparing this to those who responded that they would not like to live next to an unmarried couple, where only seventeen percent of Chinese respondents said so and only thirty two percent of Ecuadorians, we can see that overall Ecuadorians are more tolerant (WVS).

From this data it can be deduced that Stouffer's results do not apply to these countries. In each country there are other factors that contribute to their tolerance or lack thereof. I attempted to identify in Ecuador why it was that although they have a high degree of religiosity, tolerance appears to be high. In China, I wanted to understand why it was that religion appears to have little to no effect on tolerance as tolerance levels are so low.

In Ecuador, even though sixty-seven percent of respondents said that religion is very important to them, sixty four percent of respondents claimed that they are not a member of a religious organization (WVS). People in Ecuador tend to claim that they are Roman Catholic but rarely attend mass or other formal ceremonies. Ecuadorian officials limited the Catholic Church's privileges as early as 1905 and so the church was never able to establish as strong of an influence in Ecuador as it did in other Spanish-speaking South American countries. There has also been a recent movement to return to indigenous religious practices and a form of combination Catholicism and indigenous religiosity which contributes to Ecuador's high tolerance levels (Roman).

In addition to the lack of strong religious ties in Ecuador, respondents tended to be younger, from urban areas, and have higher education levels. Evidence suggests all of which have positive impacts on tolerance. In China, respondents were typically older, and the majority only had less than a high school education equivalent (WVS).

China reported low levels of tolerance for homosexuals although throughout Chinese history people have been seemingly relaxed about it. According to an article from The Economist, there are two main reasons why. The first is that because of China's one child policy, men are expected to marry a woman and have a son in order to carry on their family's name

(J.P.). Being openly gay obviously would hinder a man's ability to do this and would seem disrespectful to his family.

The second reason according to the article is because China is not a democracy. “In most countries, gays and sexual minorities have had to establish their rights by holding meetings and marches, arguing their case in the media and through other forms of self-expression. China’s Communist Party does not like the public expression of rights of any kind and has squelched most discussion of gay concerns” (J.P.). Being under a communist regime, members of the LGBTQ+ community will have a hard time getting their message across compared to places with democratic regimes like Ecuador.

China also had low levels of tolerance for people with AIDS which can be attributed to the AIDS epidemic that has affected the nation from the 1990’s until just recently. China is now making efforts and progress to combat this issue, but the people are still hesitant to accept their neighbors with AIDS (HIV).

According to this data it is clear that as far as China and Ecuador are concerned, religiosity does not affect tolerance. This does not go to speak for the rest of the world however, and there is certainly room for more research to be done to try to determine if religion truly does have negative impacts on tolerance in places other than the United States. What is important to note in each country is the other factors that can contribute to tolerance like their history. Things like what type of regime they have previously had or what they currently have can have just as big of an impact on tolerance as religion does.

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Tituba and Hester: “We Have Something to Say”

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A child is playing in the yard of their home, gullible to what or whom is within their surroundings. While at their most tender moment, an intruder takes the child and eventually brings them to a new land. The intruder assumes the child knows nothing and has not had a proper upbringing prior to coming to the new land. This child is forced to rid themselves of everything that gives them the identity they have and form into the culture that the new land offers, though they will never quite be accepted in this new land. This is an act of post colonialism and is what happened to the characters Tituba (*The Crucible*) and Hester Prynne (*The Scarlet Letter*). While looking at the oppression of women by the colonists and the need to give them a voice through Hester Prynne and Tituba, the effects of post colonialism include no power for women or punishment when they appeared to have power, no voice, their bodies were meant for male pleasure and for producing babies (motherhood), and the dominant culture/identity.

In order to understand why these women were oppressed by the colonists, you need to be familiar with Tituba and Hester and their stories that were originally told. Tituba, a fictionalized character based on the historical figure, is known from the play *The Crucible* written by Arthur Miller in 1953. The setting is placed during 1692/93 in the Massachusetts colony, Salem. Taken from her home, which is thought to be in Barbados, Tituba becomes the slave of Reverend Parris. She practices what the villagers think to be “black magic,” which is really just a religion, if you will, that she learned at her home in Barbados. Back home, this “black magic” is referred to as an act of healing. Reverend Parris’s daughter manipulates Tituba into using her “black magic,” which gets her in trouble. She, along with many other women and a few men, were accused of witchcraft. Some of them were hanged for their crime, while others like Tituba sat in

jail for a long period of time before finally being released. Tituba was outshined in *The Crucible* by the female white characters, leaving her story vague and untold.

Now, onto Hester Prynne in *The Scarlet Letter* written by Nathaniel Hawthorne in 1850, which is also set in a Massachusetts colony during the late 1600s. The novel begins with Hester being released from jail for a hearing, where she is holding an infant and a scarlet letter “A” has been sewn onto the bosom of her dress. This “A” stands for “adulterer,” which she committed and became pregnant. Though married, her husband had yet to join her in the colony, meaning the baby was not his. He does arrive in time to see his wife exit the jail with Pearl, her daughter, and the “A” sewn onto her bosom. Naturally, he is upset at his wife’s actions and the unknown partner in crime, whom he seeks revenge on. However, Hester will not give up the name of the man she committed adultery with, driving her husband mad.

As Tituba’s talent is the act of healing, Hester’s laid within a needle and thread, which is the only thing that gives her work to provide for her daughter and herself. Also in *The Scarlet Letter* are the common themes of the devil and magic. As Hester becomes more and more active in the society, the perception of her “A” begins to change from “adulterer” to “able;” the townsfolk are beginning to recognize her as the previous Hester, the talented seamstress. As all of this is occurring, Hester and her partner, the minister, finally reunite and make plans to leave for Europe together, as a family. However, the minister confesses to the town the crime he has committed and then dies. Afterwards, Hester and Pearl will eventually leave the colony and go elsewhere, though Hester does come back at an older age where her “A” has lost its significance, though it still rests on her bosom, worn away after years of wear and tear.

Neither Hester nor Tituba had the happiest of stories or a voice to tell their stories, but that all changed when Maryse Condé picked up her pen and offered these women something they had never been given before: a chance for a female author to allow them to tell their stories. This was done in the novel *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, set in the Massachusetts colony Salem and Barbados during the late 1600s and was written in 1986 in the French language, having been translated to English as well. This novel, apparent to its title, is about Tituba, the same fictionalized character from *The Crucible* based on the real Tituba and the real Salem Witch Trials. Not much is known about Tituba and her life; there are speculations, but there is nothing that shares her voice or backstory.

Condé was able to offer this to her, saying, “Writing Tituba was an opportunity to express my feelings about present-day America. I wanted to imply that in terms of narrow-mindedness, hypocrisy, and racism, little has changed since the days of the Puritans. Every black person living in America will tell you that racism still exists. A few success stories that are told over and over again for propaganda reasons must not hide the fact that for the majority of the blacks, life is still hell. As a foreigner and a French-speaking person, I don’t suffer directly from it. On the contrary, I am a curiosity; but I am too lucid not to see how the society works. Being in contact with many young black people as a university professor, I can see how frustrated and frightened they are by their society and how they have little hope in the future” (Condé, 203).

By giving Tituba a voice of her own, Condé is showing readers how life then was not so different from how it is today. This is so important because the readers will have the story shown to them and they will do what they will with what they learned, whether that be advocate to

change it or just to let it go in one ear and out the other (or eye in this case). Condé wanted to take on the challenge of writing the story of the historical Caribbean woman. The author wrote the novel in French, which makes the English translation a bit different, but the differences are very interesting. In the original French version, the novel, it is titled *Noire De Salem*, which literally means “black of Salem” (Manzor-Coats, 1). There are differences in the appearance of the novels as well, which targets certain audiences. The English translation of the novel appears as a historical romance novel and is geared towards white Euro-American white women (Manzor-Coats, 2). This is not a bad thing, having a mainly female audience, since it does finally give important female figures a voice. They are the protagonists of the story. Another important thing to note about the English translation is that it is “symptomatic of a colonial and neocolonial history in the twentieth century” (Manzor-Coats, 2). Though there are all these differences between the translations, the novel really always has those hints of colonial and neocolonialism inside its cover.

I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem starts off with the beginning of Tituba’s life being conceived from an act of rape by a white man on an English ship headed to Barbados where her mother would become a slave, her life never being the same. When Tituba was young, her mother was in threat of being raped once more, but this time she took action. Her mother struck the man, killing him. She was sentenced to hang for her crime, which continuously haunts her young daughter Tituba for the remainder of her life. One example of Tituba being haunted by the death of her mother was when Goody Glover was hanged for the crime of committing witchcraft in Salem (Dukats, “Violated Maternity”, 6). Instead of seeing the body of Goody Glover hanging there, she was back in Barbados at the tender age of six years old watching the body of her young mother swinging (Dukats, “Violated Maternity”, 6).

From there, Tituba went to live with Mama Yaya, whom she learned the act of healing from, which were powers to conduct good, not evil. This healing was a form of power and a form of maternity, for it caused her to comfort and care for others, typically those who were ill or needed the assistance (Dukat, "Violated Maternity", 10). As she grew to become a young woman, Tituba met and fell for John Indian, though she was warned by Mama Yaya to stay away. Like any woman who falls in love, Tituba does not listen to the warning and decides to go away with John Indian to a Massachusetts colony where they had received a new master, Reverend Samuel Parris. Tituba did not have a master before, though she worked for John Indian's master, and she chose to leave to go to the Massachusetts colony with John Indian. She chose slavery. "The slaves who were flocked off the ships in droves...were far freer than I was. For the slaves had not chosen their chains...that is exactly what I had done" (Condé, 25). Tituba has to accept the fate that she has bestowed upon herself.

In a new world, a world of slavery, Tituba finds herself getting into trouble. Her acts of healing are not seen as something good, but evil, witchcraft to be exact. Tituba is told by John Indian that dealing with Satan is what being a witch means to the white people, which is what they have accused Tituba of being (Condé, 27). She had never even heard of Satan until she married John Indian in Barbados. Though practicing the same rituals as she did back home, the perception of these rituals changed drastically by those who surround her. It is no longer accepted or practiced.

John Indian, her beloved husband, was one of the first people to call Tituba a witch, at first joking, but the tone began to change over time. He said to Tituba "You have bewitched me," as in she had seduced the man, using her beauty as a power to control him (Manzor-Coats, 5).

Tituba thought to herself, confused, “What is a witch? I noticed that when he said the word, it was marked with disapproval. Why should that be? Why? Isn’t the ability to communicate with the invisible world, to keep constant links with the dead, to care for others and heal, a superior gift of nature that inspires respect, admiration, and gratitude? Consequently, shouldn’t the witch be cherished and revered rather than feared?” (Condé, 17).

Tituba is confused by the meaning of witch because her culture, once she was taken in by Mama Yaya, gave her a different perspective on the art of healing, or known as witchcraft to the whites. This perspective that John Indian has on the witch is not a positive one and Tituba can sense that.

Tituba decides to engulf the person she is accused of being and confesses to witchcraft. She goes to jail for her crime where so many have been accused of the same crime that there is no room for her to be in a cell, so she is chained and left in the hall, miserable. A young pregnant white woman asks for Tituba to be put into her cell since there was room for another person inside. This woman is Hester Prynne, which is a great example of Condé using intertextuality in her novel. Not only did she offer a voice to Tituba, but now Hester as well. The reader sees the compassion Hester offers Tituba when extending her cell to Tituba as well. From there on, the relationship between the two women grew. The women helped each other and were on a first-name basis which eliminates their class and racial boundaries, though only temporarily (Manzor-Coats, 7). Hester wanted to learn about Tituba’s name, only disappointed to learn that she too has been given a name by a man, having hoped that perhaps at least Tituba’s culture does not do so (Manzor-Coats, 7). Hester wants to learn as much as she can about Tituba, interested in a world

other than her own. Tituba is happy to reminisce on the country she came from, the home she misses so desperately.

While Tituba was out of the cell for a trial, Hester was also able to take control of her own story by making the decision to end her life before the baby was born. Tituba is upset about this, merely from the fact that Hester did not wait for her, for they could have gone together. Tituba goes on with her life, given no other choice, and is eventually released from jail and ends up under the spell of a Jewish man and his family. She stays with them awhile before going back to Barbados. Here, she meets another much younger man, whom she joins in a revolt with. This revolt leads to her being taken prisoner and then hanged for her crimes. A common theme in this novel, Tituba comes back after her death, this time as a spirit where she finally chooses to be a mother and guides a young girl named Samantha while also being reunited with her mother, Mama Yaya, and Hester. While neither of the women's lives ended particularly happily, they appear to be happy in their afterlives, finally free of the chains that society judged them by.

Comparing all three of the texts, there are some key similarities and differences. Look at the authors, for instance. *The Crucible* and *The Scarlet Letter* were both written by white males, though in different centuries, decades before *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*. This means that Condé has seen or at least heard about the Civil Rights Movement, along with other significant changes going on around the world. *I Tituba* was also written by a woman, which was the first time Hester and Tituba were given a voice, let alone with a woman providing that voice. Looking closer at Nathaniel Hawthorne's work, *The Scarlet Letter*, you see how a nineteenth century male author portrays women. Women are viewed as property; they are of use to men, not equal to them. Women are supposed to be mothers and housewives, bearing children and tending to the home, though in Hester's case, a mother must be married and bear her husband's child in order

not to be judged by society. The voice originally given to these women, Tituba and Hester, are voices of white men, which does not at all reflect the authentic voice of the women. Condé gives a voice to the women who have yet to be given one, until this moment. Here is what Condé has to say regarding the voice she offered Tituba, “I felt that this eclipse of Tituba’s life was completely unjust. I felt a strong solidarity with her, and I wanted to offer her revenge by inventing a life such as she might perhaps have wished it to be told” (Condé, 199).

Revenge is another common theme between *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* and *The Scarlet Letter*. Roger Chillingworth, Hester’s husband, devotes the remainder of his life to revenge against Arthur Dimmesdale, the minister who impregnated Hester. Chillingworth goes crazy doing so and dies a year or so after Dimmesdale’s death. Then move on to Tituba, who gets revenge through Condé’s words. It is not literal, the words do not actually get revenge against those who wronged her; it is figurative because by being able to tell her own story, she has the power to expose the others to whom they really are. Given Condé’s work with feminist writing, she is able to write women, specifically Tituba and Hester, into existence, giving them speech that would have otherwise gone unheard, silenced and unable to express themselves (Dukats, “Hybrid Terrain” 1). The reader does not receive a true understanding of the women until they had read the feminist work.

Another aspect to back on Condé’s novel is the fact that Angela Davis interviewed her which is included in the back of the book. This helps validate the novel to feminist readers to help them see the connections being made (Manzor-Coats, 3). Rape is a topic that is touched on continuously throughout the novel and the reactions of the women who are raped or sexually assaulted tend to have a form of power behind them. Tituba desires the sexual activity to control the fact that it is her choice, not the males. Her mother fought against her attacker. Both of these

are acts of feminism and acts against those who oppress them. A big change in the English translation is the fact that these acts of violence go from an active to passive voice amidst the language differences (Manzor-Coats, 3). This could be for several reasons, one including the fact that the rape and assault of women is not uncommon or a new concept. It happens and has happened quite frequently.

Condé's writing of Tituba in general is also not the only touch of revenge included in her book, but Mama Yaya's advice to Tituba as well. Mama Yaya is trying to encourage Tituba not to use her talents of healing for evil, "Don't let yourself be eaten up by revenge. Use your powers to serve your own people and heal them" (Condé, 29). The revenge Mama Yaya is talking about is the evil Tituba has placed upon Susanna Endicott, John Indian's master and now hers in a way. Susanna had suspicions that Tituba was practicing witchcraft and was plotting to expose her. Tituba stepped to action by causing Susanna to come down with a sudden illness, a terrible cramp that put her to bed and eventually killed her. Little did Tituba know until arriving in Salem that Susanna had her own recipe of revenge cooking, even after her sudden death. Tituba and John Indian were sent to Salem in the New World to become the slaves of Reverend Parris. We all know how that ended.

One could argue that this was an act of oppression that Susanna inflicted upon Tituba and John Indian. Susanna was so cruel to Tituba, treating her with the utmost disrespect asking for her thanks for what little freedom was provided and criticizing what work she did for her. Tituba felt corned and abused. She acted accordingly, which was to use her healing powers for evil. Both women got their revenge in the end, but really, who won? Probably John Indian since Susanna had treated him so well, raising him in her own home, the only slave to still remain for such a long period of time (Condé, 22).

Revenge is not the only reoccurring theme in the texts, but the Salem Witch Trials as well. Now, why would a male white twentieth century author write about this? The Salem Witch trials are a perfect example of women who are showing power, or thought to be, and get condemned for it. They were not witches, they were just independent women who were starting to frighten the men of Salem.

The subject of voice is extremely important when dissecting the texts. As you open up *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* and start to read the novel, Tituba, playing narrator, is portrayed as the author herself. This concept is huge because she is literally telling you, the reader, and her story. She is given the chance to speak and define herself, forcing the readers to reimagine her (Dukats, "Hybrid Terrain" 2). The voice Tituba gives is strongest when she confesses to witchcraft, afterwards saying "I hate myself as much as I hate him" (Condé, 106). Though Tituba is not a witch, as she only practices the act of healing, she identifies as a witch because that is what the white man wants her to be.

John Indian, her husband, was continuously encouraging her to "do what the white people wanted." He was very popular among the whites, one of the reasons being was he never acted like how he wanted to, but how the whites wanted him to. An example of this would be when he was teaching Tituba her prayers, "Repeat, my love. What matters for the slave is to survive. Repeat, my angel. You don't think that I believe in their story of the Holy Trinity? One God in three distinct persons? But it doesn't matter. You just need to pretend. Repeat!" (Condé, 25).

John Indian has expressed his belief that the job of a slave is to survive. His interpretation of surviving is by morphing into a white man's culture, doing as he, the white man, would. This

works for him, but Tituba just cannot bear to do the same. Finally though, Tituba understands where John Indian is coming from and conforms, confessing to witchcraft and having worked with Satan. Samuel Parris understands this conforming Tituba practiced saying, “Well spoken, Tituba. You understand what we expected of you” (Condé, 106). By Parris saying this, especially with the use of the word “expected,” is evidence showing that he has control over Tituba. Maybe not him specifically, but the colonists do. By accusing her of being a witch and providing her with the tools to survive, Tituba has been colonized by the colonists. This identity that John Indian succumbs to is socially constructed, which is why Tituba was out shadowed in *The Crucible* (Dukats, “Violated Maternity”, 5). She did not morph into the identity the colonists expected of her, not until her life was threatened.

Interestingly enough, in *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, it is Hester’s influence that Tituba follows. She encourages her new friend to confess to the crime the colonists are charging her with, give them what they want and Tituba will get her life in return. Tituba does this, but hates herself for it afterwards, a decision that Condé is able to show the readers through the hate she has for herself. The trial and confession are the only actual historical documents that is in known of Tituba, meaning she really did confess, but Condé showed us a possible side of her as well, hating herself for having confessed to a crime she did not commit (Dukats, “Hybrid Terrain” 7). The fact that Tituba did confess was what most likely saved her life, for none of those who confessed to their charges of witchcraft were executed for their crimes.

Condé’s portrayal of Hester and Tituba is very important in the aspect that it shows the oppression of women. Not only does it show this, but it shows bringing Caribbean culture into American literature. “Condé’s novel thus not only fills a gap in the search of legendary Caribbean women, but also reclaims the Africanist presence as shaping force in canonical

American literature” (Dukats, “Hybrid Terrain” 8). Through the uniting of Hester and Tituba, the novel brings together a white and a black woman, both in similar situations, the color of their skin making no impact on the charge of the crime or the treatment they receive in prison. The women are able to connect with each other in more than just this aspect, but through motherhood as well.

Tituba has never had a child, though she has been pregnant, while Hester is also pregnant in the novel. Both women feel a strong sense of material duty which is why neither gave birth. This does not seem quite right, does it? Well the women terminated their pregnancies in one way or another because the world that they lived in was not one they wanted to bring new life too. Interestingly enough, Tituba became pregnant again before arriving back in Barbados. This time she decided to keep the baby, as she was inspired by her late friend Hester (Dukats, “Hybrid Terrain” 8). Tituba wanted to bring honor to the scarlet letter and to give it a new meaning, offering closure to Hester’s crime. (Dukats, “Hybrid Terrain” 8). If not for Hester’s pregnancy, she would fought for her beliefs and would have attempted “to undermine the foundations of the Puritan establishment” [(Condé, 163-64) Dukats, “Hybrid Terrain” 8].

Tituba admired Hester’s free will and independence, which is what inspired her to join the slave revolt when back home in Barbados. This ultimately is where her life ends, though this is not where Condé chose to end her story. Tituba was given a spiritual life in the epilogue where she is given a happy ending, finally choosing to become the mother to the daughter she was pregnant with at the time of her death. This is a great way for Condé to have offered Tituba power, something that she was constantly being accused of having, in one way or another.

One of the ways that Tituba expresses her power is by her choice to be a sexual being and not being afraid to address this to her readers. Condé writes about her character's desires, actions, and more regarding her sexual desire, explicitly naming the male's sexual organ, using it for her own pleasure, as men typically did of women, not the other way around. Going off the idea that men see women as property, they are meant to bear children and take care of the home. Tituba does not live like this. Instead of being forced to have intercourse, she chooses to have it, which is why Michelle Smith, author of the article "Sexuality and/as History in *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, claims Tituba is a feminist. One can argue this however, which Smith does bringing up Charlotte Perkins Gilman's work *Herald*, directed towards Tituba that she is "too fond of love," meaning here (hetero-)sexual relationships, Tituba can "never [be made] a feminist" (Smith, 2).

Yes, she enjoys the pleasure, but why? What are her intentions? This is something Condé does not reiterate on, leaving the readers up to interpret this. Yes, Tituba has a strong backbone that allows her to be herself, which could make her a feminist, but one must remember that she eventually does conform, sleeping with different men, confessing to witchcraft, and so on. Perhaps Tituba is this way because of her own mother. Her mother has aspects of power also, being able to stand up for herself when being raped for a second. Remember, Tituba was created by an act of rape and when she was a young girl her mother was about to be raped again, but she struck and killed the man and was hung for that. Throughout the novel the reader is given little insights that suggest that Tituba mirrors her mother, such as being close with her mistress and both ending up on the gallows (Smith, 1). Since her mother and her were both brought to a new world, taken from their home, Condé uses water frequently to flood the text in a way, which is like the colonization hanging over the readers heads the entire story, reminding us that these

women did not choose these lives, it was forced upon them (Smith, 3). They were taken from their homes, put on a ship, and brought to this new place. In Tituba's case, she had to re-identify herself otherwise she would have been killed. Tituba's mother did not choose to re-identify herself, it was yet another thing forced upon her. The English sailor who raped her also impregnated her, changing her identity to now a mother.

Tituba's mother, Abena, is an example of a violated mother, having been objectified by males (Dukats, "Violated Maternity", 1). Mothers tend to be idolized as these nurturing, caring, support, putting their children before themselves, but Abena was not this way since her daughter was a constant painful reminder of what she went through (Dukats, "Violated Maternity", 2). Mara Dukats stated this about mothers who are in slavery, "Rooted in the violent colonization of black female sexuality, motherhood in slavery was an extremely complex and conflict-ridden experience, the repercussions of which are still felt today and manifest themselves as the literary heroine's ambivalence" (Dukats, "Violated Maternity", 2). The motherhood of Abena was a very complex thing for her since being a mother comes with certain expectations which she did not meet. This effected Tituba in her own life when she was going to become a mother herself. She feared that she was going to be the same to her own child as her mother was to her.

The female slave would be used to produce more children, being solely used to have children, not be a mother to those children. She would be denied the rights to her body and to nurture her own children, not even being given the chance. Toni Morrison explained this in her novel *Beloved* with the word dirtying meaning that the worst part of slavery was not the work or the threat of being killed, it was the fact that the white men could dirty you (Dukats, "Violated Maternity" 3). Dirtying means violating the woman, being destructed by the white male (Dukats,

“Violated Maternity” 3). Everything about her does not belong to her, but to the white man who owns her.

Abena’s motherhood experience was not average as you can see because she was able to interact with her daughter. Unfortunately, she did not take advantage of this because of the painful memories that Tituba was associated with. Women literally had to labor to bring more slaves into the world. No wonder Tituba took her pregnancies into her own hands by terminating them. She only had the power to control her life and the life of the baby inside of her. She was not going to allow those who have oppressed her to continue to do so through her own children (Dukats, “Violated Maternity” 4). This shows Tituba’s strong independence, the power that aura’s around her presence that made the citizens of Salem feel threatened in the first place.

Having been separated from her mother at a young age and then in young adulthood her home, Tituba has a constant pain in her life, a reminder of the things she has lost (Dukats, “Violated Maternity”, 8). She would dream about Barbados, causing her to miss home, but also remember it at the same time. The memories are also much more comforting and pleasurable than reality. The “motherland” she returns to is not the same beautiful home that she left behind; it has changed. When she returns she finds a cruel reality, being alone and quite literally having no roof to live under. It does not help when she finally does connect with people in Barbados, they know who she is and her story. Not tales of her in Barbados, but having been accused of witchcraft in the Massachusetts colony. This will remain hovering over her shoulders until her death.

When Tituba begins her story in *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, she asks a question, wondering why her story is not out in the world among those convicted of witchcraft in Salem.

Why wasn't she included? The fact that Tituba is wondering this brings up that fact that there is existence, identity, and presence in history (Mudimbé-Boyi, 1). Everyone has these characteristics even if they do not feel like they do. Tituba felt invisible and unseen, not even having the power of being seen, the average human eye ignoring her presence (Mudimbé-Boyi, 1). By Condé retelling Tituba's story, she is no longer invisible, being able to tell her story to the readers. Though she is amidst these characters who may not see her, the readers of her story does, offering Tituba a bit of power to keep her going. Because of this, Condé and Tituba have a special relationship as Condé has not only interpreted Tituba's life for us, but mediated it as well (Mudimbé-Boyi, 1). It is significant that Condé is not from the same culture as Tituba, though both are able to put that aside for their relationship. Tituba, as a slave, does not know how to write. Her culture relies on sharing this orally to remember them, while Condé is able to write everything down, even though she speaks a language different than Tituba. This means that Condé has a power over Tituba, which she takes advantage of in the way of sharing Tituba's story, sharing her voice which offers her meaning, something that is new to Tituba (Mudimbé-Boyi, 3).

Included in the back of *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* is an interview that was conducted with Condé by Angela Davis confirms the relationship between the author and the protagonist, "The conversations went on all the time I was writing the novel. I had the feeling that Tituba was involved in the writing. Even when I left my pages at night in my study, I believed that she would go look at them, read them, and eventually correct what she did not like. I cannot say when we really started conversing, however. All along during my

writing of the novel I felt that she was there --that I was addressing her (Condé, 200).

This shows Tituba's involvement in the writing of her story, which Condé so graciously shared with us. Tituba trusted Condé in working together to write the story, which really gives the novel a sense of authenticity that otherwise may not have been there (Mudimbé-Boyi, 4).

Tituba's life was filled with her questioning many things such as her identity, origins, race, access to language, and the power of language- specifically the power of the word "witch" (Mudimbé-Boyi, 5). This reflects on what her life really was probably like, full of questions and not understanding what is going on at times. The readers see the confusion that instils over Tituba when she is called a witch and eventually accused of committing witchcraft. This was a part of her identify, the act of healing, and she is being punished for it, for being herself. This reflects on the real-world problems going on still today, which was another important thing Condé was trying to make her readers aware of. People are still judged on being themselves and identifying with their culture. They do not understand each other or for that matter try too. People, when fearing others, will objectify and oppress one another in fear of change or acceptance (Mudimbé-Boyi, 5).

C.L. Innes' book *Introduction to Postcolonial Literatures in English* and Elisabeth Mudimbé-Boyi's article "Giving a voice to Tituba: The Death of the Author?" make some great connections to post colonialism, especially the fact that there is a bias that surrounds it. Innes makes the point that there is a bias when it comes to postcolonial writing, which is what *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* is considered. The bias comes from the location of the author, some coming from Africa and the Caribbean while others are from Europe or the United States.

Some of these works have even been banned in other countries due to its content being controversial, some cultures not even being represented in the colonization at all. This is for several reasons. You have to look at who is writing these texts and what is their background, who is the intended audience. These will all lead to a specific type of writing, which in some cases is the culprit of the biases.

The Scarlet Letter and *The Crucible* are bias because they were written by males with the intended audience of those familiar with these historical events, though many know about it, but did not live through it. With *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, the author is female and is writing the novel for Tituba, intending for women to read it. Condé is not bias because she is writing about a historical figure from the Caribbean while she herself is French speaking from Guadeloupe, making her diverse. As the readers of postcolonial or anti colonial text is typically diverse, having an author who is diverse makes her story, her writing, more authentic.

Tituba's story provided by Maryse Condé is compelling. With women continuing to fight more and more for equal rights through the ideology of feminism, the importance of Tituba sharing her story, and Hester as well, becomes gradually more and more significant. Condé gives these powerful women something Arthur Miller and Nathaniel Hawthorne could not. She showed these acts of power that the women had, gave them a say in their sexuality and control of their own lives, including the babies inside them. Tituba and Hester had so much to say and share us and they were finally able to thanks to Condé's work.

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Humans, Animals, Climate Change and Our Culture.

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Abstract:

Our environment, society and its structure is built upon its relationships, with living and non-living matter, laws both natural and man-made, and consciousness of self and the world around oneself. This web of relationships has developed over time and has shaped our culture in a life like, moving, way. The physical living world faces extreme weather conditions due to climate change, which has an impact on land, water, food and energy for all life on Earth. It also faces social injustices that our culture has seemed to accept as a norm. Human relations with other living things have changed, we eat and mistreat animals, waste food, pollute the environment, manage waste poorly, and aren't addressing these issues holistically. This paper aims to look at these problems and how they relate to one another. While looking at a holistic approach in reforming our relationships and culture. All life is a part of this complex web of relations including humankind and it is humankind that has a unique ability to make drastic changes that can improve quality of life, create man-made laws that promote and protect natural laws and raise consciousness through shared knowledge and self-understanding.

Terms to Note: We- the collection of Humans that identify with the subject. Humans- sentient beings with the highest level of consciousness, the ability to be aware of objects, on the planet and a high level of intelligence, the ability to solve problem. Animals- sentient beings who have a level of consciousness, the ability to be aware of objects, and high level of intelligence, the ability to solve problems. Climate Change- The phenomenon of our average weather patterns changing over a long period of time, thirty years or more. Global Warming- The warming of the global temperature over a long period of time, usually thirty years.

We as Humans over the course of human's history have created a story of achieving and reaching new levels of consciousness; it is that ability that we possess and story that have brought us to this very moment that we are in now. We now the authors, the new authors, of the human story. What we achieve and become aware of in the time we are able to write we will have written the story that will be read from those future new authors who will continue on the writing of human history, until the story ends. We have been able to look out into the world and notice problems that aren't of our own, and be able to find ways to solve them, with new innovative solutions; to notice a life aside from our own and be able to care for it in ways that it may need to be cared in, to heal it in way that it may need to heal.

In this ever moving movement of the utensil, we call our lives, we use to write; what is being written is something of a tragedy, reaching a climax of complete and utter disaster if we don't change the narrative of the story. There is no clear collective story at the moment as it can never be one until the sentence is formed in connection with the others and the story has ended, however we are able to change the story. As the story truly can only be viewed by looking back on it, one must sit and reflect on its own life to have meaning to it. It is in that mode of consciousness that we then see what we have become, the character. In this story we share with animals, *what is our relationship to them? What relation do the collection of both beings play with our environment and how does climate change affect humans and animals?* These are questions we must ask ourselves, especially if we want to be able to continue writing the story of humans. It is a delicate web of relations with the living, including humans, animals, plants and other organisms, with the non-living, matter that we see as objects in our environment like rocks, buildings, ponds, air, etc. Those relations and how we interact with other beings and objects form what we identify with as our culture. The culture of humans varies in practice around the globe each unique in specific regions, but there seems to be a collective sense of culture where we empathize, and seek knowledge and share ideas with one another and it is that ability that humans have that make them able to solve these problems such as our relation to animals and our environment.

Imagine a regular domestic house cat living near the shores of some low lying coastal region.

The cat can visually acknowledge if a room is filling up with water and is able to climb to get out of the reach of the water because the cat is aware that it is not normal in its environment and will seek a safe place to reevaluate. Now imagine the cat is in a closed boxed room where there is an opening on the floor where water is flowing out of, next to the opening there is an object to close the opening. The cat notices that there is water filling up in the room and that cat realize that it needs to get out of reach of the water. Except the cat did not foresee the fact that it cannot climb higher than the room, as it is closed off by a ceiling. The water continues to fill and the cat will most likely drown in a horrible death. Had the cat been able to identify the problem of the water coming in through the opening at the bottom of the room it could have covered the entrance for the water, thereby stopping the water from entering the room.

The example is a visualization of our consciousness and being able to see and find solutions to problems, in being aware of the world around us, as it would be more than likely a human would have been able to prevent the continuation of the flood in the room, and would then need to search for a way out.

Just as the cat could not see how to close the entrance of the water coming into the room, it also does not see the sea levels rising due to the melting of ice caps and increased temperatures causing water to expand, that we are experiencing due to climate change and global warming, both anthropogenic, human made, and natural causes, natural heating and cooling cycles of the planet. In respect to the life of the cat one must value their life to care for another's. This is part of the empathic relationship that we share with fellow beings. As beings of the highest known of consciousness we have a duty to protect life or at the minimum not increase unnecessary harm.

If we have the ability to predict problems through shared knowledge and technology, we are first responders in aspects that threaten our livelihood and those of other beings to the best of our ability. This is a unifying culture that we share. The common helping hand, as it is clear of our social nature and our heavy dependence on the world and environments around us for our own survival. We are facing a phenomenon classified as climate change and global warming and there is still some debate over if it is man-made or a natural cause, and in some debates it is over if climate change exists.

Climate change is indeed a natural phenomenon that occurs throughout time, the earth goes under periods of heating and cooling throughout its own existence, before modern humans and animals came about and also suggest the phenomenon will continue well after our existence. The issue that we face today in regards to climate change is the rate at which it is changing and global temperatures are warming, some theories suggest that this is just a part of that natural cycle and the planet has been warming since the Ice age, but evidence gathered from modern science shows a much different picture. That the rate is changing so rapidly due to human actions and this is largely from our culture, how we go about our everyday lives. Looking at American culture more specifically, there is evidence of the American culture being extremely wasteful and practice irresponsible habits that are indeed aiding in the rate in which our climate is changing. These changes in the global climate has some irreversible damage that can be cause and one question we must ask ourselves is if we can identify the problem, seek out new and innovative solutions, why are we so similar in this moment to the cat?

One way of looking at this issue is tradition. We through our history create traditions that gets passed down from generation to generation and sometimes modified thought course of translation and the beings that practice them, but one tradition that has been observed in the American culture is waste. We live, a majority of Americans, a privileged life, one in abundance. This may be more difficult to imagine if focusing on what one does not have rather than focusing on what one does have, one could go on endlessly naming objects that one does not possess such as money, a house, car, family, job, security, food, education. One does not get to say freedom is

something they lack. We have an infinite amount of freedom in our culture. The freedom to choose, we get to choose how we live our lives in respect to the laws that we agree to abide by, we also have say in those laws, and who writes them. We have little freedom when it comes to natural law as that is the supreme law of the land in which governs how life itself works, and being that we are object of those universal laws, there are some limitations to our freedom and where our consciousness begins to fade. We waste an incredible amounts of food (about 40% goes uneaten in the U.S.) (WP, NRDC), gas (We light up rooms that nobody is even in), natural recourses (gas, water, timber, etc.), and lives (primarily animals in the food industry). Our culture has taken a turn to a very itemized world where value is on objects that we can't empathize with; I should feel no more for a phone that I do a rock.

Humans and Climate Change

Climate change is a natural occurrence that has been documented in the course of the planet's history. It has been in recent times, looking at the last 100 years, that we have seen a shift in the warming of the global temperatures. Global warming is the average global temperatures of our planet. Methane and Carbon Dioxide are two know greenhouse gases that play a large role in the increase of emissions that scientist are seeing and the have correlation with human's activity, though is not absolute in the total emission of the gases as they do occur naturally. This paper is focusing on the increase due to human's activity. Greenhouse gases (GHGs) warm the Earth by absorbing energy and slowing the rate at which the energy escapes to space. Different GHGs can have different effects on the Earth's warming since some last longer in the atmosphere and others are capable holding more heat (epa.gov).

Carbon dioxide remains in the climate system for thousands of years. While methane will last about a decade on average, but absorbs much more energy than carbon dioxide. This is troubling considering the fact that the two highest concentrations observed in the United States are these two gases, carbon dioxide (81%) and methane (10%) (epa.gov). That's totals on average to 91% of total greenhouse gas emissions come from these two gases and that humans have an influence of them due to the way that we live our day to day lives. We drive cars, shop in malls and shopping centers kept cool and well lit, we light up our homes and charge our phones, we eat products that need to be shipped to us from various regions, we eat meat based products in high quantities.

What we notice about ourselves in this relationship to total gases being emitted we can see that it may be time to reduce some of this to slow down the rate in which these gases are being released and the effect that they will cause. Carbon dioxide is largely emitted by humans due to our dependence on fossil fuel and energy. The gas that fuels a standard American car emits gases carbon dioxide, the United States EPA, gathered that about 28% of all carbon emission came from transportation and that half of that total was from domestic transportation and passenger cars and small vehicles, and the remaining half would come from freight rains, boast, planes etc. With other sectors like energy being (28%), industry (22%), commercial and

residential (11%) and agriculture (9%). These numbers have risen about 45 percent since 1990 to 2016, and are expected to continue to increase with a growing world population expected to hit 9 billion by the year 2050. This is not a system that humans and animals will thrive in, but not only do we need to worry about humans and animals but many different forms of life will either have to adapt or risk the possibility of not existing anymore. Looking at humans more specifically, we need a few things in order to survive, such as food, water, shelter, clean air to breathe, means to stay in good health, like avoiding disease and treatments for them.

We are not excluded from the phenomenon of climate change, we are in fact becoming increasingly aware of some of the effects of global warming and that it has already begun to have taken effects on human populations around the world. Bangladesh for example is a southern Asian country that sits east of India. This land is approximately 56,977 mi² and was known for its rich fertile land full of beautiful wildlife including animals and plants. There are many different waterways in the country and humans often travel by boat throughout it. About 163 million humans live there. With Bangladesh being a region on a coastal plain and parts of it below sea level, they are incredibly vulnerable to the rapid changes of our climate and sea level rise. A story that was posted in the New York Times, brought awareness to readers about a Woman who lived in Bangladesh and who had lost her husband due to a powerful storm, where she lives only 50 yards away from the shore. This woman had to save herself and children and rebuild a home that would shelter her and her family. This same woman also had sold her two sons into servitude to pay off debt and try to rebuild her life for her and her daughter. She, like others in her situation, have nowhere to go and will be part of a new mass migration, a phenomenon that we will need to address in the coming times, to new livable land. The article talked about how it is hard for the people to grow crops for food as their once fertile soil is now degraded due to the salt water that excessively washed up on the shore and flooded the plains. This is one of the many affects that they have to face, as they cannot grow their own food and are in immediate way of harm should another storm come they have very little food to survive on and their quality of life is degraded. It is also known that Bangladesh is already one of the world's most densely populated nations and is not privileged like some more well-off nations in the world like the United States. They do not have the same amount of resources like wealthier nations, which means their response to these changes also have a limitation on what can be done. (New York Times) (Population 2016).

Like Bangladesh, there are many low lying areas that will be affected due to sea level rising and some even exist in the United States like New Orleans and parts of Florida near the everglades and Miami. With an increasing population (world population expected to increase to 9 billion by the year 2050) and less land to live on, a much larger question then becomes, *where do all of these newly displaced people go and how do we manage these changes?*

We have a moral and ethical obligation to at the very minimum not continue to increase the rate in which this is happening, to take a more proactive role and not just continue our way of living. Sea level rise is expected to grow 3 feet in by the year 2100. That is a lot of water,

primarily due to the warming of the planet which is causing for ice caps to melt. Some experts say that Bangladesh is at risk of 13 feet of sea level rise, when most of the nation sits just barely above sea level already. This will have very profound effects on the people who live there. Not only that but those that have the means to leave will do so, which means they will have to find new homes elsewhere in the borders of Bangladesh or outside in new borders. Entire regions of Bangladesh will go under water if this is true, the rising sea levels. For example, the region of Dakope will be completely covered in water by 2100. It is also worth noting that more severe weather conditions will occur and the nation will see stronger water storms, hurricanes, which they are already exposed to. (New York Times)

Bangladesh is only one region on this planet and they are seeing some of the affects from global climate change and we can expect to see other regions be affected as well including our own. These impacts that climate change have on our way of living will increasingly change quality of life and the way we operate in our day to day, culture. Ecosystems will change, new species, plants and animals, may emerge and some may go extinct, it is hard to say what exactly will happen but a positive feedback system, though the outcome isn't necessarily positive is happening.

Other aspects that can be noted is with some regions experiencing temperatures rises and less land to produce on, we may see a drop in production of food such as fruits and vegetable. The very things that we need to eat for good health. We may lose some of our more traditional foods and need to adapt our eating habits to less familiar foods. Some questions we need to ask ourselves are *Will we be able to find these foods? How will we feed our global growing population? How can we transport goods to those in need and still reduce our carbon emissions?* One argument is that we can eat more animal based products as in the industrialized world we have gotten really well with industrial farming of both plant based and animal based foods. This model has some flaws given that industry also emits a large percentage of GHG and the ability for industry to expand so does its demand on land. Again with a growing population and expected less land to live on *how will this be possible?*

Animals and Climate Change

Primarily looking at those animals in the animal's agriculture industry that are there for the sole purpose to form goods for human consumption, an awful picture is painted. Consider a glass of milk, being the good many Americans purchase. We want to purchase a carton of milk to supply at a typical breakfast setting, as we are told that it will aid in the development of strong and healthy bones. We are not thinking that it has some effect on our climate, but it does. That glass of milk like any other product we purchase and even ourselves have a footprint, like water, carbon, methane etc. This glass of milk has to be transported from the dairy farm to your table and can take many different avenues to do so, depending on how you get your milk, the majority of Americans do get their milk from a grocery store and not straight from the farm. This leaves behind a carbon footprint from the transportation it took to get from the farm to the table, which

last thousands of years in our atmosphere capturing heat. (Though natural carbon sinks do exist, such as forested areas where plants thrive, like the rain forest and other forested areas and our oceans that take up carbon through phytoplankton, which take up at least 50% of carbon emission. They have a carrying capacity as we see more ocean acidification and dead zones our oceans are able to take up less and as we see more deforestation, we have less plants available to take up carbon dioxide.) A research experiment was conducted by the university of Arkansas in 2006 to help get dairy farmers in the U.S. to reduce their carbon foot print, as part of a goal they set to have by the year 2020 (Guardian). *“The researchers found that for every kilogram of milk consumed in the United States per year, 2.05 kilograms of greenhouse gases, on average, are emitted over the entire supply chain to produce, process and distribute that milk. This is equivalent to approximately 17.4 pounds per gallon. The greenhouse gases were measured as carbon dioxide equivalents and included methane, refrigerants and other gases that trap radiation. The largest contributors were feed production, enteric methane, gas emitted by the animal itself and manure management.”* (Science Daily).

It is also import to note that the leading causes if deforestation are from mega projects such as oil production and building of dams, palm oil plantations, logging, agriculture both animals and traditional, and human expansion which includes the build of cities and suburban areas etc. These practices that we currently have are a clear negative impact on our environment and we have a duty to try to mitigate some of these issues to preserve a habitable planet for future generation. We must also consider why we behave this way. That this model that we currently have, why is it that model that we use to feed our families

Animal and Human Relations

We seem to have a sense of respect for animals and often want to help protect them. We can agree that if someone states “I just want to kill a bunch of animals for fun, not trophy or game, just to murder them” some brows will be raised in concern for the individual making the statement. We yet have a culture where the killing and mistreatment of animals is a norm. Factory farm animals in particular have gotten more attention due to industry practice and how that affects climate change and global warming, but little consideration is given to the actual treatment of these animals. *Why do we need to mistreat these creatures for food if it is not necessary for human health?* All of the essential nutrients needed for human health can be found in the plant kingdom. We often here of declining wildlife population due to loss of habitat, one of the leading cause of deforestation is animal agriculture, primarily cattle ranching. Also gaming, and trophy hunting. The treatment of these animals are mostly conceived as unethical, inhumane, barbaric and unnecessary torture. A question we must address considering that we share this planet with many different life forms and have developed a relationship with animals where we seem to have removed a level of compassion for the sake of human enjoyment, *why is it tolerated for some animals and no other?* We go out of our way to protect pets, and animals we consider beautiful like elephants and lions, and the Bald Eagle, especially here in the United States, but leave others forgotten in the slums of industrial farming, or clear cut their habitat for

the development of suburban and urban areas. Our relation to the world around us has an impact on human survival, we live in a world with endless amounts of connections that we may not know how they will affect us. Animals are a relationship that is being studied, and we must do our part in efforts to preserve wild life and biodiversity.

Reform, Rewrite, Rewind

We do not have the ability to rewind in time and undo the damage that we have caused, in this or any other given situation. We do have the ability to create, reform, our culture to improve the livelihood of our own and the well-being of other creatures that we share the planet with. One means for doing this is through legislation and protections in the system of government, both self and public. We govern ourselves in how we act and interact with others, it is in that capability that we possess that we can rewrite the story we are writing with animals for a fairer and more harmonious relationship among all types including those that we may want to eat. We understand that we are not excluded from severe weather conditions such as drought, extreme weather (hot, cold) and increased sea level rises and these follow under natural parameters that we must adhere to. Being that we have noticed some problems in our current culture, *what are we to do to find solutions?*

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Death is Human.

A Response to *The Book Thief*

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I first came to know the story of the *The Book Thief* when I was in 8th grade during my Holocaust class. We had an assignment to read a novel about the Holocaust and write an essay on it. Its five years later and I am still writing on *The Book Thief*. It took me a week to read the book because it was fascinating. Needless to say, I fell in love with this book and it's partly because of the way Markus Zusak portrays the narrator Death. To me, Death is portrayed with human qualities that relate to me. I found it extremely interesting that he would choose this person to narrate the story. *The Book Thief*, is a historical fiction that not only shows Death as human but provides a reason to live? How Death views the human experience and his thoughts on why we are worth it are all summed up in the introduction. I think this is vital to focus on when looking at this text. This primarily sets up the story. He's saying here, you want a reason, I'll give you a reason. I am partly defining a human as what we experience and how we experience it. We are all searching for a meaning and reason to live in this life. Well some of us are at least. Within the introduction also Death provides human qualities such as compassion, sarcasm, and imperfection.

“First the colors.
Then the humans.
That's usually how I see things.
Or at least, how I try.”

“*****Here's a small fact*****
You are going to die. (Zusak 3)”

“You're are going to die” it is a fact that we all know that is going to happen. But the Narrator Death decides it's important to acknowledge this fact. Death verbalizes this because he wants you not to be afraid to live. Yeah, tough cookies that we all die at some point. Death doesn't want you to see him as a monster but something that is fair to you. He doesn't control

when you die but he simply comes to collect you. *** REACTION TO THE AFOREMENTIONED FACT*** Does this worry you? I urge- don't be afraid. I'm nothing if not fair.(Zusak 3)" This is a funny thought for me because nothing in life is fair. So this begs the question, is dying fair? But foremost that line kind of shows a little insecurity on Death's part. Insecurities are a very human thing. I do not see any ants saying I wonder if I am doing this wrong. He does not want to be seen as a monster but rather just that being that exists. Death because he doesn't want us to fear him, Death tells us some very human things:

****A Reassuring Announcement****
Please, be calm, despite that previous threat.
I am all bluster-
I am not violent.
I am not Malicious.
I am Result. (Zusak 6)"

I think that this also describes any of us. I am not a violent human, I have no malicious intent and I get worked up. But more important I am result, from whatever started me. Death has this conflicting view of being this important high power figure and this lonely being. I feel that Death is truly lonely and confused in this life he has, much like how I feel. This feeling is very common when you have to figure out what you are supposed to do with the rest of your life. I feel a connection to Death, in this introduction, that life is lonely and depressing but a few people can get out of that bubble. Most importantly what I take away from Death is that sometimes we aren't perfect. That no one is perfect. Not even Death.

***** SOME OTHER SMALL FACTS*****

Sometimes I arrive too early.

I rush,

And some people cling longer
To life than expected. (Zusak 9)”

This also serves a purpose that since we aren’t perfect, it’s okay to make mistakes. Death has more compassionate human qualities than have arrogant qualities. “Please, again I ask you to believe me. I wanted to stop. To crouch down. I wanted to say: “I’m sorry child” But that is not allowed (Zusak 13).” This part shows me that Death cares about the little girl in the story. If we see something bad happen to someone, we want to comfort them in some way.

I am applying phenomenology as a basis for the analysis. Phenomenology is the study of how humans experience the world. Death provides a case study for this in *The Book Thief*, that being Liesel. Giving a reason for the human experience. I believe that this is a human quality. I presume that most humans look for a reason why human existence is important. Some people deal with a deep seeded thinking of why do I exist, why am I important and why do I matter. If you do not have these questions, good for you, but I do. Each of us has a story to impart to the world. Death remarks “yes, often, I am reminded of her, and in one of my vast array of pockets, I have kept her story to retell. It is one of the small legions I carry, each one extraordinary in its own right. Each one an attempt- am an immense leap of an attempt- to prove to me that you, and your human existence, are worth it. (Zusak 14)” Death chooses this story to show you the fact that your story is worth it. Liesel (the girl in the story) reminds him that we are worth it. Death sees human experience as rough and tough but yet it somehow worth it. I think no matter who the person is, their battle wounds from their life is what makes them. I have determined that each decision we make will have an impact. So, what better person to share insight on humanity than Death. Who essentially sees everyone end?

By the time I graduated high school I was supposed to know what I am going to do for the next forty years of my life. The existentialist view is “existence precedes essences” meaning we are what we create through our experience. Not only does Death set up an incredible story to prove that life is worth living, he also proves that existentialist may know a thing or two. When Death first mentions human existence he has a bleak view almost of it. Yet, He admires us. Death conjures to us. “It’s the leftover humans. The survivors. They’re the ones I can’t stand to look at, although on many occasions I still fail. I deliberately seek out the colors to keep my mind off them, but now and then, I witness the ones who are left behind, crumbling among the jigsaw puzzle of realization, despair, and surprise. They have punctured hearts. They have beaten lungs (Zusak 5).” First Death says he can’t stand to look us. That we are beaten and broken. It’s an ugly sight but yet it kind of intrigues him. Sometimes he can’t just focus on the colors. Human experience means to exist and sometimes our existence for Death is hard to miss “ You see, to me, for just for a moment, despite all of the colors that touch and grapple with what I see I this world, I will often catch an eclipse when a human dies. I’ve seen millions of them. I’ve seen more eclipses than I care to remember. (Zusak 11)” He’s seen millions of humanity die, and yet we catch his attention. The strongest people I know are the ones who survive something truly tragic and sometimes their stories might not be what we want to hear, but yet they moved on from it and own it.

Some people believe that fate exists but even Death divulges that it is probably not a thing. That horrible things happen because we make them happen. We set things into motion such as the Germans bombing during WWII. To that question about fate existing, Death says: “Was it fate? Misfortune? Is that what glued them down like that? Of course not. Let’s not be stupid. It probably had more to do with the hurled bombs, thrown down by humans hiding in the

clouds. (Zusak 13)” This suggests the idea that we are the creators of our mess. Stating that we don’t have to be a certain way. We can control who we are. I think most importantly this is saying we decide own choices. In movies, the “hero” is someone who is connected to a certain fate. They battle it out to see if they can escape their fate or they accept it. I think that is one of Deaths points. Liesel was a girl who didn’t know how to read. Her foster father taught her. She gains the knowledge and didn’t want to be just a housewife. She wanted to learn. She fought against the nature of what she was supposed to be.

The line about fate also point out a human aspect that some of us should be pretty familiar with and that is sarcasm. Was it necessary? Yes, yes it is. He blatantly says yeah no it's you and your choices. With totally not mentioning the Germans. What is more powerful than sarcasm? Not everyone gets it. But for me, I am sarcastic being. So I enjoyed Death’s remarks. My dad gets annoyed with me sometimes when I use sarcasm. But it usually helps point something out in arguments. I honestly find his sarcasm to be charming. If you hate sarcasm you might dislike Death and think he’s cocky. Sarcasm is another human defense mechanism, this is can acknowledge as he does not want you to disagree with him. . This is a human punch line and Death well encompasses sarcasm. Which could be perceived as an arrogant trait that leads to the reader feeling that humans might be lesser.

Death shows us that we are not even a conceivable notion to him until the main character of the story and the few others catch his attention. This show the trait of pride. That he perceives himself better. We are not much until Liesel story. I have found that one person can change your perspective on something. Death does not even give us glimpse right away, he sees the colors than us. Death opens with, “First the colors. Then the humans. That’s usually how I see things. Or at least, how I try.” He focuses on the color. He even mentions that when he comes to collect

you, what color is the sky. He says it helps him relax. He makes the point of pointing out the color in the sky and what his favorite color of the sky is. Each section of the introduction he opens with a color. He discusses three colors: white, red and black. For example, “Next is a signature black, to show the pole of my versatility if you like. It was the darkness moments before dawn. (Zusak 9)” Colors are important in remembering the story. He even gets upset if you argue about the color white. “Some of you are most likely thinking that white is not really a color and all of that tired nonsense. Well, I’m here to tell you that it is. White is without question a color, and personally, I don’t think you want to argue with me.(Zusak 6)” Similarly, if I have a belief and someone tries to tell I am doing something wrong, I will get upset and snap. It is only human. He uses colors not just to get through the day but to remember certain things. Similarly, I will do the same thing with human interaction, I will avoid it with the music. I can tell you a song and a certain memory that goes with it. This is like Death’s coping mechanism much like most humans use. “The last time I saw her was red. The sky was like soup, boiling and stirring. In some places, it was burned. There were black crumbs and peppers, streaked across redness. (Zusak 12)” Lastly, the colors Death mention is symbolic to life. White is normally is a symbol of something pure. Black is usually something that evil. Red of course symbolize blood. Death sees the pureness in the girl first, then the darkness that surrounds her, and finally she is seen at a bloody scene. It shows her life through the colors. We go through life in these stages, first, we are pure at birth, a darkness will come beat us up and finally, we come out bloody. It’s the human experience. Surviving a world that is pure chaos.

The Holocaust shows how horrible humans can be. No wonder why Death looks at the colors first. When I look at the first line Zusak’s (First the colors, then the humans) Death seems to have a struggle between the colors and a human. This to me makes it out to be that Death is

trying to ignore us. In a similar way, I avoid a human interaction. Also internally with all the bad stuff that is happening in life, I want not just to avoid but why it worth trying to live in it. These are Death's thoughts about this girl who has convinced him that human life is worth having. I've had many suicidal friends, each time I talk to them they seem to have lost the idea of why life is worth it. Each time they struggle with the battle, I'll give them a list of reason why they should live. Human life is messing. This is Death's proof of why we are worth it.

I find that Zusak betrays the narrator Death as someone who is complexed. Death's the good guy who has some complex issues. That's why I see Death as a human is because of those complexities. Humans are complex, we all have different motives and actions. One of Death's complexities is that the whole introduction he works around naming who the narrator is, if I didn't pay attention to his words I could've missed who is about to tell the story for example "I could introduce myself properly, but it's not really necessary. You know me well enough and soon enough, depending on a diverse range of variables. It suffices to say at some point in time, I will be standing over you, as genially as possible, your soul will be in my arms. (Zusak 4)" As clever as he puts this, he could've said I am Death. But he poetically put it. The way he describes himself is a creative way. He's more than what meets the eye. I admire that quality because I have the same type of writing style. It's creativity in the dark world that he has. But some people would say it annoying that he doesn't "hey buddy, I'm Death." To me, this shows Death as someone who is humane. Instead of saying "I'm Death, let me kill you." seems a little malicious. I think this is also relatable to anyone who posts on social media. I will admit, I will present myself in a different light then I am actually because we want people to see the best version of ourselves. We don't just come out with saying who we truly are. We let people see what they see until they get to know us. If you read someone's twitter, you can learn a lot about them with

knowing who they are, but you will make that snap judgment in your head without second guessing it.

Normally, we encompass Death as a skeleton in black clothes who just brings chaos and reaps souls. But in this text Death has a kinder even funnier a personality His personality comforts you and relaxes you before you read a truly sad story. Death argues he's just there, he isn't out to hurt anyone. It boils down to a very human idea, that we all have a right to an opinion. When I picture Death through Zusak version I don't see him as the black-coated figure, I see him as a man with a heaviness in his eyes from all the people he has collected. I think similarly any human who has gone through something has something in their eyes that says "hey, I've been through some stuff." Zusak never gives a physical description of Death. You as a reader determine what and who he is through his words, which is very clever.

Another attribute I see Death being human is that he has this job. Death also talks about taking a vacation from his "job" Death needs a distraction from "the leftover humans. The survivors." Death refers to a point about an eclipse (a Human death) and Death says "I've seen more eclipses than I care to remember (Zusak 11). He's saying that watching people die is hard and not something easy to do. Portraying a human quality of compassion. Personally knowing people who have died is this makes feel like Death is a not monster we all should fear. But one, that I should accept and a soul just helping us along. A death of someone you know is hard. But He wants you to see him as comforter and person to help you along. I think about taking a vacation every week because something will stress me out. I think that lot of would like to vacation from work or school. But we can't always get up right now and leave for a vacation. If we did that there would be consequences. If you work, you can't leave today you have to first

request time off ahead of time. If you are in college you have to attend most of your class or there will be consequences later on, like not passing a class.

“It’s just a small story really, about, among other things:

- * A girl
- * some words
- * an accordionist
- * Some fanatical Germans
- * A Jewish Fist Fighter
- *And quite a lot of thievery (Zusak 5)”

Within this little part he sums up what he’s about to tell me and they aren’t really in sentences. I connected with this type of writing because of the fragmented way of writing and it takes an unusual point of view and makes it his own. It also relates to my writing because it is almost as if its focused stream of consciousness. Something I am very familiar with in my writing. But the part of that quote that makes me laugh is the part about the fanatical Germans. When I picture those words. I see some Germans running around the room screaming in a circle. So I get the feeling I that death wasn’t a fan of the Germans. Death has a very humorous quality in the way he words things. And that he respects human life. The whole beginning deals with him sharing that he struggles to understand humans but in the end he respects us. Because he does not understand how we can live with such tragedies.

“****Last note from narrator****

I am Haunted by Humans. (Zusak 550)

This line comes from the very last page of the entire book. I think this is imperative to add to my analysis of the introduction. The whole introduction involves him setting it up and giving us a reason. He also inconspicuously tells us who he is through mentioning different things. He mentions right away, he isn’t a fan of the broken race that we are. But sometimes he can’t look away. “I am haunted by humans.” after sharing Liesel story which is one he trying to

convince not only us but himself that we are worth existence. This is the conclusion to the open remarking. He does not give a yes or no that we are worth it. Just that he is haunted by us. I for one could not agree more with that conclusion. Some humans haunt me too.

My understanding of human existence aligns with Death's perspective of it. This is chiefly why I see and understand that Death has human qualities. He does not understand the purpose of human, only the fact that some of us are admirable. I think a fundamental of the beginning is saying that you need to try and leave a mark on the world. Death is human. You can argue and disagree but all I am saying he has a lot of qualities that relate to being human. The outstanding human qualities that Death characterizes are sarcasm, compassion, imperfection and the human question of existence. These are the things as a human being I cling to the most. This analysis may be imperfect but even Death makes mistakes and that's okay. It's been five years since I have discovered *The Book Thief* and the story never fails to capture my attention. This is because of the narrator Death being portrayed in this light.

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**Not Quite the “Most Charming Love Letter”: Appropriating Vita Sackville-West in
*Orlando***

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“I lie in bed making up stories about you,” Virginia Woolf wrote to Vita Sackville-West in one of their many letters back and forth (qtd. in Meese 99). This statement and others like it have been cited as evidence of Vita and Virginia’s loving lesbian relationship, one that gave Virginia new bursts of creativity and occurred in a time when homosexuality was still rarely seen in the open. However, the pair’s relationship did not consist only of love letters. In writing to Vita, Virginia also questioned the very idea of knowing someone intimately: “do we then know nobody?—only our own versions of them” (qtd. in Lee 479). Clearly, Virginia’s “stories” about Vita were not solely expressions of Virginia’s love for her but also a way for Virginia to create her own version of Vita, a version that ended up being the only Vita that Virginia really knew. Virginia’s invention of Vita as a glamorous, dense, faithful lover took shape in the most important love letter she wrote her—the novel *Orlando*—but led to problems in their relationship as Virginia sought to possess a real-life Vita who did not reflect the Vita in Virginia’s mind.

The evidence in favor of Vita and Virginia’s loving relationship is seemingly overwhelming. One of Vita’s most famous letters to Virginia, written in Milan and mailed from Trieste, begins, “I am reduced to a thing that wants Virginia” (Sackville-West, *Letters* 89). Virginia reciprocated Vita’s feelings in her response: “I have missed you. I do miss you. I shall miss you” (90). The two addressed each other as “My darling” (288), “My dearest,” and “Dearest Creature” (287) in letters marked with beautiful phrases such as, “Please come, and bathe me in serenity again” (Woolf, qtd. in Knopp 26). The two spent several nights alone at Long Barn, Vita’s house, and later joked about how Virginia had “‘snared’ and ‘surprised’ Vita” there, language with clearly romantic undertones (Lee 493). When Virginia’s husband, Leonard, began to worry that Vita was “perhaps a threat” to his relationship with Virginia, Vita responded by hiding her love letters inside of other letters, a stratagem that Virginia complimented her for (Lee

497-98). Even the strength of Leonard and Virginia's marriage was unable to keep the friends apart. Vita wrote a letter to her husband, Harold Nicolson, in which she made her relationship with Virginia very clear: "I have gone to bed with her (twice)" (qtd. in Lee 497). Their relationship culminated in *Orlando*, a novel that Vita's son Nigel Nicolson described as "the longest and most charming love letter in literature" (qtd. in Knopp 24). Just like Virginia's other letters to Vita, *Orlando* is filled with expressions of endearment and love.

Orlando attests, in many ways, to the truth of Nicolson's words. The novel begins by telling the story of Orlando, a young nobleman who wants to become a writer, in the sixteenth century. In the middle of chapter three, however, Orlando undergoes a mysterious sex change while in Constantinople and continues to live and write for over three hundred years—until 1928, the year the book was published. As a man, Orlando is described as having "the power to stir the fancy and rivet the eye," which is "compounded of beauty, birth, and some rarer gift, which we may call glamor" (Woolf 92). Immediately after Orlando becomes a woman, the narrator states that "No human being, since the world began, has ever looked more ravishing. His form combined in one the strength of a man and a woman's grace" (102). As Vita commonly dressed in an androgynous style, Woolf's statement that Orlando shares the beauty of both a man and a woman pays her quite the compliment. Just as the novel celebrates Vita's androgyny, it also celebrates her sapphism. As a woman, Orlando reflects on her love of Sasha: "though she herself was a woman, it was still a woman she loved; and if the consciousness of being the same sex had any effect at all, it was to quicken and deepen those feelings which she had had as a man" (119). The novel's lesbian implications were subtle enough to save it from the censorship of the time but strong enough to cement its place as "the first positive, and still unsurpassed, sapphic portrait in literature" (Knopp 33). Vita received a copy of the novel bound with her

initials (Hankins 194); this gift proved without a doubt that the novel was based on and meant specifically for her. She described herself as “completely dazzled, bewitched, enchanted” after reading the book (*Letters* 298). Hinting at Virginia’s success in creating a lesbian heroine, she admits, “I confess,—I am in love with Orlando—this is a complication I had not foreseen” (289). *Orlando* was both a private love letter for Vita to “heighten intimacy” between the two and a “public pronouncement” of adoration and admiration for her (Knopp 27). With the strength of its praise for Vita, *Orlando* pays tribute to her in a very loving manner.

The positive, adoring façade of *Orlando*, however, hides toxicity. The descriptions of Orlando in the novel, although beautiful, romanticize Vita and her life considerably and somewhat incorrectly. Hermione Lee states that Vita’s “characteristics are exploited” in *Orlando* and that “Where Vita was romantic, private, and gloomy, *Orlando* is showy, witty, and camp” (516). In the novel, Orlando asks herself, “Greedy, luxurious, vicious? Am I?” (Woolf 227). These traits fall much more in line with Virginia’s idealized version of Vita as a “carnal adventurer” than with Vita’s actual behavior (Lee 512). The novel names Vita as an influence but deviates from her to the point where parts of Orlando are completely unlike the true Vita. Rather than writing a novel in celebration of Vita, the novel seems to entail a “subordination of Vita to Woolf’s artistic design” (DiBattista 1). Soon after meeting Virginia for the first time, Vita critiqued her for how she “looked on everything as ‘copy’” for her novels (Lee 490). She reinforced this belief in a review of *Orlando* by noting how once Virginia started to write *Orlando*, she had a “sudden, urgent desire” to see Vita and learn more about her ancestry: Vita had “become ‘copy’” for Virginia and had started to blend in her mind with the character of Orlando (Sackville-West, “Virginia” 83). At the end of the letter proposing *Orlando* to Vita, Virginia commanded her, “You will write now, this instant, a nice humble letter of duty and

devotion to me” (qtd. in Sackville-West, “Virginia” 83). Even though Virginia had just begun *Orlando*, she already expected Vita to behave like a character who follows her author’s desires. Virginia acknowledged the transition in *Orlando* from a semi-realistic biography to a fully fictional novel. In the early stages of writing *Orlando*, she wrote in her diary that “the balance between truth & fantasy must be careful” in order to ensure that “people will understand every word” of the book (qtd. in Knopp 27). As she continued to write, however, her feelings about the importance of truth in the novel started to change. In teasing letters to Vita, she asked, “Is it true you grind your teeth at night? Is it true you like giving pain?” (qtd. in Lee 505). Virginia gave Vita invented habits that began to become her perception of the real Vita. After completing the novel, Virginia wrote an anxious letter to Vita, questioning, “I’ve lived in you all these months—coming out, what are you really like? Do you exist? Have I made you up?” (qtd. in Lee 507). Although *Orlando* was supposed to be about Vita, by the time the novel was published the tables seemed to have been turned—Vita had become absorbed into the fictional character of Orlando.

Orlando is more blatantly toxic in its cruelty towards its protagonist, who could still be identified as modeled on Vita. When Virginia first proposed the idea of *Orlando* to Vita, Vita responded with enthusiasm mixed with trepidation: describing herself as both “terrified and thrilled,” she noted, “any vengeance that you ever want to take will lie ready to your hand” (*Letters* 238). Virginia took that vengeance by giving Orlando many failings. The fictional biographer describes Orlando as “a trifle clumsy” (14), and after she achieves a literary success she laughs arrogantly about her “Fame!” and indulges in grand visions of how to expend her new wealth: “With my guineas I’ll buy flowering trees, flowering trees, flowering trees and walk among my flowering trees and tell my sons what fame is” (228). This rather cocky sing-song rhyme alludes to both Vita’s famous garden at Sissinghurst and her two sons, making the

disparaging portrayal of clumsiness and vanity reflect on Vita as well as on Orlando. One of the most significant symbols in the novel is the image of a “wild goose” that Orlando states has “haunted” her for her entire life and she has tried to catch to no avail (229). As Orlando’s method of trying to catch the goose is to “fling after it words like nets” (229) and she is earlier described as writing with an “old, stained goose quill” (13), the goose seems to refer to Orlando’s failure as a writer. The symbolic goose appears again at the end of the novel when Orlando cries “It is the goose!” as it flies overhead, still out of reach (241). Orlando is not ultimately able to achieve “superb and original writing” despite her best efforts to do so, and this critique applies to Vita as well (Smith 66). Virginia described Vita as having “a pen of brass” and felt that Vita’s writing abilities were far inferior to her own (qtd. in Smith 66). Vita proved Virginia right in this critique by not understanding the symbol of the goose. She wrote to her husband that she “didn’t like the wild goose” (Lee 512) and asked “What does the goose stand for? Fame? Love? Death? Marriage?” (qtd. in Smith 66). None of these conjectures, of course, is the correct meaning of the symbol, and the irony of a clueless Vita struggling to grasp the meaning of the symbol just as Orlando is unable to grasp the literal goose probably amused Virginia. Vita’s mother summed up the subtle heartlessness in *Orlando* best in her letter to Virginia after she read the novel: “You have written some beautiful phrases in Orlando, but probably you do not realize how *cruel* you have been” (qtd. in Lee 513). The truthfulness of Virginia’s criticisms of Vita makes them doubly cruel.

Just as Virginia mocked Vita’s writing abilities in *Orlando*, the pair’s real relationship was filled with subtle cruelty. In the roles the two acted out with each other, “Virginia was the talker, the wit” while Vita was the “adventuring traveler; also dumb, dense” (Lee 479). Despite the frequent compliments Virginia paid to Vita in their correspondence and despite her romantic

portrayal of Vita in *Orlando*, Virginia never seemed to have gotten over the idea of there being something “‘dense’ or ‘blank’ in her” that was also a bit dull (479). On a trip to France with Vita, Virginia wrote to her husband, “At least we can discuss books for hours—perhaps I do most of the talking” (Woolf, qtd. in Lee 509-10). Just as Virginia viewed Vita’s writing as inferior, she did not fully respect Vita’s intelligence about intellectual topics like books even though Vita was a fellow writer. Most of the time, Virginia treated Vita’s inferiority jokingly—she called Vita “Dearest donkey West” in her letters (Woolf, qtd. in Lee 478). However, sometimes she was more vocal in her mocking of Vita. When Vita gave a speech about poetry, Virginia “sat in the back grinning at her ironically” and “put Vita properly in her place” once they had left the event (Lee 498). Clearly, Virginia felt the need to remind Vita who was the real writer in their relationship.

Virginia’s cruelty towards Vita sometimes verged on emotional manipulation. During one of her depressive episodes, Virginia insulted Vita’s dullness in both personality and writing ability in a letter to her: “isn’t there something obscure in you? There’s something that doesn’t vibrate in you: . . . something reserved, muted— . . . It’s in your writing too, bye the bye. The thing I call central transparency—sometimes fails you there too” (Woolf, qtd. in Lee 499). The cruelty of Virginia’s sudden lashing out shocked Vita and created “feelings of inadequacy” in her that caused her to share Virginia’s bad mood, which may have been exactly what Virginia wanted (499). Later, when Vita went to Virginia for comfort after an affair with another woman had ended in disaster, Virginia snubbed her by telling her “I hate being bored,” summing up her distaste at hearing another tale of Vita’s ruining a relationship (504). Despite this very hurtful comment, Vita responded by actively seeking Virginia’s forgiveness and love. She wrote to Virginia, “I don’t know what I should do if you ceased to be fond of me” and assured her, “My

love for you is absolutely true, vivid, and unalterable” (*Letters* 242-43). Virginia succeeded in making Vita worry about losing another relationship to the point where she needed to comfort Virginia rather than having Virginia do the comforting. When Virginia first proposed the idea of *Orlando* to Vita, she wrote, “suppose Orlando turns out to be Vita, and it’s all about the lure of your mind—heart you have none” (qtd. in Sackville-West, “Virginia” 82). This statement, hidden jokingly among phrases of excitement, seems harmless. However, it testifies to Virginia’s ability to hurt Vita if necessary in the written, permanent version of her life.

Virginia used other tactics as well to keep Vita around. When they fought, Virginia would remind Vita of an image she had written during their first night together, when Vita stood glowing “with a candlelit radiance” in her jewels at the fishmonger’s shop (Lee 480). By bringing up this image as a reminder of how good their relationship had once been, Virginia hoped to encourage Vita to renew her affections for her, but Virginia’s use of the image also carried the subtle threat of demonstrating her power to write about Vita and cast her into whatever light she chose. In a letter to Vita after their trip to France, Virginia wrote about her “one heroism”: that of being “submissive to the extreme” in order to benefit from the mothering instincts of others (qtd. in Lee 511-12). She capped the letter by reminding Vita, “you love now several people, women I mean, physically I mean, better, oftener, more carnally than me” (qtd. in Lee 512). Both Virginia’s blatant jealousy and her statement that she is doing Vita a favor when she acts childish are forms of manipulation. When Virginia was worried about losing Vita, she tried to force Vita to return to her by making her feel guilty and protective.

Despite Virginia’s ploys to manipulate Vita into staying in love with her, she herself did not always reciprocate the other woman’s feelings. Although she wrote to Vita that she “woke trembling in the night” just thinking about her and called her a “Bad, wicked beast!” when Vita

began to find new lovers (qtd. in Knopp 26)—both signs of being a passionate lover—her diary was filled with “drier, more reserved accounts of the relationship” where she concluded after a lot of thought, “I am genuinely fond of her,” but not much else (qtd. in Lee 480). Rather than being in love herself, Virginia desired “the glow & the flattery” of inspiring a love in someone else (Lee 493). An unknowing Vita continued to dote on Virginia and give her the affection she desired.

Ultimately, Virginia wanted Vita to be something she could never be in real life—the perfect lover, someone who would constantly flatter Virginia, never leave her, and stay a dashing, romantic, and frivolous figure forever. Since Virginia could never have this Vita, she used her writing and *Orlando* in particular to invent her. In the novel, Vita could remain constant as a person whom Virginia understood even as the real Vita changed. Notably, Virginia came up with the idea for *Orlando* just when Vita was starting to move on to affairs with other women. In doing something no lover had done for her before, Virginia showed the depths of her devotion to Vita, but more importantly she “reclaimed Vita for her own purposes” and “took control of the relationship in a new form” (Lee 504). In writing *Orlando*, Virginia found a way not only to encourage the real-life Vita to stick around rather than continue to find new lovers but also to keep a backup version of a perfect Vita in case she did decide to leave. Virginia’s attempt to capture Vita through the novel calls to mind the many letters in which she addresses the impossibility of truly knowing other people. Early in their relationship, she had written to Vita, “I try to invent you for myself” but “I find you going off” and thus escaping capture (Lee 492). Through *Orlando*, Virginia once again invented Vita and was again unable to figure out who she truly was. When she finished the novel, she asked, “Do you think I know you? Intimately?” (qtd. in Lee 507). Virginia attempted to possess Vita in *Orlando* by making her even better than in real

life, but when she finished the novel “she could take no more possession of her ‘subject’ than ever” (Lee 507). Orlando had become a perfect Vita, but the real Vita had disappeared.

Virginia’s desire to retain Vita at all costs may have been spurred by past trauma. As a child, Woolf was sexually assaulted by her half-brother, Gerald Duckworth, an experience that “came to symbolize having to submit to a male, being humiliated and violated” (Szasz 92). Her violation accounts for Virginia’s seeking a lesbian relationship with Vita but also her desire to keep Vita at arm’s length—she wanted to keep herself protected. The assault also explains Virginia’s desire to keep Vita in love with her. If Virginia was able to manipulate Vita’s affections, she held the power in their relationship, a contrast to her violation as a child. Lee emphasizes Virginia’s power over Vita: “Virginia had the power to infiltrate and dominate her feelings; it was Virginia who was the stronger” (499). In this relationship, Virginia was the one in control, and she did not want that power to slip away. This desire for power over Vita’s life could have caused her to write *Orlando* as an ultimate symbol of possession.

Virginia’s sudden feverish desire to write *Orlando* can be explained by her mental illness. Virginia wrote about her frequent highs and lows of mood in a letter to Vita: “I haven’t said anything very much, or given you any notion of the terrific high waves, and the infernal deep gulfs, on which I mount and toss in a few days” (qtd. in Caramagno 10). Virginia was likely the victim of a manic-depressive disorder, a condition that causes patients to experience “variations in the intensity of their perceptions and feelings” as they swing between manic “high” moods and depressive “low” moods (Caramagno 33). This condition accounts for Virginia’s dramatic changes in tone in her interactions with Vita. Only a few days before deciding to write *Orlando*, Virginia was irritable and snapping at Vita about being bored by the stories of her affairs (Lee 504). Virginia’s sudden burst of creative inspiration about *Orlando* could have been caused by

her entering a manic phase. Manic-depressive disorders also cause those affected to “draw attention to themselves” and exhibit egotism (Caramagno 10). Virginia was certainly egotistic in her belief in her superior writing abilities and wanted attention from Vita as a constant flatterer. In a letter to her husband, Vita expressed worry about forming a relationship with Virginia: “I am scared to death of arousing physical feelings in her, because of the madness. I don't know what effect it would have, you see: it is a fire with which I have no wish to play” (qtd. in Knopp 26). Their relationship led to Virginia's greater desire to manipulate and possess Vita so that Vita would share her high and low moods. Virginia created *Orlando* as a way for the two of them to share in one of her excited moods, but also as a way to keep Vita attached to her as a continued source of emotional support.

The novel *Orlando* was a love letter from Virginia to Vita just as Vita's son described it, but it was certainly not the “most charming” one ever written. *Orlando* was a model for Virginia and Vita's relationship, a mixture of profuse flattery and subtle emotional manipulation. In the novel Virginia seemingly expresses her love for Vita, but actually expresses her more sinister desire for Vita to love and depend on her. Vita's overwhelmingly positive response shows how well Virginia succeeded in her efforts. By writing *Orlando*, Virginia was able to claim two Vitas for her own—the real Vita and a fictionalized, perfect Vita. Although Virginia was never able to “find out” the real Vita through her writing, she succeeded in creating an idealized Vita who could belong to her forever.

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Shyness, Anxiety, and Stress Against College Success

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Abstract

Research has found that shyness, anxiety, and stress are extremely prevalent and impactful in many aspects of college students' lives (Weaver, 2016; Barhyte, 2017). Many surveys show that these symptoms affect grades, success, self-esteem, and health overall, yet most people are hesitant to report them and to seek help (Crozier & Garbet-Jones, 1996; Bhujade, 2017). To delve deeper into these concepts, I conducted a ten-question survey at Purdue University Northwest, a public regional university, aimed to determine how many people willingly labeled themselves as shy and admitted to dealing with stress and/or anxiety. I also sought to learn how people were affected by these symptoms, and in what ways they might be open to receiving aid. I had a total of 137 participants and the responses were quite surprising: nearly 57% reported being affected by the above symptoms, and 70% were clear in their desire to receive help. In addition, I found a few good solutions to the troublesome effects of these symptoms, such as destressing exercise sessions and peer support group programs that have been proven at other universities to be successful in limiting the negative effects of shyness, anxiety and stress. In an increasingly competitive world it's imperative that we work to understand symptoms like these to the best of our abilities, in order to maximize our levels of success, not only in college, but also in life as a whole.

Keywords: shyness, stress, anxiety, solutions, college, success

Introduction

Shyness, anxiety, and stress may seem like small, insignificant, temporary symptoms of life, yet they can both positively and negatively impact the very success of college students. They can affect grades, success, and health as a whole, yet research has shown that most people are both hesitant to report about them and to receive help to combat them. As one who is affected by those symptoms myself, I instead feel compelled to seek aid and insight into the symptoms that plague me, and as my own research has shown, contrary to popular belief, many others actually feel the same. All of my life I have been a shy person. I have been shy around people my age, shy at functions, and shy at school. I have also been faced with anxiety; when it comes to taking tests, meeting new people, going to school, and doing well. Naturally then, stress follows each one of those scenarios with their own unique amount of pressure and adds its own. How does shyness, anxiety, and stress affect other college students? Is it really all bad? Is it something that can be managed? If so, how can we help each other cope? I chose this topic for my research project to help answer those questions. I found it important to research the effects of all three symptoms, as they are all inexplicably *connected*. For, as I referenced from my own experience, when you're shy it's natural, if not inevitable, that that shyness will lead to anxiety. It is also (when both symptoms are weighed in conjunction or dealt with a part) equally as unlikely not to feel some amount of stress, provided that isn't multiplied even further with the likelihood of experiencing stress on its own. I believe that a study in those factors that leads to even minimal understanding and few possible solutions is invaluable to both college students and the rest of the world. Hopefully, throughout this process I have learned things truly helpful in increasing both the knowledge of these factors, and also the way that we produce solutions. Hopefully I now know the ins and outs of shyness, anxiety, and stress; and in knowing such, have crafted a clearer path to the success of our time in college and life overall.

What is Shyness, Anxiety, & Stress?

It is important before we go into the findings of the study that we first understand exactly what shyness, anxiety, and stress are, and how they can affect us. To start, shyness is a very multifaceted malady, despite its timid, unimposing nature. It has the power to render a previously talkative, outgoing victim completely speechless and suddenly introverted, all from a minor change in situation. Crozier and Garbet-Jones (1996, p. 2) claim the concept of shyness is used both to describe personality and also reactions. Therefore, if you're not a shy person by nature, situations may still arise and elicit shy reactions from you.

They go on to say that there are two different types of situations that are most likely to cause shyness: novel situations such as unfamiliar settings or meeting new people, and secondly, in situations where a person feels that they are being evaluated and/or judged (Crozier & Garbet-Jones, 1996, p.2). This includes: speaking out in a group, making a speech, being interviewed, taking oral exams, and interacting with people of authority; all of which occurs extremely frequently in college. As Crozier and Garbet-Jones (1996, p. 3) point out, colleges and

universities are full of a plethora of unfamiliar people and experiences. Furthermore, those unfamiliar people are likely all in competition; for scholarships, internships, and a multitude of opportunities, all adding to the kind of intimidation that fuels shyness so well.

Crozier and Garbet-Jones (1996, p. 2) report that students also feel an excess amount of shyness in the face of their lecturers and professors. Their study showed that students feel both shy and hesitant to ask their professors questions because the students feel lessor by the lecturers' superiority in knowledge and therefore were intimidated by making points of their own. Being afraid to ask a professor a question, then still being confused about a problem, can lead to incorrect answers and bad grades, resulting in low self-esteem and in turn leading right back to more shyness causing a vicious cycle (Saklofske, Austin, Mastoras, Beaton, & Osborn, 2011, p. 2). As research has repeatedly displayed a prominent connection between shyness and self-esteem, (Crozier, et al. 1996, p. 3)

From here, it's easy to see how anxiety is the logical next step in this cycle, as poor exam grades can lead to anxiety of exams, of a particular class, and even of college itself. Anxiety is possibly even more common than shyness, at a reported more than three million cases per year, according to the Mayo Clinic (Cook, 2017). Anxiety is labeled as worry, from minor to severe, over school, deadlines, events, health; the list goes on. (Rooiji, & Stenson, 2017)

"Students report anxiety over just about anything related college life," says Weaver (2016, p.1): which can be anything from bad grades, to relationships, to even just a bad day. Symptoms resulting from this can include feelings of panic, heartbeat increase, and even insomnia (Rooiji, et al. 2017). Barhyte (2017, p. 1) reports that students feel an excess amount of anxiety when studying, exams, and presentations are involved, which likely leads to an adverse result of those important events. Barhyte's (2017, p. 2) claim furthers beliefs of anxiety in the testing area by asserting that "while a little anxiety can keep you focused, for some test takers, anxiety can be very intense and negatively impact academic performance." Barhyte (2017, p. 1) notes that test related anxiety is very common, as there is a lot of outside pressure from teachers, professors, parents, and peers in addition to the pressure and the demands of the test itself. This type of anxiety can cause mental symptoms of an inability to organize ideas, failure to understand a question, completely forgetting what you already know, and blanking out entirely (Barhyte, 2017, p. 1)

Not only are such affects physically harmful, but they also cause students to underperform, which naturally, leads to our third malady of study: Stress. When shyness and anxiety are hindering your concentration and ultimately causing you to not perform as well as you can, it is not hard to imagine why you may start to feel (if you were not already feeling) stressed and overwhelmed as all these factors are piling on to you.

College is a wonderful place to go to grow your knowledge of all of the remarkable things around you, and to expose yourself to a plethora of new, immersive experiences. But, it is

a key example of a vast collection of stressful experiences and outlets. For stress thrives in the new and the unknown. Bhujade (2017, p. 1) notes that college is very stressful because it is such an abrupt change from high school and life in general. Bhujade (2017, p. 1) labels stress as “a person’s psychological state result of their appraisal of the success to which they can adapt to their surroundings.” Schacter, Gilbert, Wegner, and Nock (2014, p. 550) call stress “a psychological or *physical* response to internal or external stressors.”

I feel those are very accurate descriptions, especially Bhujade’s, since a lot of our stress lies in perception of a situation, and I feel that we all perceive [stressful] situations differently. For example, a lot of students might view an upcoming exam with ease and confidence, while others might perceive the same exam with dread. As a student, I witness situations such as that all the time, and I am often playing the latter roll myself, independent of the volume of study work or lack thereof. It’s eye-opening to consider that simply your state of mind has such control over the powerful ailment of stress. O’Hara (2017) asserts that “we can dramatically reduce our stress by changing our distorted perceptions.” The possibility that we control our stress, (by inflicting or lessening) instead of our uncontrollable outside environment, challenges the connotation of stress as something giant, consuming, and impenetrable.

That is not to say however, that there aren’t situations that are impossible *not* to be stressed over no matter how you perceive them. Stress can be naturally entwined with a number of things, and unfortunately for us, college is one of them. Bhujade and Weaver (2017, p. 1; 2016, p.3) say that college is an outlet of amplified stress, as college students today have even more complex problems than students did a decade ago. There are more complex demands, more pressure to being on your own in a new environment, increased changes in family relations and social life, and heavier exposure to new ideas and temptations. That solidifies the fact that it will take more than curved perception to manage stress. It will take time, adaption, and a greater understanding to regulate and improve upon in a positive level; stress, and both shyness and anxiety too for that matter. Which is why research in these symptoms and their effects on the people around us is so important.

Research and Findings

To further my understanding of the effects of shyness, anxiety, and stress on the success of college students, I examined my fellow students at Purdue University Northwest. I conducted a survey and administered it to freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors of both PNW students and PNW honors students. The questions were aimed at determining from the sample; 1. Just how many people label themselves as shy? 2. What parts of their lives that shyness impacts most. 3. How to take that information and create from it solid ideas and positive solutions. 4. Understanding how many are also affected by anxiety and/or stress. 5. How to create from that knowledge equally beneficial ideas and solutions. 6. How to altogether aid in helping college students better understand the effects of shyness, anxiety, and stress, and in turn propel them to succeed to their full potential by coming together and managing those symptoms.

Out of the 137 surveyed, 80 admitted to battling shyness in a great variety of situations. That is over 58% of responders! That goes against the assumption that people are hesitant to admit that they are shy, based on the experiments performed by Crozier and Garbet-Jones, and Manning and Ray (1996; 1993). It instead suggests that shyness affects a lot of college students to an extent high enough that they are willing to identify themselves as such. In fact, many based on my findings, go one step further by asserting that they would like to receive help with that factor, as affirmed by this one responder: “I should probably tell someone about being shy, because I don’t tell people how it affects me and I keep it to myself, and that doesn’t help at all.” I also found that both those that called themselves shy and those that didn’t only gave shyness a negative connotation when viewed in the respect that it can get in the way of a particular goal, or important communication. Some responders commented: “shyness limits my ability to experience new things,” or “it is negative when I need to talk to people.” Therefore, referencing again the Crozier (1996, p. 2) definition, it is the reaction of shyness responders feel is negative, not the personality trait. The majority of responders connoted shyness as entirely *positive* or both positive and negative. Through the survey, I found that both PNW students and PNW honors students reported shyness just as frequently. I also found that those who labeled themselves as shy had just as high-reaching, ambitious definitions of success as those who thought of themselves as outgoing. Lastly, about 82% of those that said they were battling shyness also assessed that they were dealing with anxiety and stress too. It’s actually a really important assessment, as students who can recognize their emotions are better able to manage stress, (Saklofske, et al. 2011, p. 1). Recognition is thus the first key step to management, as the theme for all three symptoms appears to go.

How We Can Help

As we’ve established, the first step to fixing a problem is admitting that you have one, i.e., recognizing it, and then be willing to be helped. The great news as per the results of my survey, is that 70% of responders were open to just that. Furthermore, many were also specific with the type of help that they would like to receive. A handful of responders noted that they cope with stressors through different forms of exercise. Ersoz (2016) notes that motivation in the form of exercise can have an important role in the healthy maintenance of anxiety and other similar symptoms in college students. That being said, I feel that it would be beneficial for PNW to have sessions in the gym maybe once a week, where students could come and exercise as a group in a relaxed manner, and discuss stressors, college life, and general things on their minds. The honors college at Arizona State University has a Relax exercise event every semester that seems to really help its students, and it also provides hiking and paddle board yoga to reduce these symptoms as well (Barrett, 2017).

Another type of aid that a lot of responders were endorsing was a type of setting; like a group or a club, that was there to reason through their shyness, anxiety, and stress on a peer level. Based on their responses, a peer support group would make students feel more at ease, as they can relate to each other. Crozier and Garbet-Jones agree (1996, p. 6) that “supportive

conditions” are key in helping students deal with these symptoms. Bhujade (2017, p. 4) says that support and mentoring are required so that these symptoms can be identified and dealt with accordingly. Taking the peer support group a step further, I feel that it would be a great idea to pursue that in the form of a list. The list would consist of students who are willing to text with other students and converse about these symptoms. Students who are willing, can put their names and numbers down and that list can be placed in the counseling center, tutoring center, and honors den, that way students who are feeling overwhelmed with one or all of the symptoms, have someone who has either been through it before, and/or knows how to deal with it and work through it, to consult with on a friendly, low-key, peer level. Here is a list of names already willing and in favor: Kayla Vasilko, Brianna Buckner, Jen Howard, Alexander Smeets, Caitlyn Swan, Sam Warren, Katie Bilsn, and Mathew Veriot. Our honors college academic advisor Amy Libauskas is also in favor and willing to be on the list for support as well.

Conclusion

Overall, shyness, anxiety, and stress affect more than just our social ability. They can have powerful impacts on sleep, grades, health, and the grand scheme of success (Bhujade, 2017; Barhyte 2013; Weaver 2016; & Crozier et al, 1996) There are *some* positive effects; such of those factors eliciting drives and increased motivation (Barhyte, 2013). And it is shyness as a reaction, not a personality trait that we label as negative. As a whole, all three symptoms overwhelm students at PNW and leave them feeling alone, yet open to a solution. This project has been very helpful in understanding that, and helpful personally for myself, as I have found that a lot of people feel shy during at least some point in their college careers, and anxiety and stress are natural parts of college life. It has helped me to realize that I’m not alone, as so many people are affected just as I am. Because of that, the weight of these symptoms has gone down for me, because I no longer feel like I’m bearing it entirely on my own. That is why I feel that a peer support group would be so helpful; if you have a lot of students sharing in their experiences with these symptoms, suddenly they get a lot more manageable and don’t feel so heavy after all. That is why the results of my project and the list of names in support of the group give me so much hope; for I believe that the best way to succeed in overcoming shyness, anxiety, and stress is to stand together.

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Appendix

My Survey of the Effects of Shyness, Anxiety, and Stress on the Success of College Students

1. What year are you at PNW?
2. Would you call yourself shy?
3. How do you cope with your shyness at school?
4. Do you label shyness as positive or negative?
5. Do you experience anxiety at school? How do you cope?
6. Do you feel stressed at school? How do you cope?
7. What part(s) of your life do you feel shyness, anxiety and stress affect most?
8. In what ways would you be open to receiving help with those factors?
9. In what ways do you think we could help others deal with theirs?
10. What does success mean to you?



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