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FOREWORD

Rutgers University is notorious for its rigorous undergraduate writing courses. After completing the required Expository Writing, some students continue on to Research in the Disciplines, where they explore an academic subject and ultimately choose their own topic for research. What results is an impressive collection of student-driven creativity as young writers investigate and analyze their findings in a 10-page essay. That's a formal description. Reading the papers reveals a deeper, more thoughtful side of students making knowledge, perhaps for the first time in their college experience.

The Writing Program at Rutgers offers research courses that range from the Psychology of Conflict to the Ethics of Food, from Conspiracy Theories to Human Ecology. Other topics include feminism, medicine, film, propaganda, graphic novels, taboos, and family. Each semester, instructors provide background, theory, and the research skills needed to launch an exploration. However, it is the student who determines her argument and the trajectory the essay will follow. The authors of the best papers are invited to submit their work to Dialogues@RU. This volume contains some outstanding research on video-visitation in prisons, media representations of queer villains, and maternal health in sub-Saharan Africa. Timely topics are also represented in essays on food waste, CRISPR gene therapy, and the limits of free speech in protest.

The essays appearing in this journal reflect another step in the Writing Program's course sequence—editing, publishing, and presentation. All submissions are selected and edited by students enrolled in the Editing Internship. Volume 12 included an initial pool of more than 200 research papers. Some authors go further and submit their work to the Undergraduate Research Writing Conference at Rutgers. This scholarly gathering provides an opportunity for writers to showcase their work in panel discussions and individual presentations. The entire event is organized and overseen by students in the Editing and Conference Planning Internship. From conception to execution, revision to publication and presentation, writing at Rutgers is student-centered.

My thanks go to the wonderful team of interns who worked tirelessly on substantive and technical edits. Without their thorough comments

and proofing, this journal would not happen. Many thanks also go to colleagues in the Writing Program who helped with selections and final reads. A big shout out to Lynda Dexheimer, Research in the Disciplines Coordinator, Writing Program Associate Director, URWC overlord, and all-around marvel. Scholarly journals reserved for undergraduate writing are rare, and ones focused on analytical composition and research even more so. For this, much gratitude goes to the Rutgers University Department of English for their continued support of such an important publication.

Finally, congratulations and thanks to all the authors in Volume 12. Your essays are now published scholarly work.

Tracy Budd
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Civil Disobedience and the First Amendment: The Subjective Constitutional Validity

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By NATASHA ALMANZAR-SANCHEZ

ABSTRACT

The United States was founded by consecutive acts of civil disobedience, the Boston Tea Party being the most prominent example. Since then, civil disobedience has been used continuously in social movements like Civil Rights and Anti-War. Despite the historical influence civil disobedience has had in American history, it remains a controversial topic because it involves the act of law-breaking in order to express a thought or position to denounce a government act or law. Exploring the constitutionality of civil disobedience as a form of speech will determine its place in the eyes of the law. The case of United States v. Eberhardt, the rising use of electronic civil disobedience, and the current surge of social tensions will be addressed in correlation with both the First Amendment and civil disobedience to establish a concrete argument.

INTRODUCTION

The term "civil disobedience" is relatively contemporary for something that is a historically recurring event. Henry Thoreau, a 19th century philosopher, historian, and one of the first individuals to address civil disobedience, offers the interpretation that individual resistance against established government is a natural right that prevents overbearing state control; "[government] has not the vitality and force of a single man; for a single man can bend it to his will" (Thoreau 7). The government is not run by a single man, therefore it cannot have a singular perspective toward anything, including civil disobedience. What is the relationship between civil disobedience and the First Amendment? Is it protected or illegal? Per Thoreau, "Why has every man a conscience, then?... We should be men first, and subjects afterward... All men recognize the right of revolution; that is, the right to refuse allegiance to, and to resist, the government, when its tyranny or its inefficiency are great and endurable" (Thoreau 11, 17). Morality, in prominent occasions in history, has been what motivated people to stand up against the political system. The colonists thought, "Hey this isn't right," when Great Britain enforced the quartering of soldiers in their homes in the 1700s, and what average citizens and slaves thought throughout the two centuries of longstanding slavery.

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The law dictating that something is just does not mean that the public should automatically trust that judgment. In fact, in 2015, only 15% of Americans trusted the government always/most the time (PEW Research Center). Challenging the law is a decision each American can make if they feel that the governing power is not serving in the interest of justice, especially in today's hectic political climate. If Americans do not attempt to defend civil disobedience, then they risk losing a very valuable form of free speech and allow the government to silence a form of criticism. Thoreau's theory of morally objecting to government through individual resistance will be applied to the overlaps in modern social movements like Black Lives Matter to historical civil disobedience like the Civil Rights Movement and to the new issue of civil disobedience on the internet. But beforehand, to explore the relationship between civil disobedience and the First Amendment, the definition of civil disobedience must be established to eliminate any ambiguity. Then the cases explored will make determining the validity of the civil disobedience constitutional claim in today's scope a more accurate investigation. Ultimately, civil disobedience ought to be protected under the First Amendment because of the free speech qualities that have proved to positively work toward social change with movements like Civil Rights and Anti-War.

THE HISTORY OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE: GLOBALLY AND IN THE UNITED STATES

The relevance of civil disobedience is not only seen in American history, it is a global phenomenon that has shaped much of the world's history as well. One of the earliest examples of civil disobedience can be found in Exodus 1:15-21, when Hebrew midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, deliberately disobey the king of Egypt's orders of killing any male child born in the community (Cohen 2). Shiphrah and Puah feared God more than the king so they kept the boys alive, appealing to the religiosity of the Ten Commandments rather than the political structure of monarchy. Though Shiphrah and Puah's actions date back to 13th century BCE Egypt, civil disobedience is globally visible centuries following. When colonists dressed up as Native Americans to dump 342 chests of tea into the Boston harbor to show their disapproval of the Tea Act in 1773, this was civil disobedience. When Mahatma Gandhi refused to remove himself from a first class compartment on a train in South Africa in June 1893 despite the strong Apartheid laws, this was civil disobedience (Brown 230).

When thousands of protesters blocked both sides of the Berlin Wall gates in November 1989, pushing for the unification of East Berlin and West Berlin, this was civil disobedience (Taylor 1). Civil disobedience is a term that Americans constructed to define acts of protest that disobey laws in order to dissent a specific government regulation. Civil disobedience is also the tactic utilized in many successful American social revolutions in an attempt to illicit change from the government that was being ignorant of the institutionalized oppression of certain minority groups (Blacks, Latinos, LGBTQ, etc.). Ultimately, "history abounds with examples of civil disobedience that have changed laws and policies" (Bauer 1181).

DEFINING CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN RELATION TO THE FIRST AMENDMENT

Before establishing civil disobedience as defined by the First Amendment, it is important to establish what it is not: "There are those who tend to prejudge the whole issue of civil disobedience by restricting its meaning to intentional violation of a law already declared valid and controlling by the highest national authority" (Freeman 235). This misconception labels civil disobedience as an excuse people use to engage in illegal activities without moral purpose, painting civil disobedience as vindictive anarchism that aims to challenge democracy. "What threatens…" democracy is not civil disobedience, it's not even those who misuse civil disobedience with "vandalism, violence, bad temper, and worse manners", it is "the growing infection of the movement with ideologies (Maoism, Casrroism, Stalinism, Marxism-Leninism, and the like), which in fact split and dissolve the association… of divergent minds" that citizens need to fear (Arendt 98). The silencing of voices is the biggest danger. When a group cannot voice its grievances or cannot be represented in its government, then that limits the diversity of inputs, creating one-sided regulations. Civil disobedience is democratic itself. The freedom to have different opinions and to support those opinions in public nonviolent protests is a part of democracy. A government that never receives disagreement from its people might as well be a totalitarian government. A faulty or unreliable definition for civil disobedience will disrupt any argument for its constitutionality and fail those who utilize it as a source of expression. Professor of Philosophy at the University of Michigan Carl Cohen's definition intertwined with Harrop Freeman's fundamentally nonviolent clause creates the best definition for civil disobedience:

a nonviolent "act of protest, deliberately unlawful, conscientiously and publicly performed" as a democratic tradition that is rooted from free speech (Cohen 1). "The theory" of it "is not anti-law but within the law" because of the unalienable rights it roots from (Freeman 228) The First Amendment safeguards petition, assembly, and press — all three platforms being instruments in questioning the government. The "unlawful" factor is what makes civil disobedience heavily associated with controversy because although "the violation of the law is the actor's instrument in expressing intense dissatisfaction with some policy of government," it is also the primary argument why a constitutional amendment should not condone law breaking (Cohen 1). But if the Colonists never engaged in civil disobedience over 200 years ago, America would have never broken away from British rule and the American Revolution would be a figment of nonexistent history.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT

The flow of opinion and ideas in the United States is firmly constructed from the First Amendment right listed in the Constitution of 1787 which prescribes "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances" (amend. I, sec.1). With that in mind, "[civil disobedience] is a form of communication and asserts that it is within theory of the first amendment" because it expresses the disapproval of a specific law by demonstrating the illegality of it. (Freeman 232). Speech is not only understood through words. Actions are a form of speech because they communicate a certain position that requires more than words to emphasize the gravity of a situation. For example, clapping at a performance is communicating praise. If a performance ended with no clapping, how will the actors know in the moment if the audience enjoyed themselves? When Harrop Freeman, an Emeritus Professor of Law since 1974 at Cornell University, uses the word "communication" he is alluding to an interaction; a thought is asserted on one end and it is met with a reaction on the other. Civil disobedience is speech being expressed by way of actions to elicit the change necessary to rewrite or overturn a law.

A complication with tying civil disobedience to the First Amend-

ment is original intent, which is a method used in interpreting state and federal provisions that calls for the meaning of a provision at the time it was first drafted to be the official interpretation and execution. Original intent aims to preserve the democracy of the Constitution the Founding Fathers had envisioned, but it does not compensate for new problems that will inevitably rise as people and technology expand. The Founding Fathers never specified how to apply the First Amendment to Twitter or YouTube, so how does their initial vision apply to something they could not foresee? Civil disobedience is also never specified, but its credibility still stands. In a democracy, civil disobedience evokes the dissenting opinion of a law; "dissent implies consent, and is the hallmark of free government" (Arendt 88). Each individual has the right to protest the power of the government simply because the power of government is given by the people. When a law is complicit with the subjugation of a group, expressing disapproval through means of civil disobedience is necessary to bring justice. However, dissatisfaction with the law is a recurring human behavior that is subjective depending on the beholder.

THE LAW IS NOT MEANT TO PLEASE EVERYONE

Government is influenced by opinion, but its purpose is not to appease everyone's opinion. People who do not favor a certain law and decide to break laws to express their dislike commit civil disobedience. Asking a jury to "endorse illegal acts on the basis of political necessity undermines majority rule," as commented by the Stanford graduate and experienced trial lawyer Steven Bauer (Bauer 1195). John Rawls, a political philosopher, states that "even under a just constitution unjust laws may be passed and unjust policies enforced" because "the majority may be mistaken, more or less willfully, in what it legislates" (Rawls 247). The people in the end create unjust laws. There are inevitably instances where democracy is used as a tool for oppression. Even hate groups are protected by the First Amendment to an extent. The jury may convict an innocent man or free a guilty man. The Electoral College may vote against the popular vote. Politics is never absolute and neither is democracy. Unjust laws are bound to be passed because laws change with the people. It is naive to expect every law to satisfy every individual. Not even the Constitution guarantees a 100% success rate.

People cannot break laws just because their own definitions of justice do not match the majority's. "It is essential to observe that the

constitutional process is always a case of what we may call imperfect procedural justice: that is, there is no feasible political procedure which guarantees that the enacted legislation is just even though we have a standard for just legislation" (Rawls 246). There is no political process, including democracy, which ensures that only just legislation will be ratified under such government despite the supposed set morals established for what is just legislation. That leaves us with the "obligation and a natural duty… to comply with what the majority enacts even though it may be unjust" (Rawls 247). Being born into the United States solidifies a mutual agreement immediately enacted, a social contract with the government that binds the citizen to become a civil follower of the law's benefits and restrictions. If citizens ignore the social contract then "one risks compromising democratic processes and thwarting democratic institutions when one advances individual empowerment on grounds other than constitutional principles" (Bauer 1196).

THE POTENTIAL FAULTS IN CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE THROUGH UNITED STATES V. EBERHARDT

There are always instances where even the most wholesome idea comes with faults. An example to highlight the controversies surrounding civil disobedience is through a criminal case that took place during the Vietnam War (1954 to 1973): In the case of United States v. Eberhardt, four men broke into a Customs House and proceeded to pouring a human and animal blood mixture on Selective Service files to send the political message that the Vietnam War was unjust. The blood they poured on the draft cards was meant to be symbolism for the unnecessary bloodshed in Vietnam, but symbolism does not provide a strong legal case in court. Three were charged and found guilty of "causing willful injury to property of the United States…, willful mutilation of records filed in a public office of the United States, and willfully hindering the administration of the Military Selective Service Act" (OpenJurist 1). One gentleman was convicted under the same charges but as an aider and abettor. Though their intentions are morally inclined, the court recognized neither their actions nor their motivations as worthy of legal backing. These four men undoubtedly defiled government documents and even trespassed on more than one occasion, as this was not their first act of defiance. Civil disobedience is always met with the question of whether or not it is right to

justify law breaking. If these four men were not found guilty, they would have continued their crusade and defaced thousands of dollars more of government property. Wouldn't creating one exception to breaking the law lead to others? Allowing individuals to break the law as a form of speech might leave room for self-proclaimed freedom fighters to disrupt the peace of a community.

Millions upon millions of Americans then and now believe that the U.S. had no business interfering in another country's domestic problems while enough of our own domestic problems were still unresolved. Many protesters brought up the legal point that the "Vietnamese war is violative of international law and that they cannot be forced into war and violation of Nuremberg law" (Freeman 236). America gained nothing from participation except for military loss and approximately 58,200 American casualties; a comparatively small number compared to what North Vietnam and South Vietnam suffered (HistoryNet).

The Declaration of Independence refutes the arguments against civil disobedience because of one sentence: "Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it" (US 1776). The practice of civil disobedience is a practice that lives up to the wishes of the Declaration. Just like the colonists, those who practice civil disobedience aim to protest nonviolently an unjust legislation by breaking laws in the process. The United States is founded on questioning, demanding, and reforming the government. It is the right of the people to implement and voice change when the government is on a path towards prejudice. That right is more important than ever today.

BLACK LIVES MATTER: THE MODERN CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Police brutality directed towards minorities and institutionalized racism are prevalent issues that some Americans faced excruciatingly in the 1900s, and continue to face today, leaving civil disobedience as the conduit to tie modern protesters to Civil Rights activists. The Black Lives Matter movement is a social movement that has gained momentum ever since its birth in 2013. The Washington Post found that "34 percent of the unarmed people killed in 2016 were black males, which is quite disproportionate since black men make up only 6 percent of the U.S. popula-

tion" (Craven 1). Black Lives Matter uses nonviolent protest intertwined with subtle law breaking to emphasis the very real urban poverty, unequal educational opportunities, and microaggressions used by politicians that undermine the black community and black culture. Public occupations, stopping traffic, sit-ins, and publicly calling out individuals are methods Black Lives Matter utilizes, undertones of the Civil Rights Movement. America is not a post-racial society. Civil disobedience is repeatedly utilized to emphasize the injustice happening. Silencing civil disobedience is ultimately silencing speech, and action, and change. In *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*, written over 50 years ago, Martin Luther King Jr. comments on what is stopping change from happening— the importance of having no friction over the importance of having justice:

> … the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Counciler or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action"; who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season". (9-10)

Protests are meant to disrupt schedules and be inconvenient for passing people to draw attention. Change requires active participants and proactive methods.

Old, time consuming, labor intensive organizing for civil disobedience involved in-person petitions, door knocking, leaflets, and religious/political meetings; all successful as history proves it. But these organizing methods of the past have given way to new rapid organizing which includes social media and internet capacities. As technology expands and benefits society, it also provides a new platform of possible exploitation when in the wrong hands.

ELECTRONIC CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Civil disobedience is relevant in terms of the Internet. Bauer categorizes civil disobedience as "as a form of public expression [that] possesses its greatest utility and legitimacy when orthodox channels of democratic participation have failed" (Bauer 1184). Nothing is more pub-

lic than the Internet and more unorthodox than hacking. As technology advances and becomes more complexly intertwined with our daily lives, the application of constitutional rights becomes nuanced. Free speech is applicable both on paper and online. This goes to say that injustices do not just occur in the physical world; "power/capital, having constituted itself in a new electronic form in cyberspace… requires that opposition movements have to invent new strategies and tactics that counter this new nomadic power of capital" (Manion 2). The Internet is being used by power/capital juggernauts to continue dirty work like controlling media, adding to the growth of dataveillance, and harassing the lives of consumers with advertisements daily. The National Security Agency was granted unlimited power when the "Bush administration had secretly authorized the NSA to eavesdrop on Americans and others inside the US, to search for terrorist activity without the Fisa court warrants" (MacAskill 2). Privacy and speech are under threat within the web, which "entails that certain old ways of trespass and blockade- such as street demonstrations- are being modified through electronic civil disobedience, or hacktivism, to meet the new conditions" (Manion 2). Typical civil disobedient tactics cannot be used to battle these growing biases. Rather, to battle on a new frontier, one must enter and adapt to it.

      The Internet is the next frontier when it comes to civil disobedience. Hacktivism is the utilization of computer hacking in an attempt "to help advance political causes" or social issues with nonviolent and ethical motivations (Manion 1). Examples of this type of electronic civil disobedience have been used to protest nuclear testing in India, "attack Indonesian Government websites over the occupation of East Timor, as well as protest anti-democratic crackdowns in China" (Manion 1). The purpose of hacktivism is not to prevent the spread of information, but to protect it. Though hacking has a negative connotation when associated with cyberterrorism and cyberwar, it has the potential to draw attention to issues that matter. "Labeling the hacktivist as a national security threat provides further legitimation for the erasure of individual privacy at the hands of the national security state…The demonization of the hacker may also be an attempt to obscure the violation of our privacy at the hands of corporations" (Manion 4). Associating hacktivists with blasphemy is the best way to discredit the causes they fight for and the method in which they do so. Civil disobedience is a tactic that applies to both in-person and online battles. Not applying it to the First Amendment will leave the Internet vulnerable to manipulation and leave hacktivists fighting a battle

they are not meant to win.

CONCLUSION

Overcoming revolution, slavery, and suffrage does not mean that the fight to better society has been won. The political climate in the last year alone has aroused tensions in social and academic areas that have prompted multiple wide-scale marches in Washington D.C. to mirror the great March on Washington led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr himself in 1963. President Donald J. Trump has awakened a wave of prejudice that has split up the nation. Plans to defund Planned Parenthood, excommunicate global warming as a threat, and placing an immigration ban on dominantly Muslim occupied countries are just a handful of the injustices adopted by Trump. Women body rights, scientific exploration, and the meaning of who is "American" are all being questioned at this moment.

As the philosopher and historian Bertrand Russell notes, "where there is not liberty, there is some group which has the power and which is able to prevent or punish all criticism of itself" (Russell 64). To allow an open forum for discussion and different opinions, the First Amendment was created to protect criticism. Not even presidential accusations of "fake news" spreading blasphemy can undermine what the First Amendment promises. Social, religious, and political areas generate the most controversy because of the plethora of opinions that fluctuate in those fields, constantly growing more nuanced as time goes on. History has proven that differences have not been appreciated and represented equally through the legal system, and the creation of the Internet only adds another platform to oppress the disadvantaged. David Thoreau believed in civil disobedience because he believed that the best form of government is self-government. The governed do not give up their voice or their minds to the government, whose purpose is to amplify natural rights. It takes millions of people to push for a law to change, and it takes one act of civil disobedience to get millions to pay attention. Ultimately, civil disobedience is a vocal practice that has prompted social change in America since the founding of the nation and that it has transferred onto the world-wide web just like the First Amendment. Speech is a huge part of civil disobedience undoubtedly. Therefore the First Amendment safeguard applies. Any possible action to stop civil disobedience will be a direct attack on the people's right to protest and to criticize.

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The Significance of Environmental Influences on an Individual's Creativity

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By VIJAY ANAND

ABSTRACT

Research about creative development suggests that both environmental and genetic factors play a large role in influencing an individual's creativity. The degree to which the two factors influence creativity, however, is still a controversial topic. In an attempt to strengthen the argument for why the environment may have a greater influence on creativity, this paper addresses environmental and genetic factors involved in creativity through the context of neuronal plasticity and the unique solutions that the environment can initiate for an individual. Embedded in this analysis are discussions concerning the different environmental factors and genetic aspects of creativity, alongside the science behind neuronal plasticity and the importance of the environment in order for an individual to develop unique solutions. The overall analysis brings to light the idea that although genetics may influence an individual's ability to be creative, neuronal plasticity and the unique solutions initiated by the environment show that an individual can learn to be creative and that an environment within which an individual can be creative must be present.

INTRODUCTION

Although there is agreement on the overall implications of creativity, the significance of the different factors that influence creativity is still unclear—specifically, genetics and environment. A significant amount of research discusses how environment and genetics may play a role in creative development in an individual, but the extent to which each influences individual creativity is not fully understood. Certain research suggests that genetic factors may play a partial role in creativity. One case study on one-year-old children and their parents shows that children develop divergent thinking, a form of creativity (Torrance, 1974, as cited by Hoicka et al., 2016; Ashton-James & Chartland, 2009; Cropley, 2006; Erbil & Dogan, 2012; Guilford, 1967; Moore et al., 2009, as cited by Holm, 2016), at a very young age (Hoicka et al., 2016). Researchers related this early development of divergent thinking in the children to genetic factors, which may directly take part in physiological processes in the body (de Manzano et al., 2010; Reuter et al., 2006; Runco et al., 2011;

Volf et al., 2009, as cited by Hoicka et al., 2016). However, they acknowledged that divergent thinking could just as well be developed through environmental interactions that an individual may experience (Hoicka et al., 2016). The extent to which environmental and genetic factors are attributed to creative development is seen through a number of studies which points to an uncertainty of the weight of both factors.

Although most studies acknowledge both environmental and genetic factors, it is evident that the present research concerning the influence of environment on creative factors seems to be far greater (Kandler et al., 2016). Certain experts discuss how "creativity can be learned" (Holm, 2016, p. 17) which ultimately suggests the influence of environment on creativity. Although Todd T. Holm expands upon the importance of environment on creativity in his article "The Teaching of Creativity," he, too, provides information that suggests that there are possible genetic factors which influence creativity (2016). Similarly, in his article "On the Orderliness of Behavioral Variability: Insights from Generativity Theory," Robert Epstein discusses the implications of the generativity theory in studying individual creativity (Epstein, 2014), which points to a possible genetic factor for creative development. Still, the relatively disproportionate emphasis on environment and genetics makes it unclear which factor is more important in developing creativity, and more importantly, does not explicitly address the reason that environment has a more impactful role in developing individual creativity, as much research suggests (Kandler et al., 2016). Further analysis of research may, however, suggest that environment has a stronger influence on determining individual creativity, specifically, due to the physiological structure of the nervous system and the ability of the environment to help an individual produce unique solutions.

OVERVIEW

This paper focuses on the implications of unique solutions that an environment can help an individual produce and the implications of neuronal plasticity on an individual's creativity. In an attempt to prove how these two factors point to environment as the greater influence on an individual's creativity, the paper will be organized into three sections. The first section will detail what exactly neuronal plasticity is, its involvement in creative development, and how environment helps individuals produce unique solutions. Following this discussion, research regarding the

environmental and genetic factors surrounding creativity will be presented. This discussion will provide perspectives in favor of the superiority of environmental factors on creativity as well as research surrounding the possible, significant genetics involved in creativity. The paper will end with a transition back to neuronal plasticity and the unique solutions facilitated by environment and explain how these factors, supported by past research on genetics and environment, demonstrate the overall superiority of environmental factors on creativity.

NEURONAL PLASTICITY AND UNIQUE SOLUTIONS: IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENT

Neuronal plasticity provides strong support for the greater influence of environment on creativity because it shows that creativity can be developed by an individual through external interactions. To understand this concept, consider N. V. Gulyaeva's discussion on neuronal plasticity in her article "Molecular Mechanisms of Neuroplasticity: An Expanding Universe." In the introductory discussion of her paper, Gulyaeva (2017) explains that "Neuroplasticity … a remarkable capacity of the brain to change and adapt, implies physiological changes in the brain resulting from interactions of the organism with the environment" (p. 237). Gulyaeva's (2017) statement can then be extended further to suggest that the effect of the environment on the brain could influence how an individual may think, as suggested by other research (Bennett et al., 1996, as cited by Hosseiny et al., 2014). If this is the case, then it is plausible to assert that creative thinking could be influenced by the environment. This research also correlates positively with Holm's assertion that "Creativity can be learned" (Holm, 2016, p. 17). Because the environment can directly influence the physiological structures within the brain and influence how a person thinks creatively, this leads to the conclusion that teaching creativity to an individual is possible. In other words, the teaching of creativity could be considered as the environmental influence on the individual, and the individual's development of creative thinking could be seen as a result of the physiological changes within the brain due to the environment.

A look at the unique solutions that an individual can produce as a result of the environment also provides significant support for the greater influence of the environment on creativity. A comprehensive understanding of these "unique solutions" can be derived from the research

conducted by Jaime Velázquez, Nancy Segal and Briana Horwitz in the paper "Genetic and Environmental Influences on Applied Creativity: A Reared-apart Twin Study." Although the information from this research will be discussed in greater depth in the next section, the authors' input concerning a possible difference between creativity in two forms of creative measures suggests that the environment can aid an individual in exhibiting creativity. Specifically, Velázquez et al. (2015) explain that there may be a potential difference in how much creativity individuals exhibit when given the task of drawing a person and drawing a house; the authors assert that "most people can bring more individual expression to drawing a person than a house" (Velázquez et al., 2015, p. 145), which supports that there should be greater environmental influence when the individuals draw people as opposed to houses (Velázquez et al., 2015). Although not explicitly stated, this assertion posed by Velázquez et al. (2015) implies that environment itself can promote the level of creativity within an individual, whether or not an individual may be more genetically inclined to exhibit creativity. In their article "The Nature of Creativity: The Role of Genetic Factors, Personality Traits, Cognitive Abilities, and Environmental Sources," Kandler et al. (2016) make a similar point by arguing that creativity may be dependent upon the environment of the individual. The environment, in this way, could promote creativity by providing individuals with a conducive atmosphere (Kandler et al., 2016). An individual's solution to a task, if the "environmental context" (Kandler et al., 2016, p. 233) or atmosphere is conducive to creativity, could then have a greater chance of being considered unique and creative. The overall implications of these "unique solutions," produced by certain environments, is that even if an individual may possess genetics that promote creativity, unless a proper environment is present, the individual may not be able to exhibit creativity or produce unique solutions. Through this reasoning, the proper environment could then be deemed as the ultimate factor in promoting an individual's creativity.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND GENETIC FACTORS ON CREATIVITY: PAST RESEARCH

In order to fully understand how neuronal plasticity and the unique solutions facilitated by the environment point to environmental factors as the stronger influence on creativity, a look at the past research and its implications is also necessary. As the *Journal of Personality and Social Psycholo-*

gy explains, there are "several perspectives that propose the environment as the primary source fostering creativity" (e.g., Amabile, 1988; Simonton, 2003a; Sternberg & Lubart, 1996, p. 233). An analysis of other experts' assertions and relevant case studies may also point to the greater influence of environment than genetics on creativity.

Perhaps one way to understand how environment plays a significant role in creativity can be seen through the implications of Holm's discussion of creativity as something that "can be learned" (Holm, 2016, p. 17). This definition or theory of creativity presented by Holm implies that creativity is something that is not already a part of an individual. On the contrary, creativity, as Holm explains, is something that is learned or retained from the environment which the individual is in (Holm, 2016). Holm's theoretical approach to creativity correlates with the case study on one-year-old divergent thinking, mentioned previously. In the article "One-Year-Olds Think Creatively, Just Like Their Parents," Elena Hoicka and her associates detail the results of a study they conducted comparing divergent thinking in toddlers and their parents. More importantly, the article explains, "Whereas most imitation research focuses on imitating specific actions, some research shows 2- and 3-year-olds imitate how people interact with the world more generally" (Hoicka, 2016, p. 1100). The article demonstrates that toddlers have the ability to imitate interactions which may occur in the environment (Hoicka et al., 2016). The article also explains that toddlers may exhibit divergent thinking by watching another individual perform actions involving divergent thinking (Hoicka, Perry, Knight, & Norwood, 2016, as cited by Hoicka et al., 2016). When the toddlers demonstrate divergent thinking by observing other individuals, such as their parents, it is essentially the toddlers learning (Hoicka et al., 2016). The environment, therefore, could be seen as the exposure of the toddlers to divergent thinking through other individuals. The fact that even very young children can learn divergent thinking from other individuals (Hoicka, Perry, Knight, & Norwood, 2016, as cited by Hoicka et al., 2016), insinuates, via Holm's theory of creativity, that divergent thinking and, more importantly, creativity can be influenced by the environment. Although it may not show the superiority of the influence of environment over genetics in terms of creative development, this reasoning demonstrates the considerable influence of environment on creativity.

To understand the importance of the environmental influence on creativity, a more statistical analysis may be applicable. Consider the discussion in which Hoicka and others explain the possible genetic fac-

tors which may produce divergent thinking in individuals. Immediately after detailing the possible genetic factors, the article asserts, "research on twins suggests that although genetics is part of the answer, it may not be the entire answer … while modern genetic research reveals there are genetic factors at play, each gene may only account for a very small portion of variance, suggesting nongenetic factors are also important" (Hoicka et al., 2016, pp. 1103-1104). The article demonstrates that both genetics and environment can contribute to an individual's creativity (Hoicka et al., 2016); the article does not, however, address which factor has a greater influence. To see which factor has greater importance, one could analyze the findings of the research conducted by Velázquez, which was mentioned briefly in the previous section. The research conducted by the authors involved monozygotic and dizygotic twins who were split apart for 32.51 years and 41.79 years, on average, respectively (Velázquez, Segal, & Horwitz, 2015). The researchers attempted to correlate "Applied creativity" (Robinson, 2006, as cited by Velázquez et al., 2015, p. 141) in individuals to possible genetic components using "Draw-a-House (DAH)" (Velázquez et al., 2015, p. 143) and "Draw-a-Person (DAP)" (Velázquez et al., 2015, p. 143) tests, in which the participant twins would "'draw a house'" (Velázquez et al., 2015, p. 143) and "'draw a person'" (Velázquez et al., 2015, p. 143). The article goes on to explain that the drawings would then be judged by experts and non-experts in accordance with the "Consensual Assessment Technique" (Velázquez et al., 2015, p. 143) method (Velázquez et al., 2015). Towards the end of the article, the authors state their findings; they assert that "Genetic influence was indicated for the DAPs," (Velázquez et al., 2015, p. 144) to which 38-47% of the difference in creativity in individuals is attributed (Velázquez et al., 2015, p. 144). The remaining 53-62% "of the variance" (Velázquez et al., 2015, p. 144) is attributed to environmental factors (Velázquez et al., 2015). Although both factors cause variance in terms of creativity among individuals (Velázquez et al., 2015), the contributing influence of environment resulted in a majority of the difference in individual creativity. Furthermore, when discussing the results of the DAH test, the article shows that 74-77% of the difference in individual creativity is due to environmental influences (Velázquez et al., 2015, p. 144). The authors even state that "most of the variance in the DAHs…was ascribable to non-shared environmental effects" (Velázquez et al., 2015, p. 144). In both the DAP and DAH tests, the environment caused the greater difference in an individual's creativity, providing increasing support for the assertion that

environment has a more impactful role on creativity.

Although certain data and research points to the overarching influence that environment has on creativity, some research and experts may suggest otherwise—specifically, that genetics has an equal, if not greater influence on creativity. Epstein (2014) discusses a possible genetic component of creativity in his writing, explaining that the generativity theory is "a formal, predictive theory of the behavior of organisms that reveals the orderliness … in apparently disorderly behavior—even the surprising behavior a community sometimes calls 'creative'" (Epstein, 2014, p. 279). Epstein essentially articulates that when animals are in the act of exhibiting creative behavior, they may still be following a set, "orderly" (Epstein, 2014, p. 284) process, even if they are operating within a disordered situation (Epstein, 2014). Although Epstein does not directly imply the genetic components of creativity, his explanation regarding the generativity theory implies that there may be a natural inclination of animals to act orderly and creatively in chaotic situations. This natural inclination, of course, could then be interpreted as a possible result of a genetic factor as opposed to that of the environment. To further support this argument that genetics substantially impacts creativity, research concerning the DRD4 gene can be examined. In their article, "Do Openness to Experience and Recognizing Opportunities Have the Same Genetic Source?" authors Scott Shane, Nicos Nicolaou, Lynn Cherkas, and Tim D. Spector discuss the DRD4 gene, which correlates directly with openness in an individual (Comings et al., 1999, as cited by Shane et al., 2010, p. 291). Shane et al. also add that "individuals who are open to experience are more creative," (Feist, 1998, 1999; Scratchley & Hakstian, 2000, as cited by Shane et al., 2010, p. 293). Through this information, it can be argued that because openness is correlated with creativity (Feist, 1998, 1999; Scratchley & Hakstian, 2000, as cited by Shane et al., 2010, p. 293) and has a correlation with the DRD4 gene (Comings et al., 1999, as cited by Shane et al., 2010), creativity could also be considered to have a genetic component. One may go as far as asserting that the DRD4 gene could be responsible for the natural inclination of an animal to exhibit creativity through openness in disorderly situations, as implicated through Epstein's writing. Not only is this important because it draws support for the significance of genetics to creativity, but it also sheds light upon the partially negative implications of holding genetics as the greater contributor to creativity. Specifically, Shane et al. (2010) explain that companies could search for certain genes in a job applicant, like the DRD4 gene, to

judge whether or not the applicant would be beneficial for the company's interests. The same reasoning could then be applied towards jobs requiring creative thinking, in which applicants may be accepted solely on the condition that certain genetics for creativity are present in the individual (Shane et al., 2010). Shane et al. (2010) continue to assert that accepting an individual for a job by examining his or her genetics would be extremely unethical because genetics are factors that people "have no control [over] and cannot easily change" (p. 299). Extended further, this hiring practice could be used to determine the occupation of an individual as early as birth, which would ultimately limit an individual's freedom in his or her creative pursuits in life.

      Although the research mentioned above may produce serious concerns considering the support it provides for the influences of genetics on individual creativity, recent research on how orangutans produce more creatively under some circumstances still draws greater support for the effect of environment on creativity. According to the article "The Reluctant Innovator: Orangutans and the Phylogeny of Creativity," orangutans in the wild "avoid novelty," (van Schaik et al., 2016, p. 4) and are less likely to exhibit innovative behavior or creativity (Reader & Laland, 2003, as cited by van Schaik et al., 2016), whereas orangutans in captive environments are more likely to exhibit creativity (Reader & Laland, 2003, as cited by van Schaik et al., 2016), due to their "lack of neophobia" (Damerius, 2015, as cited by van Schiak et al., 2016, p. 5). The authors further explain this trend by asserting that conditions such as "absence of predation risk" (van Schaik et al., 2016, p. 7) and "more leisure time" (Kummer, 1992, as cited by van Schaik et al., 2016, p. 6) may lead to more creativity in orangutans in captive environments as opposed to the wild orangutans who have priorities set more on survival in the wild (Lawrence, 1985; Dukas, 2009, as cited by van Schaik et al., 2016). This information primarily indicates that a change in environment can result in a change in creativity in an individual. This further implies that even if an individual has a genetic component for creativity, akin to the "DRD4 gene," (Comings et al., 1999, as cited by Shane et al., 2010, p. 291) an individual may only be able to exhibit the creativity if the environment is conducive to the individual doing so (van Schaik et al., 2016), which shows the reliance of creativity on environment. The idea that creativity, even if it has potential genetic components, relies on a proper environment for it to be exhibited illustrates the influence of environment on creativity. This idea extends further as it may discredit the need for genetic sampling of job applicants as explained

by Shane et al. (2010) because the research above implies that simply a change in environment or location may control individual creativity as opposed to the genetics of an individual.

ENVIRONMENT, NEURONAL PLASTICITY, AND UNIQUE SOLUTIONS: OVERALL IMPLICATIONS

Clearly the research between the two previous sections illustrates both the influence of environmental factors and genetics on creativity and, specifically, how neuronal plasticity and unique solutions facilitated by the environment demonstrate that environment plays a larger role in individual creativity. In this section I will analyze the impact of genetic and environmental factors on creativity with the research on neuronal plasticity and research supporting the unique solutions created by individuals as a result of environment, in order to show how creativity is more influenced by environmental factors.

A starting point for this analysis could begin with a look at an argument proposing the possibility of genetic components involved in creative development. In the article "Dopamine and the Creative Mind: Individual Differences in Creativity Are Predicted by Interactions Between Dopamine Genes DAT and COMT," Darya Zabelina, Lorenza Colzato, Mark Beeman, and Bernhard Hommel articulate that certain genes, such as the 9/- variation of the DAT gene, may attribute to "leaky attention" (Garcia-Garcia, Barceló, Clemente, & Escera, 2010, as cited by Zabelina et al., 2016, p. 12) which may aid in individual creativity in certain fields of study (Zabelina et al., 2016). Here, Zabelina et al. (2016) show that because "leaky attention" (p. 12) affects how well an individual may exhibit creativity and has a genetic component, creativity itself may also have a significant influence on the genetic components, such as the DAT gene. The authors continue by writing that "Leaky attention may also make people more distractible or sensitive to environmental stimuli" (Carson, 2011; Kasof, 1997, as cited by Zabelina et al., 2016, p. 12). This provides greater support for the influence of genetics on creativity because it suggests that an individual may first have to have the proper genes for "leaky attention" (Zabelina et al., 2016, p. 12) in order to effectively respond to the environment and produce unique solutions. From this research, one could think that creativity is a highly genetic component of an individual, and only those with certain genes may be able to exhibit creativity in response to the environment.

Although it may be true that certain genes that encode for traits such as having leaky attention may help with an individual's receptiveness to the environment (Zabelina et al., 2016), the implications of neuronal plasticity still suggest that an individual could learn to be receptive to the environment. As Gulyaeva (2017) explains, neuronal plasticity involves the physiological structures within the brain to be changed as a result of environmental influences on the individual. This could imply that even if an individual did not possess the potential gene for leaky attention or, more generally, creativity, he or she could still make use of neuronal plasticity and learn creativity. Gulyaeva (2017) also touches upon Long Term Potentiation, a "form of neuroplasticity" (p. 238) which helps to facilitate effective learning by strengthening the synapses involved in repeatedly accessing some form of learned memory (Gulyaeva, 2017; C. Beal, personal communication, September 6, 2016; D. Stern Cardinale, personal communication, March 30, 2017; Reece et al., 2014). This could insinuate that the more an individual is exposed to creative behavior and the more he or she internalizes creative thinking, the more likely his or her brain will be able to exhibit creative thought. The idea that creativity can be learned is also well supported by the research conducted by Hoicka, in which the authors explain that individuals can exhibit creativity by observing other individuals (Hoicka, Perry, Knight, & Norwood, 2016, as cited by Hoicka et al., 2016). This information demonstrates that creativity can be learned initially through observation of external creative behavior (Hoicka, Perry, Knight, & Norwood, 2016, as cited by Hoicka et al., 2016), and can subsequently be internalized in the individual through constant exposure from the environment (Hoicka et al., 2016) and long-term potentiation, which ultimately discredits the need for any direct genetic component of creativity in an individual.

Previous research on the environmental factors on creativity also supports the concept of unique solutions that an individual can produce as a result of the environment. Consider James C. Kaufman's (2009) discussion on "instructions" (p. 51) in the chapter of his book *Creativity 101* titled "Modern Theories of Creativity." Kaufman (2009) suggests that an individual can exhibit creativity when given "instructions to be creative" (Harrington, 1975; Shaeffer, 1969, as cited by Kaufman, 2009, p. 51); the instructions, as Kaufman (2009) implies, could be considered environmental factors. This idea that instructions can induce individual creativity correlates well with the Velázquez et al. (2015) study. As Velázquez et al. (2015) explain, the participants in the study were tasked with drawing a

person and a house which were then judged for creativity (Velázquez et al., 2015). In this way, it is observed that aside from specifically telling an individual "to be creative" (Kaufman, 2009, p. 51), providing any form of instruction or task, such as the "DAH" or "DAP … tasks" (Velázquez et al., 2015, p. 141) could elicit an observable amount of creativity from an individual. This reasoning provides strong support for the environment's substantial influence on creativity. Aside from the environment simply providing a "positive innovation climate, stimulating milieu, [or] absence of evaluation pressure" (Kandler et al., 2016, p. 231) for an individual to exhibit creativity within (Kandler et al., 2016), the environment, in the form of tasks or instructions (Kaufman, 2009), could initiate and provide direction for the creative expression of an individual. In the Velázquez study, the participants could have had natural inclinations towards creativity; however, the creativity was not exhibited until the DAH and DAP instructions were given. In more general terms, even if an individual has the genetic components for creativity, it is not until the individual receives a task or instruction that he or she can produce creatively. The task, of course, may not be given directly by another person—the task could originate from an outside inspiration as well. Regardless of how an individual may encounter the task or instructions, the source of the task or instruction will be the environment. This then solidifies the importance of the environment, in the form of instructions or tasks, over genetics because it shows that even if an individual possesses genetic components for creativity, it is the environment which will ultimately initiate an individual's creativity to produce unique solutions.

CONCLUSION

The research presented provides strong support for the influence of environment on creativity over genetics. Specifically, this is due to neuronal plasticity and the ability of an individual to produce unique solutions as a result of the environment. Holm's (2016) theory that "Creativity can be learned" (p. 17) alongside the research conducted on divergent thinking in toddlers (Hoicka et al., 2016) and creativity in orangutans (van Schaik et al., 2016) show the strong influence the environment can have on individual creativity. The concept that creativity can be learned and influenced by the environment, as suggested by the research, points to issues concerning neuronal plasticity (Gulyaeva, 2017; Hosseiny et al., 2014) as a physiological explanation for why environment could influence

creative thinking in an individual. The generativity theory, as proposed by Epstein, alongside research on the DAT and COMT genes (Zabelina et al., 2016) and the DRD4 gene (Shane et al., 2010) suggest potential genetic factors for creativity in individuals. Research conducted by Kandler (2016) and Velázquez (2015), however, indicate that the environment can help an individual produce unique solutions by providing a creativity-inducing atmosphere (Kandler et al., 2016) and by providing instructions or tasks to initiate and direct an individual's creativity.

The overall implications of the research are that whether or not there are genetic components of creativity, an individual need not necessarily depend on them. Through neuronal plasticity (Gulyaeva, 2017; Bennett et al., 1996, as cited by Hosseiny et al., 2014), an individual may simply be able to learn creative thinking given the proper environment (Hoicka et al., 2016), which implies that genetic components for creativity may not have a substantial influence on creativity. Additionally, even if an individual possesses genetic components for creativity, in order to produce unique solutions, an environment providing some form of instructions or a task should still be present for an individual to begin exhibiting his or her creativity. This, once again, adds greater support for the influence of environment on creativity as opposed to genetics.

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Divide and Conquer:
The Role of Identity in Intergroup Conflicts

—

By KIRAN ARSHI

INTRODUCTION

History unfolds itself with the rise and fall of kingdoms and the beginning and end of conflicts. Every conflict has its own context, its own causes, its own timeline, and its own resolutions, but often, these conflicts do not just come and go. Rather, they have the potential and power to mend themselves into the fabric of the societies in which they occur. This means that even after a conflict apparently ends, it can continue to exist and endure in new forms and meanings outside any political or obvious light. One way it can find a new course of meaning is through the concept of identity, because identity can influence a conflict just as much as the conflict can influence identity. This paper explores this relationship in the narrowed context of conflict not between countries, but between groups of people that explicitly or implicitly identify against each other. Conflicts like the Korean War, the Rwandan Genocide, and race relations in the United States all exemplify how intergroup conflicts affect more than just politics, leadership, and history books- they have a deep impact on every-day human beings, those of whom have witnessed the conflict as well as those who have not. These conflicts have a nature of persisting even after they reach a legal point of conclusion, and this is what makes them all the more dangerous. Ultimately, within intergroup conflicts, a collective identity supersedes personal identity, which allows the conflict to endure within a society despite having been seemingly fixed.

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

Before the complex relationship between identity and intergroup conflict can be assessed, the complex concept of identity needs to be better understood. The complexity of this topic lies in its multiple dimensions. Developing a sense of self is an essential process that everyone goes through, but this sense of self is often changing in different situations; factors outside of just personal choice, such as societal pressures, easily influence this sense of self. For example, "a person's real ethnicity on the inside might not correspond to their apparent ethnicity displayed on the

outside" (Hilker 87). Self-identity does not always personally translate outwardly, meaning that the way that a person identifies himself or herself may be different than the way that others see him. The gap between real and perceived identities points to the influence of society on people's interpretation of others; this gap also constructs the categorization of "the other." The difference between real and perceived identities sparks more than just a conversation about identities themselves, but also about truth and fiction. The gap between truth and fiction is why many survivors of conflicts "must be helped to speak the horrifying truth of [their] past-'to speak the unspeakable'-because telling that truth...has not only a personal therapeutic but a collective value as well" (McKinney 292). The "collective value" here calls to change a socially constructed narrative that drifts away from the truth which is hidden in the victims who fall silent, as a social narrative that falsely speaks for them overshadowed their personal identities. Encouraging the breaking of the silence, which becomes "therapeutic," shows the effort made to get these victims to regain their voices and speak up for themselves once again. The root of the problem, though, goes back to the initial gap between real and perceived identities, and between truth and fiction. It is in this gap that social construction of identity manifests; it is here where a common voice is raised at the cost of smaller, silenced ones. Race and ethnicity are two examples of components of identity that are largely argued to be socially constructed, and these two components are also common drivers of intergroup conflict.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

Race is difficult to define because what it means in one place may not be the same as what it means in another place; also, what it meant at one point in time may not be the same as what it means today. It is a concept that is always changing. Context put aside, a definition of race that finds broad acceptance refers to race as "the belief that socially significant differences between human groups or communities that differ in physical characteristics or putative ancestry are innate and unchangeable" (Foner & Fredrickson 211-12). Arguably the most important word in this definition is the word "belief," because race has commonly been classified as non-biological- meaning that it is not a thing that emerges from science and genetics, but rather is an idea that people construct. The inherent quality of its social construction is often forgotten and overlooked in a society, and even this ability of being forgotten but still silently in the works

highlights its power of influence and endurance. Ethnicity is the same way. With no biological justification, what allows for the construction of ethnic groups is the self-consciousness of a group of people to "distinguish themselves from others," and "to draw a boundary between 'us' and them' on the basis of the claims we make about ourselves and that, that 'we' share something that 'they' do not" (Cornell and Hartman 20). Even though there is self consciousness in both the concept of race and ethnicity, this self consciousness always finds its source in outsiders. The terms race and ethnicity themselves function to distinguish one group from another, and ultimately create collective identities that are defined not by what they are, but by what they are not. For example, the categorization of one group as the opposite of another largely defines U.S. immigration history: White Anglo Saxon Protestants were prejudiced against poor, Catholic Irishmen; white Jews and Italians considered themselves privileged over lower class blacks; European immigrants of white descent were intolerant of Asian immigrants of the "yellow" race, and so on. In the end, both race and ethnicity are used by people to define themselves, and when it comes to conflict, these beliefs and ideas about the way that groups of people identify themselves and others around them perpetuate division and boundaries that can cause serious problems.

CONFLICTING IDENTITIES: THE EXISTENCE OF INTERGROUP CONFLICT

Time and time again in history, social construction of identity has been purposely used to drive conflicts between people, with often the unfortunate hope of maintaining beliefs of superiority and hate. Race and ethnicity are just two kinds of social components of identity, but they are not the only ones. Different contexts call for different explanations. Conflicts are not constructed all the same: they do not endure in the same ways; they are not remembered in the same ways nor are they forgotten in the same ways. What is striking, however, is that despite the difference in context, all conflicts encompass themes of construction, endurance, and remembrance. Analyzing even multiple different contexts will still show these similarities in themes, and these similarities exist because in all cases, identity seems to be a common factor of influence. It all goes back to identity because identity is what largely defines the existence of a conflict as well as its endurance. The Korean War, the Rwandan Genocide, and Racism in the United States are three cases that exemplify this concept.

Before the role of identity can be analyzed in these cases, their causes must be historically identified.

THE KOREAN WAR

War between North and South Korea in the Korean peninsula "claimed the lives of more than a million people" between 1950-1953, and "almost half a century after the events, an estimated ten million individuals are still separated from their families" (Bleiker and Hoang 196-197). This conflict is known for its intense climate and frequent military escalation; its resolution is also still considered to be intense and unresolved. "Collateral damage," meaning civilian casualties, comprised "70 percent of total losses as compared to 40 percent during World War II" which shows just how deep this conflict cut into the region and its population (Liem 114). This was a conflict that split families apart; a conflict where even brothers stood on opposite sides. Identity is thus embedded into the Korean War not just in one way, but in many ways- because it is not just based on a group identity but also individual family identity, national identity, etc. Even now as Demilitarized Zone splits north and south, the way that each side views the "other" Korean is in many ways just opposite of how they view themselves. So much happened during the war that disrupted and deconstructed identities of all kinds; this feeling of "overwhelmness" can be seen in the following poem by Ko Un:

> Occasionally I hear talk from the dead
> of the Korea of centuries past.
> They usually leave out a few things, I think.
> After all, how could they say everything
> in one brief resurrection? (Bleiker and Huong 195).

The poem's mention of the Korean dead of "centuries past" reflects on how much the once unified country has fallen into opposition over time. The Korean War, though having its own context and history, contains similarities with other major world conflicts in that it has altered not only the present climate, but has also changed the ways in which people construct and view the past.

RWANDAN GENOCIDE

In the Rwandan Genocide of 1994, identity facilitated a traumatic event that continues to shape the lives of the people who live there today.

Across the span of only a hundred days, an estimated 500,000–1,000,000 Rwandans were killed: 70% of which were the Tutsi, and 20% of the total Rwandan population. Ethnic identities in Rwanda "do have tangible influence on conflict, because such identities have been deliberately manipulated from above until it now appears as if they are based on primordial ties of kinship or 'race'. But explaining genocide through ethnicity is rather like explaining the movement of stars through astrology; in both cases, appearances are highly deceptive" (Hintjens 27). The meaning that ethnicity has come to hold in this society is the result of constructed political narratives about one group of people by another, and this fabricated narrative resulted in the mass killing of a large population of the civilians in Rwanda. "The assumption that there was a correspondence between a person's past experience and ethnic identity also worked the other way round, i.e , knowledge about a person's ethnic identity was often to make inferences about their past" (Hilker 91). Misrepresentation of the history of Rwanda not only perpetrated the genocide, but also allowed it to happen in the first place, which is significant in the understanding of the conflict itself. Moreover, Tutsi and Hutu people prior to colonialism never had issues with one another; colonialism began the division that allowed for the campaign of murder to even exist. Colonial beliefs of the Hamitic hypothesis, which "held that the Tutsi and everything humanly superior in Central Africa came from ancient Egypt or Abyssinia" were systematically perpetuated by Belgians who indirectly ruled Rwanda through Tutsi monarchs and their own chiefs. Years of the Belgian administration favoring Tutsis in almost all levels of Rwandan society consequently led to feelings of Tutsi superiority and Hutu ridicule, spurring a new kind of racism that is reflected in the Rwandan Genocide. The only way that personal identities were able to be so belittled, meaning the reason why people could turn against their own community members, their own neighbors, and their own friends, is because of initial injustice done to them that reaches as far back as colonial times. Therefore, when people ponder over something as brutal as genocide, it is important to note that although humans are prone to violence, the latter only translates into action when there is a cause- and like in the Rwandan Genocide, these causes are socially constructed, systemic, and rooted in complex histories.

RACISM IN THE UNITED STATES
The idea of race and ethnicity being socially constructed is

supported by the United States' long history of related policies that have shaped the way that how people understood race since slavery, to the two eras of immigration, to race as we know it today. Slavery, landmark civil rights case decisions such *Plessy v. Ferguson, Loving v. Virginia, United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind*, and the U.S. census options are perfect examples of our nation imposing its definition and understanding of what it meant to be black, or what it meant to have interracial marriages, or what it meant to be a citizen of the United States, or what it meant to be nonwhite. Today, there is evidence for the "the emergence of a new color line at the beginning of the twenty-first century, namely a black-nonblack line, that will persist with greater strength than will the white-nonwhite or black-white color line" (Lee and Bean 237). The color line of United States' history was therefore constantly shifting. From black-white color lines in pre-Civil War slavery days, to white-nonwhite in the times of European, South Asian immigration, and post-Civil War Reconstruction and legislation, to black-nonblack today. The shift emphasizes the significant point about how "racial categories are historical products" (Cornell and Hartman 24). Conflict within the black-nonblack color line today is linked inevitably to the institutional and societal recognition and implementation of previous color lines, and the problem with this is that the conflict roots so far back that it in many ways it has become "intractable," a word used to describe conflicts "persisting destructively for a really long time, despite efforts to resolve them" (Kriesberg 1). Racism in the United States and the way that history has allowed it to persist even today shows how dangerous consequences of an identity-based conflict can continue to negatively influence and destruct identities.

IDENTITIES CONFLICTED: THE ENDURANCE OF INTERGROUP CONFLICT

All of these cases emphasize how the past, the present, and the future are all connected: memories of the past shape how today will be remembered in the future. The connection between them is not just logical, but also emotional. Memory, in the case of intergroup conflicts, can be distorted to the point where the fluidity of the connection between past and present is lost. The emotions tied to the conflict may be distorted and exploited as well. People in power can alter social narratives for their own personal gains and benefit, changing how social memory and culture is interpreted by the mass. Social memory is shared memory outside of for-

mal historical discourse and is what informally constructs the distortion of memory of the past in conflict-experienced regions. In Rwanda, "the absence of written records, what was remembered or ignored was socially constructed to validate the position of the dominant power. Social memory was therefore closely linked to power" (Fisiy 20). Power in Rwanda that drove hate and genocide manipulated social memory and the way that Rwandans remembered their past through propaganda. Thus, the brutality of the genocide was not in just the murders themselves, but in the way that manipulated memory could actually turn one group of Rwandans against another. Leadership in this case and in all cases play a crucial role, because they purposely "put forward identities that include some people while excluding others" (Kriesberg 5). It is a reality that is constantly forgotten, but both the existence of identity conflict and the endurance of identity issues after conflicts are caused by institutional deconstruction. Moreover, "nowhere is the process of rewriting history more obvious and more politically consequential than with regard to the Korean War," where the "two Korean governments have sponsored much more black and white accounts of war, accounts that put all the blame for the conflict on the other side" (Bleiker and Buong 4). How North and South Koreans identify each other is based on the supposed historical narrative that they have been told about each other, which emphasizes the powerful role that these politically driven, yet inaccurate narratives of social memory has on a group's understanding of themselves and the people around them. In all cases, what is remembered and what is forgotten is not just a subjective or individual process, but rather part of a collective political agenda meant to sustain some sort of superiority of one kind of a group over another.

Political agendas have the power to construct memories that can persist in the lives of everyday people. More than twenty years after the Rwandan Genocide, even though policies have been legislated that aim to de-sensitize ethnicity, it is regardless still very salient. Categorization and stereotypes still structure the social world of Rwanda, making it especially difficult for youth to identify with and understand words like "Hutu" and "Tutsi." This is thus an example of an active form of memory of the Rwandan Genocide and its ongoing social impact. Escaping the reality of 1994 seems almost close to impossible because of the depth to which this tragedy impacted not just the Rwandan people, but the social order and world in which they live. The conflict cut so deep into Rwandan society that even in contemporary times, a person is able to say this about his relationship with a person of "another" ethnicity:

> We can be friends without problems, but not very intimate. There is always a barrier. I could never have total trust of the other ethnicity… We can't talk openly about the political situation or about the past or our own experiences (Hilker 85).

The very first sentence in that comment already symbolizes how things can be okay without actually being okay. The inability to trust a person of another race, while keeping up barriers that prevent the development of meaningful, human-to-human relationships, shows how after all this time, the conflict during the 1994 genocide perpetuating the division between ethnic groups, that were themselves created way back in colonial times, continues to divide Rwandans today. Just as the Rwandan genocide continues to silently endure in Rwanda, racism in the U.S. also continues to institutionally endure, regardless of race-based discrimination having been made illegal in a post civil-rights movement era. Statistic after statistic about the African American population in the United States reveal disheartening disparities. Criminal justice records show, for example, that "black Americans are more likely to serve longer sentences than white American for the same offense" (Kahn and Kirk 3). Moreover, "blacks are more susceptible to falling from middle class grace, less capable of cushioning hard times, less able to retool careers or change directions" and "far less able to pass on their hard-earned successes to their children" (Shapiro 51). For this statistical reality to be ignored is hypocritical, and the blind acceptance and continuance of such disparities in the African American population is a powerful indicator of the social construction of race taking on an alternative form. The statistics further serve to seriously question how far the United States has actually come in its fight against racism, even with a black president in office. More than that, the endurance of this conflict reiterates how in the end, the historical narrative of racism that the U.S. has struggled to erase has become so institutionalized into American society that the same thing that was said about the Rwandan youth's comment earlier can also be said here: that certain realities that go unquestioned and appear mundane on the surface, only exemplify the normalization of the issues that persist under the surface. These problems that root back to conflicts historically and emotionally embedded in time continue to linger and undermine people's personal potential, hopes, dreams, and everything that would allow them to be unapologetically, wholeheartedly themselves- all without even being commonly and explicitly recognized as problems.

CONCLUSION

The problem is therefore largely in the ignorance of the problem. In times of conflict, as well as in enduring conflicts that are hardly ever labeled so, the true loss is in the belittlement of personal identities. A survivor of the Korean War dishearteningly writes how, "without going through [the war], no one will understand how painful it is to see your loved ones die right next to you. To lose a family member, hopes, dreams…" (Yoon 1). His personal identity speaks when he mentions his family, hopes, and dreams. In saying that this is what he lost through the conflict, he signifies how he lost a part of himself through it as well. In the case of the Rwandan genocide, and in mostly any cases of intergroup conflict, no one not-affiliated in politics asks for conflict, and yet it is the people who do not ask for it that lose the most through it. African American families who are suffering from the racial-wealth gap, which affects everything from education to job opportunities to even healthcare, are the ones whose personal identities are being compromised by the ongoing persistence of the racial conflict. If the heart of the problem is in the destruction of these personal identities, then the solution is in their revival. The solution is in regaining power from politics, which again is the primary cause of division within intergroup conflicts, and putting it in the hands of individuals.

When power is given to personal identities, personal identities can be used as means of bridging people from different groups together. The idea that everyone has a personal identity that fundamentally makes each who he or she is, is what can help shed light on the humanity that is too often overlooked during and even after conflicts. History cannot be entirely unwritten, but if intergroup conflicts have divided groups of people and placed them against each other, then reconciliation does not necessarily mean that the differences between them have to be dissolved, but rather it means that any differences that do exist need to be accepted, respected, and understood. The journey to reconciliation is not an easy one- even regaining power from politics to give back to the people seems unlikely to happen- but the first step is always to recognize that there is a problem: politics drive conflicts that serve to identify groups of people in certain ways, which then causes people to identify themselves and everyone around them in certain ways, all while undermining personal, human identity. The solution begins in the people's recognition of the role and manipulation of identity in these conflicts. The solution is in them being

able to define the problem before the problem goes on to define them.

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Challenges in Maternal Health for Sub-Saharan Africa

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By KAILA BANGUILAN

ABSTRACT

Maternal health continues to be a pressing issue for impoverished countries. In recent years, global initiatives have been set to reduce the rate of maternal mortality. While progress is being made in other low-income countries, the Sub-Saharan African region continues to have the highest rate of maternal deaths globally. The different barriers that prevent the improvement of maternal health within this area will be discussed and analyzed. Topics such as women's rights, HIV/AIDS, and demand for a skilled workforce will be discussed extensively. The importance of quality and access to care will also be examined. In addressing these factors, it is important to illustrate the role the health system plays. By doing so, the region's healthcare leaders can gain a better understanding of how to approach improving maternal health in Sub-Saharan Africa.

INTRODUCTION

Within the past decade, the United Nations has addressed the issue of rising maternal mortality rates in the world's poorest countries. Through the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), this organization sought to reduce maternal death by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015 ("MDG 5: Improve Maternal Health," 2015). Although this goal was not achieved on a global scale, regions such as South Asia reported a 64% decrease in maternal deaths, while Sub-Saharan Africa experienced only a 49% decrease (Ban, Way 39). Despite the slight progress, Sub-Saharan Africa continues to have the highest maternal mortality rates (MMR) in the world. In 2013, the region had a recorded MMR of 520 deaths per 100,000 live births, a far cry from other regions that have an MMR of around 170 or 190 (Lewis 1197). The disparity in maternal deaths found between African countries and other areas of the world can be attributed to many factors that make Sub-Saharan Africa unique from other impoverished regions. They include: the lack of a proper health system and health services, the insufficient amount of skilled health professionals, and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS. These factors combined ultimately result in poor quality care.

Currently, important health services that could potentially minimize maternal deaths, such as safe abortion and HIV education, are not made available to women due to the lack of infrastructure within the

health system. Poor allocation and distribution of resources by the government has also lead to shortages in the workforce and hospital supplies, putting a high strain on both the health care providers and the patients. Furthermore, because the health system fails to properly enforce women's rights, unmarried and HIV-positive pregnant women continue to experience hostility from workers who stigmatize them. In order to overcome the challenges brought about by these problems, the health system needs to assume its role and responsibility by designing plans and implementing policies that will directly address these factors.

The question at hand then is: what approaches are necessary to resolve this problem? First, it is important to discuss the significance of women's reproductive and health rights. It is also imperative to address the role of HIV/AIDS, its impact on both the patients and the doctors, and how that affects the quality of care. Assessing the reasons behind the lack of a skilled workforce as well as studying staff-patient relationships will also provide better insight on how these factors contribute to poor care. In addition to that, analysis of the debate between emphasizing quality of care versus access to care can help determine which has more significance in improving maternal health. Each component is critical in the evaluation of how to minimize maternal deaths because each targets a different challenge that health systems must face. Sunanda Ray's evaluation, "Activism: Working to Reduce Maternal Mortality Through Civil Society and Health Professional Alliances in Sub-Saharan Africa," is one of the many articles that will be involved in discussing this issue. Other articles to note include "Changing Patterns of Maternal Mortality (HIV/AIDS related) in Poor Countries," by H.M. Sebitloane and "The Implications of Shortages of Health Professionals for Maternal Health in Sub-Saharan Africa," by Nancy Gerein.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN MATERNAL HEALTH

In many cases of maternal mortality, the causes of death were found to be preventable. Deaths are usually due to internal bleeding and infection – all of which can be treated provided there is a sufficient amount of resources (Lewis 1199). This raises a question in ethics and the health system's role in upholding set standards. Studies show that due to systemic failures not addressed by the government, hospitals have not been able to decrease the amount of maternal deaths that occur within their facilities (Ray 43). For Sunanda Ray, associate professor at the University of Botswana School of Medicine, the reason the health system has not assumed responsibility in fixing ineffective policies is because there is not enough emphasis being placed on women's rights in maternal health.

In order to advocate change, civil society organizations that campaign for the importance of human rights can use their influence to promote the ideas of women's rights in health care. An example of the power of campaign influence is the launch of the HIV treatment literacy model established by the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) which is a South African campaign that seeks to push for equal access to treatment for AIDS. In addition to the "systemic failures" noted above, the lack of government regulation has also lead to hospitals mistreating patients whether through simple negligence or discrimination, as told by patients from Pumwani Maternity Hospital located in Kenya (Ray 45). While it can be argued that doctors and health care workers are more directly involved when it comes to patient interaction, the overall issue with how patients are treated can be traced back to the fundamental flaws in how the region's health systems fail to address women's rights. Therefore, through a rights-based approach, which involves developing policies while promoting and protecting rights of those affected, health system reforms can take place and improve the overall quality of maternal health. However, the notion that such reforms would bring about great advancements in maternal health is debatable. In "Improving Global Maternal Health: Challenges and Opportunities," the authors found that "health care services contribute only one third to improvements in life expectancy and that improving life chances and removing inequalities contribute to the remaining two thirds" (Lewis 1200). This suggests that even with government action, such services are not enough to compensate for the socioeconomic barriers that prevent a patient from receiving the best quality of care. According to Lewis, the cause of death may have more to do with the patient's circumstances and economic status, rather than the health system's role.

However, regardless of the patients' quality of life prior to the pregnancy, the UN Human Rights Council stated that it is crucial and necessary that their rights as women are preserved and protected by the government (1201). It can be speculated that perhaps the reason for the lack of improvements made in maternal health is because of the "low value that society, political, religious, community, and family leaders have placed on women's lives" (Lewis 1200). H.M. Sebitloane, a senior specialist in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at King Edward VIII Hospital located in South Africa, would agree. He found that, "many maternal deaths related to HIV could be prevented if health professionals and society would accept that women infected with HIV are worth saving" (Sebitloane 497). By advocating for women's rights through maternal health, MMRs will not only decrease, but health services available for women will also be expanded upon. For example, services such as con-

traceptive education and family planning would be highly beneficial to women in Sub-Saharan Africa since many of the maternal deaths involve women with unwanted pregnancies (Lewis 1202). Currently, women in West Africa who are pregnant and unmarried feel they cannot have access to these services because they believe it is only available for women who are married and because they fear judgement (Williamson 5). The stigma against women who do not follow traditional norms results in a more limited quality of care provided to them. This issue will be further elaborated upon later by analyzing the relationship between poor maternal health and the health professionals involved. For now, however, this is only one of many examples that highlights why the government and its health systems must take more responsibility in enforcing women's rights to implement services that will reduce the rate of maternal mortality.

THE IMPACT OF HIV/AIDS ON MATERNAL HEALTH

HIV/AIDS is one of the leading indirect causes for maternal death. In fact, over 50% of patients' deaths can be traced back to this disease (Lewis 1199). Some researchers have proposed that one way to combat this disease is by educating HIV-positive patients. Ray adds to that argument, emphasizing the importance of ensuring that patients with HIV are not shamed, by advocating the TAC. The TAC uses activism of the campaign's methods in teaching women with HIV on how to communicate their concerns to health professionals by "building self-worth and self-efficacy through the 'HIV-positive' trademark, rejecting silent victimhood" (Ray 42). Not only would this type of model begin the process of making HIV testing more accessible, but it would also allow for additional treatment for women with HIV. For example, micronutrient deficiency, "could result in increased risks of opportunistic infections and faster progression of HIV disease," which would ultimately lead to the mother's death (Sebitloane 495). Treatments regarding nutrition would slow down the spread of the disease, keeping the patient at a lower risk for complications or death during or after childbirth. Promoting the treatment and discussion of HIV amongst patients also targets the poor treatment they receive from doctors and health professionals that have developed a negative attitude toward the disease. If health professionals are able to have an open discussion with their patients about their conditions, perhaps it will lessen the stigma that patients must face.

In conjunction with HIV education, government systems in partnership with private organizations should also ensure that resources needed to treat HIV are being properly funded. In "A Public Health

Perspective on HIV/AIDS in Africa: Victories and Unmet Challenges," examples of initiatives in combating HIV have shown to be successful. For example, "the Clinton Health Access Initiative specifically focuses on access to treatment and making the antiretroviral medicines affordable at negotiated prices" (LeVasseur, Goldstein, Welles 241). If the health system implemented similar policies, access to HIV care would greatly increase, consequently lowering infected mothers' risks during child labor. The World Health Organization, for example, sought to increase access to antiretroviral therapy, or AVR, and successfully increased its availability to people in Sub-Saharan Africa by 800% (LeVasseur, Goldstein, Welles 243). Although this therapy does not cure patients of HIV, it lengthens their lives and improves their quality of living. However, because HIV is a virus that is continually mutating, treatments must also mutate with it and this requires a large amount of resources. However, the issue can be reduced or controlled through educational services and initiatives put forth by the region's health systems and private entities.

THE NEED FOR BETTER HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Due to the prominence of HIV/AIDS and the lack of educational training, the health professional workforce in the Sub-Saharan African region is largely strained. Physicians continue to decrease in numbers, as many workers continue to emigrate to other countries where practice conditions are of higher quality (Hagopian 1754). The high demand for sufficient health professionals in richer, more stable countries also makes it easy for such workers to migrate because they offer economic stability, ultimately hurting the health systems of low income countries. In "The Flight of Physicians from West Africa: Views of African Physicians and Implications for Policy," suggestions to prevent migration of important health workers include increasing the pay of doctors. For example, Ghana's implementation of increased physician pay through the "Additional Duty Hours Allowance" has shown to help reduce the number of workers that migrate (Hagopian 1756). Although increasing the pay of doctors may provide some impact, it is also important to consider the cost-effectiveness of implementing such a policy. "Human Resources and Access to Maternal Health Care," by Petra Ten Hoope-Bender, refutes this methodology by bringing to attention that investing in doctors may not be the smartest choice since "not only are they more expensive but it is usually more difficult to attract doctors to work in remote areas" (Hoope-Bender et al. 230). Instead, Hoope-Bender proposes that nurses and midwives should be trained to do the work of emergency care obstetricians. Not only would this cost less, but it would also provide patients with more

skilled attendance while improving the quality and accessibility to care.

Furthermore, there have been many cases in which unskilled workers performed cesarean sections upon delivering a child, a surgical procedure that only obstetricians are trained for. Because of their lack of training, this would often lead to the mother having an increased chance for infection, complication, and death. This places an immense amount of stress on the worker and as a result, hampers the quality of care given to the patient. In Nancy Gerein's article "The Implications of Shortages of Health Professionals for Maternal Health in Sub-Saharan Africa," she states "a continued inability to provide quality care can contribute to job dissatisfaction, stress, demotivation, and intentions to seek other employment, creating a vicious cycle of staff attrition" (44). Since the quality of care is directly related to the quality of healthcare workers, it is important to assess not only how maternal mortality is affected by staff shortages, but also how the lack of resources hurts workers. Health professionals that are stressed and overworked do not have the ability to provide the best care for their patients due to their lack of alertness and attentiveness, ultimately hurting the chances for patients to properly recover from their conditions.

However, it is not only the number of health professionals available that is hurting the quality of care given to mothers, but the relationship between the doctor and patient as well. As noted earlier, doctors' negative attitudes towards pregnant patients that are unmarried or have HIV have shown to affect the health of the patient: "Unmarried women frequently have to face strong stigma from judgmental providers if they are sexually active, which in turn reduces these women's ability to obtain needed services" (Lewis 1202). There have also been cases in which staff showed a lack of empathy towards patients which directly obstructed the patients' care. In an interview, a patient staying at local hospital in Malawi stated that as she was crying in pain, a nearby nurse would either ignore her or scream back (O'Donnell 6). Not only is it necessary to train workers to perform medical care, but it is also critical that they are trained to provide the best care possible by showing compassion, regardless of the patient's history or record.

QUALITY OF CARE VS. ACCESSING CARE

As policy planning in maternal health continues to be reshaped, it is essential to discuss whether to place emphasis on quality of care or accessibility to care. In a comprehensive study, "Approaches to Improve the Quality of Maternal and Newborn Health Care: An Overview of the Evidence," the authors state that "access to and availability of medical

care are both necessary but not sufficient factors to improve maternal and newborn health. In fact, they do not guarantee increased utilization of services or improved client satisfaction…poor quality of care is the most plausible explanation for this reality" (Austin et. al 2). The claim that emphasis should be placed on quality of care is important to discuss because measuring the quality of care is subjective, while measuring the ability to access care is objective. In the article "At the Right Time in the Right Way, With the Right Resources: Perceptions of the Quality of Care Provided During Childbirth in Malawi," Dr. Elizabeth O'Donnell and her co-authors discuss the perceptions of quality care provided during childbirth in Malawi and investigate how patients and health providers define quality care. While caregivers regarded skill and amount of resources available to be the main factors that contribute to good quality care, patients defined quality care as a "positive staff-patient relationship" (O'Donnell et. al 3). With both definitions in mind, the health system will have a better idea in how to address the issue of low quality care that patients are receiving, whether it is through proper allocation of resources or fighting discrimination that workers hold against patients. However, even if improvements are made, there is no guarantee that the overall maternal health of the region will progress if the issue of accessing care is not addressed.

There is strong evidence that indicates that accessibility should be held at an equal standard as the care itself. Accessing care is limited due to the inefficient health system and uneven distribution of health services available, especially in rural areas (Gerein 42). In a study carried out by Dr. Mickey Chopra and his colleagues found that "even though more than 90% of women complete at least one antenatal visit, only about 11% received the full set of interventions required…" (Chopra 840). This statistic is only one of many that highlight how health outcomes have not been reflecting the progress being made in trying to provide more health services. Despite health services being made available, women are unable to access them, either because of their location or lack of awareness. Thus, the health system's role is not only to provide these services, but also to ensure that they are accessible.

The decline in the number of health care professionals is also a contributing factor in making care less accessible. Patterns show that trained professionals tend to cluster in more urban areas as opposed to rural areas, creating an uneven distribution and inequity in maternal care. In certain cases, "some facilities would contact health professionals to respond to emergencies out of hours, but the effectiveness of this depends on the communication infrastructure and the distance between the facility and the professional's residence" (Gerein 45). Off-hour health workers

that live far away from rural hospitals would not be a reliable source of care since they are not on duty and the distance they would have to travel. For women in rural areas, the risks for infection, complications, and death run higher.

Overall, keeping the given information in consideration, it is difficult to assess whether more importance should be placed on the quality of care or the ability to access such care. Ideally, focusing on both would yield the most progress, however Sub-Saharan Africa's limited resources may prove this to be a strenuous task.

CONCLUSION

Although improving maternal health in Sub-Saharan Africa will continue to be a complex and challenging task, the slow progress and continual analysis of how to approach the issue provides hope for mothers that seek to live long and healthy lives with their babies. By addressing women's rights, HIV/AIDS, the demand for a better workforce and the debate between quality and access of care, a better understanding of the health system's role in these aspects can lead to the development of more effective plans in reducing maternal deaths. However, the scope of this research is limited; there are many more complexities that this topic encompasses that were not addressed in this paper. Those include the issues of child marriage, which prevents girls from having equal opportunity to health and education, unwanted pregnancies, which can lead to dangerous abortions, and lack of knowledge or access to contraception (Lewis 1201). Further discussion of maternal health on a global scale can also be helpful in analyzing approaches of improvement in Sub-Saharan Africa. Evaluating the role of health systems in other low-income countries would also provide great insight to add to this discussion.

In conclusion, it is important to highlight the health system's role in tackling the unique challenges Sub-Saharan Africa faces in dealing with maternal health. From the gathered research, it is evident what their role is and what steps need to be taken to reach the United Nations' Millennium Development Goal. Through further research and inclusion of components not analyzed in this paper, the hope of providing these women with the best maternal care is even brighter. If other impoverished nations could address their specific issues and successfully decrease sizable amounts the rates of maternal mortality within their populations, there is no reason to believe that Sub-Saharan Africa cannot do the same.

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Discrimination against the Transgender Population and Recommendations for a Trans-inclusive Environment in the U.S. Military

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By COURTNEY S. BEARD

ABSTRACT

Since its establishment in 1776, the United States military has discriminated against various groups of people by denying enlistment due to race, gender, sexual orientation, and most recently, transgender individuals. The Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT) Repeal in 2010 was a progressive step made by the military that allowed for gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals to openly serve. However, the "T" in LGBT was left behind in this repeal. It wasn't until the announcement in 2016 by Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter (2015 - 2017) that transgender individuals were able to openly serve in the U.S. military. Carter announced transgender individuals would also be able to begin joining the military in July 2017. However, since the transition of President Obama to Trump, the original timeline was delayed after Trump announced transgender individuals would not be able to serve in the U.S. military in any capacity whatsoever. This has put the future of thousands of transgender individuals currently serving and hoping to serve in jeopardy. As of November 2017, Federal Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly blocked the enforcement of Trump's transgender military ban. Further updates have yet to be made or announced. This paper discusses the discrimination transgender individuals have faced in the U.S. military, from being denied joining to not being able to serve openly. This paper also explores ways in which the military can create a trans-inclusive environment to ensure all military members feel welcome and are able to proudly serve, as we look ahead for a brighter future of the U.S. military.

INTRODUCTION

The moment we are born, the beliefs and expectations of society are forced upon us. The color of our bedroom walls, the first outfit we wear, and the toys made available at home to play with are chosen based on the sex we are assigned at birth. Judith Butler discusses this idea at length in her theoretical piece, *Gender Trouble*. Butler's goal is to have the reader re-examine assumptions and social constructs involving gender identity. We live in a world where immediately upon birth, the way we dress, act, and the feelings we should or should not express are solely

based on the sex assigned at birth. However, for some individuals, their assigned sex at birth is not the sex they choose to identify with.

Transgender individuals choose to identify with another gender other than the one they were assigned at birth. Along with this decision comes many different types of discrimination. Cisgender individuals, or those whose gender identity matches the same gender they were assigned at birth, are not subject to the same discrimination. David B. Cruz shares the details of a national survey completed:

> The largest, most systematic national survey on the subject, the National Transgender Discrimination Survey, has found that transgender and other gender non-conforming people as a group 'face injustice at every turn: in childhood homes, in school systems that promise to shelter and educate, in harsh and exclusionary workplaces, at the grocery store, the hotel front desk, in doctors' offices and emergency rooms, before judges and at the hands of landlords, police officers, healthcare workers, and other service providers.' The respondents to this survey 'lived in extreme poverty,' 'nearly four times more likely to have a household income of less than $10,000 [per] year compared to the' population average. They 'experienced unemployment at twice the rate of the general population at the time of the survey, with rates for [trans and gender nonconforming] people of color up to four times the national unemployment rate.' 'Ninety percent . . . of those surveyed reported experiencing harassment, mistreatment or discrimination on the job or took actions like hiding who they are to avoid it.' 'Forty seven percent . . . said they had experienced an adverse job outcome, such as being fired, not hired, or denied a promotion because of being transgender or gender non-conforming.' (267)

As Cruz mentions, the workplace is one example of an environment where transgender individuals may face discrimination. Thus, the focus of this research paper will be the discrimination against transgender individuals in the United States military. Recommendations for how to create a trans-inclusive environment in the U.S. military will also be discussed. The primary research question is: What forms of discrimination do transgender individuals in the military face? Subsidiary questions for this topic include: Now that it has been announced that transgender individuals can serve openly in the United States military beginning in 2017, how can we ensure these individuals will be working in an inclusive environment?

The United States' military has discriminated against groups

of individuals throughout its history, specifically by banning particular groups from joining. A few examples of groups banned from joining the U.S. military include women, gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and black individuals. Allison Ross reminds us that, "until recently, women were not allowed to serve in direct ground combat positions" (188). The U.S. military has also made progress over time and currently allows all of the previously listed groups of individuals to serve. However, not all groups of individuals have been as lucky. As Adam F. Yerke and Valory Mitchell explain, the "current policy leaves transgender people who are now in the military stranded, and without protection" (455). Currently, the U.S. military does not allow for transgender individuals to join, and until the recent announcement in June 2016, transgender individuals were not able to serve openly in the military.

The DADT Repeal is one example of a great accomplishment and progress made within the U.S. military because it finally allowed lesbian, gay, and bi-sexual individuals to serve within all branches of the U.S. military openly. Prior to the DADT Repeal, gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual individuals in the military faced the possibility of being discharged if anyone found out about their sexuality. Hence the policy's name, which suggests the military will not ask about your sexuality and you will not tell. Brandon Alford and Shawna J. Lee make an excellent point by stating "Practically speaking, DADT required LGB (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual) service members to stay closeted so as to serve their country" (3). The Don't Ask Don't Tell Repeal Act was passed by Congress and signed by President Barack H. Obama in December 2010. The repeal went into effect in September 2011 and was celebrated among the lesbian, gay, and bi-sexual populations everywhere, especially in the military. Unfortunately, the "T" in "LGBT" was left behind in the repeal of DADT. Transgender individuals were still unable to serve openly, even after the DADT Repeal took effect. It was not until recently, in June 2016, that Secretary of Defense, Ashton Carter, announced that transgender individuals would be able to serve openly in the U.S. military. This was the moment the transgender population in the U.S. military had always waited for. The policy took full effect beginning July 1, 2017, and the U.S. military began to allow transgender individuals to join.

The primary position of this research paper is that despite the continuous progress the U.S. military has made throughout its history, the transgender population has faced countless forms of discrimination. This research paper will review forms of discrimination the transgen-

der population faces in the U.S. military before and during their time in service, such as not being able to join, not being able to serve openly, and not having the same opportunities to seek mental health assistance as their cisgender peers. This research paper will also include recommendations for how the U.S. military can create a trans-inclusive environment. Recommendations include training for all service members and leadership regarding what it means to be transgender. This training should include information regarding terminology and the importance of proper pronoun use. Lastly, healthcare equality should be made available to all transgender service members. I postulate that just as the U.S. military has successfully changed their policies and integrated groups previously banned from serving, the transition to include transgender individuals will also be a successful one.

FURTHER EXPLANATION OF THE TERM TRANSGENDER AND THE GENDER BINARY

The word "transgender" is an umbrella term used to describe individuals whose gender identity or expression does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth. In the essay "Gender Identity Issues and Workplace Discrimination: The Transgender Experience," Michelle Dietert and Dianne Dentice explain that "the ways in which transgender people self-identify and express their gender identity vary depending on the individual. Some transgender people take on some degree of masculine and/or feminine characteristics depending on their gender self-identification" (122). Each transgender individual's decisions of how they choose to present themselves by the clothes they wear, the makeup they choose to wear or not wear, the overall look and/or length of their hair, and many other choices may vary from person to person. Ross explains transgender individuals have identities, expressions, or behaviors that "do not conform to that typically associated with the sex to which they were assigned at birth" (188). The idea of being born one sex but identifying with another challenges society's current idea of the gender binary.

The male/female gender binary has existed within society for centuries. Ross explains that "the gender binary is a culturally defined and socially constructed set of acceptable behaviors for biologically defined men and women" (187). In Butler's *Gender Trouble*, this very idea of teaching and enforcing behaviors according to gender is challenged. Butler asks, "What is the prohibitive law that generates the corporeal

stylization of gender, the fantasied and fantastic figuration of the body?" (135). While society has an expectation that all individuals fall within the gender role of male or female, Butler challenges societal views by forcing the reader to re-think any pre-conceived assumptions the reader may have regarding gender identity and how a male or female should appear or act. Matthew F. Kerrigan also mentions in his article "Transgender Discrimination: The New Don't Ask, Don't Tell," that "transgenderism is a challenge to the strict binary gender system assumed by the military, and much of the Western world" (501). It is important to note that not all transgender individuals choose to complete gender confirmation surgery. Because of this fact, an individual may appear to be male but identify as a transgender woman. Some individuals may even identify as genderqueer or non-binary, a person who does not categorize themselves into the conventional gender system but identifies with neither of the genders or a combination of both the female and male genders. The defiance of the strict "stylization of gender" opposes the male/female gender binary that plays a role in our everyday lives and especially in the U.S. military. The gender binary has led to the belief that gender dysphoria is considered a disorder and therefore led institutions such as the military to ban these individuals with such a disorder from joining their ranks.

TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS FORBIDDEN TO JOIN A DESIRABLE WORKPLACE

Despite the ban on transgender individuals serving in the U.S. military, a large majority of the transgender population actually considers the military to be a highly desirable workplace. The fact that transgender individuals are forbidden to join the U.S. military is the first form of discrimination against the population. Male-to-female transgender individuals who have yet to transition may find the military to be an attractive career option for multiple reasons. Yerke and Mitchell explain in their article that the military is "an organization that rewards and cultivates exaggerated masculine behaviors: high-risk taking, stoicism, controlled violence, heterosexuality, athletic prowess, and contempt for physical/emotional weakness" (441). Therefore, transgender females may desire the very masculine career field to attempt to suppress their feelings of wanting to be female. Female-to-male transgender individuals who have yet to transition "may also be interested in the military for its focus on traditional masculinity or hyper-masculinity. The military is one place

where women are encouraged and commended for adopting masculine traits" (Yerke and Mitchell 441). It is unfortunate that a population who finds a particular career field to be so attractive is not allowed to join because of who they are.

Regardless of the military being a desirable career option for transgender males and females alike, the U.S. military does not currently allow them to join. This is the first form of discrimination discussed in this research paper that the military currently exercises against the transgender population. In order for individuals to join the military, physical and psychological examinations are completed. Both of these examinations are chances for transgender individuals to become disqualified. Any transgender person who has undergone gender confirmation surgery will be disqualified during the physical portion of the exams. Ross notes that "transmen who have had sex-reassignment surgery may be excluded for 'major abnormalities or defects of the genitalia' and change of sex. Transwomen who have had sex-reassignment surgery may be excluded for penis amputation, 'major abnormalities or defects of the genitalia' and change of sex" (190). The psychological exam is considered another challenging test to overcome for the transgender population. Ross explains that "transgender persons may be disqualified for a long list of disorders, including transvestism, transsexualism, psychosexual conditions, and Gender Identity Disorder (GID)" (190). It is still possible for transgender individuals to pass both the physical examination, so long as gender confirmation surgery has not been completed, and the psychological examination, as long as the individual does not admit to identifying as a transgender person or is not even aware of it at the time. Nonetheless, transgender individuals who pass the initial examinations still experience continuing discrimination once successfully sworn into the U.S. military.

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS DURING SERVICE

Transgender individuals who are able to enter the U.S. military successfully after passing the initial examinations continue to endure discrimination during their commitment in the military. Any member who possibly dares identify themselves as transgender faces the risk of being discharged. Therefore, transgender individuals who "wish to remain in the military must 'pass' as their biological sex, which means they cannot take hormones or pursue sex-reassignment surgeries, and they must con-

ceal their gender identities and transgenderism" (Ross 190). As transgender individuals "must 'pass' as their biological sex," they continue to live with a false identity incongruent with how they feel internally. This type of discrimination can eventually cause negative effects on one's mental health. Since transgender individuals are not allowed to serve in the military in the first place, the option of speaking to a counselor or therapist is not available due to the risk of exposure and possible discharge from the military. By not having these options available, individuals continue to serve without any treatment, and their symptoms continue to exacerbate. This may result in some individuals choosing to "treat symptoms with alcohol or drugs, which could lead to substance abuse or dependence. Transgender people may also resort to self-harming behaviors (e.g. cutting, hitting, or burning themselves), another common problem related to untreated gender dysphoria" (Yerke and Mitchell 445). Despite the ban on transgender individuals serving in the U.S. military, some still attempt to join. Regardless of whether an individual is aware they are transgender before joining, or make the discovery during military service, discrimination prevents them from seeking professional help, forcing them to internalize these feelings and putting the state of their overall mental health at risk.

It seems the U.S. military, prior to the June 2016 announcement that transgender individuals are able to serve openly and join the armed forces, did not consider at all the skills, knowledge, and talents of transgender individuals. In June 2016, Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter announced that "Americans who want to serve and can meet our standards should be afforded the opportunity to complete to do so" (Rosenberg 5). Prior to 2016, transgenderism did not receive consideration, despite individuals having the skills required to serve their country. This discrimination can be compared to a time when female service members were not allowed to serve in combat roles in the U.S. military. The U.S. military clearly did not consider the skills, knowledge, and talents of female service members who wished to serve in combat roles, and instead, simply banned a group of individuals from specific roles in the military because of their gender. One clear example can be seen in 1991, when General Merrill McPeak, who was serving as the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force at the time, stated that "he would pick a less-qualified male pilot over a more qualified female pilot for a combat mission" (McSally 3). McPeak explained he had a traditional attitude when it came to wives, mothers, and daughters killing people. Could the military's attitude

on transgender individuals be a traditional one as well? Traditional in a sense that the military continues to follow the gender binary beliefs formed by society. Preferably, the U.S. military would openly welcome all individuals with high potential, comprising a great abundance of knowledge, and valuable skills. In turn, this would work toward the goal of building a successful and more powerful military force. Unfortunately, the U.S. military made choices to exclude certain groups based on race, sex, and gender.

OPPOSITION TO ALLOWING TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS TO SERVE

Many different opinions and ideas against transgender individuals serving in the U.S. military have been formed over time; however, there is also research to oppose these beliefs. For example, a doctor testifying for the Air Force in the case *Leyland v. Orr* made a couple of comparisons to transgender individuals. As Kerrigan writes, the doctor in the Air Force "analogized allowing transsexuals to serve to allowing someone with coronary heart disease to serve on the battlefield. The Air Force doctor also compared sexual reassignment surgery to a 'loss of limb'" (510). This comparison may be viewed by military individuals as handicaps that disallow transgender individuals to fully perform their job roles. Others opposed to transgender individuals serving in the U.S. military share reasons that include unit cohesion suffering and the extremely high cost of accepting transgender individuals into the military. Yerke and Mitchell depict an objection made by the United States that "transgender people are emotionally unstable, or that they can damage the well-being of those around them" (450). Bunn also shares that for transgender individuals to live a stable life, it "requires extensive medical treatment" (223). Examples of treatment may include "ongoing psychotherapy and counseling sessions, periodic hormone treatment, long-term electrolysis sessions, periodic outpatient body-contouring procedures, and other medically necessary procedures to effectuate and maintain the transition from one sex to another" (Bunn 223). The U.S. military believes the costs associated with all of these procedures and forms of treatment will be extremely high and cause a financial burden.

Although these concerns may be considered valid, there is proof that states the exact opposite for both of the above oppositions: unit cohesion and financial burden. The idea of unit cohesion suffering can

be argued against by using examples from the past. Ross discusses the fact that this very same argument of unit cohesion suffering, previously mentioned by Yerke and Mitchell, was used in the past "to support the Army's racial segregation; it was then resurrected to prevent women, and later, openly lesbian, gay, and bisexual people from serving. For each of these restrictions, this argument was undermined and the military ultimately reversed its initial position" (204). In fact, unit cohesion actually suffers as service members are forced to remain "closeted" and not able to express their true selves. Before the repeal of DADT, service members resorted to leaving the military all together because they did not feel comfortable serving as their true selves. In fact, unit cohesion suffers when specific groups are deliberately excluded. Regarding the perceived financial burden, a study prepared by Karl Bryant and Kristen Schilt for the University of California determined that "existing research suggests that allowing medical gender transitions for service members would not create a financial burden on the military, as the percentage of people accessing such services would be quite small" (9). Therefore, it is important to recognize that allowing transgender individuals to openly serve in the U.S. military would not affect unit cohesion and financial resources would not be used to the extreme that some have implied.

CASE STUDIES OF TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS SUCCESSFULLY SERVING IN THE U.S. MILITARY

There are case studies available that highlight successful careers of transgender individuals serving in the U.S. military. Take for instance a case study of S.C., a transgender pilot, who served in the U.S. Army. S.C. had a successful career with over 7,000 flying hours and over 3,000 hours in combat. Ross explains that "S.C. experienced distress with her GID until she was able to disclose her gender identity and undergo surgery to realign her body with that identity….Hence, disclosure of one's identity as a transgender person might lead to better, more capable military service" (193). An important point to take into consideration is that S.C. felt much more at ease after she was able to transition. The doctors involved with S.C.'s transition also concluded that "a transgender aircrew member is 'no more likely to be unsafe than the non-[transgender]" (Ross 194). S.C.'s case proves it is possible to successfully serve in the U.S. military.

The case study of Paula Neira is another example of a service member successfully serving in the U.S. military. Neira served as an

officer during the Gulf War. During this time, Neira handled the tough assignment of keeping her fellow service members alive. Ross refers to the military's ban on transgender service members as "counterproductive" (196). Ross also goes on to state that "it is detrimental to military strength to turn away qualified, willing, and educated service members because of their gender identities or because they have had sexual reassignment surgeries" (196). With case studies such as S.C. and Neira available, we can see it is not only possible for transgender individuals to successfully serve in the U.S. military, but the military is more likely to be successful if individuals with high skill-sets, knowledge, and potential are not turned away simply because of gender identity. Canada is proof of a successful military force who welcomes transgender individuals. Based on a Canadian study, "it was concluded that the decision to lift the ban on gay, lesbian, and transgender service members had no impact on military performance, readiness, cohesion, or morale" (Ross 207). Fortunately, the U.S. military has the advantage of reviewing the experiences of other countries when it comes to including transgender individuals into the force. With successful case studies of transgendered individuals in the United States forces, along with successful results from other countries who allow transgender individuals to serve, the U.S. military finally decided to lift the ban preventing transgender individuals from joining and serving.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CREATE A TRANS-INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT IN THE U.S. MILITARY

The U.S. military announced in June 2016 that transgender individuals will be able to serve openly and eventually join the service. With this announcement, it's important to consider how a trans-inclusive environment can be created for transgender individuals newly joining the ranks and transgender individuals who have been serving in silence. To begin, all leadership personnel should be educated on what it means to be transgender. This includes the proper use of terminology. Yerke and Mitchell state that "failing to address the unique needs of this population fuels continued discrimination, as has been identified with research with transgender veterans, and can exacerbate mental health problems" (442). Since mental health worsens with experiences of discrimination and exclusion, mental health problems could be elevated with transgender indi-

viduals, especially if they do not feel comfortable having open discussions with anyone out of fear their military careers may come to an end. Once leadership has been educated, the remaining force should be provided with necessary training. Both leadership and individual service members will need to be educated on the importance of using the transgender individual's preferred pronouns. Dietert and Dentice explain that during a research study, "the use of pronouns and chosen names that reflected their chosen identities was an important issue" (134). Each transgender individual's chosen name and preferred pronouns are important, and they view the use of these terms used by others as signs of respect and acceptance of their transition. Refusing to address individuals by their preferred names and pronouns is a sign of disrespect.

Transgender individuals currently serving, as well as any transgender individuals who want to join when they are able, will need access to proper healthcare. This includes any transgender-related healthcare. Yerke and Mitchell state, "It is important for transgender people to access preventative healthcare" (452). Preventative health care services include prostate exams and mammogram exams, regardless of whether the individual has chosen to transition from female-to-male or male-to-female. Yerke and Mitchell suggest that "healthcare specifically related to transitioning (such as hormones) should be covered, as it is in the United Kingdom and Canada, and transgender surgeries should be provided, as they currently are by government entities as the City of San Francisco and Canadian Armed Forces" (452). Nonetheless, healthcare is not a current option available to transgender individuals. Being granted the equality to access preventative healthcare is extremely important, as it is already granted to all cisgender military individuals. Not only should physical health care be made available to all transgender service members, but "the mental health needs of transgender individuals should finally be addressed, just as these needs are addressed for other military personnel" (Yerke and Mitchell 452). Depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and substance use disorders are among a few psychological problems transgender veterans experience. Having resources available to transgender veterans to freely discuss problems such as these should be available, just as they are to their cisgender counterparts.

CONCLUSION

Based on conducted and gathered research, answers to questions

have been discovered. Transgender individuals working in the U.S. military face many different forms of discrimination. The research material clearly includes examples of discrimination: transgender individuals are currently banned from joining the U.S. military, risks of being discharged if their true identities are discovered, and discrimination with health care. However, there are ways in which the military can in fact create a trans-inclusive environment for individuals who join next year and for those who are now able to serve openly, following the announcement earlier this year by Secretary of Defense, Ashton Carter.

The theoretical piece by Butler was written to challenge the set ideas of society and the concepts of femininity, masculinity, and what each of these terms really mean. The cultural constructs in society that identify with what it means to be masculine or feminine, in forms of behavior and appearance, can reinforce discrimination. The military has been guilty of discrimination throughout its history: black, women, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals. Fortunately, these forms of discrimination have been challenged and defeated over time. If this study were to continue, aspects that should be included would be what changes the military decides to implement after the announcement of transgender individuals who are now able to openly serve and join the military, and how those changes either failed or succeeded. After a few years of inclusion within the military, it would be interesting to see if unit cohesion actually suffers and the concrete monetary costs associated with assisting transgender service members. The military should welcome all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, gender, and sexual orientation. Choosing to welcome individuals based off of their merit, potential, knowledge, and skills to create a diverse and inclusive environment is extremely important to ensure our military consists of the highest quality individuals possible, resulting in a strong military force overall.

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CRISPR: Genetic Therapy, Enhancement, and Why It Matters

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By BRIAN CHANG

ABSTRACT

The ethics of human genome editing have been debated for decades. Over the years, geneticists have developed multiple methods of adding, removing, and altering genetic material, with each building on and expanding the continuously evolving debate. The most recent development, the CRISPR-cas9 system, has done just that. With its unprecedented affordability and frightening accuracy, CRISPR has both started a new age of genetic engineering and ignite new debates in the field of science. This research investigates one such debate: genetic therapy versus enhancement. Now that gene editing is gradually approaching the level of safety and efficacy demanded by clinical trials, guidelines ought to be set in order to regulate the use of this powerful tool. On the one hand, scientists have their eyes set on its therapeutic potential to eradicate genetic diseases; while on the other, some envision a society of a "better" people with the use of its enhancement properties. Naturally, each comes with its set of costs and benefits and cannot be heedlessly viewed as simply "accept" or "do not accept." The current paper seeks to determine how CRISPR should be used by examining specific cases of CRISPR usage and reviewing topics from ethics and philosophy.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the term "CRISPR" has garnered the attention of the public as a result of a fascinating development in the field of genetics, causing much debate among scientists. Patented by the Broad Institute and UC Berkeley, the CRISPR-cas system, or "clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats" (Pellagatti et al., 1023) coupled with a CRISPR-associated, or cas, protein, is the most controversial new gene-editing tool in medicine. Compared to its predecessors, TALENs and ZFNs, CRISPR is not only a more effective, precise method of manipulating genes, but also extremely cheap and convenient relative to any other method by far. In just the past year or so, researchers have made developmental strides in the genetic manipulation of certain animals, plants, and bacteria, and are beginning to assess the possibility of human embryo manipulation. It is important to first understand what CRISPR is and how it has rekindled pre-existing debates in genetic engineering.

Debates surrounding this technology include the ethics of human experimentation, risks versus benefits, natural versus synthetic, and therapy versus enhancement. In particular, the therapy versus enhancement debate has attracted the public with the possibility of using CRISPR to cure all genetic diseases as well as to augment certain human traits.

CRISPRs, which are short DNA sequences, pair with a cas-protein to constitute the immune system of many bacteria. Using a given RNA sequence, the CRISPR-cas system can precisely cut and modify target nucleotide molecules. This natural system was discovered in the late nineteen-eighties, but was only recently isolated as a technology with the potential to edit genes. As Pellagatti et al. elegantly observe, CRISPR has "elevated genome editing from being a technical challenge to a practical reality due to the simplicity of the method" (Pellagatti et al. 1024). What may have seemed a fabrication of science fiction has quickly turned into reality in just a few years. For several decades, geneticists have controversially used expensive and time consuming synthetic TALENs and ZFNs as gene-editing tools, which will soon be replaced by CRISPR in the genetically modified organism industry for crops and livestock. Unsurprisingly, even more controversy arises when dealing with human genetic engineering. According to Caplan et al., CRISPR "offers new possibilities to render humans immune to a range of diseases, or to repair fatal gene defects in a human embryo" or in human germline cells (Caplan et al. 1421). With epidemics such as malaria and AIDS plaguing millions, many would agree that if the possibility to eradicate diseases exists, it should certainly be researched and used. However, with growing conversation and criticism about designer babies and genetic enhancements possibly improving intelligence, body type, and many other traits (Briere & Resnick 108), scientists must seriously contemplate the point at which a cure becomes an augmentation. Naturally, defining such a line between the two cannot be done without critical analysis of both general and specific cases.

The ethical questions surrounding CRISPR are clear but challenging to definitively answer. To what extent should genetic engineering have a role in human gene manipulation? Furthermore, in the therapy-enhancement debate, should the government limit CRISPR to therapy or is there a case to be made for enhancements as well? In "CRISPR/Cas9 Genome Editing - New and Old Ethical Issues Arising from a Revolutionary Technology," Martina Baumann focuses on "learning from past debates related to similar technologies...[to] come closer to a consensus upon which society as a whole can agree," which is the ultimate goal of

bioethics (139). While in "No Time to Waste-The Ethical Challenges Created by CRISPR: CRISPR/Cas," Arthur Caplan and his colleagues discuss CRISPR's "possibilities to render humans immune to a range of diseases" and theorize on its future implications. From a more regulatory perspective, Laura Colleton, in "The Elusive Line Between Enhancement and Therapy and Its Effects on Health Care in the U.S.," explores how one should define certain procedures by looking at "what constitutes disease or dysfunction and who truly requires medical attention" (72). Almost all concede that CRISPR will inevitably be used on humans and scientists face increasing pressure to answer these ethical questions due to the rapid development and accessibility of the tool. Instead of asking what CRISPR is capable of currently, society should preemptively ask, "What could be done using it in the next decade; how will ethical lines be drawn; and who will draw them?" The line between use and misuse of genetic engineering tools in humans may be less clear than expected. Initially, enhancements may be viewed negatively, but gradually some may become regarded as necessities. Furthermore, regulations should be decided based on wide public participation rather than exclusively selected legislators because of the debate's potential outcomes on mankind's future itself.

THERAPY VERSUS ENHANCEMENT

Due to its future ethical implications, CRISPR presents new challenges to the pre-existing therapy versus enhancement debate. In a broad sense, therapy can be defined as the treatment of any disease, disorder, or dysfunction and enhancement as the improvement of one's health beyond the norm. However, both of these terms are dependent on the definition of what counts as normal. In most cases, "abnormal" can refer to any deviation from the standard. However, as Laura Colleton observes, "standards of 'normality' often refer to averages, but technologies to alter the average have become more advanced and more widely available" (71). For example, consider flu vaccinations, which are commonly considered enhancements because of their preventative and immune system bolstering properties. If someone receives an enhancement through a vaccination, that treatment is considered as a deviation from the norm, but if everyone becomes vaccinated, it becomes the new norm. With this, the line between therapy and enhancement may become unclear. Consider the medical insurance company, Aetna, and its views on enhancements. In the case of using "androgens and anabolic steroids for performance

enhancements," Aetna views such pharmaceuticals as "not medically necessary" (Colleton 73). This concept of being medically unnecessary is critical to the separation of therapy versus enhancement; it is what dissuades scientists from choosing the side that favors enhancement for "bodily functions or appearance, such as athletic endurance or eye color" (Baumann 144), which is now possible because of CRISPR. To determine the medical necessity of a procedure, it is important to determine if it prolongs and reinforces an aspect of a patient's life that would be lacking otherwise.

The potential benefits inherent in human germline therapy, or modification of cells responsible for heritable traits, outweigh moral concerns regarding identity, autonomy, and naturalness. CRISPR's vast potential for curing genetic diseases has been supported by trials in non-human organisms. Shortly after its discovery, researchers in Kyoto found that CRISPR/Cas9 components could be used to silence HIV expression by manipulating the viral genome (Hirotaka 2). If this research continues, it could potentially become an anti-HIV treatment, leading to further cures for similar genetic autoimmune illnesses. Most people, including renowned scientists and scholars, would agree that this kind of treatment is acceptable in the context of the sheer amount of individuals affected by HIV. However, some bioethicists approach this issue adversely from a naturalistic standpoint, arguing that, at a certain point, treatment becomes so unnatural that it is no longer justified (Briere & Resnick 106). However, the negative connotation associated with the word "unnatural" reflects a common view that nature unfailingly produces optimal results and that to work against natural processes would be dangerous, despite evidence demonstrating that "unnatural" procedures can be both safe and beneficial (Briere & Resnick 138). But as Martina Baumann argues specifically for CRISPR's case, "a total ban based on arguments such as dignity or autonomy would have to stand up against the moral obligation to promote medical intervention in the case of diseases that lead to great suffering of patients" (148). One would have to argue against the potential of saving millions in order to win a case for entirely natural treatments. In fact, genetic ethics societies in the U.S. have already allowed the first human trials to begin in order to initiate treatments. During the month of June 2017, "eighteen trial patients will become the first people in the world to be treated with CRISPR'd cells" (Park 118). In this case, many scientists have concluded that the possibility of treating cancer with CRISPR far exceeds the moral concerns of a minority. (Park 117)

In comparison to therapy, enhancements tend to bear a negative stigma. For instance, society tends to frown on artificial enhancements such as excessive cosmetic surgery or anabolic steroids in athletics. This stigma tends to translate to genetic enhancements as well. Studies have demonstrated CRISPR's effectiveness in enhancing traits in cynomolgus monkeys (Caplan 1030). Monkeys are commonly and effectively used to simulate human clinical testing, so CRISPR may bear similar results in future human applications. Many have become aware of this success and disapprove of the artificial aspect of similar experiments possibly being done on humans. Furthermore, consider the series of experiments done on dogs just a couple years after CRISPR's discovery. Researchers in China developed a method to induce "spontaneous mutations of MSTN [causing] muscle hypertrophy [in beagles], without causing severe adverse consequences" (Zou 580). By taking advantage of CRISPR's abilities, these scientists manipulated the gene that regulates myostatin, a muscle growth hormone, to essentially create muscular beagles. This form of enhancement is analogous to an injection of steroids in humans, for example, which fails the test of being medically necessary.

The argument against enhancements lies in the safety and reliability of CRISPR, but what will stop the mass implementation of enhancements once CRISPR is more thoroughly optimized and deemed safe? It is arguable that genetic enhancements for eye color or height are no different than the cosmetic surgeries, such as rhinoplasty or liposuction, done on thousands of individuals today (Lagay 2). The key distinction is that cosmetic surgeries are somatic, or body cell, procedures. They have no discernible impact on heritability, that is, they do not affect DNA and thus cannot be passed down. Germline enhancements, on the other hand, pose an ethical threat as their unintended consequences are compounded continuously generation after generation, making a change as seemingly harmless as changing eye color not worth the risks. In opening the door to one kind of germline modification, regulators will likely open the door to all other modifications as well. Furthermore, arguments against enhancements have been made on the basis of "a slippery slope towards eugenics" (Baumann 153), or the selection of certain traits or races over others. This criticism relates especially with another popular argument called the slippery slope argument, which is "that taking the first step with single-gene disorders is likely to lead, in some number of years, to the conduct of non disease enhancements that many would rather see prohibited" (Briere and Resnick 98). Although the name of this

argument is analogous to a common logical fallacy, the threat of favoring and eliminating certain traits is a simply unignorable possibility. Even though the majority argues against such practices today, it may only take one enhancement to trigger a new ethical complication. When considering questions of allowing enhancements, it is hard to justify them as ethical without ignoring many of the adverse moral consequences that could occur.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN THERAPY AND ENHANCEMENT

Upon reviewing certain other cases, however, it seems that one can categorize a treatment as both enhancing and medically necessary. Recall the trial mentioned earlier in which eighteen cancer patients will become the first human trials for CRISPR gene therapy. The method in which the experimenters anticipate to treat cancer is by "[extracting] their T cells, a kind of immune cell, and using CRISPR to alter three genes in those cells, essentially transforming them into superfighters" (Park 118). Consider Laura Colleton's argument for normality in the therapy-enhancement debate; this procedure potentially returns a suffering cancer patient back to the norm, but if used on an unaffected individual, it elevates his or her immune system beyond what is normal (73). A genetic edit that amplifies the release of growth hormones for a patient diagnosed with pituitary dwarfism can also be used to potentially help an athlete surpass his or her competition with a synthetic height advantage. Furthermore, if a large enough population receives an enhancing immunization, perhaps that will constitute the new norm, meaning that those without immunization must receive it as a therapeutic return back to the norm. These are the unavoidable predicaments that ethicists struggle with, as the details of ethics differ from individual to individual. As genetic ethicist Faith Lagay observes, "the bright ethical line in the debate over therapy versus enhancement separates acting in the patient's best interest from abdicating the responsibility to determine, with the patient, what constitutes 'best interest' in a given case" (3). Although this distinction is rather vague, it accurately describes a general concept of how to distinguish therapy and enhancements for future CRISPR patients. Genetic engineering ethics are not, for the most part, universal, but relative. As seen in theoretical cases earlier, definitions vary on a case by case basis; a therapeutic treatment for one patient could be an enhancement for another. From a

consultant perspective, it is likely that "regulatory authorities will never-theless always leave it to the parents or [patients] to take the final decision for or against a therapy in order to protect their autonomy" (Baumann 150). The keys for the debate involve a collaborative experience in which a physician determines what is medically necessary for a specific patient, who uses his or her own ethics to decide whether or not to proceed; this kind of interaction ought to be reflected in the regulation of CRISPR.

REGULATION OF CRISPR

When deciding the ethical aspects of genetic engineering laws in regard to therapy and enhancement, legislative bodies ought to im-plement public participation into the governance of human genetic engineering. The emergence of CRISPR as a genetic research tool has a dramatic impact on all; its ethical implications cannot be accurately and representatively defined by a select few. Therefore, citizens should be giv-en more of a voice in such important decisions that will affect their lives. It is possible that some of the ethical questions raised by CRISPR simply cannot be answered by social scientists and biologists. According to Bri-ere and Resnick, "the risks and benefits associated with human genome editing should not be defined solely by the scientific community, and that a comprehensive understanding of risks and benefits will require broad public debates...with respect to the range of voices and how relevant concepts are defined" (126). Caplan et al. further supports this saying, "without clear...public engagement and discussion, the public's trust in the safety of GE [humans] will follow the same path as GM food" (1424). Without a firm foundation in regulation, human genetic engineering may remain continuously controversial and divisive as genetically modified organisms (GMOs) have been for the past several decades. To institute participation with the public, the government should approach this issue by promoting a better general understanding of the sociopolitical aspects of human genome editing and communicating with the public on how its engagement will affect regulation and decision making. To do this, "ongoing monitoring of public attitudes, information deficits, and emerg-ing concerns would be essential" (Briere & Resnick 135), done through more effective communication between policy agencies and their respec-tive publics. Effectively, this will give the public better representation in decision making moving forward.

When it comes to the regulation of CRISPR itself as a tool,

CRISPR should be limited to the modification of somatic cells rather than germline cells. As Evitt et al. observe, "a complete ban or temporary moratorium will be nearly impossible to enforce due to the low cost of CRISPR and heterogeneity of regional ethical codes" (26). CRISPR could be completely legalized but incredibly hard to regulate because of its accessibility. Nevertheless, this is not necessarily bad, because as researchers have concluded, it would be a waste to not use CRISPR's potential as therapy. However, CRISPR should not be used for germline modification. According to Caplan et al., "the use of gene drives, [a tool that augments the heritability of an edited gene], also poses a much larger risk to the environment, as they have the potential to decimate an entire species" (1422). Not enough research has been done on the usage of CRISPR for editing germlines, thereby making this an aspect of genetic engineering that should be regulated and prevented at the present moment.

THE RISKS OF CRISPR

Although CRISPR undeniably holds the potential to change modern science and medicine, it still has some associated risks and should not be viewed as a panacea as of yet. According to Pellagatti et al, one of the greatest blocks to CRISPR's potential usage is "that Cas9 can make cuts at off-target sites in the genome, and as a result has the potential to introduce mutations that are just as deleterious as the one being corrected" (1030). Although this gene-editing tool has been regulated for human therapeutic practices only, there still exists an inherent risk in such a procedure; the possibility of a failed human experiment would tarnish the experimental genetics community. Considering a theoretical case in which a patient suffers from a failed genetic modification, the weight of the issue would be much greater if the patient were undergoing muscle enhancement, rather than a cure from malaria, for example. All this goes to show that CRISPR should not be viewed as a miraculous cure-all. As Caplan et al. observe, "ensuring that CRISPR/Cas does not become touted as a panacea for all genetic illness is crucial for proper application and dissemination of the technology" (1425). Like all biological tools, CRISPR has a margin of error. In order to account for this error, it is critical that scientists start small by focusing on the more important therapeutic application rather than minute personal enhancements. New discoveries have already been made in augmenting CRISPR's accuracy by reducing the residual off-target sites, thereby improving safety and efficacy (Kleins-

tiver et al. 494). Although CRISPR is still in its developing stages, optimization and research over time may open the doors for certain procedures that were previously closed off.

CONCLUSION

Researchers have struggled to specify the line between genetic therapy and enhancement. Furthermore, despite the existence of clear distinctions for many procedures, others cannot be classified so easily, which causes severe problems in genetic engineering regulation, health insurance, public safety in general, and many more areas. As evidenced by this research paper and its sources, using CRISPR for most therapeutic purposes can be justified while enhancements cannot. Still, certain instances of enhancing procedures ought to be permitted on a case-by-case basis for the betterment of a patient's condition, given mutual approval from both patient and consultant. Although this distinction requires more improvement over time, it adequately serves as a foundational guideline to build on during the establishment of regulations. As researchers optimize CRISPR and discover more about it, ethical opinions on the therapy-enhancement debate will also continue to develop as the genetic editing tool becomes more safe, reliable, and effective.
By encouraging public understanding, involvement, and discussion, the government can more accurately represent the majority when forming regulations and classifications for such a powerful gene-editing tool. Because of the pervasiveness of CRISPR's potential effects on society, the monitoring of public viewpoints is critical to the ethical development of laws. With growing conversation on this issue, the ethical maturation of the therapy-enhancement can ideally outpace the biological maturation of CRISPR as a genetic tool, allowing for ethical lines to fully develop and keep up with new scientific discoveries. Thoughtful research of the debate on the classification of CRISPR's procedures and regulation is necessary for the ongoing public debate on the subject. This paper encourages others to participate in the much-needed discussion of the potentially instrumental applications of CRISPR in the future.

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Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs for Early Detection of Drug Abuse: A Better Prognosis and Higher Survival Rate

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By EMILIA DABEK

ABSTRACT

It is a common misconception that prescription drugs are safer than illicit drugs because they are prescribed by physicians or medical practitioners. In fact, prescription drugs are the primary cause of accidental overdose fatality. This research paper aims to understand what Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs) are and how they can be used to effectively fight the prescription drug epidemic. Qualitative analysis of case studies of PDMPs in New York, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Massachusetts helps to identify the medical and legal prerogatives surrounding the implementation of PDMPs. In addition, this paper aims to understand how these factors affect the ability of PDMPs to effectively deal with the drug abuse crisis that exists in America. The analysis leads to the conclusion that standardized thresholds in every state for unsolicited PDMP reports will facilitate better management of prescription drugs used in patient treatment. Ultimately, PDMPs present promising intervention and prevention opportunities as diagnostic tools for identifying patients with drug-seeking behaviors that are critical to mitigating the national drug epidemic.

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps it is only when an individual is immediately affected by an unfortunate circumstance that he or she becomes aware of the gravity of the related issue. Such an unfortunate circumstance may be losing someone to a prescription drug overdose. The Center for Disease Control has declared that although the amount of pain reported by Americans has not changed, the proportion of prescription drug use, namely opioid analgesics, has quadrupled in the past two decades (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). This trend indicates a misuse of medications that leads to prescription drug abuse and the eventual increase in overdose-related mortality. Dr. Taghogho Agarin, a physician specialist in pain management and expert in the area of opioid analgesics, is the lead author of the article "Reducing Opioid Analgesic Deaths in America: What Health Providers Can Do." A practitioner background allows Agarin and his co-authors to discuss factors related to prescription drug fatalities, which

include doses that are too high, inadequate access to and use of resources for patient monitoring, and long-term use of pain medications in chronic non-cancer pain therapy (Agarin et al. E308). Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs), computerized databases that collect specific data on substances prescribed and dispensed to patients, are one of several proposed interventions for the existing national prescription drug abuse problem.

Drug abuse is the intentional overuse of prescription drugs for not indicated purposes. Drug diversion occurs when legally prescribed medications are moved to the illegal market for illicit use. To procure the medications, drug-seeking individuals often engage in doctor shopping, which means they visit multiple treatment providers in either a single episode or over a period of time. For example, Julie Worley, a psychiatric and family nurse practitioner, states that

> [I]n 2008, 170,000 Medicare beneficiaries received prescriptions from five or more medical practitioners for 12 classes of frequently abused controlled substances and two classes of frequently abused non-controlled substances. Since the time of the report, the two non-controlled substances have been designated as controlled. Six hundred of the Medicare patients studied received prescriptions from 21 to 87 medical practitioners, leading the GAO to conclude they were supporting or disguising an addiction. The GAO study states that according to the Department of Justice, doctor shopping is the primary method used to obtain highly addictive opioids for illegitimate use. (320)

Morley's data shows that the magnitude of this problem, even within just the Medicare program, is clearly enormous. One possible solution to help mitigate this problem is the use of PDMPS, which "help change prescribing behavior, and reduce doctor shopping and prescription abuse" (Agarin et al. E308). By discussing the social benefits and limitations of PDMPs, Agarin sets up the background for the use of PDMPs in mitigating the prescription drug problem.

The threat posed by the continuous existence of a prescription drug overdose epidemic affects America as a whole. Although prescription drug abuse negatively impacts the health and safety of the public, the implementation of PDMPs can potentially reverse these effects. The purpose of this research paper is to examine how legal and medical prerogatives create complexity in effective use and standardization of PDMPs.

The research question of this paper seeks to conclude which statutory and ethical factors most affect Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs and what changes should be made to more effectively deal with the critical problem of the prescription drug overdose epidemic in America. I will conduct an analysis of the variations of PDMPs across states using case studies of New York, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Massachusetts. Dr. Leonard Paulozzi, a medical epidemiologist whose concentration is prescription drug overdoses, works with lawyer Daniel Stier to theorize about the relationship between the effectiveness of PDMPs in monitoring opioid medical treatment under varying levels of governmental regulation. The article by Paulozzi and Stier, in conjunction with the article by Cindy Parks Thomas, a research professor at Brandeis University whose focus is analyses of drug utilization and spending trends, set up part of the case-frame analysis for this paper.

The case-frame, which is composed of the social limitations and benefits that PDMPs have at the state level, is helpful for identifying the complexity of the drug abuse epidemic. Paulozzi and Stier find that "the rate of drug-related death was twice as high in the Philadelphia area (18.8 per 100,000) as in the New York City area (9.2 per 100,000)" (Paulozzi & Stier 427). This data provides convincing evidence for using PDMPs because it shows that stricter regulations, as exist in New York, facilitate the reduction of mortality caused by unintentional prescription drug overdoses. Likewise, in the case of Massachusetts, Thomas concludes that PDMPs help to identify potential drug-seeking behavior such as obtaining multiple illegitimate prescriptions for illicit distribution or personal substance use, and includes drug diversion and doctor shopping. Thomas surveyed Massachusetts physicians about the usefulness of unsolicited reports from the PDMP and analyzed their feedback about the extent of PDMP contribution to increasing awareness of patients' medical histories. According to Thomas, "40 of the 55 patients for whom any responding prescribers reported [that the unsolicited PDMP report provided] sufficient knowledge of the patient to make an assessment of medical necessity for prescriptions, no respondent reported that all of the prescriptions were likely medically necessary" (953). This suggests that access to pertinent information about a patient made available to both physicians and pharmacists through the PDMP improves the ability of health care providers to identify potential drug misuse or abuse. Additionally, the results indicate an increase in beneficence, a medical ethics principle that holds health care professionals responsible to prevent or remove patients

from harm. Because they promote the ability of health care providers to organize a patient drug intervention when necessary, PDMPs are useful diagnostic tools that should be incorporated into standard medical care.

However, as promising as PDMPs appear to be, there are legal and ethical limitations that hinder their usefulness in the health care system. Social weariness caused by perceived excessive regulation of heath care by the government can bring about resistance from health care providers and patients to the establishment of legal restrictions by PDMPs on medication prescribing practices. In addition, current definitions used by PDMPs may not be universally applicable to all individuals. Scott G. Weiner, a professor of emergency medicine at Tufts University, makes the case that the PDMP definition of drug-seeking behavior in Massachusetts does not always accurately indicate the presence of prescription drug abuse. This is a problem because opioid prescribing practices have changed, and the criteria set for drug-seeking behavior are crucial to the effectiveness of PDMPs. For instance, reporting thresholds that are too strict lead to low sensitivity and result in a higher proportion of false-positives for identifying such behavior (Weiner et al. 282). Although such thresholds would decrease the use of prescription drugs, the indirect result is an inadequate treatment of pain. The analysis conducted by Weiner suggests that balancing the goals of medicine with the legal prerogatives of PDMPs is the next step in creating an effective system to mitigate the prescription drug abuse epidemic. Determining the criteria that provide an effective minimum threshold for unsolicited PDMP reports and evaluating the tradeoffs of liberal and conservative criteria is significant to the creation of a viable policy to deal with the critical prescription drug overdose epidemic. The controversy between medical and legal prerogatives in health care affects the ability of PDMPs to effectively mitigate the prescription drug epidemic in society and thereby improve public health and safety.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAMS

The magnitude of the prescription drug problem varies between states as do types of PDMPs. The number of drug overdose-related fatalities relative to population is a fair indicator of the extent of the drug problem in a given state. To draw conclusions on the correlation between opioid overdose mortality and Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs, Paulozzi, Kilbourne and Desai evaluate nineteen state PDMPs and

measures their aggressiveness by defining proactive, aggressive PDMPs as "those generating reports for prescribers, dispensers, or law enforcement authorities without being solicited" (749). In separate studies, Li and Paulozzi, et al. applied this definition to their reports; both found no significant evidence that suggests implementation of PDMPs promotes the reduction of opioid drug-related overdoses.

However, the results found by Li and Paulozzi, et al. cannot be considered absolute, as complexity within the findings arises. The above-mentioned studies consider associations of PDMP proactivity with drug overdose fatalities that are analyzed using state-level time series data. Taking this into account, it is important to note the secondary data analysis conducted by Paulozzi on the rates of drug overdose mortality and opioid consumption by state (Paulozzi, et al.). This study includes mortality files compiled by the Center of Disease Control and drug prescribing and usage patterns from PDMPs. Paulozzi, et al. concludes that "individual states revealed distinctly lower than average crude rates of drug and opioid overdose mortality on a year-by-year basis in the PDMP states of California, New York, and Texas" (749). It is significant to state that California, New York, and Texas are three of the most populated states in the US. The lower rates of overdose fatalities observed by Paulozzi, et al. are believed to be associated with the tamper resistant prescription forms required by the PDMPs in these states. The varying levels of effectiveness of PDMPs in individual states are perceivably a result of varying levels of regulation, hence creating a standardized system through PDMPs that balances the legal and medical concerns is crucial in dealing with the prescription drugs crisis in America.

Knowing that legal prerogatives factor into the usefulness of PDMPs, we can determine the necessary changes that must be made in order to better the quality of medical treatment by prescriptions while maintaining patient safety as a top priority. The amount of permitted governmental oversight and ideological philosophies are directly related to the stringency of legislative regulations on health care and related sanctions for noncompliance. In 2010, Hilary L. Surratt, a scientist for the Center for Drug and Alcohol Studies at the University of Delaware, analyzed the effects of legislative interventions passed by the health care regulating agencies in Florida. Florida is a case that shows the effect pivotal laws can have on mitigating the current national prescription drug abuse epidemic. Before the important legislative changes, Florida's pain clinics were largely unregulated and the PDMP lacked prescribing

oversight, making Florida residents major victims of the drug epidemic. According to Surratt, the Pain Clinic Legislation regulated pain clinics by setting "(i) limitations on pain clinic ownership; (ii) mandating registration and inspection of pain clinics; (iii) placing limits on prescribing when cash transactions were involved; and (iv) restricting on-site dispensing of controlled substances" (315). Surratt also mentions that later an additional statute was enacted, which requires "data for controlled substances be reported by practitioners and pharmacies within 7 days of dispensing" (315). This case study provides supporting evidence for policy interventions, which target unlawful prescribing, to be incorporated into PDMPs to make them more effective in controlling drug diversion. Increasing the extent of governmental oversight as presented by Surratt in the case of Florida is visibly beneficial to society. By dealing with a source of the problem, specifically physicians, regulation of prescribing patterns through PDMPs is key to stopping prescription drug abuse and overdose fatalities. On the other hand, more severe disciplinary actions may not be necessary if unsolicited PDMP reporting is appropriately adjusted. Patients who meet pre-determined parameters trigger these alert reports, which are relevant in flagging possible illegal drug-seeking behavior. From state to state, the generated threshold, if it exists, can vary. One such study conducted for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health surveyed prescribers' feedback upon receiving unsolicited reports from the state PDMP. In this study, Thomas seeks to evaluate the efficacy of intervention set by the threshold of the state PDMP of Massachusetts. For example, if a patient obtains prescriptions prescribed by four physicians or dispensed by four pharmacies in a span of 90 days, and those prescriptions are above the set daily dose of opioids (i.e., 120 mg of morphine), then the set threshold is passed and an alter report is generated (Thomas et al 951). Notably, Thomas finds that "the majority of respondents (56.5%; 188/333) were unaware of any other prescribers listed in the report" and of the responding prescribers, Emergency Department physicians were least aware of other prescribers used by their patients (952). This correlates with Thomas' initial finding that PDMPs provide health care professionals with the necessary information to make appropriate medical decisions for the treatment of their patients. It is visible that PDMPs can have a notable effect on the existing prescription drug epidemic by automated reporting; however, this is limited by current legislative prerogatives.

There are complex factors of medical ethics, which include patient confidentiality and doctor prescribing practices, which influence drug diversion and indirectly affect drug abuse and limit PDMP effectiveness. The increased utilization and implementation of PDMPs bears unintended consequences on patient safety, namely regarding patient confidentiality. Of the existing limitations, liability concerns of physicians to patients have the most substantial effect on PDMP efficacy in mitigating the prescription drug epidemic. This is supported by the analysis conducted on PDMPs in clinical practices by Nathaniel Katz, a neurologist and pain management specialist. Katz finds that "Difficulties may also arise regarding the effective usage of the PMP data, including problems misinterpreting the data or acting on the data in an inappropriate manner" (592). Katz highlights the utmost important aspect of health care: appropriate treatment of patients. This primarily concerns adequate pain management and proper opioid prescribing practices, which, as noted by Katz, can be hindered by PDMPs. The understanding of the physician's responsibility to the patient in relation to the necessity for doctor intervention promotes the strategic use of Prescription Monitoring Programs in standard health care. The responsibility, to which physicians should be held as the primary source of access to prescription drugs, can contribute to lowering drug overdose mortality. Thomas notes that where obligations of physicians with access to PDMPs exist, they include:

> referring the patient [presenting behavior indicative of drug-seeking] to a specialist, prescribing the patient non-controlled medications, requesting the patient to come in for a visit, conducting a screening and brief intervention, discussing the report with a pharmacist, and establishing a narcotics contract with the patient…[A prescriber may also request] additional patient prescription history information from the [Prescription Drug Monitoring Program]…or discharge the patient from their care altogether. (954)

This observation by Thomas suggests that strict statutes governing the logistics of PDMPs encourage physicians to dismiss, instead of help, patients who display signs common of drug-seeking and drug abuse. Rooted in concerns of physician liabilities, this unintended consequence, which may present itself through the decrease in prescribing prescription drugs, leads to inappropriate pain treatment. This can be described as having a "chilling" effect on prescribing. In conjunction with the resultant insuffi-

cient management of pain there is:

> increased prescribing of inappropriate or inadequate alternate medications, as was noted in New York when benzodiazepines were added to that state's paper-based prescription monitoring registry in 1989. Although there is concern that the significance of this "shift" in prescribing seen with New York's triplicate prescription program may have been overemphasized, medication substitution by prescribers remains a potential unintended effect of broad-spread PDMP implementation and use. (Gugelmann et. al 384)

This analysis demonstrates that although one is inclined to believe that a reduction in opioid prescribing is correlated with a decrease in the prevalence of drug abuse and consequent drug overdoses, there exists the unintended consequence of improper pain management. The liability concerns discussed by Thomas that can lead to the unintentional consequence of improper pain management discussed by Gugelmann, limit the effectiveness of employing PDMPs in medicine, the practice of diagnosis, treatment, and disease prevention. To preserve beneficence, the primary principle of health care, and enhance the ability of PDMPs to deal with the drug abuse problem in America as diagnostic tools, the statutes governing current PDMPs need to be amended.

Another limitation to the usefulness of PDMPs concerns the medical right of patients to confidentiality. Katz argues that sharing of patient information between state PDMPs is a controversial matter because "[p]roviders and patients express strong privacy and confidentiality concerns over the usage and availability of sensitive data, similar to that for personal medical information" (592). The conclusion reached by Katz about medical confidentiality is grounded in the HIPAA law, an act that sets up boundaries and checkpoints in order to protect patient privacy and personal medical records. This conflicts with the fact that interstate data sharing is primarily utilized by law enforcement for identification of doctor shoppers and for criminal prosecution. As noted by Gugelmann, the HIPAA law also regulates the conditions "for disclosure of personal health information in the case of public health, health oversight activities, and law enforcement" (384). Therefore, a key component to mitigating the widespread epidemic of drug abuse is evaluation of the current conditions on the disclosure of patient information without patient authorization. Furthermore, Gugelmann states, "Optimally, identification of potential aberrant use by a patient should allow a clear series of

responses that include counseling the patient and referral for substance abuse treatment as appropriate" (384). Gugelmann makes it a point that establishing a loose protocol of actions following the identification of a patient presenting drug-seeking behavior would allow for the preservation of the patient-doctor relationship and make the role of PDMPs in fighting against the existing prescription drug problem more significant. According to Gugelmann, giving physicians the authority to report their patients to law enforcement when deemed appropriate allows them to make autonomous and impartial medical decisions. The importance of this is the positive impact that can be made on reducing the prevalence of doctor shopping. The ability of prescribers to analyze, interpret, and take action on the information given about specific patients selected for their apparent drug-seeking behavior is evidence for the social benefit of PDMPs related to the ongoing drug crisis in the U.S.

THE FUTURE OF PDMPS

The utilization of PDMPs as a diagnostic tool for identifying prescription drug abuse is critical to producing an effective response to the ongoing drug epidemic. Because of its effect on societal progress, the crisis concerning prescription drugs in America is receiving a substantial amount of media attention. On Tuesday March 29th, 2016, President Barack Obama spoke at the National Rx Drug Abuse and Heroin Summit. The push by the former president to incorporate PDMPs in a proposed plan of action for dealing with the ongoing drug problem was the central topic of that year's summit. The complexity of universal implementation of PDMPs across America, as discussed in detail in the previous section, is founded in medical and legal prerogatives. However, the 2016 National Rx Drug Abuse and Heroin Summit highlighted the indispensability of PDMPs and the critical measures necessary to increase data reliability and to optimize prescriber usage of the system for enhancing the quality of patient care.

One promising development of PDMPs is the improvement in interstate data sharing. This poses value in providing health care providers with access to patient data and the ability to deter drug diversion and alter prescribing practices to optimize care for patients displaying a risk for drug abuse. Emergency medicine specialist Christopher Griggs claims "PDMPs could provide means of communication between providers within the Internet portal that is compliant with privacy laws and allows

better communication on opioid prescribing. This would also allow emergency providers to notify other prescribers of patients who have either overdosed, are at risk for overdose, or have a pain contract" (68). This shift in approach addresses the existing limitations of PDMPs concerning patient confidentiality. Richard Deyo, a physician in internal medicine, also notes the importance of linking state programs. To develop the benefits of interstate agreements for data sharing of patients who present risky behaviors involved with activities such as doctor shopping, Deyo believes that the underlying features of Prescription Monitoring Programs should be universal. In an effort to standardize PDMP systems, Deyo suggests that:

> To avoid the substitution effect, programs should monitor all schedules of controlled substances. All states should allow access to program data by prescribers. The value of immediate clinician access to data argues for web-based electronic access and not reliance on telephone, fax, or mail. Programs should also standardize the timing of pharmacy reports to the database. Monthly reporting may be suboptimal and real-time reporting burdensome. Weekly intervals for reporting seem reasonable, but further evaluation is appropriate. States should institute regular periodic data system and program evaluations to ensure data accuracy, assess program impact, and gauge responses to program changes. (610)

Deyo argues that the presence of the aforementioned parameters across all PDMPs would make them more effective in initiating and maintaining a widespread downward trend in prescription drug abuse and related morbidity. The aim of the reform, first and foremost, is to consider the importance of public health. Ultimately, standardized thresholds in every state for unsolicited PDMP reports will facilitate better management of prescription drugs used in patient treatment. Nonetheless, further studies on reaching the least burdensome approach for the integration of PDMPs into the clinical practice of medicine are still needed.

CONCLUSION

The future of PDMPs includes the employment of data provided to reduce opioid overdose mortality rates, the identification of patients who present drug-seeking behaviors, and the identification of physicians or pharmacists who exhibit risky dispensing behavior. But the complexity of the issue of drugs is clear. Although strict regulations that impose a

profound limitation on prescribing prescriptions reduce legal approaches to obtain drugs for abuse, one must consider that access to commonly abused drugs from the black market may continue. Yet by reforming state drug monitoring policies, establishing appropriate thresholds for unsolicited PDMP reporting, and authorizing interstate data sharing, PMDPs can become useful diagnostic tools in reducing the severe prescription drug problem that exists in America. The intended use of PDMPs for the future, particularly in the clinical practice of medicine, is to reverse the negative consequences on public health and safety induced by the drug epidemic. To achieve this, it is important to note the variations between states in PDMPs: the type of data included, patient flagging thresholds for drug-seeking behavior, and the range of health care professionals with access to the patient reports.

In addition to the ethical concerns, such as patient confidentiality, and liability issues that influence opinions concerning the value of PDMPs in health care, the fundamental statutes of PDMPs will reduce doctor shopping and drug diversion, which are strongly correlated to drug abuse and overdose fatalities. By identifying the present limitations of Prescription Monitoring Programs, health care regulating agencies can make amendments to PDMPs that will uphold medical beneficence. In conclusion, PDMPs are promising for intervention and prevention, specifically as diagnostic tools for identifying patients with drug-seeking behavior, which is critical to mitigating the national drug epidemic.

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Night-Walkers in the Neruons

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By JOSH FINKELSTEIN

Abstract

This paper attempts to answer the question of whether modern myths relate to their original renditions or rather differ so greatly that they are similar only in name. This paper uses vampires as the test case, and upon doing so, assesses not only the transformation of vampires in different fields, but also whether they appeal primarily to the right side or the left side of the brain. This paper concludes that modern vampires are still related to every other version of the beasts throughout time, in that in every stage they did not stand firmly in either side of the brain but rather straddled the neural "fence" of the corpus callosum.

INTRODUCTION

2016 is an age conquered by Disney, in which every myth is modified, every monster is muzzled, and every Grimm tale ends with a moral. Before Disney became the phenomenon that it is today, the Little Mermaid lost her love and turned to sea foam, the Pied Piper drowned innocent children because a village did not pay him, and the Three Bears murdered Goldilocks. Clearly, times have changed. This raises the question: Do current myths that bear the name of older yet very different myths have anything to do with each other? Can today's "Jack and the Beanstalk" rightfully use the name and basic premise of the original "Jack the Giant Killer"? Can today's modern mythical variations still claim to be the same myths? Or should society clearly state that the two are wholly different? The debate as to whether myths are static in their original times or naturally evolve along with humanity is an important one to consider and is relevant to all forms of cultural educators, ranging from teachers and novelists to actors and film directors.

To examine this question, it seems most effective to analyze specifically the realm of monsters. Looking at the transitions of the worst of the worst to how modern media represents them today, with vegetarian werewolves and zombies who prefer tofu to brains, highlights the extremes of mythic transition and is easiest to evaluate. The vampire seems the obvious case study to examine, since it is one of the creatures that has undergone the most drastic transformations since its birth. Vampires began as wholly evil beings spawned from the whims of Satan and Lilith,

the demon-queen, and later emerged as murderous revenants, reanimated corpses. They eventually disappeared into the background as a result of the rationalism of the Enlightenment and a disgruntled Catholic Church, until 1897, when Bram Stoker's *Dracula* took to the shelves. The publication brought vampires back into the spotlight, and in modern times they were transformed by the 21st century into heartthrobs like those of Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight Saga*, HBO's *True Blood*, and L.J. Smith's *The Vampire Diaries*. In these realms, the vampires shed almost all of their devilish implications and instead became the protagonists in a world where they do not belong.

This paper will attempt to analyze the vampire in relation to many different fields. It will first assess the vampire with regards to politics and military to display how far history stretches them across the hero-villain spectrum. It will then assess them in relation to heroism, science, religion, and tragedy throughout the timeline to see whether today's vampire can teach something to the modern audience, and if so, whether those lessons at all relate to the vampires of old. Another assessment will be particularly applied to the structure of the human brain, the most complex "technology" in the universe. According to the theory of brain dominance, the brain is roughly compartmentalized into its two hemispheres. The right brain is responsible for the creative and emotional side of a person while the left side is more logical and rational, with every individual being prone to prefer one side (and thus type of thinking) as opposed to the other. As the paper goes on, an analysis with regards to which side of the brain the vampire resides in will ensue. The findings will display that vampires of 2016 do still give a nod to the vampires of old as their older brothers and that they do not entirely appeal to one half of the brain. Rather, vampires walk along the corpus callosum, the cranial wall that separates the two hemispheres of the brain and allows thoughts to pass between them

VAMPIRES ON THE BATTLEFIELD

An important dynamic shift in the vampire has been his transformation across the hero-villain spectrum over the centuries. When society considered vampires to be demonic entities, they were viewed as irredeemably evil and had no other meaning, aside from being another reason to fear the dark. Society's perception of vampires changed as time went on, and a clear example of this is the symbol of the vampire as it is

represented in the realms of politics and the military. In a way, people saw the myth as representative of a powerful empire engulfing all others that lay in its wake, absorbing them into its own being much like the way vampires drain the life force of their victims to retain immortality. A vampire "sucks the blood of all nations, swallows all nations and yet still preserves some kind of sovereignty… He is a conqueror, a colonizer of territories, bodies, thoughts, knowledges; spreading like infection" (Vrbančić 2,4). This abstract notion of vampires as the faceless archetype of the political conqueror parallels their original mythic concept as a demonic force that spreads shadow and darkness indiscriminately against all its innocent victims, or in this case, helpless villages and cities. Simon Bacon begins to give more specific meaning to the vampire and deems it as a villain, though not without purpose. The vampire as a villain gives its victims the chance to be heroes. Bacon shows this in explaining the Peace of Passarowitz of 1718, which brought parts of Serbia and Wallachia reluctantly under Austrian rule. At that time, the vampire became more than a night-walker. Instead, it became a "way of establishing a sense of inclusion and collective identity against that which is trying to exert its own will upon them. This imposed external will can further be configured as something beyond the world that the local people inhabit, almost other-worldly if you will, and so the revenant comes to signify the dangerous and infectious nature of this imposed rule and ideology" (Bacon 46). The vampire became a villain that brought villagers together, not just to fear but to rally against as well. This idea brought vampires down to earth in a way, transforming them from mystical horrors into political villains. The beginning of the quote also discusses communion. Villagers feared vampires and, undoubtedly, could not defeat them alone, but by coming together to behead the beast, the villagers could find freedom and safety. The myth became helpful, even with the creature's villainious nature, by granting solace to the "underdog" who felt trapped under the thumb of an unbeatable empire. However, there are other contrary opinions that look through this political and martial lens to find that the vampire is less of a villain and more of an anti-hero. Historically, Count Vlad Dracula is largely inspired by Vlad the Impaler, ruler of Wallachia. Legendary accounts of brutality, and even thirst for human blood, are told of the Impaler, clearly a wicked man, but "it is important to note, however, that despite Vlad Dracula's horrific deeds he is remembered as a hero by the Romanian population… [M]uch like Vlad the Impaler, today's vampires are often seen as heroes for exercising their brutal tendencies toward neg-

ative forces" (Bohn 16). Whereas Vrbančić and Bacon saw the vampire as a political enemy, Bohn's vampire is a political protector via his brutality, suggesting that the same creature can be viewed as a villain or a hero-or, an anti-hero -depending on which side of history the vampire lurks on. This point is particularly acute because Wallachia is a territory that was protected by the "vampire" Vlad the Impaler and one that evoked fantasized plots of village justice against the vampire of the Austrian Empire. Vampires in the political field prove that they can dwell in both halves of the brain. Depending on which side the vampire lies in a particular political conflict, the emotions of the villagers (a trait of the right-side brain) will color his/her acts as heroic or villainous. It is only after the fact, when each conflict is recorded in history, that the vampire will be marked as good or evil objectively in the "collective left-brain."

DR. BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Vampires' presence on the battlefield can paint them as brutal and unforgiving warriors. However, when taking them out of a political context, it can be argued that at their core they are tragic in nature. This tragedy exists within them even before approaching modern times. Vampires have a tragic element even when they are supposedly evil and meant to be feared. When one thinks about it, they are personified ids in which their personalities are slaves to their animalistic instinct. Their immortality dooms them to bear witness to deaths of all of their loved ones and eventually to be cursed to a life of solitude until eventual death damns them. Furthermore, David Keyworth explains in the *Journal of Religious History* that "remnant energy of those who died violently or prematurely, such as murder victims and suicides, and that of depraved individuals, supposedly took longer to dissipate, compared with those who died a natural death, which meant that the former were most likely to become revenants" (169). This means that vampires were not chosen by the devil, but rather existed due to metaphysical trauma. The depraved who bore knives and the victims who were on the other end of those blades simply could not fully move on to the next world and were stuck here, in a world they no longer belonged in. As time went on and the revenant approached the modern era, the word "hero" was attached to the tragic being. In the genre of modern romance, authors humanize the vampire by changing the mythos entirely and saying that "the vampire heroes are not the creation of an evil force" (Bailie 142), thereby allowing for intense

humanization. Thus, like every mortal character surrounding it and every mortal reading about it, the vampire has free-choice. That is highlighted by most arcs where the vampire protagonist is pitted against "…the evil vampire (that) makes a deliberate choice to embrace his darker nature, while the vampire hero not only struggles against the temptation but will sacrifice himself rather than succumb to it" (Bailie 143). As a result, the vampire protagonist is rendered isolated and alone in a tragic way, becoming the "sympathetic vampire," one that does not wish to conquer the world, but rather live in harmony with it. He or she requires emotional stamina as a creature that just wishes to be freed from isolation and to connect, but the vampire is left unsatisfied. Humans, as a whole, refuse to accept the sympathetic vampire because they see him or her as a monster, while vampires refuse to accept the sympathetic vampire because this creature is too humane to walk among them. Some take this even further, saying that vampires in general may be "evil, disgusting, and supernatural, but also unsympathetic; one, [however,] is sympathetic. He recognizes the immoral nature of his kind's predation and rejects it, struggling to become something harmless; he even attempts to reform his colleagues" (Gordon and Hollinger 229). Gordon and Hollinger specifically reference vampires as "supernatural," originating from demonology or dark sorcery, with the ability to raise themselves up from hell. In addition, the sympathetic vampires can have the moral resolve not only to stand tall in spite of the animalistic race opposing them, but also to even try to better their kind. These facts highlight the tragedy of the modern sympathetic vampire even more poignantly. These creatures have done the impossible in redeeming themselves and do their best both to protect humanity and reform other vampires. Nonetheless, they are not accepted by either race. The idea of vampires being monsters that deserve at least some degree of sympathy in spite of that firmly links vampires of old and vampires of today.

As a result of vampires' tragic existence, some modern presences in popular culture have deemed it not only appropriate, but rather necessary, to take a very "right-brained," emotional approach to our understanding of these creatures. In the modern popular culture narrative, authors grant the male vampire hero redemption by saving him from his isolation by giving him a romantic companion. Two of the most notable examples of this are Bella and Edward of the *Twilight Saga* and Elena and Damon in *The Vampire Diaries*. In this "heroine saving beast" format, the vampires have often become protectors over the innocent, living "with an

innate sense of responsibility for those who are weaker and blind to their own self-destructive tendencies" (Bailie 144). That transformation usually occurs after meeting the heroine, who always saves the hero immediately before loneliness and isolation strip him entirely of his humanity. The heroine almost always appears at the last possible moment, and so, if not for her appearance, the hero would have resolved to live in darkness and succumbed to his dark tendencies. But the heroine helps transform the hero and sublimate his instinctive urges. One example is the heroism mentioned above, but another instance of this is even in the trademark of a vampire sucking blood. Usually "in vampire lore, blood is associated with violence and brings about not only death but perdition. However, in the romance novel, the function of the blood exchange between the lovers is one of the central differences between the traditional vampire seen as predator and the romance novel vampire as lover and eternal mate" (Bailie 146). The heroine helps the vampire use his strength and speed to protect the innocent and his urge for blood to create an emotional bond. The final act that brings the vampire into the light is when he and the heroine have a child, which "symbolizes a love that is eternal… with the assurance that both vampire and heroine will finally be part of a community—this time of their own making—that will never reject them" (Bailie 147). Finally, a vampire that has been rejected by two species can start a hybrid-family to end his tragic tale. This saga of the romantic heroine very much appeals to the modern audience's right brain. However, on the other side of the corpus callosum, there is a much more rationally appealing story of the vampire. That story tells one of a vampire that turns not to a romantic companion to redeem his satanic nature, but rather to a scientist who helps him control his biological urges and animalistic tendencies. The mortal scientist then ironically enters a position of power over the uber-powerful monster; in this narrative, vampires "are set off against, destroyed, or sometimes saved, by the solid, sensible, reliable presence of the doctor" who has the job to know about them and tell the reader or audience what to expect from the beasts (Hallab 169-170). With this immense power, the scientist can range from the benevolent doctor to the vengeful vampire hunter. Assuming they choose the peaceful route, "doctors keep vampires from hardening into mere monster villains and, in their interactions with them, reveal their human possibilities and promise," relying on scientific facts and methods to assist the vampire instead of waiting for the stars to align so a lover can reawaken the vampire's humanity (Hallab 180). Even if the scientists decide to hunt vampires for whatever reason,

there is still a possibility for them to humanize vampires, primarily by showing the vampires their own mortality, and in turn, "...show[ing] them to be human" (Hallab 180). Either way, the scientist always makes sure to show the audience that no matter how evil the vampires are, their presence can still be beneficial to mankind. The scientist shows that "Dracula can be at once a friend of Satan and a natural being whose uncanny ability to survive death as reported will someday be accepted" as an opportunity that humans can use to better their own lives via ordinary scientific advancement (Hallab 173). A prime example of this is *The Vampire Diaries*. Despite the fact that the show focuses on the right brain and the capabilities of emotional change, there are doctors and hunters who use the left brain and repurpose mystical properties of vampire blood to heal severe wounds. The two above archetypes, the lover and the scientist, show that vampires can be redeemed or doomed through both rational and emotional means, whether the story is told as a left-brain chronicle or a right-brain adventure. It is very important to note, however, that the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Just as the corpus callosum allows a fluid narrative between the two sides of the brain, there is overlap in the vampire tale to keep it from being too polarizing either logically or emotionally. Even the romantic tales often involve logical elements, such as developing the vampires' blood scientifically to help others, and in most cases the scientists simply cannot keep themselves aloof. Whether through friendship or enmity, they almost always develop a personal relationship with the vampire protagonist. There is an idea that in his writing of *Dracula*, "Stoker 'may have been tapping into the late-Victorian anxieties about the conflict between science —especially evolutionary theory— and religious faith. That both operate side by side in the novel and that both science and faith must be used to overcome Dracula suggests that the two are not incompatible'" (Bohn 22). Both scientific companionship and emotional connection can save the vampire, but similarly, the vampire can itself turn around and affect the human concept of emotional connection and scientific benefits.

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

Just as humans can affect vampires using emotion and science, so, too, can vampires teach humankind about the two, specifically emotion with regards to holiness and God through a religious lens. To begin the conversation, below are two shockingly similar passages:

1. "And you, their best beloved one, are now to me *flesh of my flesh*; *blood of my blood*; *kin of my kin*; my bountiful wine-press for a while; and shall be later on my companion and my helper."
2. 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper opposing him… And the man said: 'This is now *bone of my bones*, and *flesh of my flesh*; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.'"

The two passages have extremely similar nuances, themes, and word choice, seen in the repetitions of "flesh of my flesh" and "my helper." The shocking element then, is where they come from. Passage #1 is from Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (Stoker 252), while passage #2 is from the Old Testament (Scherman 14-15), specifically when God creates Eve and Adam names her. With the apparent allusion to the Bible in Dracula, it seems prudent to look at the similarities between vampires and religion. In "The Aetiology of Vampires and Revenants: Theological Debate and Popular Belief," David Keyworth points to the vampire's similarity to saints, saying, "the apparent incorruptibility of deceased Catholic saints can also be compared with eighteenth-century vampires, given the reputed lack of decomposition associated with the latter, while the copious amounts of blood that poured from the corpses of particular saints can be equated to the voluminous quantities of blood supposedly shed by vampires when impaled or injured" (165). When the immortal vampire is injured and massive amounts of blood spill from his or her living corpse, that serves as a reminder of or reference to the bodily immortality of deceased saints and to the idea that one can acquire bodily incorruptibility through righteousness as opposed to darkness and vampirism. Thus, the bleeding of a vampire can bring about righteousness and repentance, for whoever injured the vampire can gain that righteous immortality, and so it is indirectly the vampire that causes further goodness to come into the world. That realization that evil has the potential to bring about goodness can inspire existential humility in the face of God.

In spite of that, vampires also highlight ideas of futility. People associated vampires' "supernatural magnificence to that of angels" (Bohn 20), even though when "the vampires gesture towards the City of God, it is weirdly to the earthly city of God, since they cannot raise themselves to the transcendental sphere" (Vrbančić 7). Though the vampires possess the same physical traits or external behaviors of the devout or holy, they are inherently dark creatures that cannot represent God or God's Will.

This apparent inability for vampires to approach God no matter how hard they try, whether they be the vicious Count Dracula or the sympathetic Edward Cullen, is bound to evoke right-brain responses by modern audiences in the form of sympathetic appeal. But even according to those who see vampires as irredeemable, the hope for vampires is that they are still a conduit to God for humanity, because "vampires mirrored Christian belief in a future bodily resurrection at the Last Judgement, when each individual would be reunited with their physical body and face final judgement, remembering too that Jesus himself arose from the dead three days later" (Keyworth 172). Related to this is the idea that the vampire's immortality comes from human blood, making drinking blood the antithesis to Catholic transubstantiation, the idea of blessed wine substantively changing into the immortal blood of Jesus. These two examples show that, because vampires contained so many biblical motifs surrounding their mythology, people believed in them not just due to social hysteria; they *wanted* to believe in them to substantiate the presence of biblical concepts in modern life.

Trapped in a strange religious state where they are unable to interact with God-except as a stepping stone for humankind-vampires can teach readers and audiences that even something inherently bad can be an outlet for good. For example, in Season 3 of the C.W.'s *The Vampire Diaries*, the following exchange occurs between the female protagonist, Elena Gilbert, and a member of the first generation of vampires, Rebekah Mikaelson:

> Elena: So, vampirism was a form of protection?
> Rebekah: What else would it be?
> Elena: A curse?
> Rebekah: My parents only saw a way of keeping their children alive.
> (Wauters)

In this episode, Rebekah gives the origin story of the Originals, the first vampires to walk the earth. To protect her children from the werewolves they live amongst, Rebekah's mother, a witch named Esther, uses magic to make them stronger and faster than the werewolves, resulting in the original family of vampires. Esther used dark and satanic magic with the good intent of saving her children from ferocious, uncontrollable beasts. Even though to the logical left brain this seems to be a selfish decision with unpredictable results that leads to a species of killers being released to prey

on humankind, every emotional right brain can relate to and sympathize with a mother willing to try anything to protect her children.

A hop back across the corpus callosum shows that vampires can teach society not only about religion, but also about rational hubris and sociology, specifically through apocalyptic vampires. Apocalyptic vampires are vampires that were not created through magic or occult means at all, but rather through scientific blunders or diseases that ordinary people were usually responsible for. Author Mary Hallab cites the 2007 film *I Am Legend* as a prime example of this. In the movie the protagonist, Robert Neville, is the sole survivor in a world decimated by a man-made plague that transformed humans into mutated and modern versions of the classic beast. In that environment, ironically, the roles are flipped, and humans became the monsters. Whereas humans previously rallied against vampires because of their differences, now the vampires have adopted the same role and rallied against humans. In other words, "the Other is the Other in my interior… the vampires are in me [, each and every one of us]" (Vrbančić 3). Vampires highlight exaggerated versions of human greed and lust. Therefore, in the right circumstances, humans may release the monsters inside them, even unconsciously and unwillingly, to preserve themselves. Hallab argues that "…a scientific blunder may have caused the disaster, but scientific research, carried out by vampires in cooperation among themselves, has also found a way to treat it… [W]e can cause or cure death and devastation only by our personal badness or goodness" (Hallab 177-178). Vampires may "objectively" be monsters, but the character of someone or something, whether human or monster, is determined by their actions and choices. Another point can be further fleshed out by bringing in a new breed of apocalyptic vampires to the discussion, those that are also sympathetic. Joan Gordon of the University of Pennsylvania took samplings of a number of novels and found that in "none of these novels is the vampire supernatural. Rather he is transformed perhaps by a virus or by a defective gene. Or it may be a member of a different species" (231). In Gordon's examples, science can create apocalyptic vampires ranging from beast-like monsters to fully functioning "humans" who both want acceptance, showing the consequences of scientific innovations or blunders. Similarly, these apocalyptic vampires reveal the universal truth that everyone wants acceptance, independent of circumstance.

CONCLUSION- CORPUS CALLOSUM

The beginning of this paper asked whether myths of today could be considered at all similar to their original renditions bearing the same name. Vampires seemed the clear case study to examine this question, and for vampires, time did not do them injustice. Their stories have not been altered at all, but rather are simply in a new and ever-evolving stage: "Their monstrous otherness is constantly metamorphosing, filling the gaps in the ideological edifice. In the past, they were wandering aristocrats, the citizens of the world, but in American culture, they have transformed into teen vampires, queer vampires, paedophile vampires, psychic vampires, educational vampires (my daddy vampire, my mommy vampire, vampire rock stars and serial killers)" (Vrbančić 6). They are "metamorphosing" but not entirely changing their stripes to the point of being unrecognizable. Vampires were never meant to be the demonic creatures that authors used as a trope. Rather, they were and are meant to be a "living myth," taking a new variation of its core form in every generation to most effectively teach the lessons they carry. This paper showed that, throughout every stepping stone of time, vampires have straddled the fence of the corpus callosum instead of dwelling entirely on one side. Vampires of the devil are still clearly related to vampires of *Twilight*. Satanic revenants of old deserve sympathy for their tragic limbo nature just as Edward Cullen does, even though they also had political influence. *Dracula* alludes to God, but also was logically humanized by the hunters who chased him, the same hunters who continue to chase the Salvatore brothers on the CW's *The Vampire Diaries* seeking to make them victims of mortality. Today's vampire culture portrays both the handsome heartthrobs of HBO and the disgusting apocalyptic vampires that show humankind that they too can become monsters. Vampires embody a range of ideas-nature versus nurture, the eye of the beholder, and the concept of redemption-spanning every nook and cranny of the brain's neural structure. Vampires are prime examples of the fact that the modern age need not necessarily weaken the impact of myths; it has the power to enhance the myths' cultural significance and the ability to learn from them.

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"Best Used By": Labeling the Blame for Consumer Level Food Waste in the United States

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By DANIELLE HEANEY

ABSTRACT

In light of the associations between food waste in developed countries and the use of ambiguously defined expiration date labels, this paper intends to identify the contributions that expiration dating practices make to food waste in the United States. The focus is to use ethical perspectives to determine whether or not food manufacturers are liable for the food wasted as a result of their labeling choices. Despite conventional expectations, expiration dates are based on food quality and sensory attributes, not on safety information. Based on the ethical theory of Deontology, and the moral codes of Authority and Avoidance of Harm, food manufacturers act unethically. They defy consumers' authoritative trust, disable them from making choices about health risks, and use their misinterpretations about expiration labels as a means to financial ends. However, the biases and stigmas that customers bring into their purchasing decisions imply that the manufacturers' labeling tactics are also founded on moral grounds. Manufacturers have a responsibility to the customers, and also a Fiduciary Duty to themselves, to provide high quality food and to collect profits. Ultimately, food manufacturers are somewhat responsible for food waste, but consumers should also be held responsible because their expectations partly drive manufacturers' immoral behaviors. The conclusion is that it is unethical to expect food manufacturers to combat food waste alone. Instead, changing current practices to create a dual-label system of expiration dates has the potential for a more Utilitarian solution to tackling food waste in a way that's fair to all involved parties.

INTRODUCTION: THE CURRENT PLIGHT OF OUR FOOD CONSUMPTION

Over-indulgence and waste are two coinciding vices often ingrained in the cultural behaviors of first-world countries. More specifically, the fixation on food production and consumption in the United States promotes a discord between the quantity of food purchased and the quantity actually eaten. The United States Department of Agriculture estimates that consumers and retailers waste thirty percent of the country's food supply each year. However, food waste stretches beyond a mere dis-

crepancy in supply and consumption. In fact, nearly twenty-five percent of consumer food waste in the US is linked to the products' packaging details, such as expiration labels (Tiwari 1448). Food industries in the US use a variety of labels to indicate how long a food product should remain on the shelf: from "freeze-by," to "use-by," to "sell-by," and even "enjoy-by" dates. However, the ambiguous definitions associated with these labels encourage people to throw out edible foods that are not actually spoiled or unsafe to eat. Given the correlation between consumer misconceptions about expiration labels and the prevalence of food waste in the United States, this paper addresses whether food corporations are morally obligated to take responsibility for the food waste produced as per consequence of their expiration labeling practices. "The Moral Instinct," written by professor and psychologist Steven Pinker, is used to explore how various moral senses contribute to the righteousness of the United States' expiration labeling system. The ethical theories of Meritocracy, Tragedy of the Commons, Non-Zero Sum Game, Deontology, Fiduciary Duty, and Utilitarianism also add dimension to the senses of responsibility and blame for food waste. Though it is debatable whether or not food corporations are truly at fault for food waste, it is immoral to continue to allow food waste to occur as a result of consumers' misconceptions because the act of waste in and of itself is not a constructive, nor a sustainable, habit. Closing the gap between consumers' understandings of expiration labels and their actual meanings through a dual-labeling system potentially offers a more ethically accommodative approach to dealing with food waste.

FOOD ENTITLEMENT: A FIRST-WORLD DILEMMA

To approach the problem of food waste from a moral perspective, the first important outlook to examine reasons that the collective mentality toward food in developed countries encourages waste. A lot of people see food as an entitlement. After a long, difficult, or even mundane day, food is the consolation prize for exerting effort and attention. In one respect, the moral dimensions of Meritocracy argue this is acceptable because "[w]e should give people what they deserve… rewarding according to someone's merit" (Bender). Humans want more food because they feel that they deserve it, and if they are going to reward themselves, they might as well indulge on only the best available. However, this attention toward "the best" and "the most" invites people to eat less of the foods that are not perfect quality. Michael Pollan, an influential journalist in

the field of food and farming, discusses the preoccupation with perceived quality and the commodified food market. "The fact that we no longer have to plan or even wait to enjoy these items…makes us that much more likely to indulge impulsively…[because] if you make special-occasion foods cheap and easy enough to eat every day, we will eat them every day" (Pollan). The mass availability of processed foods prompts a growing stipulation for only the highest quality products that curtails consumers' purchasing choices. Since producing indefinitely perfect foods is impossible, those that begin to blemish or decline in quality are often tossed aside. Food waste becomes a consequence humans endure to fulfill their perceived entitlement to wholesome food products.

In light of the philosophies presented by the ethical theory of Tragedy of the Commons, this self-absorbed mentality toward food paints humans' relationship with it as the voracious overuse of a public resource. Tragedy of the Commons states that any consumption motivated by a greed for personal benefits is immoral because it disregards the costs that this greed imposes on others (Bender). The accessibility of food products enables people to exploit them to the point that it harms the well-being of society. By overeating or throwing away edible foods, people contribute to not only the depletion of the food itself, but also the resources fueling agricultural and food production systems. This idea is corroborated by "Total and per Capita Value of Food Loss in the United States," which attempts to estimate how much food is lost per capita in developed countries and the monetary costs of these losses: "food waste represents significant amounts of money and other resources invested throughout food's entire lifecycle to produce, store, [and] transport" (Buzby and Hyman 562). Inputs like water, soil, air, and even human labor get wasted when food is not eaten. Still, not everyone recognizes these societal costs. Consumers instead focus on individual desires to consume fresher foods, simply because they have access to them.

FOOD EXPECTATIONS: A PUBLIC MISUNDERSTANDING

Though this quality-driven attitude essentially puts the blame on consumers for food waste, it is crucial to highlight the layer of confusion that expiration label practices add to consumer decisions to throw away packaged foods. Contrary to popular belief, there are no universal federal expiration label standards in the US. The Food Safety and Inspection

Service, the public health division that oversees the labeling and packaging of poultry, meat, and eggs, expresses that "[e]xcept for infant formula, dates are not an indicator of the product's safety and are not required by Federal law" (USDA). The federal government only regulates dating labels that manufacturers choose to include on food packages and does not require them on all US products. Instead, expiration labels are more closely regulated at state and municipal levels. As described in an article from an international law journal, sixty percent of the US has label requirements or recommendations, but the types of foods they apply to and the labeling terminology they permit varies from state to state (Tiwari 1457). Thus, there is wide commercial dating freedom.

When it comes to choosing such expiration dates, food manufacturers focus on the quality of a product, or its sensory attributes, as opposed to safety information. On the corporate level, the term "*sensory shelf life*" (SSL) is typically used to discuss food dating. SSL is based on desire, acceptability, and intent of product (Hough 1-2). The idea is that, after its production, a food only lasts so long at peak quality. Sensory evaluation scientist, Guillermo Hough, explains that SSL tests look for changes in a food's sensory profile over time and determine which of these changes are critical to customers' perceptions about the food (5). In short, feedback regarding the perceived quality of features like taste, smell, texture, and appearance is used to establish a range of peak food quality. Therefore, when a person refers to the "expiration" on a food product picked up at the store, he or she is actually referencing the sensory shelf life date – not necessarily an indicator of safety. From this, expiration labels can broadly be defined as non-mandatory indicators of food quality. However, when it comes to the public perception of this definition, not all people are aware that expiration labels do not reflect food safety. Even though most people use these labels to gauge when to discard foods, the truth is that a food's quality "may deteriorate after the date passes… [but it] should still be safe if handled properly. Consumers must evaluate the quality of the product prior to its consumption to determine if the product shows signs of spoilage" (USDA). Since conventional expiration dates actually indicate SSL, food past its date may still be safely edible. As per consequence, consumers are expected to use their own instincts to determine the safety level of the products they eat.

The assumption that all consumers feel comfortable and able to make decisions regarding food safety, however, is unrealistic. It substantiates why many consumers are quicker to throw away an expired food

than they are to eat it. The standard consumer is not an expert on food safety. Some rely heavily on these dates to decide if "a food is safe for consumption, not knowing…when their food goods are merely declining in quality or deteriorating to a medically dangerous level" (Tiwari 1455). There is a level of uncertainty and risk that comes with consuming expired foods. If customers are not aware of the differences between sensory decline and food contamination, they chance their health and well-being when they make consumption choices. "The Effect of Expiration Dates and Perceived Risk on Purchasing Behavior in Grocery Store Perishable Categories" further examines the influence of five types of perceived risk on customers' willingness to purchase a product near expiration. It found that "perceived risks associated with the quality of a perishable…and the resultant health risks, are the most salient types of risks and are positively correlated with the frequency with which consumers check expiration dates" (Tsiros and Heilman 121). Although consumers are very attentive toward perceived food quality, they are equally as concerned with food safety. The fact that their frequency in checking labels is proportional to their fear of health concerns proves their expectations of, and dependency on, companies to provide safety information.

With this risk in mind, consumers' reflexes to throw out expired foods are essentially driven by an innate moral sense. Most cultures sympathize with the same five moral themes or spheres – Fairness, Community, Purity, Avoidance of Harm, and Authority (Pinker) – which define the moral decisions that people make. Specifically, the belief that "it is right to defer to legitimate authorities" and the "impulse to avoid harm" both conceivably influence consumer choices to eat or throw away an expired food (Pinker). Because most people do not feel properly educated about food safety, they do not think the risk of sickness is worth eating something expired – avoiding harm. Instead they rely on corporations, whom they consider experts on food safety, to make the decision for them – deferring to authority. By these definitions of Pinker's moral codes, one could say that consumers are morally compelled to throw away edible foods, or that the waste of edible foods is the consequence of a deep-seated moral compulsion. In relation to the earlier discussion on the Tragedy of the Commons, this suggests that consumers are not necessarily at fault for their overuse of food resources. Consumers only follow rules set forth by Pinker's universal moral spheres; it is not just their greed driving them to create more food waste, as the initial explanation of the Tragedy of the Commons suggests, but their sense of moral responsibility to themselves.

Now, consider another viewpoint: that food manufacturers are the greedy over-users in the Tragedy of the Commons scenario. Evidence that will be presented below suggests that manufacturers strategically take advantage of the lenient label regulations. These corporations are incentivized by monetary rewards – the greed that drives the overuse of public goods and services – to sell more and more products. Yet, they do not consider the negative externalities that such practices impose on individuals or society in the form of food waste.

As mentioned, food labels are very distinct, erratically managed, and depend on the product in question. As a result, it is ultimately up to manufacturers to decide which terminology best suits their product, and how the date associated with it is chosen. Some manufacturers take into account "their marketing strategy…additional costs…or even brand manager preferences when deciding whether to include expiration date labels" (Tiwari 1450–1451). For most businesses, this means utilizing SSL to create the most competitive, palatable products that keep consumers coming back to purchase more. More specifically, "[c]ompanies use the labels to protect the reputation of their products – they want consumers to see and consume their food in as fresh a state as possible" (Charles). Companies' marketing strategies and concern for their public perception prompt the date that they include on a package. However, the costs of such concerns on society and consumers may be greater than the benefits the companies accrue.

Hough outlines a surprising technique in which companies base their expiration dates on those of other similar products in order to speed up production rates and improve competitive prospects. "[A] small- or medium-sized company could decide to produce a chocolate biscuit similar to a leading brand…[but] marketed at a lower price. Instead of conducting a shelf-life study, they could decide to use the same *best before* period as the leading brand;" the company would thereafter use consumer complaints about declining sensory attributes to re-estimate the *best before* timeframe (Hough 66). This shows that manufactures can be motivated by a competitive greed to succeed, regardless of the costs. Yet, one of the provisions of moral behavior is "that it cannot depend on the egocentric vantage point of the reasoner. If I appeal to you…then I can't do it in a way that privileges my interests over yours" (Pinker). This idea essentially defines the ethical theory of Non-Zero Sum Game, which

highlights that it is unethical to compete with others because, by tearing each other's businesses down, the individuals end up worse off than they would have if they had cooperated (Bender). The manufacturers' competitive use of expiration labels is unethical because it is a self-seeking representation of individual gains over shared costs.

In addition, the exploitation of sensory shelf life data to create expiration labels unethically disregards the authoritative trust that consumers have in food manufacturers. The article "Consumer Attitudes toward Freshness Indicators on Perishable Food Products" discusses customers' reactions to the concept of additional indicators on packaged meats and salads that specify how fresh the product is. When it comes to current expiration labels, Fortin, Goodwin, and Thomsen write that "even if consumers do not use labels they may derive a sense of trust and security from the fact that information is present" (3). This notion of trust in expiration labels links back to the discussion on perceived risk and willingness to purchase, and also proves that the presence of expiration labels and the information they provide motivate consumers' purchasing decisions. However, given that these labels are not gauges of safety, manufacturers deceive consumers' trust and leave them with a false sense of security. Not only does this betray the moral code of Authority, but using consumers' dependency on quality and labels also breaks the ethical codes of Deontology. The ethical theory of Deontology claims that someone who is ethical follows the Categorical Imperatives of doing one's duty. This means never lying or using someone as a means to an end (Bender). By playing toward consumers' affinity for peak quality foods as a marketing strategy, and by allowing consumers' misinterpretations about the relationship between expiration labels and food safety to go unaddressed, food corporations essentially use consumers as a source of profit, or a means to an end. Studies indicate that "the price buyers will pay increases with the introduction of an expiration date…thus giv[ing producers] an incentive to add an expiration date to help enhance their profits" (Kerley et al. 8). The narrow-minded dependency that consumers have on expiration labels actually encourages manufacturers to use expiration dates. Customers' fear of physical and social risks makes them more willing to pay for indicators that they believe represent safety (Tsiros and Heilman). Overall, Kerley et al.'s association of dating labels with prospective revenue speaks to the underlying profit-maximizing mentality of food businesses, and the dishonest exploitation behind such practices.

In spite of these unethical truths regarding the capitalizing practices of manufacturers, a return to the opening discussion on consumer entitlement for quality foods partially negates these arguments. It is true that many food businesses, over-concerned with their public reputations, rely on quality control and SSL dates to improve the appeal of their products. However, this practice is somewhat necessitated by the consumers themselves in order for manufacturers to succeed in a society driven by perfection. Since consumers actually demand higher quality products, manufacturers are only fulfilling their duty to the customers by limiting shelf life to reflect sensory dates. The article "Consumer Attitude toward Shelf-Life Labeling: Does It Influence Acceptance?" examines how expiration labels influence Uruguayan consumers' willingness to accept a food and purchase it again. Though this study originates in South America, the comparisons it makes to statistical data from the US makes it relevant to this research. The authors explain that "[f]inding unacceptable products within their shelf life could diminish consumer confidence… leading them to not purchas[e] that particular brand again. This could cause important economic losses for manufacturing companies" (Giménez et al 872). This underlines how food quality directly correlates with manufacturers' reception by consumers. Consumers want foods that meet certain standards, so they bring these expectations and stigmas into their purchasing decisions. In fact, an article endorsed by the Food and Agriculture Organization recognizes the impacts of these stigmas. When investigating the monetary compensation needed to motivate participants to drink milk at an increasingly significant number of days since expiration, Kerley et al. found that "expiration dates would dichotomize or stigmatize consumer preferences so that food before the expiration date is viewed as acceptable" (2), but that "unacceptable behaviors, such as drinking expired milk, generate disgust and are viewed as examples of stigma" (Rozin 2001, as cited in Kerley et al. 2). In this way, the negative overtones associated with expired foods reduce consumers' willingness to purchase them and fuel their stipulations that it's only acceptable to eat fresh foods. Therefore, manufacturers need to meet these demands if they want their product to sell. Their duty is to "[pay attention] to shelf-life issues throughout the food chain, always bearing in mind that consumers are the final link in that chain and that in the end they will judge whether

the food product is acceptable and/or satisfies their needs" (Hough 5). The value consumers place on a product, and their attitudes, needs, and desires, are ultimately what motivate food corporations' decisions about dating labels.

Due to these conflicting obligations toward safety, profitability, and consumer utility, applying the theory of Fiduciary Duty contributes an ethical logic to the actions of food manufacturers. Fiduciary Duty reasons that "the employee of a firm has a [duty]…to maximize profits to the firm" such that it is "profitable and compete[s] successfully in the marketplace" even despite the internal moral conflicts that these duties may incite (Bender). On one hand, my portrayal of Deontology explains how manufacturers tend to unethically betray their duty to customers by maintaining a false perception of food safety. However, Fiduciary Duty clarifies that food companies' duty is not just to the customers, but also to themselves. They have a responsibility to maximize their own profits, and consumers' voracious appetites oblige that they do this in a way that labels and markets only the highest quality products. Therefore, businesses are not necessarily immoral in their expiration labeling tactics, nor completely at fault for the food wasted because of them. As a matter of fact, today's consumers expect "quality, convenience, nutrition, year-round availability, and prolonged storage…A difficult proposal indeed!" (Hough 63). This pressure on manufacturers to act ethically toward the environment, its customers, other businesses, and itself while minimizing the negative externalities of these duties, like food waste, is a heavy responsibility. Moreover, Pinker's moral code of Fairness portrays that it is ethically unfair to burden manufacturers alone with this responsibility because helping others should not cost the giver more than the recipient (Pinker). Instead, following the ethical theory of Utilitarianism encourages searching for a more progressive solution – one that does the greatest good for the greatest number of people (Bender). This includes considering both manufacturers' and consumers' needs and utility instead of saddling these responsibilities solely onto manufacturers.

CONCLUSION: A FAIR SOLUTION FOR OUR FOOD FUTURE

The fundamental conclusion to stress is that food manufacturers are not alone in their culpability for food waste. Instead, the dimensionality of the findings in this paper implies that both food companies and individu-

al consumers unethically contribute to the exploitation of food resources. So, in one respect, the short answer is: yes, food manufacturers should take responsibility for the link between their dating label techniques and food waste in the United States. However, "[t]he moral sense…tends to reframe practical problems as moral crusades and thus see their solution in punitive aggression" (Pinker). There is clearly more at play than a one-sided question of accountability, and so the burden of tackling food waste should not be simply dished out to one contributor and flouted by the rest. In fact, proposals already exist to change the entire expiration labeling system as a means of confronting consumer misconceptions and food waste: "they're asking companies to use just two labels. One would use the words 'Best if used by' a particular date. This label would probably go on most foods;" the second is "a 'Use by' date [for] products that could become less safe as they age" (Charles). Recommending that manufacturers switch over to only two different expiration labels to help minimize consumer confusion acknowledges that the current waste-expiration-label relationship is unethical and unnecessary. However, this method is still arguably not the most ethically accommodative solution, as limiting manufacturers' label choices still encumbers them with most of the burden to reduce food waste, yet imposes little or no negative effects on consumers for their contribution to food waste.

 Instead, companies should use both quality and safety dates on their products, ultimately leading to more transparency and clarity when it comes to expiration labels. In one respect, having a "best-by" date that indicates quality relieves the concerns that companies have about their public image because it still allows them to designate a peak consumption timeframe for their product. This enables manufacturers to fulfill their Fiduciary Duty to themselves and leaves the possibility for financial gains. At the same time, a "use-by" date based on potential safety data acknowledges that health-related food contaminations and unpalatability do not occur simultaneously for most products. This system gives consumers an opportunity to more consciously understand when their health is truly at risk, and also the chance to decide, based on the ethics of Meritocracy, when it is acceptable to indulge on special-occasion products because they deserve to. In tandem, manufacturers can embrace their role of Authority as they comply with consumers' security and trust through more transparent labeling practices.

 Altogether, a dual-dating system respects the ethical theory of Utilitarianism, which is arguably the most pertinent theory to apply when

considering actions that impact the entire food industry. Giving both consumers and manufacturers equal opportunity to choose how they deal with food waste benefits the largest number of people because it offers them a freedom of choice, while also eliminating popular misconceptions about expiration labels. Such a system has the potential to encourage manufacturers and consumers to develop a more environmentally-conscious relationship with food consumption and food waste. Provided with the tools they need to make informed decisions, consumers can choose when they are entitled to fresh food products, versus when they should do their ethical duty to protect an increasingly polluted society from the loss of more resources at the expense of commercialized desires.

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A Legalized Evil: The Usefulness of Just War Theory in Contemporary Politics
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By RALSTON HOUGH

The realm of international law has always been plagued by questions of legitimacy and enforcement stemming from the inherently anarchic nature of the international political system and the diversity of cultural norms. Due to the lack of an absolute overarching authority, international law exists largely in a realm of promises, threats, and argumentation. As the international political system becomes more complex, new types of actors continue to have increasingly large and unexpected roles, such as international terrorist organizations, supranational institutions, and insurgent militaries. Evaluation of the current norms for legitimizing and justifying warfare can serve as a key component in the understanding of modern warfare and international politics, since political rhetoric and legitimization speech are central to the functioning of the field. For nearly four hundred years, Western-and later international- standards for war legitimization and official efforts to restrict war have been heavily reliant on the tenets of traditional just war theory. Traditional just war theory is venerable in its robustness and universality. The modern international legal system owes much to its tenets, and the result has for centuries been a restriction of international political actors to, at the very least, argue for their behavior within the moralism of just war theory. Unfortunately, understandings of warfare and its morality are beholden to material realities. Recent lax interpretations and changing realities in the nature of war have encouraged applications of just war theory in political rhetoric almost antithetical to the intentions of the theory's founders, serving as an excuse for war, rather than a mechanism of its restraint. The moral nature of just war theory demands the creation of equally moralistic legitimization arguments, which inevitably lead to "us vs. them" rhetoric, conducive only to further warfare and international hostility. Furthermore, the realities of politics often prevent world leaders from acting on issues of international justice, opting to do nothing unless forced to. Just war theory brought great historical benefit to the humanitarian cause in the modern international system by setting moral standards for the declaration and waging of war, but the nature of politics and war requires a rehabilitation, reiteration, and advocacy of the theory

in order to maintain its usefulness as a theoretical source of official efforts to restrict war.

Traditional just war theory was originally so appropriate for international politics because of its universality, derived from a basis in natural law. St. Augustine was the first Catholic thinker to formulate a theory of just war, but his own take was not very useful in a secular international setting, since he was preoccupied with theological and spiritual questions with no application outside Christianity (Gaffney 45). His work centered on the concept of holy war, the persecution of heresy, and the personal, internal moral responsibility of soldiers (Gaffney 52-53). Nearly nine hundred years later in his *Summa Theologica*, St. Thomas Aquinas drew on Augustine's authoritative work to provide a much more practical model of just war. His concept of *jus ad bellum*, governing the declaration and initiation of war, included the right authority (war must be declared by legitimate governments) and just cause (self-defense) criteria attributed by contemporary thinkers to Aristotle and Cicero, and added the criterion of right intention, saying those who wage war must not be burdened by selfish ulterior motives. He also added to Cicero's *jus in bello* thinking, governing the conduct of parties *within* war, with the concept of proportionality in military activity (Gaffney 55-59). Aquinas's expression of just war theory set the stage for later thinkers to apply the theory to real international situations.

Aquinas's writings, though widely praised, accepted, and invoked in Europe, did not find meaningful application on the world stage until the early 16th century, when they formed the basis of the work of the Spanish monk Francisco de Vitoria on the subject of just war. Vitoria was the founder of a philosophical tradition known as the School of Salamanca, and it was he who first expressed and defended the modern version of traditional just war theory, preparing it for its eventual domination of international legal thought. The revelation of atrocities committed by Spanish colonists in the New World against native populations incited a fierce academic debate in Spain over the morality of invading and conquering the native lands. Vitoria placed the natives on an equal moral footing to the Spanish, and vehemently opposed the invasion of their lands and the waging of war against them, let alone the horrific tactics employed for the cause (Gaffney 61). While it is largely a foregone conclusion today, Daryl J. Charles says in his article "Presumption Against War or Presumption Against Injustice?: The Just War Tradition Reconsidered," that "thinking about cultures and nations that find themselves outside of Christendom is

a chief contribution of Francisco de Vitoria" (Charles 353). Expanding the moral and legal competence of Christian European states and peoples to others outside that classification allowed Vitoria's arguments to eventually inform the establishment of modern war laws and norms. It was Vitoria's universalism, his firm belief that human beings were moral, spiritual, and legal equals, that allowed his thinking to set the stage for the next half-millennium of international political thought (Gaffney 59-64). The six traditional criteria of a just war enumerated by Vitoria are: just cause, almost always considered to be self-defense; legitimate authority, which is to say that war must be declared by a legitimate government; right intent, so that no other motives cloud the pursuit of justice; proportionality, so that war is waged in a manner appropriate to the circumstances; probable success, so that lives and treasure are not wasted on lost causes; and last resort, reaffirming that war is to be avoided as much as possible (Charles 358). This thinking that war ought to be subject to moral restrictions, on the basis of a universally shared human legal and moral dignity, is central to modern attempts to legislate warfare on an international level.

The modern effort to set the moral precepts of just war theory and their derivations into law is exemplified in the Charter of the United Nations and the Geneva and Hague Conventions. The former clearly expresses a belief, to which all member states supposedly subscribe, that there are limited circumstances in which the declaration and waging of war are morally acceptable (*Charter of the United Nations*, Chapter VII, Article 39, 51). It also expresses an intent to enforce these moral restrictions through legal and military means (*Charter of the United Nations*, Chapter VII, Articles 40-50). The *jus ad bellum* concepts of just war theory are all present, including just cause, legitimate authority, right intent, and last resort. The Geneva and Hague Conventions are sweeping international agreements that deal entirely with the conduct of people, states, and organizations during war. That is, they are *jus in bello* documents, prohibiting behavior contrary to the ideal of proportionality. Civilians, the wounded, and humanitarian workers are not to be harmed. The unnecessary destruction of infrastructure is to be avoided. Captured enemy combatants are to be treated with respect and cared for. These concepts arose from the ideas of justice in and around war first thoroughly defined and argued for by Vitoria and developed by his intellectual successors, as did the initiative to apply those concepts to international law.

Unfortunately, justice does not enforce itself, and sometimes, the just war tradition gets in its own way. One problem is the natural

tendency away from wars abroad in the pursuit of idealistic concepts. World leaders have to be vigilant if they want to thoroughly and properly apply the ideals of justice and the rule of law to the international realm, but this is rarely the case. Writing in *Social Research*, noted scholar of genocide and former US Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power argues that, in the case of the United States and, more generally, the first world international policing establishment, the default position is one of inaction. Rather than living up to the United States' self-appointed role as world policeman, "[t]he American response to genocide, again and again, is what might be termed 'all systems shut down'" (Power 1093). Power notes that American governments are more than willing to deploy military force or impose "softer" measures when it is expedient to the national interest, but remain eerily silent when a genocide comparatively irrelevant to United States interests takes place. There must exist a significant impetus for U.S. government action, whether that manifests in material economic or military interests, or in the realm of public opinion. She compares the American response to the Bosnian genocide with that for the Rwandan genocide. Though the Rwandan atrocities were worse in terms of body count, the United States ignored it completely. Rwanda held no strategic importance for the United States in economic or military terms, and it did not become widely held public knowledge until the situation was too advanced for corrective action. The Bosnian situation was met with sanctions and more, Power argues, because there was sufficient "noise" from the American public (Power 1095). Perhaps because of Bosnia's location in the more culturally familiar Europe, American media and civic organizations raised enough of a fuss to create a political incentive for action on the part of the country's leaders, in lieu of a material one. The first obstacle to the successful application of a justice-based international system, then, is the fact that the enforcement and pursuit of justice is dependent upon leaders who are generally compelled by public political interests, not justice itself. In other words, the realities of public discourse and politics obstruct the diligent pursuit of justice. In order to compel action, just war theory must be advocated and expressed to actors in a way that demonstrates the strategic and political benefits of theory's application, rather than as mere moral idealism.

The second problem that arises in an international system based on the pursuit of justice is the great potential for abuse by opportunistic actors. Politicians avoid involvement in inconvenient atrocities abroad, but they also take advantage of the justice-based political environment in

order to engage in wars that *are* convenient. The 2003 invasion of Iraq by the United States of America is now widely criticized as unjust and disproportionate, but at the time those in power and their supporters went to great lengths to make the war palatable to the citizens of America and her allies. Chiara Bottici and Angela Kuhner have developed a theory of "political myth" that explains how politicians go about legitimizing wars in their own societies. A subconscious cultural consensus forms political myths, presentations of political reality that give events significance by fitting them into a larger narrative. This new significance and narrative of events is shared by a group and applied to their particular political realities (Bottici and Kuhner 99). In particular, Bottici and Kuhner cite the rise of the political myth of "clash of civilizations" which has come to dominate international politics with regards to the War on Terror. The theory originated with Harvard political scientist Samuel Huntington, and has since been widely criticized in the academic community as simplistic and culturally reductionist. In this myth, recent conflicts in the Middle East and Islamist extremist acts of terror in Western countries are described within a narrative pitting East against West, Judeo-Christianity vs. Islam, in an apocalyptic war (Bottici and Kuhner 105). In Bottici and Kuhner's understanding, Huntington was actually only putting a name to a preexisting political myth, one that had been under construction in the cultural subconscious of both "sides" (Bottici and Kuhner 106). When American politicians decided to go to war in Iraq after 9/11, they relied heavily upon this myth and others to legitimize their actions, with support from American pop culture and media. Even President Bush, rejecting the label of "clash of civilizations," still called the War on Terror a "crusade" (Bottici and Kuhner 108). The moral demands of an international regime grounded in just war theory compels the creation of moralistic rhetoric, and the "clash" is just one example, particularly crude in its reduction of entire cultures.

Joanne Esch has analyzed a trove of primary American political documents to identify two more political myths driving legitimization of the War on Terror: American Exceptionalism and Civilization vs. Barbarians. American Exceptionalism holds up the United States as an example to "lesser" nations; it "represents the forces of good against evil" (Esch 366). Civilization vs. Barbarians is a myth as old as empire, which deems an opposing state or society to be morally degenerate or unprogressive. In the case of the War on Terror, that backwards foreign enemy is the Arab world. It has been used previously to justify genocide against Native

Americans (Esch 370-1). Political myths are partially or entirely moral in nature, and seek to create an "us vs. them" dichotomy between potential belligerents. Politicians such as American leaders in the lead up to the War on Terror sprinkle their speeches with "lexical triggers" that subconsciously summon these myths to the public imagination; these are words such as justice, western, evil, freedom, and hate (Esch 370). Studies show that this kind of rhetoric works. George H. W. Bush's own focus groups showed much higher appreciation for morally charged speeches accusing Saddam Hussein of "evil" than for more pragmatic speeches citing material and economic concerns (Esch 371). These myths were especially useful in the aftermath of September 11th, which afforded American leaders a concrete event towards which they could direct American memories and emotions. Esch writes about the myth of "Exceptional Grievance," which touted the events of 9/11 as a peculiarly American tragedy, and one which demanded extreme action (Esch 372). As Esch writes, "[T]hrough continual emphasis of American ownership of the tragedy, the official rhetoric succeeded in bestowing upon America the politically valuable status of primary victim" (Esch 373). Forced to conform to the just war standards of the international regime, but also provided with a rhetorical vocabulary by that same paradigm, American leaders sought to secure a "just cause" for their *jus ad bellum*. Unable to find genuine cause, but still compelled to fit the moral paradigm imposed by the modern international justice-seeking regime, actors resort to divisive political myths that play upon nationalistic pride and fear of the foreign.

While politicians, if they wish to maintain a positive public international image, are forced to *appear* compliant to the standards of just war, a closer look at their arguments and actual wartime actions often reveals a disconnect between practice and theory. Ahmed Sahlane analyzed the public discourse of American and British opinion media to find examples of fallacious reasoning in favor of the 2003 Iraq Invasion. He found an overwhelming tendency towards dubious moral reasoning, which in particular violates the just war requirements of proportionality and just cause. Sahlane points to arguments asking the public to imagine the horrific consequences of *not* going to war, and the vast benefits of a preemptive strike (Sahlane 475). These depictions of the future were often unfounded, but more importantly, the concept of preemption is irreconcilable with just war theory, which requires an imminent and existential threat to exist. Proportionality demands limits on the conduct of warfare, defined by the just goals of belligerents. The requirement of probability of

success is flouted when wars are started before an existing threat is even established, and the unilateral waging of war to solve problems "before they happen" obviously means that war was not pursued only after attempting all alternative solutions. Similarly, Antonio Reyes posits five strategies that are generally employed by politicians when legitimizing wars: emotions, a hypothetical future, rationality, voices of expertise, and altruism (Reyes 781). The emotion most often exploited is fear, specifically through what Reyes calls "negative other-presentation." Politicians try to convince their constituents that the proposed enemy directly threatens or has already attacked their safety and well being, in an attempt to provide a just cause for war (Reyes 785). As Reyes points out, they then lay out the supposed consequences of inaction through "if, then" sentence constructions, claiming proportionality in the use of force (Reyes 786). By constructing a "hypothetical future" in which the government has permitted a great evil to go unchecked and unchallenged, politicians can paint a very convincing picture of necessity, implying that the only result of inaction is tragedy, and the only result of action is success, while the outcome of war or peace in fact remains unpredictable. Rationality and voices of expertise both give the impression that this course of action is a *last resort*, that the proper authorities have considered the question seriously, and that war is a regrettable, yet reasonable, solution (Reyes 786). Finally, claiming altruistic motivations (the rescue of foreign citizens from tyranny, for instance) could easily be reframed as a claim to right intention (Reyes 787). All of this analysis exposes a failure by political actors, willful or not, to understand and properly apply the ideals of just war theory, even as they appeal to those ideals in legitimization rhetoric.

The United States does not have a monopoly on the moralistic legitimization of mercenary warfare, nor is the practice relegated to wars of the past few decades. Christian Methfessel discusses the rhetorical methods employed by European politicians, particularly German and British, in the justification of imperialistic wars and interventions around the turn of the twentieth century. Early legitimization rhetoric pleads the safety of European citizens abroad, casting them as victims of barbaric foreigners. This justification, though at best a severe stretching of the doctrine of just cause, was accepted readily enough by the public, but when it became painfully obvious that the conflicts in question were not *proportional* to the supposed goal of protecting Europeans, fresh debate arose (Methfessel 44). The answer was an escalation of themes already present in political rhetoric to a full representation of the "Civilization vs. Barbarians" myth.

This manifestation of the myth was also touched by Reyes's altruism strategy. Whereas the myth as it has been discussed focuses on the moral deficiency of the "other," the European colonialist model excused itself further by claiming to have the colonized peoples' best interests at heart. The goal was to "civilize" backwards and unprogressive cultures, and thus bring a higher quality of life to the whole world (Methfessel 45). These arguments became untenable once the actual fighting got under way, with European atrocities during war raising doubts that the conflicts had a "civilizing" effect (Methfessel 48). Furthermore, by that point they had completely abandoned any pretense of *proportionality*, and *right intent* and *just cause* were not far behind. It is also worth mentioning here that even Francisco de Vitoria could not stop the slaughter and enslavement of New World natives, though new laws in defense of those people were passed and orders handed down from the royalty and papacy. It was simply too late, and the benefits for the culprits too great. The difficulties associated with a system based on just war theory (the failure of political actors to carry out its ideals and the abuse of those same ideals in legitimization rhetoric) are not new or geographically isolated, but are instead inherent flaws in that system.

Just war theory is not, however, a complete failure. There is reason to believe that the international regime of justice seeking created by this tradition has had real-world benefits. A 2014 study from Lisa Hultman, Jacob Kathman, and Megan Shannon analyzed United Nations military interventions from 1992 to 2011. Over that period, the UN steadily increased the total number of personnel deployed to mission areas, as well as the number of military personnel relative to police units and "observers." The study found a striking inverse correlation between the number of UN military personnel present in a mission zone and battlefield deaths (Hultmanandal 739-41). It is therefore possible for international military cooperation to be successful in securing peace and enforcing justice. Michael Scharf and Paul Williams describe a variety of benefits derived from international tribunals, the means through which the modern international regime carries out "justice" in a traditional, criminal, and arbitrary sense. First is the establishment of "individual responsibility" and the denial of "collective guilt." The establishment of international criminal tribunals to prosecute and convict world leaders who commit atrocities allows former war zones to avoid blame games that lead to further conflict. When a few leaders are assigned blame and punished, it becomes much more difficult to vilify and take vengeance against an

entire group of people (Scharf and Williams 170-1). Justice activities, like courts, investigations, and official punishments, also allow the establishment of an "accurate historical record" to "pierce the distortions generated by official propaganda, endure the test of time, and resist the forces of revisionism" (Scharf and Williams 175). This record prevents the romanticization of fallen leaders, and serves as a reminder of past mistakes. Finally, tribunals have the power to deter future crimes and negligence on the part of world leaders, though this effect is hard to measure, since one does not know what one has deterred (Scharf and Williams 176-7). These beneficial and at least sometimes successful efforts to respond positively to moral horrors abroad, and to punish leaders who fall criminally behind standards of justice, would not be desired or pursued in a system that did not presuppose the inherent moral and legal equality of persons and states.

Despite the benefits of the just war tradition, war and politics do not stay the same in form or practice, and just war theory faces the threat of obsolescence. J. Brian Hehir notes that conceptions of just war theory have been heavily informed by political and cultural circumstances since the beginning of the tradition. Just as Francisco de Vitoria and Hugo Grotius were responding to the shift away from Christendom to a more anarchic system of sovereign nations, so today just war theorists are tasked with crafting the theory to the problems of a post-Cold War world (Hehir 239). Changing realities surrounding politics and war, coupled with the chronic abuses of political rhetoric, have compelled attempts to fortify just war theory, either through a return to its true roots or a rehabilitation of the theory to take on new problems. Hehir identifies two challenges to just war theory in light of the Cold War's end: "the shifting face of sovereignty" and "the changing face of war" (Hehir 243). Hehir sees the world undergoing an "erosion of sovereignty" due to normative, strategic, economic, and political reasons. The international regime of justice institutionalized in the United Nations and expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has contributed directly to the rise of interventionism, a direct attack on the concept of sovereignty, in order to enforce justice and human rights throughout the world (Hehir 244). Ironically, just war theory has inspired an international regime so nominally dedicated to the preservation of justice that it has begun chipping away at a concept crucial to the internal logic of just war theory in the first place. War itself is also changing; wars between great developed powers are unthinkable, and even nuclear war seems unlikely in the extreme.

Instead, the wars of the future will look like the Gulf War: regional civil wars between asymmetric opponents, with U.S. or other power intervention (Hehir 247). Wars won't be fought in the same manner either, as technology allows for ever-more precise and ever-more destructive attacks, forcing new understandings of the concept of *proportionality* (Hehir 248). Modern just war theorists are tasked therefore with tackling the question of whether the wars of humanitarian intervention, which seem to have defined recent history, can ever be justified, especially in light of the state of military technology and the increasing number of options for non-lethal persuasion (Hehir 254-6). If traditional just war theory ever provided a comprehensive and dynamic method of evaluating justice in international warfare, that ability is now under threat, unless the theory is rearticulated for the modern era.

The solution of religious authorities, including the Catholic Church with which just war theory originated, has mostly been a move in the direction of pacifism. J. Daryl Charles criticizes American religious leaders who have responded to the rise of nuclear weapons and the cold war with an interpretation of just war theory that borders on unconditional pacifism. Their argument proposes that war is so terrible that the requirements of just war can never be met, and so just war theory best understood is an expression of functional pacifism. In fact, just war theory proceeds under the assumption that "peacetime" can and does create more injustice and suffering than a corrective war: "Without justice, peace itself can be illegitimate" (Charles 338). Unfortunately, Charles notes, mainstream American religious thought on just war is "characterized by a presumption against war and force in general rather than a presumption against injustice," a position that ultimately proves impractical, as the prevention of injustice ought to be the ultimate goal of moral thinking, and war is but one of many injustices (Charles 336). Kristopher Norris also sees a shift in recent religious just war thought towards pacifism, but supports the change, and holds that political concerns prevent the Church from pursuing a total transition to pacifism. He warns against the abuse of just war rhetoric as occurred leading up to the War on Terror. Warfare was not applied as a last resort in that case, nor was it conducted in a manner proportional to the threat. There are methods to combat terrorism other than open war, and Norris applauds the restraint just war theory traditionally demands (Norris 116). With regard to the issue of humanitarian intervention, Norris points out that statements from Catholic leaders like Pope John Paul II have approved the use of military

force abroad "in the cases of 'groups whose very survival is threatened [...]'" (Norris 117). This pronouncement restricts the practice to situations of genocide, and, as in the case of terrorism, strongly encourages "softer" approaches to the prevention of such violence in the first place. According to Norris, public politics is responsible for both the shift towards a more pacifistic just war theory in the Church as well as the restraint from preaching absolute pacifism, since "the pragmatic nature of public policy prevents an absolute acceptance of pacifism as a national policy" (Norris 129). Charles's concern that just war theory will eventually become a functional pacifism cannot come to reality. Politics demands that there always be *some* justification for the use of force, and the prioritization of justice and social good by Church theology precludes a complete conversion to pacifism. The functional pacifist "solution" is therefore not useful within the context of practical international legal theory.

David Lonsdale is particularly concerned with reconciling the official Catholic teaching of just war theory with modern nuclear strategy. The Catholic Church has never issued an official statement on nuclear weapons deterrence, but only qualified and "interim ethics" statements. Generally, these statements have absolutely condemned the use of nuclear weapons, which are thought to be inherently abhorrent, especially against civilian populations, but have granted moral permissibility to nuclear deterrence on three conditions: The first declares that nuclear weapons are only morally viable for the deterrence of nuclear attack. The second criterion dismisses the quest for nuclear superiority, arguing that nuclear weapons must only be possessed in limited numbers sufficient to fulfill the first criterion. Finally, deterrence must be used as a step on the road to disarmament (Lonsdale 192).

This position is clearly transitional at best and unsustainable in the long term. In order to provide a better solution, Lonsdale finds "possible convergences" between Catholic just war theory and current academic strategic studies. First, the Catholic rejection of countervalue strategies (the intentional targeting of civilian populations) is consistent with the current direction of academic nuclear strategy, which sees the targeting of military forces as much more effective. Second, proportionality is possible in the modern era due to the changing nature of nuclear war and tactics, with fewer, smaller, more accurate warheads and fewer potential targets. Third, it is possible to deploy nuclear weapons only in self-defense, provided they do not target civilians, are in proportion to the enemy threat, and do not threaten the destruction of civilization (Lonsdale 198).

Modern nuclear weapon technology makes such use of these possible. According to Lonsdale, then, just war theory is potentially reconcilable with modern strategic requirements and realities, but not without an active attempt to rearticulate the theory with clarity.

In addition to the erosion of sovereignty, advances in military technology, and nuclear strategy, the rise in significance of non-state actors poses questions to which traditional just war theory does not necessarily provide answers. "Inter-state war has become a rarity," writes Valerie Morkevicius, "but various forms of intra-state violence, sadly, have not" (Morkevicius 158). Just war theory therefore risks irrelevance if it cannot account for the various types of non-state actors, such as terrorist organizations, insurgent groups, and international authorities. Morkevicius also supports the addition of a new "pillar" of just war theory in addition to *jus in bello* and *jus ad bellum*, "*jus post bellum*"—a concept which arose out of interventionist policies that leave countries worse off than before the invasion (Morkevicius 158). One way to expand the theory to account for non-state actors may be to evaluate their legitimacy and authority according to natural law standards. The non-state actor must act and look like a state; in other words, if an actor rules over an area through methods other than pure coercion, provides basic infrastructure, claims a reasonable historical narrative, and behaves according to jus in bello norms, that actor may be granted legitimate authority (Morkevicius 159). There are theoretical reasons for rejecting the legitimacy of non-state actors outright, but such a stance seems unproductive in reality. Recognizing a non-state actor as a legitimate authority indicates that the actor is held to a standard of just behavior equivalent to that of states. Leaving the possibility of recognition open to non-state actor enables the application of just war standards, while rejecting all such entities outright leaves no political incentive to comply. Non-state actors crave legitimacy, and the possibility of being treated as legal equals to traditional state actors may compel them to behave more according to the ideal of justice enshrined in international law.

Just war theory is in need of a public rehabilitation. The theory and its derived traditions have always been presented and argued in terms of abstract moral ideals, which later served as inspiration for the creation of international law regarding war, as well as the institution of justice-seeking in international criminal tribunals. In other words, the ideals of the just war tradition have been *imposed* on international actors on the pretense of universalist morality. Little effort has been made to advocate

just war theory to leaders as a strategic good, beneficial to all parties if followed and enforced. War, especially unrestrained war, is severe stress on all involved, and as the world becomes more and more connected, "all involved" is beginning to include the entirety of the international system. If just war theory is to continue to have a positive effect on international humanitarianism, the case will have to be made, using the arguments presented above, that the theory is not only morally sound, but practical and applicable. A good analogy is the efficacy of vaccines, which work best when a large number of people are vaccinated. True compliance with the precepts of just war theory on a large scale, especially among powerful nations, will compel similar behavior from weaker nations, especially if they are strictly enforced by international law. In the long run, this is the most strategically agreeable situation, especially for powerful states, which ultimately stand to lose the most from upheaval and instability in the international status quo.

Just war theory, which made possible the norms and ideals of modern international politics, is in crisis. The justice-oriented system of current international law, exemplified in institutions like the United Nations, has been beneficial. Unfortunately, politics is a cynical arena based on speech and appearances. The justice-seeking regime of international politics, defined in universalist moral terms, has forced politicians—who must always legitimize their wars—to do so in fittingly moral terminology and rhetoric. These legitimization methods never fail to resort to "us vs. them" dichotomies that contribute to further conflict and violence. Discord is apparent between this moralistic speech and the realities of modern war, illuminated in both the failure of governments to actively respond to real injustice abroad on their own initiative, as well as in their conduct in bello. This discord, combined with rapid changes in the nature of warfare and international politics, has eroded the reputation of just war theory, raising questions of its usefulness in restraining war and pursuing justice in the modern world. A rehabilitation of just war theory would allow the further restriction of disproportionate and unnecessary wars of intervention, while allowing for dynamic and nuanced reactions to new threats such as terrorism and legitimate humanitarian crises. The best path to this rehabilitation is an active attempt on the part of scholars to reiterate the ideals of just war theory in the context of these modern challenges, while stressing the restraining instinct of the theory, rather than its permissive aspect.

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The Role of Pharmacogenomics in Racialized Medicine

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By AMY HU

ABSTRACT

Pharmacogenomics is a novel approach to drug treatment that seeks to use a patient's genetic information to determine the most suitable drug in minimizing adverse drug reactions and maximizing drug efficacy. This technology is intended as a form of personalized medicine and is regarded as an advancement from the previous "trial and error" method of prescribing drugs, but its actual application in research has seen the substitution of race for genetics and a revitalization of race in medicine. The association between race and genes stems from the mandatory categorization of research participants in terms of six categories of race and ethnicity, which encourages researchers to analyze their findings by race and use confirmation bias to justify the continued presence of race in everyday society. These "scientifically-supported" racial groupings in genetics research have significant implications in the creation of specific race-targeted drugs in pharmaceutical industry and the practice of risk profiling in the clinical setting. The current role of race in research has caused pharmacogenomics to turn into population-based medicine, which will exacerbate pre-existing health inequalities along racial and ethnic lines if strict guidelines are not implemented in research, pharmaceutical industry, and clinical practice.

INTRODUCTION

Pharmacogenomics is a branch of medical technology that studies how an individual's genetic characteristics affect their response to medications. Its official definition, as defined by the FDA, is "the study of variations of DNA and RNA characteristics as related to drug response" (*Paving the Way for Personalized Medicine* 9). The focus of pharmacogenomics is to understand how a patient's genetic profile influences the safety and efficacy of specific drugs. By determining the genetic basis for certain drug reactions in a person, doctors can provide more personalized drug therapy designed for the patient's needs and preferences instead of a "one-size-fits-all" approach to treatment. The hope for a dramatic transformation in treatment has recently been touted in many popular publications. An article in Time magazine anticipates, "'Doctors will treat diseases like cancer and diabetes before the symptoms even begin, using

medications that boost or counteract the effects of individual proteins with exquisite precision, attacking sick cells while leaving healthy cells alone'" (Lee 170). However, contrary to society's view of pharmacogenomics in the *Time* article, the application of genetics to research and medicine has, in practice, served not to streamline treatment but to justify a reincorporation of race and ethnicity into medicine under the proxy of genetics. According to researchers Linda M. Hunt and Meta J. Kreiner, "Current manifestations of Personalized Medicine appear to be reinforcing entrenched notions of inherent biological differences between racial groups, and promoting the belief that racial profiling in health care is supported by cutting-edge scientific authority" (226). In effect, personalized medicine becomes scientifically-validated "racialized medicine," where medical diagnoses are judged according to outdated racial and ethnic categories (232).

Given the diversity within racial constructs, the current use of such racial and ethnic categories in research and clinical settings undermines the usefulness of pharmacogenomics in drug therapy treatment. Likewise, the substitution of race for genetics encourages racial profiling in the form of population-based medicine and exacerbates health inequalities along racial and ethnic boundaries. Despite the negative effects of racialized medicine, however, racial categories continue to hold predominance because of the alternative view that race-based therapeutics can lessen health disparity with the help of drugs designed to benefit minority populations. In this paper, I will examine both the supporting and refuting arguments contributing to the debate about racialized medicine. I will consider the role of race in research, pharmaceutical drug development, and the clinical setting as it relates to achieving the purpose of pharmacogenomics and decreasing or increasing health inequalities. Overall, even though race can be useful in considering the social and environmental factors of disease, the current infrastructure of racialization in medicine increases health disparity and limits the effectiveness of pharmacogenomics to provide individualized treatment.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENES AND RACE

The lack of a clear scientific correlation between genes and race introduces complications in the incorporation of race into genetic research. In his book review "Race Finished," Jan Sapp recounts a 1972 study by Harvard geneticist Richard Lewontin which found that "the

great majority of genetic variation (85.4 percent) was within so-called races, not between them" (1). In contrast with attempts to group individuals with "similar" pools of genes by region, the genetic variation among individuals from local populations was greater than among members of different regions (1). The implications of this investigation suggest that different races do not necessarily have different sets of gene variations, but rather have more genetic similarities to each other than such racial categories indicate. Likewise, research conducted by the Institute of Genetic Research and the National Institutes of Health supports the conclusion that "individuals are frequently more genetically similar to members of other so-called races than they are to their own said race" (1). According to these studies, racial classification has no genetic significance beyond shared superficial traits like skin color, blood type, or hair form, suggesting that "races" are largely a misguided creation of boundaries between humans.

On the other hand, other studies have continued to extract a relationship between genes or genetic ancestry and race. As evidence, research on the enzyme family cytochrome P450 suggests that variations in an enzyme in charge of drug elimination and response have shown to have "high variability among racially identified populations" (Lee 173). Likewise, another publication evaluating the genomic ancestry of 1037 Brazilians "'confirmed the partition of worldwide diversity into five genetic clusters that correspond to major geographical regions'" (Ventura Santos et al. 57). In contrast to Sapp's review, these studies find genetic relevance in race and ancestry groups. Research on this side of the debate may explain why some diseases, such as Tay Sachs disease, have been found to exist primarily among members of certain regions, like the Ashkenazi Jews originating from Eastern Europe. Because there is evidence illustrating that some genetic diseases exist along racial lines, researchers still believe that race is a useful consideration in pharmacogenomics overall.

Furthermore, the fact that genetics research requires racial and ethnic classifications implicitly prompts researchers to finding a relationship between genes and race. The National Revitalization Act of 1993 "mandates the inclusion of racially identified groups into research" (Lee 173). As a result, this legal requirement leads to "bioethnic conscription," which involves "a slippage between a simple pragmatic description of ethnic-racial labels to identify groups to one of the attribution of qualities to those groups" (Ventura Santos et al. 61). Bioethnic conscription

demonstrates how well-meaning attempts to increase diversity by classifying participants according to their background has simultaneously encouraged a greater institutionalization of race in research. Interestingly enough, however, most scientists are well aware that race is not an accurate representation of genetics. Their justification for its continued association is that instead, race serves as "an interim solution" where "the use of race is acceptable only until further research reveals the biological mechanisms that explain differential drug response" (Lee 177). In reality, the researchers' tendency to give preference to scientifically-validated categories of race may be better understood as a method to assimilate science into long existing social norms.

RACE IN RESEARCH

Despite their inclusion in scientific research, racial and ethnic categorizations are sociocultural constructs of perceived differences reinforced by existing cultural norms. As Sandra Soo-Jin Lee points out in "Pharmacogenomics and the Challenge of Health Disparities," "Race is never given, but produced through structures of beliefs, practices, and values" (178). These categorizations are consistently used in studies to group participants and make claims about genetic data according to race and ethnicity, even though there is no direct correlation between genes and race. In fact, critics note that "when differences are observed between racially labeled groups, genetic variation is often assumed in the absence of genetic data, while other variables well-known to influence drug response are routinely neglected" (Hunt and Kreiner 232). This deliberate association between genes and race follows a confirmation bias in that people's expectations of a genetic basis in race causes them to search for such evidence. For example, the anti-hypertension drug BiDil was approved by the FDA specifically for African Americans and hailed as a landmark achievement of pharmacogenomics, even though the genetic "mechanism(s) by which the drug works remained unknown at the time of the patent" (Friese 1). The public automatically assumed that the racial specifications of BiDil were scientifically supported by the genes found predominantly in African Americans, but failed to consider how the drug's association with race may have been caused by the relationship between environmental factors and race instead. Environmental factors involve living conditions that make people more susceptible to certain diseases. Thus, the presence of a disease may not be directly from their

race but instead related to the living conditions of the average member of that race. As a result, the tendency to draw genetic conclusions from race represents a desire to validate the racial norms in everyday society.

Nonetheless, scientific research continually categorizes participants by race and ethnicity for data analysis. In addition to the National Revitalization Act of 1993 mentioned previously, the US Office of Management and Budget dictated in 2005 that publicly funded investigations can only classify participants using the six racial/ethnic categories of American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, black/African-American, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino, and white (Ramos, Callier, and Rotimi 3). Even though such mandates ensure a degree of standardization and consistency in research format, they do not reflect the increasing ethnic complexity of the population arising from modern globalization and are thus problematic in practical application.

In consequence, the restrictive nature of racial categorizations impedes correct prescription dosages. For the widely-used anticoagulant drug Warfarin, website algorithms require patient information including sex, weight, height, clinical history, as well as race and ethnicity to determine the doses of the drug prescribed (Ventura Santos et al. 49). In an investigation of how to apply American racial and ethnic categories to the highly genetically heterogeneous population in Brazil, Ventura Santos et al. found that "self-reported race/color was not a significant predictor of Warfarin requirements in our patient cohort, despite the significant differences in the maintenance warfarin dose across the race/color groups" (57). In other words, the diversity of Brazilian patients suggests that their self-reported race and ethnicity were inaccurate in predicting the dosage of warfarin needed. Accordingly, the inflexible ethnic and racial groupings required in research are inapplicable in the consideration of diverse populations like that in Brazil. The continued use of such dosing algorithms is harmful to more racially mixed patients because they advise incorrect drug dosing based on race. Interestingly enough, however, instead of using this data to reanalyze the accuracy of drug dosing algorithms, Brazilian data is often not included in international collaboration of pharmacogenomics because "they seem not to fit the required 'racial framework'" (63). This lack of inclusion suggests the tendency to ignore contrary data that threatens the predominance of race in scientific analysis. Therefore, the insistence on racial categories represents more of social norm than a variable applicable to diverse worldwide populations.

Moreover, the lack of set regulations on how to categorize re-

search participants by race raises questions regarding the validity of research data. Experimenters have frequently used one of two ways to place participants into groups, whether by asking participants to self-report their race and ethnicity, or by assigning the classifications themselves. The self-reported nature of race and ethnicity introduces variability between different conceptions of race from one participant to another (Huber 4). A case of the ambiguous use of racial categorization is how the antihypertensive drug mentioned above, BiDil, was approved by the FDA for "self-identified black patients," but without clear standards on how to characterize race or for those of mixed race (Lee 175). In reality, the genetic variation among "self-identified black patients" is significant enough to produce variations in drug response and reduce the effectiveness of a race-targeted drug (Ramos, Shawneequa, and Charles 4). Another questionable practice is how scientists may also place patients into assigned racial groups based on their own subjective phenotypic observations of the patient, thereby mixing self-reported and researcher-assigned criteria within a sample (Ventura Santos et al. 60). The nonexistence of regulations on how to classify participants into the limited racial and ethnic groups introduces confounding variables based on the investigator's interpretations and ultimately undermines the accuracy of the results. Ramos, Shawneequa, and Charles explain the flaw of race in research by noting how researchers assume that "populations of the same shared ancestry are sufficient for comprehensively identifying important genetic markers associated with a particular disease trait" (5). This practice may cause a drug to be approved for a specific race, but still cause adverse side effects in users because of the large genetic variability within race. The race-specific drug labels can provide erroneous assurance and harm more people than they would have without race designations. Likewise, characterizing drugs according to race leaves out individuals whose genotypes would deem them as suitable candidates for the drug as well, but are rejected because of their self-identified racial categorization. These statements are summarized by Jan Sapp in his remark, "not only is the drug [BiDil] not effective for all African Americans, it is quite effective for many individuals who self-identify as Caucasian" (2). Consequently, self-reported and experimenter-assigned race-based research allows the formation of extraneous variables and both presents complications to intended drug recipients and hinders the potential benefit of drugs to other populations.

Not only is the way in which participants are assigned to racial categories ambiguous, but the insufficient inclusion of patients from

different populations makes research unequal as well. Petersen et al. indicates the skewed inclusion of races in research by mentioning how "it has been estimated that more than 90% of genome-wide association studies are performed on populations of European ancestry" (214). Even though American minorities, such as those originating in Africa, have the longest ancestral history and consequently the most complex genetic variation, more research is devoted towards investigating the genetic variation of European-Americans (Ramos, et al. 6). The predominance of research about European-Americans restricts the representation of other racial groups, which is dangerous because the majority of pharmacogenomic information on drug labels derives from populations of European ancestry (Petersen et al. 214). The assumption that genetic information from one subpopulation can provide enough information to treat the entire population of diverse individuals is erroneous. In addition, from a health disparity perspective, the lack of inclusion of minority populations in genetics research accentuates poor health outcomes by decreasing the medication targeted towards less genetically understood groups. This lack of study on the genetic variation of diverse subpopulations may cause an eventual "bimodal characterization of patients" between "those whose genetic variations we understand clinically and everyone else" (Ramos, Callier, and Rotimi 2). In consequence, "the application of personalized medicine would be limited to patients with well-understood genotypes," creating a disparity in accessibility to pharmacogenomics among racial and ethnic lines (2). Thus, to combat the potential for an unequal distribution of pharmacogenomic technology, it is necessary to encourage the inclusion of diverse subpopulations and properly understand the span of human genetic variation in investigations.

However, even with inclusionary policies by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to increase diversity in research, the recruitment of participants by gender, race, and age only serves to further institutionalize race as a proxy for genetics. Huber notes that "six times between 1988 and 2002, Congress or the FDA itself demanded broader representation of race, ethnicity, sex, age, and 'population subgroups' in clinical trials" (4). Similarly, in Carrie Friese's response to Troy Duster's paper, "A post-genomic surprise," she discusses how the Minority Health and Health Disparity Research and Education Act of 2000 requires US medical scientists to enroll and stratify study populations by race and ethnicity in the name of ensuring equal representation (54). In the process of identifying research subjects by such

labels, however, government bodies unintentionally reinforce the molecular basis of race, and further "molecularize" race as a legitimate variable. Nonetheless, race remains a sociocultural construct and is not an actual molecular marker. In consequence, in an attempt to promote diversity, race is even more integrated into research, encouraging researchers to substitute race for genetics in their analyses. The focus on race correlates to populations and detracts from the genetics and needs of the individual. As Peterson et al. notes, "The existence of population substructures threatens the equality goal because of their potential to mask the health needs of individuals in some subpopulations" (215). Continuous employment of racial categorizations in research consequently misdirects pharmacogenomics into inaccurate population-based racialized medicine instead of personalized medicine while augmenting health disparity between overrepresented and underrepresented populations.

RACIAL MARKET NICHES IN DRUG DEVELOPMENT

Not only does the current research landscape validate the association between race and genes, it also has widespread implications on drug development in the pharmaceutical industry. Pharmaceutical companies' drive for profit has a powerful influence on the direction of research and health disparity. For these industries, the association between race and genes is beneficial in that they can develop drugs targeted towards specific "at-risk populations" or market niches. As Huber explains, "Every new sliver of human diversity offers drug companies, physicians, and patients a new opportunity and reason to go their own, separate, patented, and therefore expensive ways" (3). Contrary to medications which have existed for decades to treat common symptoms and already have several generics, new drugs are sources of profit for drug companies. The clinical trials which test the drugs are also streamlined because companies can recruit participants of the targeted race or gene and then get the drug approved by the FDA for a specific market niche, thus saving time and resources. Not only does the concept of tracking specific diseases or genetic abnormalities to target for profit raise ethical concerns, but there is also the potential for economic disincentives to fuel an increase in health inequality. Pharmaceutical companies may perceive patients with rare diseases as unattractive because the profit from such a small consumer base would not offset its drug development costs. In consequence,

despite the existence of pharmacogenomic technology, the lack of economic profit would dissuade drug development and some diseases would become "orphan diseases that affect an underserved patient population" (McGowan et al. 190). S.S. Lee expresses similar concerns in the risk for "orphan patients", commenting that "scholars worry that the beneficiaries of pharmacogenomics research will be among populations that are seen to constitute larger, more profitable market shares" (173). The concept of "orphan diseases" and "orphan patients" stem from the idea that rare cases of disease will only be pursued if deemed economically favorable for drug development, leaving certain populations untreated as "orphans," Hence, the profit drive of pharmaceutical companies poses the risk of further increasing health inequality through such "orphan diseases."

In contrast to the questionable ethics of targeting diseases by race for profit, people have argued that pharmaceutical companies' focus on race can reduce health inequalities for minority populations. Regarding BiDil, which was designed to lessen heart disease for African Americans, drug developers presented a moral justification for its approval in that the drug would act as "moral redemption for a legacy of excluding and exploiting African Americans in biomedical research" (Lee 176). Regardless of the real genetic mechanism of the drug, BiDil would move towards addressing healthcare injustice given the disproportionate burden of disease suffered by African Americans. Nonetheless, despite the claim of justice that exists with minority-targeted drugs, the existence of a race-based drug is merely a concealed example of racialized medicine. The social justice argument does hold considerable significance, however, as seen by how a group called the African American Academic Surgeons voiced their support of BiDil (Friese 54). Interestingly enough, the desire to seek compensation for ongoing injustices overcame any concerns the minority race had about propagating their own racialization. Friese suggests an interesting interpretation of racialized groups' self-racializing behavior by arguing that "the genetic sciences are possibly strategically appropriated by racialized people in order to use the tools of those in power in order to speak back" (55). The implicit approval of racialized groups to use race-based drugs to address injustice further complicates the dynamic between race-based drugs and health disparity. As a result, racially-focused drug development remains controversial as to whether these drugs should exist to reduce health inequality.

The greatest opportunity for pharmacogenomics to have a positive impact lies in primary care settings with direct doctor-patient interactions. With genetic technology, doctors can prescribe medications that are more suitable for their patients, thus improving medication adherence and ultimately reducing further healthcare costs in treatment. In contrast, even though people envision personalized medicine as empowering doctors to better implement science into treatment, the real situation presents several major difficulties integrating genetic research into clinical settings. For example, given the complicated nature of genetic sequencing, "'the majority of physicians do not have ready access to training about interpretations of genetic test results'" (McGowan et al. 190). Doctors willing to incorporate genetics into practice also face logistical challenges due to a lack of knowledge about where to obtain the tests and how they will be paid for, deterring a large number from ordering genetic sequencing entirely (Hunt and Kreiner 230). Even if the genetic testing is paid for by insurance, the resulting personalized treatment may prove too expensive for insurance coverage and be inapplicable for patients of lower socioeconomic status without the ability to pay (McGowan et al. 190). In consequence, the financial inaccessibility of genetic testing exacerbates economic-based health inequalities. Overall, the practical concerns relating to pharmacogenomics are significant, as portrayed by a field study of physicians which found that the "cost of gene based therapies, cost of genetic testing, limited availability of genotype based treatments, limited clinical guidelines, and limited physician knowledge or awareness of personalized medicine were ranked the top 5 barriers toward personalized medicines" (Petersen et al. 216). The financial and informational logistics of applying new technology to medicine consequently present formidable difficulties in terms of the impact of pharmacogenomics in society.

Furthermore, attempts to incorporate pharmacogenomics in clinical settings may turn into race-based risk profiling. Interviews of 58 clinicians by Hunt and Kreiner demonstrated that physicians' oversimplified perception about pharmacogenomics caused them to incorporate "genetics" into clinical practice not through individually tailored treatment but by adopting beliefs about "geneticized racial ancestry". The reversion back to racial stereotyping under the appearance of "scientifically-validated medicine" is apparent by how a number of clinicians in the study "skipped the whole idea of using genetics to personalize prescribing, and instead

indicated they looked forward to pharmacogenetics leading to more and better race-based treatment recommendations" (Hunt and Kreiner 232). This practice may thus prompt pharmacogenomics to coexist with health injustices in the form of unintended racial discrimination (Petersen et al. 210). Despite research proving the inadequacy of current racial and ethnic categorizations in representing the diversity of human populations, the legal requirement for their continued presence in experiments allows doctors to justify their assumptions about race and differentially prescribe by population. Such self-justified decisions made by prescriptive authorities raise concerns about how unbiased health care can be assured in an environment where racial classifications are claimed to exist genetically in pharmacogenomics.

COMBATTING THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF RACIALIZATION

After investigating the role of pharmacogenomics in racialized medicine, it is necessary to propose solutions to combat the infrastructure of racialization in genetic research, drug development, and the clinical setting. Multiple researchers have called for increased legal regulations, particularly from the FDA, to set standards designed to clarify the role of race or to promote health equality. For example, the creation of explicit working definitions of race in research would minimize the variability and subjectivity when categorizing research participants. Similarly, Lee mentions the need for regulatory measures to counter potential economic disincentives and help encourage pharmaceutical companies to develop products for orphan patient populations (173). In the clinical setting, interviews with medical professionals suggested that an establishment of clinical guidelines is necessary for personalized medicine to become incorporated into healthcare (Petersen et al. 216). Thus, setting official regulations to guide the direction of new pharmacogenomic technology is essential for its effective implementation in drug development and medicine as well as for the unbiased incorporation of race in research.

Nonetheless, even though the current use of race as a proxy for genetics prevents pharmacogenomics from providing personalized medicine, race is still a useful consideration in medicine when addressing health inequality. Sapp argues that "carefully taking account of race to help understand broader social or environmental factors that may be influencing health disparities can be warranted...but race itself is not an

inherent causal factor in such conditions" (2). Race is an important factor when investigating the predominance of disease among populations, but is not a substitute for the underlying genetics of a disease. Therefore, the argument that genetics and minority-targeted drugs can reduce social inequality is misguided because the source of health disparities between ethnic groups is primarily from the established health system perpetuating the inequalities, not genetic differences. Friese points out how health disparity cannot be addressed by genetics when she says, "if genomic research is being conducted in a racist society, new knowledge and technologies will reproduce rather than change social inequities" (55). This phenomenon explains how genetic sequencing technology cannot propel social change, since it assimilates itself into the existing cultural norms. In consequence, a shift in approach towards a greater consideration of the environmental variables of disease combined with genetics would move towards the actual improvement of health outcomes. Ramos, Shawneequa, and Charles suggest "ethnogenetic layering, which provides an 'alternative to the current reliance of the biological racial paradigm in public health, epidemiology, and biomedicine' by integrating 'information on relevant geographic, environmental, cultural, genetic, historical and demographic variables needed to understand local group expressions of disease inequities'" (4). Sapp also considers "evolutionary medicine," which looks at ancestral geographic origins, socioeconomic factors, and culture as a replacement for racialized medicine (2). Overall, it is evident that while the direct association between genes and race is questionable in pharmacogenomics, race is still applicable in medicine as a whole to understand the social causes of disease.

CONCLUSION

Currently, the primary role of race in pharmacogenomics remains an explanation rather than a contributing factor in determining the predominance of disease among populations. However, because there is a legal requirement for participants to be classified according to race and ethnicity in research, race has become unintentionally institutionalized in pharmacogenomics as a replacement for genes through bioethnic conscription. Even though studies have established the inaccuracy of racial categorizations in representing the diversity of genetic variation and scientists acknowledge that such groupings are outdated, their continued use as a "temporary" explanation for the genetic underpinnings of

disease serves only to further entrench race in medicine. Consequently, the role of race in research translates into the development of race-based drugs and racial profiling in clinical diagnoses under the justification that such categorizations are scientifically-validated. In reality, however, the paradox that looking at race is simultaneously an acceptable target for drug-development and clinical diagnoses while also only a temporary substitute for genetics culminates to reinforce the continued existence of race in medicine. The lack of initiative in removing this infrastructure of racialization may conform to the desire to assimilate new genetic technology into the pre-existing social norms of a racist society. Even though race is significant in understanding the cultural and environmental factors that promote disease, the lack of regulation of race in research and clinical settings creates extraneous variables which pose a barrier for pharmacogenomics to be applicable in society. Until strict standards are set to define the role of race in research and minimize economic disincentives in drug-development, pharmacogenomics will remain an embodiment of unequal, population-based racialized medicine rather than personalized medicine.

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Sexuality, Sexual Identification, and Success: The Troubles and Consequences of Choosing to Stay in or Come Out of the Closet

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By TAYLOR JONES

ABSTRACT

This paper studies both the benefits and drawbacks of staying in or coming out of the closet for LGBT teens. Despite the drawbacks, it has been found that the benefits of coming out outweigh the disadvantages because of both psychological and emotional trauma that kids can experience due to the suppression of their sexual identity. This paper also explores how the suppression of a teen's sexual identity negatively impacts his/her ability to achieve academic success in the future. Ryan and Deci's self-determination theory (SDT) is utilized in this paper as the theoretical framework supporting the argument that hiding one's sexual identity leads to a lack of academic success. From Ryan and Deci's SDT, autonomy is frequently discussed. It was found that there is a direct correlation between the ability to act freely and the acceptance or suppression of one's sexual identity. Also, the effect that external forces (such as parental beliefs, peer pressure, etc.) has on the expression or suppression of one's sexual identity is explored. In conclusion, through the research presented in this paper, it was found that it is more beneficial for teens to express their sexual identity, because expression of one's sexual identity promotes positive emotional and psychological effects.

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I will be addressing one of the hardest decisions for LGBT teens to make: when (and if) they will express their sexual identity, and how this decision can (and, in fact, does) affect them in their ability to succeed academically. I chose to address this issue because, "we know little about status attainment processes specific to gay men and lesbians or about any costs resulting from homophobic discrimination" (Barrett, Pollack, & Tilden, 2002, p. 163). Contrary to popular belief, the actual sexuality of LGBT teens is not what most greatly affects their success—it is the suppression or expression of their sexual identity. Oftentimes LGBT teens who make the choice to express their sexual identity are met with negative consequences such as bullying, harassment, and discrimination, while many children who internally identify as an LGBT teen long before

presenting their sexual identity to family, friends, peers, etc. do not. This leads to the conclusion that the actual expression of one's sexual identity to others is the cause of negative backlash—not the actual sexual identity itself. LGBT teens that choose to hide their sexuality from others may be able to go through their adolescent years without bullying, harassment, or discrimination because no one knows about their true sexual identity. While this may seem like a plausible option for some, hiding one's sexual identity does, in fact, negatively affect an LGBT teen and his ability to succeed, due to the psychological burden created by attempting to suppress one's true identity. In his thesis, "Learning, living, and leaving the closet: Making gay identity relational," Tony E. Adams discusses the difficulties that LGBT people face being closeted (suppressing one's sexual identity from others), the difficulties of coming and being out, (expressing one's sexual identity) and how sexual identity influences one's life. When talking about being closeted, Adams says that many experience, "a time of confusion, fear, isolation, secrecy, loneliness, [and] interrelated feelings that rub against each other" (Adams, 2008, p. 135). These feelings are extremely common in closeted LGBT teens and often lead to negative psychological repercussions that prohibit LGBT teens from achieving their full academic potential. This idea will be explored explicitly through the utilization of a study done by Nancy E. Day and Patricia Schoendrade, in their article, "Staying in The Closet Versus Coming Out; Relationships Between Communication About Sexual Orientation and Work Attitudes." When describing how sexual orientation can impact the work environment, Day and Schoendrade say that, "[in order] to maintain equitable treatment, closeted gay and lesbian workers may believe that they must keep their sexual orientation secret. Variations in communication of one's orientation may, consequently, have implications for aspects of job satisfaction and other workplace attitudes, as well as performance" (Day & Schoenrade, 1997, p. 149). I understand and fully acknowledge that coming out is a stressful and (in many cases) negative experience for LGBT teens. However, the effects of remaining closeted create many unforeseen and extremely damaging psychological effects that prevent an LGBT teen from truly embracing his identity. Therefore, I argue that it is more beneficial to express one's sexual identity. Remaining closeted can have many negative effects on a child's success in an academic setting and on his potential to succeed in the future, due to deep-rooted mental and emotional trauma.

In order to make this paper as explicit and clear as possible, I feel it is necessary to define a few key terms that are most vital to the understanding of this paper's content. Therefore, I want to clarify the context in which I am referring to the term sexuality, since there are countless variations in its definition. In her article, "So Much More than 'Sex Ed': Teen Sexuality as Vehicle for Improving Academic Success and Democratic Education for Diverse Youth," Catherine Ashcraft explores how sexuality affects students academically and also provides what I determined to be the most suitable meaning of the word sexuality for the purpose of this paper. According to Ashcraft, sexuality is, "not only the biological or physical aspects of sex (e.g. intercourse, condoms, 'safe sex' practices) but also includes the relational dynamics around sex, romance, and other aspects of sexuality as well as the myriad ways a subject's experiences of these differ in terms of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation, among others" (Ashcraft, 2008, p. 634). The concept of the relational dynamics around sex (i.e. if the relationship is between a lesbian, gay, or heterosexual couple) is the aspect of this definition that will be used throughout this paper.

Another key term that requires an explicit definition is sexual identity. Sexual identity refers to, "becoming aware of one's unfolding sexual orientation, beginning to question whether one may be GLB [gay, lesbian, bisexual], and exploring that emerging GLB identity by becoming involved in gay-related social activities and/or sexual activities" (Rosario, Schrimshaw, Hunter, & Braun, 2006, p. 2). Sexual identity in short, is the acceptance, awareness, and exploration of being LGBT (even though in this particular definition, transgender identity is not included). The act of embracing one's sexual identification is what often leads LGBT teens to be bullied, harassed, and made fun of by peers or even adults. For this reason alone, many LGBT teens remain closeted, which refers to "a state of secrecy or cautious privacy regarding one's sexual orientation" ("Definition of Terms," 2011). The process whereby someone accepts and acknowledges his own sexual orientation and identity and shares that identity with others is referred to as coming out ("Definition of Terms," 2011). Understanding these four terms is key to being able to comprehend what LGBT teens might think, feel, and want, and also to better grasp all of the issues that affect their ability to achieve academic success and success in the working world.

By utilizing the theoretical framework proposed by Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci, in their article, "Self-Determination Theory: A

Macrotheory of Human Motivation, Development, and Health," this paper will explore how and why the decision to remain closeted or to come out can affect an LGBT teen's success. Ryan and Deci describe self-determination theory (SDT) as, "a macrotheory of human motivation…[that] addresses such basic issues as personality development, self-regulation, universal psychological needs, life goals and aspirations, energy and vitality, nonconscious processes, the relations of culture to motivation, and the impact of social environments on motivation, affect, behavior, and well-being" (Ryan & Deci, 2008, p. 182). While this theory covers numerous important facets of life, only a few of them will be discussed in this paper. The main concepts that will be examined are the impact of social environments on motivation and the well-being of LGBT teens. Ryan and Deci also introduce the concept of autonomous actions, which they describe as, "endorsed by the self, fully identified with and 'owned'…to be autonomous there must be some relative unity underlying one's actions; they must be congruent and endorsed by the whole self" (Ryan & Deci, 2006, p. 1561). For the purpose of this paper, it would be most useful to consider autonomy as the governing of one's own thoughts, actions, and desires. Throughout this paper, it will be clearly shown how LGBT teens' autonomy is undermined because of the influence of external factors. An external factor that I will be explicitly discussing is the fear of rejection by family, friends, and other people in an LGBT teen's life. However, I want to acknowledge that the fear of rejection is not the only outside force that can act on an LGBT teen. Other outside forces that can act on an LGBT person include fear of facing "ridicule, ostracism, or even job loss" (Day & Shoenrade, 1997, p. 148). I plan to effectively show how the inability to act autonomously creates difficulties in achieving academic success and success in the future.

HOW AND WHY REMAINING CLOSETED HARMS LGBT TEENS' ACADEMIC SUCCESS

In this section, the ways in which remaining closeted affects LGBT teens' academic success will be discussed and explored. In his article, "The Closet: Psychological Issues of Being In and Coming Out," Jack Drescher focuses on the difficulties of both coming out and staying in the closet, as well as the different levels of acceptance people go through when they realize they are an LGBT person. Hiding one's sexual identity makes it very hard for an LGBT teen to recognize his strengths (Drescher,

2004, p. 2). This can be in part because, "dissociation's impact on self-esteem can also make it difficult to feel one's actual accomplishments as reflections of one's own abilities" (Drescher, 2004, p. 2). In order to utilize this quote to support this paper's argument, it is necessary to understand the meaning and context of dissociation in this text. Therefore, dissociation is, "separating one's sexual identity from the rest of one's persona" (Drescher, 2004, p. 1-2). Thus, dissociation is a major component in the issue of closeted LGBT teens experiencing difficulties in evaluating their own strengths. Dissociation, for these teens, creates difficulties in recognizing accomplishments that came about as a result of their own abilities, and negatively impacts their self-esteem. This is problematic because self-esteem is a vital factor in the ability to succeed academically and the willingness to work hard to achieve academic goals.

It is critical to fully address the importance of self-esteem and self-efficacy, and the reasons why they are relevant to the argument presented in this paper. In order to address both self-esteem and self-efficacy, Drescher's article, as well as Judit Szente's article, "Empowering Young Children for Success in School and in Life," will be drawn from. In her article, Szente explores how self-esteem, self-efficacy (self-worth), and goal setting can help children become empowered to achieve academic success, as well as success later in life. Szente describes self-esteem as, "a construct which includes (as cited in Gresham, Elliott, and Evans-Fernandez, 1993) 'self-evaluation of competence in certain domains of functioning (e.g., academic, social, or vocational success),'" and self-efficacy as "how confident individuals are in their ability to perform certain tasks" (Szente, 2007, p. 450). When discussing the importance of self-efficacy and self-esteem she says, "people with high self-esteem [are] 'less troubled by fears and ambivalence'" and "children with high self-efficacy tend to persist at tasks longer, are more motivated, and tend to work harder to achieve their goals" (Szente, 2007, p. 450). Self-esteem and self-efficacy are being addressed together because they often operate interdependently. Therefore, the idea that people with high self-esteem and self-efficacy are less fearful and uncertain, tend to have greater persistence and motivation, and work harder is somewhat troublesome when considered in terms of closeted LGBT teens. LGBT teens have been found to try to disassociate their sexual identity from that which they perceive to be acceptable in the eyes of the public. In his article, Drescher describes dissociation as "tuning out the background noise on a busy street" (Drescher, 2004, p. 2). Through disassociation, LGBT teens often "tune out" aspects of them-

selves that are key to their personal identity. Because of this, LGBT teens' self-esteem, self-efficacy, strengths, and value of their accomplishments can become muddled, and even lost, because they dismiss the importance of key aspects of their overall identity. They may also become engulfed by fear and uncertainty, not only regarding their sexual identity, but also regarding their stance and abilities in an academic setting, as dissociation and remaining closeted fosters low self-efficacy. This can lead to being less persistent, motivated, and hardworking (which, undoubtedly, will lead to a decrease in academic success). Therefore, it would be more beneficial for LGBT teens to come out and embrace their sexual identity (despite possible negative reactions that may result) because it fosters the development of higher levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy.

For most people, coming out is more helpful in achieving academic success and success in the future because it promotes self-acceptance and also the acceptance of oneself by others. However, for some, coming out may not be a feasible option. In her article, "Out or in…? Which is It?: The Question of Coming Out in the Heteronormative and Homophobic World of Education," Barbra A. Johnson explores the difficulties of LGBT educators in deciding if and when they should disclose their sexual identity. She writes that, "Exposing one's sexual identity to students can have serious negative effects on one's teaching experience and one's personal life…the cost of coming out may include being fired" (Johnson, 2012, p. 35-36). While this article is not explicitly linked to the discussion of LGBT teens and their academic success, the overall messages conveyed throughout this article can be used to highlight ideas that are applicable to the present topic. LGBT teachers can be, and in some cases, have been fired because of the disclosure of their sexuality to their students. For example, "a young student teacher, Seth Stambaugh, was removed from his elementary teaching placement in Oregon because when a student asked if he was married, he alluded to being gay" (Johnson, 2012, p. 38). Stambaugh was removed from his position because of his allusion to his homosexuality and because of a lack of tolerance and acceptance of the LGBT community in his school. This type of reaction from employers is not uncommon. Therefore, many LGBT teachers choose not to express their sexuality to others in their workplace due to fear of getting fired. Those that "do choose to reveal their true identity to a principal, for example …are often met with a plea to remain closeted to their students" (Johnson, 2012, p. 38). Therefore, for some people, coming out of the closet may not always be the best or most viable option because

of the negative reaction they may face due to the expression of their sexuality. However, despite the social ramifications of coming out, disclosing one's sexuality to others is more beneficial than hiding it because it gives LGBT people the ability to act autonomously in their relational endeavors and in their day-to-day interactions with those around them.

While the case shown in Johnson's article needs to be considered, and by no means overlooked, coming out is more beneficial to LGBT teens, despite the initial negative implications that may arise, because exposure of one's sexuality promotes the ability to act freely. Drescher's article highlights an example of how Ryan and Deci's SDT ties into the process of coming out, and supports the claim that coming out is more beneficial than remaining closeted. In his article, Drescher says that, "a fear of rejection often plays a significant role in a gay person's decision about who to tell or whether to come out" (Drescher, 2004, p. 2). In this case, the fear of being rejected by family, friends, co-workers, etc., is an outside force that would restrict the ability of an LGBT teen to engage in self-determined acts. Ryan and Deci distinguish self-determined acts as "those reflecting one's will, from other forms of striving or motivation" (Ryan & Deci, 2006, p. 1560). In other words, a self-determined act is one that is completed because of one's own will, and is not influenced by outside factors. The reason fear of rejection acts as an external force is because a violation of the ability to complete self-determined acts implies there is a breach of an LGBT teen's ability to act autonomously. This is important to this paper's argument (that remaining closeted negatively affects academic success, thus, LGBT teens would benefit more from coming out) because, "When autonomous motivation…is undermined, there are well-documented costs in terms of performance, especially when it requires flexible, heuristic, creative, or complex capacities" (Ryan & Deci, 2004, p. 1564). To put it simply, if autonomy is undermined, it is found to have negative costs in terms of performance when the performance requires any type of creative or innovative ability. This is troublesome because a great deal of student achievement is being able to "respond to initial obstacles by remaining involved, trying new strategies, and using all the resources at their disposal for learning" (Dweck, 2006, p. 17). Since academic performance is heavily reliant on all of the capacities mentioned by Ryan and Deci, the ability to achieve academic success would suffer costs (e.g. decreased GPA, lack of desire to come to school, etc.) due to the inability to act autonomously.

While it has been argued that LGBT teens should come out because of the negative implications that remaining closeted may have, it is necessary to recognize that coming out is often an option that LGBT teens, and LGBT people in general, do not consider viable. The actual expression of one's sexual identity is what causes someone to receive negative reactions from others around him. Oftentimes, the negative backlash that is experienced falls under the category of bullying. In "The Intensity of Victimization: Associations with Children's Psychosocial Well-Being and Social Standing in the Classroom," Rozemarijn van der Ploeg, Christian Steglich, Christina Salmivalli, and René Veenstra describe bullying as, "repetitive and intentional behavior against a victim who finds it difficult to defend himself or herself" (Ploeg, Steglich, Salmivalli, & Veenstra, 2015, p. 1). In other words, bullying is a very broad term used to describe any negative interaction (both verbal and physical) that involves a vulnerable victim. Even on the opposing side of this paper's argument, it is still possible and, in fact, useful to show that Ryan and Deci's SDT can be applied to bullying. In this context, bullying would be considered an extrinsic factor that would undermine an LGBT teen's desire or ability to act autonomously. That bullying can act as a reason to suppress autonomous actions for an LGBT teen (e.g. expressing his inner thoughts, needs, and desires, or bringing his significant other to a school/social function, etc.) is something that is supported by Ryan and Deci's SDT. As such, Ryan and Deci state that, "people often feel they cannot be autonomous. Social controls, evaluative pressures, rewards, and punishments can powerfully constrain or entrain behavior" (Ryan & Deci, 2006, p. 1566). In this context, bullying could be considered an evaluative pressure that constrains the behavior of LGBT teens, and may lead a teen to keep their sexuality closeted (or hidden) from others or even themselves.

In order to thoroughly examine the opposing side of this paper's argument, it is key to explore how bullying affects academic success. According to Hall, "LGBT students who frequently experienced harassment had GPAs that were about 10% lower than those who did not" (Hall, 2007, p. 7). This is one of countless statistics that support the claim that coming out negatively impacts academic success. Many people fail to realize how powerful their words and actions truly are, and how offensive derogatory terms can be, even when used "as a joke." A study of verbal

harassment through the use of homophobic language in North Carolina schools found that, "Pejorative terms based on sexual orientation such as 'faggot' and 'dyke' were heard frequently or often by almost two-thirds (64%) of students. The expression 'that's so gay' or 'you're so gay' used in a derogatory manner was heard frequently or often by 69% of students" (Hall, 2007, p. 5). The continuous verbal harassment, whether intentional or not, experienced by LGBT teens is a major contributor to their lower GPAs. It was found that, "as a consequence of being harassed and feeling unsafe at school, LGBT students often skip school, perform poorly, or drop out" (Hall, 2007, p. 7). All three circumstances ultimately result in LGBT teens' inability to perform to the best of their academic abilities and, thus, negatively impacts their ability to succeed academically.

To further explore the very real outcomes of bullying, the case of Tyler Clementi should be examined, as it is extremely relevant to this paper's argument. Tyler Clementi was an eighteen-year-old freshman at Rutgers University. He committed suicide in September of 2010 after finding out that, "his roommate had secretly used a webcam to stream Mr. Clementi's romantic interlude with another man over the Internet" ("Tyler Clementi," 2012). The harassment and bullying that he encountered both before and after this event led to his decision to take his life. Despite the fact that he could have sought help from friends, family, counselors, or even the police, Tyler felt that the weight of this exposure was too much to endure. Prominent figures such as Ellen DeGeneres and President Barack Obama spoke about this tragedy, and the Rutgers community lost the opportunity to watch one of its students achieve amazing feats both academically and in the working world. His identification as a gay man brought him negative attention, harassment, and bullying from the beginning, and it, heartbreakingly, caused him to take his life in the end. Mr. Clementi's story acts as an example of how harmful bullying can be for an LGBT teen. However, despite this, there are many different ways to cope with bullying and harassment, and the fear of being bullied and harassed should never force an LGBT teen to remain closeted. Even with the possibility of bullying and harassment, it is more beneficial for LGBT teens to come out and embrace their sexuality rather than hide it because, by coming out, LGBT teens, or people in general, will feel the burden of evasion (of one's sexual identity) lifted (Adams, 2008, p. 143).

I do not want to dismiss the very real concern that LGBT teens have when deciding to come out. However, it should be made clear that the negative effects of remaining closeted can affect a person long after

the years of being bullied in school, and that coming out is the more beneficial decision for LGBT teens to make in order to ensure the greatest possible chance for academic and later success. In an article, "Staying in the Closet Versus Coming Out: Relationships Between Communication About Sexual Orientation and Work Attitudes," Nancy E. Day and Patricia Schoenrade conducted a study that investigated the relationship between the amount of knowledge shared about sexual orientation and how that affected attitudes in the workplace. Despite having difficulties in creating a sample of representatives to conduct the study, they "obtained the mailing list of the Human Rights Project (HRP), a Kansas City-based organization that promotes gay and lesbian rights" and sent out questionnaires that "concern[ed] their [subjects'] sexual orientation and, if they were homosexual, the extent to which they communicated their sexual orientation to coworkers" (Day & Schoenrade, 1997, p. 151-152). The results of their study showed that, "more open workers are more effectively committed to the organization, have higher job satisfaction, perceive that top management is more supportive of their rights, have lower role ambiguity and role conflict, and less conflict between work and home" (Day & Schoenrade, 1997, p. 159). While the context for their study is in the workplace, and the context for this paper is in an academic setting, the results of their study are applicable to and support this paper's argument. Their findings suggest that LGBT teens who express their sexual identity will have higher satisfaction in their environment (their school), feel that top management are more supportive of them (teachers, administrators, faculty members, etc.), and have more clarity as to where they stand in comparison to the rest of their peers, and the purpose they serve as a student. These results may be, in part, because of perceived inequity in the quality of treatment of LGBT people. It has been found that:

> workers will respond to perceived inequity by adjusting job performance accordingly. The closeted homosexual employee is, presumably, concerned in part about possible inequities associated with identification of her or his sexual orientation. Because open homosexual workers have been reported to have 'tested the waters' regarding fair treatment in their organizations before 'coming out', we [Day and Schoenrade] would expect them to experience more positive attitudes." (Day & Schoenrade, 1997, p. 149)

This excerpt explains the reason why Day and Schoenrade's study concluded by saying that workers who were out experienced a more positive

working environment; the preconceived notion that LGBT people will be treated differently is enough to change their experience in the work environment or school setting. In this study, it was found that LGBT workers would adjust their job performance in order to avoid inequity, and they would "test the waters" before coming out because they feared they would experience inequity in the workplace. Therefore, when and if an LGBT worker does come out, they will no longer fear inequity because they will either be accepted, or face discrimination from co-workers. Even if faced with inequity, the LGBT worker will not be constantly asking himself "what if" questions regarding his sexual identity and will be able to make strides toward improving the situation. However, as stated above, most out workers experience a more positive work environment, and it is evident that reduced fear of being treated unjustly or differently from others has a direct correlation with a positive outcome. Therefore, the comparison of workers to LGBT teens in a school environment is appropriate because the similarities between a workplace and a school setting (e.g. hierarchical structure, communication among peers or co-workers, working in groups, etc.) allow for the application of the ideas of Day and Schoenrade's study to the context of teens in the educational system. From Day and Schoenrade's findings, it can also be concluded that LGBT teens that express their sexuality will experience a more positive school environment which, in turn, nurtures the ability to achieve greater academic success.

It is now critical to address how Ryan and Deci's SDT ties into the results of Day and Schoenrade's study. The results of their study can be linked to the ability of LGBT workers to act autonomously. In their article, Ryan and Deci say that, "Support for autonomy facilitates attachment, intimacy, and the outcomes associated with them…greater autonomy for being in a relationship was associated with greater satisfaction, relationship stability, and well-being for both partners" (Ryan & Deci, 2006, p. 1564). While Ryan and Deci are discussing relationships here, (presumably romantic ones), this theory can still apply to why LGBT workers who shared their sexuality in the workplace experienced a more positive experience than those who did not. Therefore, acting autonomously (expressing one's sexual identity) will lead to greater attachment and intimacy, which fosters greater satisfaction, relationship stability, and well-being for those involved in the relationship. In the context of Day and Schoenrade's article, the relationship might be between two workers, a worker and a manager, etc. In the context of this paper's argument, the relationship

might be between two students, a student and a teacher, etc. By increasing the overall well-being of the relationships among those in the same environment (either a work environment or school environment), there will be greater ability to succeed in that environment. Being able to act autonomously in terms of expressing one's true identity facilitates the eventual acceptance of one's true self by others. Therefore, despite the possible negative outcomes associated with coming out, expressing one's sexual identity is still the more beneficial choice when it comes to ensuring academic success and the ability to succeed in the future.

LAWS CONCERNING LGBT PEOPLE

There are many laws, regulations, and policies that are in place to help protect LGBT teens from situations like being bullied, harassed, or experiencing discrimination. In his article, "Harassment, Bullying, & Discrimination of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Students: Legal Issues for North Carolina Schools," Will Hall describes different legal documents that are in place to protect LGBT students. For example, he writes about Title IX, which is a:

> federal statute related to harassment and discrimination of LGBT students [and is part of the Education Amendments of 1972]. Title IX prohibits sexual harassment directed at an LGBT student and harassment based on a student's failure to conform to sex stereotypes... [and] requires school administrators to intervene and rectify any harassment "of a sexual nature" directed at an LGBT student that is severe enough to prevent the student's access to, or enjoyment of, a school program, which includes all of the academic, education, extracurricular, athletic, and other programs of the school. (Hall, 2007, p. 9)

This statute was put in place to help protect and prevent LGBT students from being harassed, bullied, and abused. Also, it puts the responsibility of protecting LGBT teens into the hands of school leaders (teachers, faculty, administrators, etc.) which is good because many LGBT teens are afraid to stand up and speak for themselves. Laws such as this are put in place to ensure that LGBT teens have a school environment that promotes academic growth and success, and provides the student with feelings of safety and comfort. Research has shown that, "29% of LGBT students missed at least one day of school in the past month due to feeling unsafe" (Hall, 2007, p. 7). This research confirms the negative impact that harass-

ment can have on an LGBT teen's perception of school (and consequently the negative impact on their academic performance), and only helps to validate the need for laws that help to protect the LGBT community.

While the enforcement of laws designed to protect LGBT teens may, in fact, help decrease the amount of bullying in schools, it does not guarantee that bullying and harassment of LGBT teens will disappear entirely. In his article, Hall also discusses the current climate of harassment, bullying, and discrimination of and against LGBT teens. He talks about a study which found that, "84% of LGBT youth experienced some form of harassment at school" and that, "over half of LGBT students reported having property such as cars, clothing, or books stolen or deliberately damaged…39% of LGBT students reported experiencing physical harassment…and 17% reported experiencing physical assaults…at school" (Hall, 2007, p. 5). While the policies he talks about in his article are created with the intention to stop bullying, it is evident that, even with laws in place, bullying and harassment of LGBT teens still exists in schools. There are many possibilities as to why, even with laws in place, LGBT teens still experience a high volume of bullying and harassment. A significant reason may be that many LGBT teens remain closeted to the parents, adults, and authorities in their lives; thus, they do not turn to them for help out of fear of being rejected because of their sexuality. Another possible reason may be that there are often people in authority (parents, teachers, school administrators, etc.) who have homophobic tendencies. This is supported by a study Hall writes about in his article which found that, "80% of prospective teachers held negative feelings towards gays and lesbians, and one-third of these prospective teachers demonstrated highly homophobic attitudes" (Hall, 2007, p. 6). Despite the fact that laws regarding the well-being of LGBT teens may not be strictly enforced, the most important information from this section of this paper is that there are, indeed, laws in place to protect LGBT teens and the LGBT community at large. The laws ought to be more strictly enforced by government officials in the future in order to make it easier, safer, and more comfortable for LGBT teens to come out.

CONCLUSION

Upon researching the effects being closeted or coming out can have on the success of LGBT teens, many sources suggest that coming out engenders substantial repercussions, such as bullying, harassment,

and discrimination, that can have a huge impact on academic success. However, after further research, it has been found that remaining closeted creates an extreme deficiency in self-esteem and self-efficacy, and also creates a disconnection between an LGBT teen and his true sexual identity. Because of this, it is more beneficial for an LGBT teen to come out and embrace his sexual identity despite the possible negative repercussions that may arise. Through the application of Ryan and Deci's SDT to the subject of sexuality, it has been concluded that LGBT teens experience many different external factors (e.g. the fear of being rejected) that often prevent them from feeling like they can act autonomously. This creates an inability to achieve maximum academic success because autonomous actions and self-determined acts are two key factors to becoming successful and completing one's goals. In order to eliminate some of the discrimination, harassment, bullying, and overall fear experienced by LGBT teens, the government should utilize and enforce laws that are in place (such as Title IX) by addressing cases of discrimination and harassment immediately and with the utmost concern for the victim. Of course, there is still the problem that some LGBT teens may not report the discrimination they experience. A possible way to bring attention to the discrimination and harassment that takes place is to train those in power (in the context of this paper, teachers, principals, administrators, etc.) to be more observant of students' behaviors, interactions, and relationships in the classroom and in the halls in order to report cases of discrimination that LGBT teens themselves may be too afraid to expose. Above all, I hope the reader of this paper will walk away more knowledgeable about the struggles and difficulties that LGBT teens, and LGBT people in general, face when confronted with the choice of whether or not to come out. Also, despite the possible negative consequences associated with coming out (bullying, harassment, discrimination, etc.), I argue that coming out is more beneficial to one's overall ability to succeed in an academic setting and to succeed later in life.

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Energy Drinks: Alcohol for the Youth?

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By MARQUES JULES

ABSTRACT

The research of this paper engages in a multi-layered study of energy drinks with respect to their ingredients, main consumers, and relationship to alcohol. The paper looks into the many components of energy drinks and the individual effects that they have on the body. After examining the main individual components of energy drinks, I look at the topic from a macro scale by examining the dangers of consuming energy drinks, considering the effects of the individual ingredients. The information and real life accounts collected challenge the common belief that energy drinks are extremely harmful to the body. However, as with many things, the danger is evident when consumed in excess. Through the examination of case studies, I make a connection between excess consumption and the main dangers associated with this act, which are dangerous cardiac events. Despite these facts, I examine various marketing tactics targeted towards explaining the reason why excess consumption of energy drinks continues to be an issue. All of these points converge and serve as a strong comparison with the excess consumption of alcohol, which provides a framework with which to apply methods of regulation to curb excess energy drink consumption.

INTRODUCTION

Among adolescents and young adults, there has been a growing desire to gain more focus, alertness, and competitive leverage. In order to accomplish this, many individuals within these age groups have turned to consuming energy drinks. It is for this reason that energy beverages are "targeted primarily toward young men and openly promoting psychoactive, performance-enhancing, and stimulatory effects" (Higgins, Higgins, and Tuttle 1033). However, with an increasing number of fatal cardiac events associated with excessive energy drink consumption, there are still many question marks that loom over the idea of energy drinks being readily available in the same way that sports drinks are. Relatively unknown ingredients such as guarana, taurine, and glucuronolactone cause concern for the general public. Questions regarding the ingredients and level of caffeine present in these drinks ultimately lead to the following questions: are energy drinks dangerous, and if so, what makes

them dangerous? More importantly, should energy drinks be viewed in the same light as alcohol? My goal is to review the underlying dangers that are associated with the consumption and overconsumption of energy beverages on adolescents and young adults. In order to do this, I will examine some of the marketing tactics used by energy drink companies and the similarities energy drinks have to alcoholic beverages.

IMPORTANT COMPONENTS

Energy drinks have rapidly become one of the most popular beverages among teenagers and young adults over the last few years, and their components have become a divisive topic of discussion, especially in America. Red Bull, one of the most popular brands of energy drinks, "was introduced in Austria in 1987 and in the United States in 1997. Since then, the energy beverage (EB) market has grown exponentially" (Higgins et al. 1033); this is evident in the increasing number of companies that have now entered the energy beverage arena since 1987, which, as a result, affects how the drinks themselves are marketed. Every company wants their target consumers to know that their energy drink will not only give them more energy but aid in their concentration, alertness, and perhaps even their athletic performance. While the reason behind why certain individuals might want to consume energy beverages seems understandable, there is one big question that remains: what exactly is in these popular energy drinks? Not only is it important to look at each of the popularly used energy drinks in detail in terms of what positive or negative effects they can cause to the body, but it is just as important to note the interaction between those ingredients and how they affect the human body. Through the examination of these ingredients, we can gain a better understanding of exactly how dangerous these beverages are.

CAFFEINE

Caffeine "has been used since ancient times as a mild stimulant psychoactive drug and belongs together with alcohol and tobacco as the most common legal addictive substance" (Rudolph and Knudsen 521). This ingredient is consistently the most popular and most well known across the large variety of energy drinks on the market today, such as coffee, tea, and soft drinks. Due to this, a complete and in-depth understanding of how caffeine can affect the body is vital in coming to the conclusion regarding whether energy drinks are safe to consume. Caffeine is

a substance that is present in a variety of beverages such as coffee, tea, and soft drinks. According to Kevin A. Clauson, Kelly M. Shields, Cydney E. McQueen, and Nikki Persad, "[c]affeine has many physiologic effects, including stimulation of the central nervous system, heart, and skeletal muscles and possibly the pressor centers that control blood pressure" (56). This substance has also been associated with causing jitters and providing increased energy, providing the extra boost that these beverage companies want to provide for their energy-seeking demographic.

OTHER IMPORTANT INGREDIENTS

While caffeine may be the most important and abundant ingredient found in energy drinks today, ingredients such as taurine and guarana—as well as their effects—are relatively unknown to the general public. With regard to taurine, Higgins states that this is an amino acid that "is the most abundant intracellular amino acid in humans and a normal constituent of the human diet" while also presenting that "some evidence show[s] the ability to improve exercise capacity and performance" (1036). Based on these findings, there is reason to believe that this ingredient can in fact produce a great benefit to the human body. Ginseng "is purported to increase energy, relieve stress, and increase memory," sharing the same effect as taurine (Higgins et al. 1037). It is important to note that the examination done on these two ingredients has not been as extensive as caffeine, but the studies that have been conducted have shown some sort of link between this ingredient and increased bodily functions.

RATIONALE BEHIND CONSUMPTION

A topic that many people are becoming increasingly interested in concerns why so many teenagers and young adults seek to consume energy beverages. One reason for this may be a deficiency in the amount of sleep that these individuals are receiving, thus driving them to gain a source of energy elsewhere. However, is this true? In a questionnaire study of college students noted by Nancy J. Wesensten, she states, "respondents reported sleeping an average of 6.71 hours per night on weekdays and 8.30 hours per night on weekends (weekly average, 7.16 h)" (79). From taking a look at these numbers, one can conclude that overall, there is not much of a deficiency, or 'sleep debt,' among college students. The answer may be found by looking at the activities that the target consumers participate in. The article led by Kevin A. Clauson provides some insight into this

by stating: "One study of energy drinks found that glucose and caffeine together can enhance behavioral performance during demanding tasks requiring selective attention" (57). Demanding tasks such as testing and strenuous physical activity may call for this group to try to gain some sort of advantage through the process of consuming caffeine to enhance their performance.

The benefits that caffeine provides in energy drinks, which include "increased alertness, improved memory, and enhanced mood," are what young adults and adolescents are seeking (Alusnni and Badar 3). On the other hand, it is important to understand whether the levels at which they are each present within these energy drinks are safe for consumption. With the rising number of cardiac fatalities occurring as a result of drinking energy drinks, great concern has been centered around this issue. In 2011, a fourteen-year-old girl consumed two 24 oz. cans of Monster energy drink, which contained a total of 480 mg of caffeine (TODAY health, 2012). This high level of consumption within a short period of time sent her into cardiac arrest and eventually led to her death. Another instance in 2013 showed a nineteen-year-old drinking two Monster energy drinks in a twenty-four-hour period in addition to having at least two cans a day for the previous three years (Bouckley, 2013). He died twenty-four hours after consuming those cans of Monster energy drink in twenty-four hours. Because of these events, many are wondering if the levels of ingredients in a can (one serving) of an energy drink can be considered deadly. Throughout my research on energy drinks and their content, I have come across one extremely consistent answer to this concern, and the answer is a resounding no.

The levels at which the ingredients of energy drinks are found cannot produce any negative effect to the human body when consumed. The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have set guidelines in terms of healthy consumption of nutrients, vitamins, minerals, and the like. These guidelines are known as Recommended Daily Values (RDV). They are limits that are set by the FDA and if any individual exceeds them, they would be putting their life in danger, or risking suffering from toxicity. Of the ingredients popularly utilized in energy drinks (more specifically the ingredients that were highlighted previously), none of them exceeded the RDV for their respective ingredient. With regard to caffeine, Wesensten states, "The FDA lists 400 mg per day as the 'amount not generally associated with dangerous, negative effects'" (81). It would be surprising to many to note that the amount of caffeine included on

average in energy drinks is around 160 mg per serving, which is on par with the amount of caffeine in a cup of coffee. Despite the limit of 400 mg placed by the FDA, Higgins et al. state, "Adverse effects typically manifest with ingestion higher than 200 mg of caffeine and include insomnia, nervousness, headache, tachycardia, arrhythmia, and nausea" (1034). In comparison to cardiac fatalities, nervousness and headaches are relatively less serious. However, this level would imply that an individual would have to drink more than one energy drink in order to experience some sort of negative side effect as a result of consuming the drink. For taurine and ginseng, the same study found that the levels present in the popular energy beverages were, "far below the amounts expected to deliver either therapeutic benefits or adverse events" (Higgins, Higgins, and Tuttle 1037). What conclusion can be made from these findings? It is certain that there is not an excess amount of a particular ingredient that would cause an individual consuming an energy drink to "overdose." However, the danger does lie in the overconsumption of energy drinks. As stated earlier, the safe level of daily consumption set by the FDA is 400 mg. The only way to exceed this number is to consciously consume in excess of what is recommended. How is the target consumer affected by marketing tactics that ultimately put them at risk for overconsumption?

MARKETING

As noted in the introduction, the issue with energy drinks is not necessarily the amount of caffeine that is present in one can. Instead, there are two large concerns that revolve around the aggressive marketing tactics of energy drink companies. One concern regards the way in which these companies are aiming directly towards an adolescent's perceived notion that they are in need of caffeine in order to gain that edge. "[E]nergy drink brands placed many of their television advertisements on networks watched disproportionately more often by youth under the age of 18 than by adults" (Harris and Munsell 248-249). This extremely direct way of marketing allows an uninterrupted line of communication to their target consumer to make their beverage sound more appealing. Another issue associated with the marketing of energy beverages is the fact that there is no system in place to confirm the benefits that EB (energy beverage) companies state their particular energy beverage can provide a consumer. Despite promising increased energy and cognitive performance, "Companies generally are not required to substantiate these claims with the FDA"

(Harris and Munsell 249). Therefore, the positive benefits that consumers believe they will receive when drinking their favorite energy beverage may be a little exaggerated. While many can argue that the positive effects presented by companies can easily be exaggerated due to the lack of oversight of these statements, it is important to note that the negative effects could also be greatly overstated, taking into account the safe levels of ingredients found in one serving. The marketing strategies implemented provide consumers with a sense of constant superior performance and invincibility, and with the consumers' desire to maintain this level, this particular strategy can also be considered as a contributing factor to the abuse and overconsumption of energy beverages.

Just like alcohol, the main issue does not lie in consuming the beverage on occasion. Rather, a true issue arises when the alcoholic beverage, or an energy beverage, is consumed in excess. This is especially concerning when that beverage is consumed within a very short period of time. With the current form of marketing present, the intended benefit for energy drinks has shifted from a drink that will just give you an edge. Moreover, it has caused adolescents to drink these beverages in order to maintain the level of alertness that they so desire. These adolescents "are explicitly targeted at extreme sports events . . . where energy drink sponsorships fuel a belief in the invincibility and stamina of the average energy drink consumer" (O'Brien, McCoy, Rhodes, Wagoner, and Wolfson 454). These effects begin to act as an addictive feeling of sorts for young adults and adolescents, and in order to maintain that level of energy, they choose to drink more energy drinks. This leads to the overconsumption of caffeine—the most abundant ingredient found in energy drinks—and can lead to fatal consequences for the human body.

ALCOHOLIC ASSOCIATION

The major similarities concerning the consumption of both energy beverages and alcohol clearly show that these two beverages should not be treated any differently from one another. The properties that compose energy drinks and alcoholic beverages, such as beer, are very different. While caffeine serves as a stimulant for the human body, alcoholic beverages serve as a depressant that can slow down the CNS (central nervous system). Despite the fact that their effects on the human body are on opposite sides of the spectrum, both beverages become very dangerous if consumed in excess. Babu et al. notes, "Despite its large thera-

peutic window, massive overdoses of caffeine may result in life-threatening toxicity" (38). Similar to energy beverages, when alcohol is consumed in large quantities it can have an extremely negative effect on the central nervous system—and more importantly, on cognitive function. Energy drinks can cause some mild short-term effects such as jitters, and even the inability to stay asleep for a long period of time. Despite this, long-term fatal effects only arise when the consumption of the caffeine in the energy beverage becomes excessive, or above the RDV (recommended daily value) of 400 mg per day. Alcohol can also cause mild short-term effects that include decreased motor skills and dizziness. Long-term fatal effects only come into play with the overconsumption of the beverage. There are many restrictions in place regarding the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages, one of them being an age limit in the United States restricting individuals under 21 years of age from both purchasing or drinking alcoholic beverages. What is the reason for this? While it is widely accepted that young individuals below this age are not yet mature enough to function responsibly due to the impairment that alcohol can cause the body, this may also have to do with the fact that their tolerance level is also much lower. This means that a smaller amount of alcohol in the system of an individual below the age of 21 can cause quicker intoxication and put their lives in danger. Just like alcoholic beverages, energy drinks contain levels of caffeine that will affect younger consumers more quickly than older consumers. While excess alcohol consumption can cause fatal intoxication, excess caffeine consumption can indeed cause fatal cardiac events, which is why the regulation of these beverages is necessary.

A GROWING TREND

Serving as a bridge between energy drinks and alcoholic beverages, there is a new trend that has recently been sweeping the nation, which is the combination of these two drinks. According to Higgins et al., "EB (energy beverage) consumption has been shown to be positively associated with high-risk behavior, including. . . drinking, problems stemming from alcohol abuse" (1033). This has proven to be true considering the increasing number of adolescents and young adults using this method of consumption. It is for this reason that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) decided to take action against this dangerous practice, stating that, "caffeinated alcoholic beverages presented a public health concern

and that adding caffeine to malt alcoholic beverages was an 'unsafe food additive'" (Patrick and Maggs 455).

One may ask, what would be the reason for adolescents to create this extremely dangerous concoction of beverages? With regard to close examination of a completed study, Sionaldo Eduardo Ferreira et al. states, "After the combined ingestion of an alcohol and energy drink, volunteers reported fewer sensations of intoxication…. This might be due to a possible reduction in the depressant effects of alcohol" (603). With energy drinks serving as a stimulant and alcohol serving as a depressant, the simultaneous consumption of these beverages poses a whole new danger to society, especially among adolescents who are prone to high-risk behavior with increased energy drink consumption. With the presence of an energy beverage, the individual does not realize their level of intoxication despite the fact that they are intoxicated. By reducing the effects of alcohol, energy beverages might very well cause an individual to drink and intoxicate themselves to a fatal level. However, in referring to experimental conclusions, Joris C. Verster, Chris Aufricht, and Chris Alford state that "when looking at the group that combined energy drinks with alcohol, it was shown that on occasions when they did mix alcohol and energy drinks they consumed significantly less alcohol" (194). While this may seem to contradict the argument that individuals who consume energy drinks are prone to riskier behavior—in this case, drinking a large amount of alcohol—the authors must take into account a big portion of the consumer market for energy drinks, who happen to be adolescents. Most likely due to prior drinking experience, young adults have a better understanding of their "limit" despite not being able to feel the full effects of intoxication as a result of mixing the energy drink. This is a luxury that young adolescents that have not yet had much drinking experience do not possess, and the addition of energy drinks thus poses a great danger to their health.

CONCLUSION

Caffeine is an ingredient that is found in a variety of beverages today such as coffee, soft drinks, and tea. Its presence in energy drinks is well known, and the research on these drinks and the other ingredients found in them is constantly evolving. However, the uncertainty paired with the known negative effects of the overconsumption of energy drinks is too great to not be regulated. Due to this lack of regulation, younger

consumers have taken power into their own hands by responding to the aggressive marketing tactics of energy drink companies and consuming the drinks that will give them the "edge" and "energy" they desire. However, the dangers these beverages pose are no different than that of alcohol, and the fatal events that have occurred as a result of excessive consumption are a testament to this. Safe consumption of energy drinks that stay below the safe intake of caffeine is not the problem. The research that I have conducted and the studies that have focused on energy drinks have proven that energy drinks are safe to drink in moderation due to the fact that all of the ingredients found in one serving are all below the level set by the FDA as safe to consume. The problem lies with the overconsumption of the beverage; the marketing of constant physical and mental focus as well as superiority encourages excess consumption. An age limit to both purchase and consume energy drinks might be an effective solution to this problem. As a result of this, the consumption of these energy drinks—which can also lead to more dangerous activity—will decrease. When the dangers of the overconsumption of alcohol were made clear, a concerted effort was made to protect people from harming themselves. It is time that the same action is taken for energy drinks. The first step to take when confronting a problem is education. However, there are still many unknowns about energy drinks and their effect on the human body. There are ingredients that companies place into their "energy blend" that still need to undergo further research in determining their impact on the body alone, as well as their interaction with other ingredients within the beverage. While energy drinks are still considered to be a relatively new beverage, the dangers are still present, and precautionary efforts must be taken in order to protect the young adults that typically consume this beverage. In following the precedent set by the management of alcoholic beverages, many lives could be saved through the regulation of energy drinks.

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Queer-coded Villains (And Why You Should Care)

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By KOEUN KIM

ABSTRACT

This paper looks into the historic and persisting characterization of villains with stereotypes often associated with homosexuality, a concept known as queer coding. This paper aims to answer the questions of why this practice exists; why it has been so prevalent, extending from early stage to modern media; and why it is harmful to both homosexual and heterosexual audiences alike. To answer these questions, this paper looks at the history of the relation between homosexuality and villainy in the early media as well as the circumstances behind the rise of the stock character "sissy" on stage. Examples of queer-coded villains and the methods used to code them are explored as well.

INTRODUCTION

The first place that young children come across people who look and act differently from themselves is often on a screen. Television sets and movie theaters are hubs for worlds unlike your own, an anthropological delving into mindsets and lifestyles that don't align with only one kind of person's. Most viewers can flip through channels and find stories that reflect or relate to their own stories. However, one issue the media has always had is in the stories of LGBT characters. The inclusion of LGBT characters in media today is still quite new, and although many characters fall into the same tired stereotypes and behaviors, there are also many characters that represent a more realistic idea of queer people. However, something that is incredibly hard to miss is queer-coded characters – characters that are not *explicitly* stated as homosexual but display stereotypical behaviors and traits consistent with those of queer communities. It's also hard to miss that these queer-coded characters are almost always villains. Television continues to queer code villains through stereotypical depictions of traits and behaviors in order to reinforce traditional gender roles and to equate deviancy with villainy.

To better understand this conclusion that answers *why* traditional media queer codes, and to understand why we should care, one needs to understand the "who, what, when, and how" of this phenomenon. *Who* are these queer villains, *what* is queer coding, *when* did queer coding begin, and *how* are characters coded queer become the necessary in-

formation to understand the *why*. Traditional media – and television in particular – continues to queer code in order to reinforce gender roles. Delving into the Hayes code will describe the *when*, whereas taking an introspective look into the traits that constitute a queer-coded character using examples from Disney movies will describe to us the *how*. Exploring the history behind queer coding as it began on stage and the effects of the homosexual ban on the early days of film will help answer the what of our question. The who is hard to pin down to one source, being as there are plenty of examples of queer-coded characters on television, but this paper will use episodes from a popular children's show, *The Powerpuff Girls*, delving into the most devious villain of the series, Him.

THE WHAT – WHAT IS QUEER CODING?

This idea of the "celluloid closet" where characters are not explicitly stated as gay but "coded" gay has been around since the early days of stage. To be coded gay is to be implicated as having or displaying stereotypes and behaviors that are associated (even if inaccurate) with homosexuality or queerness (*The Celluloid Closet*). An important movement in entertainment was the Fin-De-Siecle Drama of the 1890s. Around this time, talking about sexual deviance and perversion was considered taboo, and as homosexuality was considered both, it was never stated outright. However, the belief at the time was that

> [Homosexuals] differed from such familiar social misfits as alcoholics and morphine addicts in that their deviation was not necessarily a ganglion of actions, often environmentally or hereditarily determined, but was seen as the result of their fundamental nature. They and their abnormality might therefore be identified by any number of behavioral traits and outward manifestations, even when they were not engaged in hysterical or homosexual activities. (Senelick 202)

This means that the prevailing belief was that homosexuals could be detected beyond noticing whom they slept with, simply through their nature, behavior, and dress. Despite being rooted in stereotypes, the understanding at the time was that homosexuality was not just a sexual preference but a flaw in the nature of a person, and it therefore would manifest in traits and personality. These same beliefs set the first bricks in queer coding in entertainment spaces. "Homosexuality is first introduced on stage in disguise" (Senelick 204) – it is no secret that traits that were

believed to be implicit in homosexuals were introduced by characteristics given to certain characters. For example, if a character on stage sashays over to the hero and talks with a slight lisp, a majority of the audience would assume the character was a homosexual, even if not acknowledged consciously.

THE WHEN – HISTORY OF QUEER CODING & THE HAYS CODE

In the year 1922, when cinema was gaining traction and popularity, The Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association (MPPDA) hired a devout Presbyterian, Will H. Hays as its head. Eight years later, in 1930, the MPPDA ratified the Motion Picture Production Code. Also known as the Hays Code, these guidelines were set up as "a list of rules that studios could follow to avoid the censors' wrath" (Couvares 593) to clarify what was and was not appropriate for film, and of these rules, one specific line read "sexual perversion or any inference to it is forbidden" (Glass). This then banned homosexual content from the big screens. The Production Code Administration (PCA) that decided if a film met the standards set by the MPPDA's code spent years keeping homosexuality or any implications of homosexuality from reaching public viewership. Eventually, the code was amended in the 1960s to read "In keeping with the culture, the mores and values of our time, homosexuality and other sexual aberrations may not be treated with care, discretion and restraint," although LGBT representation in film was mostly fatal and depressing or stereotypical afterwards (Glass). According to *The Celluloid Closet*, a documentary about homosexuality in early films, the importance of these long thirty years of homosexual content being banned was that it allowed "Hollywood …[to teach] straight people what to think about gay people, and gay people what to think about themselves" (*The Celluloid Closet*). This era in censorship set the stage for a culture in which the stereotypical behavior of homosexuals, or any behavior deviating from the traditional gender roles, is seen as dangerous, evil, and even fatal. By representing coded homosexual characters as depressed, perverse, and succumbing to punishing ends, it shifted social subconscious beliefs of LGBT individuals in real life to those represented on screen. Media often teaches us how to feel about others and ourselves – e.g., it promotes specific body types and clothing styles. In the same way, by promoting gendered behavior and banning homosexuality, it spread a message that homosexuality was not

fit to be viewed openly. The truth of the matter is that although content pertaining to homosexuality was banned, it was certainly alluded to, and is still is to this day.

The methods to which characters are queer coded have been around for a long time. The first example of the stereotypical gay coded character was the sissy. "Enter the sissy – Hollywood's first gay stock character. The sissy made everyone feel manlier or womanlier by occupying the space in-between. He didn't seem to have a sexuality so Hollywood allowed him to thrive" (The Celluloid Closet). These stock sissy characters would be used for humor in old films, usually flamboyant and obnoxious to a ridiculous extent through dress and behavior. These traits found in the stock character "sissy" began appearing in characterizations of villains in movies, television shows, and animations. The traits of which queer coding consists include physical characteristics, costuming, props, non-verbal body language, interest, dialogue, and sexuality itself.

THE HOW – THE METHODS OF QUEER CODING

Physical characteristics of the queer-coded villain include delicate features associated with feminine beauty. Finer bone structure, high cheekbones, thin bodies unlike the masculine forms of the heroes, and features touched with makeup are some of the characteristics that are often associated with the queer-coded villain (Li-Vollmer and LaPointe 97). To better paint a picture of the sissy-caricature turned queer-coded villain, we will analyze one of the scariest, most memorable villains most millennials would recognize – Him. Him is agreed to be the most frightening enemy from *The Powerpuff Girls*, a popular children's cartoon show that is, on the surface, an innocent show that children of all ages watched growing up, praised for being the first children's program to feature three female leads fighting crime. In this example, Him is thin and tall, has prominent and thick eyelashes, thin eyebrows, blushed cheeks, and shaded lips that look painted on. He is referred to with male pronouns and is referred to as "the most evil" villain on the show ("Octi-Evil"). Costuming and props of queer-coded villains are also effeminate, usually overdone and luxurious. Colors such as lavender and ruffled clothes as well as androgynous styles are common (Li-Vollmer and LaPointe 100). *The Powerpuff Girls*'s Him dresses in what can only be described as a short dress with ruffled collar and tutu attached, with a belt across the waist, as well as wearing tall high-heeled boots ("Octi-Evil"). Non-verbal body language

is incredibly important considering some queer-coded villains may not be coded queer in dress and physical looks. Femininity is commonplace in the way these coded villains sit, walk, and talk. "[The villains] have the body positioning and movement of a well-bred lady, especially in comparison to the easy, fluid motion and expansive gestures of the male protagonists. When sitting and walking, the gender performances of villains express stereotypically feminine qualities" (Li-Vollmer and LaPointe 100). Him often displays the "limp-wrist" gesture and walks with an effeminate gait ("Telephonies"). The activities of the villain are a big indicator of their queer-coded status as well. While a masculine hero often fights his own battles, the coded villain chooses to primp, groom, and send out cohorts to fight instead (Li-Vollmer and LaPointe 102). Whereas the Powerpuff Girls fight their own battles, Him has never directly fought them. Instead, he turns the girls against each other ("Octi-Evil") and mind-controls their loved ones to fight them ("Telephonies"). The verbal cues that set queer-coded characters apart from their non-coded counterparts are implicit in the dialogue. Gender performance is often indicated in dialogue. The things characters say, the gendered language in their words, and even how the words are said are all affected when a character is coded gay. Him is voiced by a man who is speaking in a high falsetto. He drags words and giggles giddily when things are going his way ("Octi-Evil"). Lastly, sexuality itself is a factor in queer coding. Queer-coded characters often display subtle hints toward their sexuality (Li-Vollmer and LaPointe 103). Him, in one episode, ends up controlling the mind of the Professor, the father figure of the Powerpuff Girls. While he has him under his control, he grabs him in a hug from behind, slowly licks his neck, and says "It's not about what I'm going to do to him" ("Telephonies") This conversation and behavior alludes to a "deviant" sexual interest in the Professor. These traits and behaviors in the villains equate villainy with deviancy, and the villain's unusual gender performance is a marked difference from the masculine heroes, explicitly painting the breaking of gender roles in a negative light. These methods of queer coding are found in more than just a children's show like *The Powerpuff Girls*.

THE WHO – QUEER-CODED CHARACTERS

These traits found in Him of *The Powerpuff Girls* are also found in characters in many different television shows, movies, and media. Some other examples include Hades, the robe-wearing, elegantly postured and

thin villain of Disney's *Hercules*, the complete opposite of the muscled and masculine hero; the cruel villains running the Capitol in *The Hunger Games*, with their makeup wearing and flamboyant speak; to King Xerxes of *300*, with his makeup, body jewelry, and sexual aggression toward the Spartans. Villains are constantly and continuously coded as queer. "It is supposed to be an insult to call a man effeminate, for it means he is like a woman and therefore not as valuable as a 'real' man. The popular definition of gayness is rooted in sexism. Weakness in men rather than strength in women has consistently been seen as the connection between sex role behavior and deviant sexuality" (*The Celluloid Closet*). Villains are often chosen to display such traits to tie in their gender deviance with villainy. Often, the heroes of these films and animations display masculine behaviors if they're men and feminine traits if they're women. The heroes of traditional media often follow traditional gender roles rather than deviate from them.

WHY YOU SHOULD CARE

Traditional media continues to do this because it seeks to reinforce traditional gender roles. Media seeks to associate gender transgression and sexual deviancy with villainy. Li-Vollmer and LaPointe suggest that "the queered villains may, in fact, become even more feminized as a sort of countervailing presentation of gender that helps heroes maintain their masculinity and male standing. This is troubling in that it not only reasserts a homonegative standard, but it invokes anti-femininity as well" (104). A villain of the same nature would subvert the gender roles that the male hero exemplifies, such as masculinity and strength. By showing the villain as deviant from gender roles by being effeminate, the hero maintains their masculinity while the villain's act of gender transgression becomes equated with evil and negativity. The very nature of the villain becomes rooted to their sexuality, and their sexuality becomes rooted to their evil intentions.

The existence of the deviant is not as innocent as simply creating an easily identifiable villain. Gross and Woods state, "One function of the deviant is to help define for us which is not deviant. In an important sense a society cannot judge some of its members good, polite, or moral without simultaneously offering contrasting figures that can be deemed bad, rude, or immoral. The definitions are inherently relational" (qtd. in Li-Vollmer and LaPointe 91). By portraying the hero as the one who

accepts and follows gender roles and the villain as the one who subverts them, it paints a clear picture of who is good and who is bad – the one who accepts gender roles is good, and the one who does not is evil. Morality becomes tied to the masculine behavior of the hero, and perverse, immoral behavior becomes tied to the villain. Senelick writes, "At times it is difficult to determine whether the problems of art are being discussed in the vocabulary of sexuality, or whether issues of sexuality are being invented in the vocabulary of art" (221). Television is an important platform on which social problems can be confronted and allowed to shape ideas about cultures and communities. A negative portrayal often leads to a negative social understanding of a community. Putnam writes that a certain portrayal "suggests that viewers find homosexuality or untraditional gender behavior and appearance unsettling, at best, and thus, that it's okay to treat people who are different from the heterosexual norm as dangerous or disgusting because they will hurt you; after all, they are villains" (159). Of course, one must acknowledge that there have been many advancements in queer representation on television compared to when the Hays Code was first implemented. *The Powerpuff Girls* is, admittedly, breaking gender roles by having female leads fighting crime instead of falling victim to it or talking about boys, and it is celebrated for just that. Queer villains still exist, but many of them are being written explicitly queer rather than coded, such as Raoul Silva of *Skyfall*, with his womanly body language and his incessant flirting toward James Bond. From his first scene with James Bond, he shares a homoerotic conversation, with him coming onto Bond, and Bond replying with "You think this is my first time?" (Skyfall). Raoul Silva's sexuality and flirtatious behavior toward Agent 007 is made perfectly clear from the get-go. He is still a villain, and he still has the traits of the stock "sissy" queer-coded villain, but his sexuality is written in rather than coded. However, this does not alleviate the issue at hand, because queer coding remains alive and well today. The problem with queer coding villains is that it not only associates queer people with negative views about their intentions, but it quantifies stereotypical behavior with sexuality, and ties in gender deviance with evil. Even without the "coded" after his queer identity, Silva is still written effeminate and evil, the very traits that are still being tied to queer people due to media then and now.

Another opposing view says that queer coding is necessary for a queer narrative, and by bringing it to the forefront, although it deals with LGBT characters, the mainstream nature makes the content no longer

"queer." Lynne Joyrich states:

> Queer is defined precisely as the subversion of the ordinary… Does this then make the very notion of [queer television] impossible, or does it make this nexus particularly productive, since this combination itself defined in and as contradiction, thus making it necessarily queer? Might that implicit queerness then help to explain some of the shifts in TV, including the shift toward incorporating more LGBT characters? Or is that the very opposite of "queer" because it indicates only assimilation… In summary, when LGBT folks "make it" on television, streamed into the dominant currents within televisual flow, are they no longer quite queer? (Joyrich 134)

By this, Joyrich is asking the valid question of "What constitutes queer?" She is asking – by bringing an LGBT storyline or character to the forefront and explicitly stating their gay status – does the character become "regular," and therefore, cease being queer? The subversion of "normal" is often associated with queer, hence why "queer coding" is the subversion of heteronormative and gender-role affirming roles by bringing us effeminate villains against our masculine heroes. Joyrich is arguing that when queer coding is no longer coded, it stops being queer as it is no longer subverting what is generally accepted in society. However, I disagree with her analysis. Even when queer characters become explicitly queer, it does not prevent LGBT identities from still being against the "status quo." As long as queer people are being "represented" on television rather than simply *being* on television, queer identities are still subverting traditional gender roles and social views and, therefore, remain queer. The mainstream consciousness about queer identities should be educated and expanded with LGBTQ characters being explicit and open, and even now, explicitly queer characters play the same villains they were once queer-coded as. Explicitly queer villains represent the same issues a queer-coded villain does, except one is in main-text and the other in subtext.

CONCLUSION

Gender roles become a dangerous precedent, and characteristics of femininity become seen as something more negative and more inferior than characteristics of masculinity. This is not only harmful to queer individuals, but also to heterosexual and cisgender (those for whom the gender that was assigned to them at birth matches their personal and current

gender identities) individuals who become boxed into a strict and narrow understanding of gendered behavior. In these ways, we cannot allow issues of sexuality to be "invented in the vocabulary of art" (Senelick) and must realize that traditional media queer codes villains through stereotypical depictions of traits and behaviors in order to reinforce traditional gender roles and to equate deviancy with villainy. Realizing this is the first step toward removing negative associations in our minds and moving toward the end of queer coding of villains, but we cannot stop there.

To fight this negative association and adherence to gender roles, the heteronormative guidelines must be overturned. An important step for this is to have more stories, more narratives, and more perspectives of the non-traditional. Effeminate male heroes fighting masculine male villains, masculine female warriors taking down evil feminine ladies, gender non-conforming individuals celebrated for their accomplishments and not their gender adherence – these are all stories that are waiting to be told. Bringing queer identities to the front lines without making the stories strictly about their sexualities and making gender roles no longer a necessary step in a successful narrative are necessary steps to further advance a future where children may look at the television and find in it stories that they relate to and stories of peers that they will one day have and respect.

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Conscious versus Gangster: An Evolving Relationship in Hip-Hop Activism

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by JOON LEE

ABSTRACT

The hip-hop community as a whole is united in its critique of the malpractices of the American criminal justice system. In his article "Much Respect: Toward a Hip-Hop Theory of Punishment," Paul Butler notes that hip-hop culture's principal gripe with the criminal justice system is its largely utilitarian punishment philosophy, employing harsh sentences for drug crimes and disproportionately targeting low-income, predominantly African-American neighborhoods. Despite the varying perspectives in the culture of rap music, "on the fairness and utility of American criminal justice… the hip-hop nation speaks as one" (Butler 986). Ever since its inception, the monolith of hip-hop culture has accordingly responded to such injustices. However, the manner in which rappers address larger social issues has always manifested itself in different forms. This paper will explore the differences between two of the genre's main forms: gangster rap and conscious rap.

MOMENT OF TRUTH: WHAT'S WHAT AND WHY

My question concerns the shifting paradigm of politically charged hip-hop music from the 1980s to the present day. From the earlier, morally ambiguous rap to the modern, ethically clear rap, it is clear that there has been a growing dichotomy between conscious and gangster rap ever since they were born. As Butler published his article in April 2004, the scope of his musical material is limited to the late 1990s and early 2000s at the latest; hence, it is vital to also include newer hip-hop artists and songs in this discussion.

First, some etymological clarification is necessary before the larger analysis goes underway. In his article "Gangster Rap and Nihilism in Black America: Some Questions of Life and Death", Nick De Genova describes 'gangster rap' as a product that "musically and lyrically reproduces the hyperboles of the ghetto and thus stands as the fantastical reproduction of destruction, a production of irrepressible and bombastic 'Blackness'…" (106). By and large, gangster rap presents itself with an abrasive attitude, violent verses, and sonic stridence. In the opening lines of legendary gangster rap outfit N.W.A.'s "Straight Outta Compton" (1988),

lyricist Ice Cube masterfully captures the gangster ethos in the opening lines of his hit song: "Straight Outta Compton, crazy motherfucker named Ice Cube / From the gang called Niggaz Wit Attitudes / When I'm called off, I got a sawed-off / Squeeze the trigger and bodies are hauled off" (1-4). This tune's violent imagery and impassioned delivery makes it a staple in the annals of gangster rap. From being a member of a group with a racial epithet in its name, to explicitly referencing acts of ferocity in his lyrics, Ice Cube represents the "reproduction of destruction" and "bombastic 'Blackness'" that De Genova referenced in his characterization of the genre.

Of course, gangster rap is not the only style of hip-hop. In fact, rap music is extremely diverse in its range of themes and sounds. Another prominent subgenre is politically and socially conscious rap, often simply referred to as 'conscious rap'. As illustrated in A. A. Akom's "Critical Hip Hop Pedagogy as a form of Liberatory Praxis", conscious hip-hop "focuses on the social, economic, and political situation of oppressed people… [and] espouses agency, critical consciousness, and transformative resistance as ways to ameliorate problems in black communities" (64). Conscious hip-hop highlights significant issues in society and pushes a larger political or social agenda to remedy such problems. Renowned conscious rapper Talib Kweli begins his song "Get By" (2002) by musing, "We sell crack to our own out the back of our homes / We smell the musk of the dusk in the crack of the dawn" (1-2). In reference to the consequences of the crack-cocaine epidemic of the 1980s that affected predominantly African-American communities, Kweli points out the squalid nature of selling drugs, comparing its lingering effects to an unpleasant odor. With an emphasis on sharp lyrics and relevant themes, conscious hip-hop asks listeners to "open their eyes" and carefully consider what the artist is preaching. One might compare these musical elements to the lyrical themes found in a typical gangster rap song, such as Dr. Dre's "Xxplosive" (1999), in which guest rapper Kurupt boasts, "West Coast shit nigga / Overdosage, imperial pistols ferocious / Fuck a bitch, don't tease bitch, strip tease bitch / Eat a bowl of these, bitch, gobble the dick" (1-4). It is evident that Kurupt here is not attempting to advocate for a meaningful cause, but instead is informing his listeners of his predilection for violence and his crude sexualization of women. Generally speaking, such differences between gangster and conscious rap are easily distinguishable. However, the existing exceptions to this discrepancy are noteworthy for their scope of influence and cultural relevance.

Given the stark contrast between gangster rap and conscious rap, it would seem, then, that the two subgenres are mutually exclusive and nowhere near each other on the musical spectrum. Yet hip-hop musicians in the late 1980s and early 1990s would say otherwise. It is in this period of time that gangster rap and conscious rap were very much one and the same. During this era, hip-hop lyrics with a political or social edge were often accompanied by violent and ostentatious inclinations. Furthermore, misogyny and homophobia were significantly common in the lyrics of the music of this era. Famed jazz rap band A Tribe Called Quest is an excellent example of these dialectical attitudes in display. In much of their music, A Tribe Called Quest, "[called] for a move away from music dedicated to escapism and avoidance of daily realities…" (Gladney 293). Operating in an era when gritty gangster raps dominated the radio, A Tribe Called Quest offered smooth rhymes over jazz-influenced production. The group's music posed as an ideological opponent to the more escapist and nihilistic music of gangster rappers. Even with their progressive outlook on hip-hop, A Tribe Called Quest still adhered to the prejudiced attitudes of gangster rap from time to time and exhibited such qualities on their song "Georgie Porgie" (1991). Here, the Tribe takes their lyrical lens and shifts its focus on the moral depravity of homosexual men, asserting, "Ain't got no reason, to hell with alibis / Won't play basketball cause your nails ain't dry / Call me homophobic, but I know it and you know it / You're filthy and funny to the utmost exponent" (52-55). As A Tribe Called Quest largely retained a reserved yet lyrically sharp style in their music, to label them as a gangster rap outfit would be an enormous stretch. However, by analyzing their lyrical content, it is clear that even the more morally righteous hip-hop acts can succumb to the gangster rap tropes of bigotry and enmity.

Naturally, then, there existed a clear hybrid form of conscious and gangster rap that was problematic in its logical consistency and moral legitimacy. Linking such predicaments to their effects on hip-hop's retributive philosophy, Paul Butler inquires, "Can any credible theory of justice be based on a culture that routinely denigrates more than half the population?" (1015). Misogyny, endemic in hip-hop culture, is perhaps the genre's most notorious prejudice, but it is far from the only one.

Homophobia and xenophobia, along with misogyny, all jeopardize the moral legitimacy of hip-hop activism. To refer back to the highly influential gangster rap group N.W.A. (a.k.a. Niggaz Wit Attitudes), their monumental protest song "Fuck Tha Police" (1988) creatively highlights the injustices that African-Americans endured when encountering racially prejudiced law enforcement. Ice Cube's first verse starts with the chilling lines, "Fuck the police coming straight from the underground / A young nigga got it bad cause I'm brown / And not the other color so police think / They have the authority to kill a minority" (1-4). Such a forceful musical demonstration of dissatisfaction was extremely relevant at the time and continues to be to this day. The song offered an artistic perspective on the turmoil that black people frequently encountered in urban communities. The lyrics contributed to a social and political narrative adopted by the general public after learning of the beating of Rodney King in 1991 and the Los Angeles riots in 1992. While this particular set of bars certainly carries the angry approach of a prototypical gangster rap song, its core message is one that a conscious rapper would embrace. However, in the very same verse, Cube displays an utter rejection of political correctness when describing being patted down by a police officer. He wonders, "I don't know if they fags or what / Search a nigga down, and grabbing his nuts" (19-20). In one breath, Ice Cube takes the moral high ground and castigates the inherently immoral actions that certain police officers in urban communities have done to keep "niggas" in control. In another light, he is demonstrating his own prejudices against the gay community. One might argue that this confusing arrangement of values "besmirches hip-hop's extraordinary aesthetic achievement and detracts from its important evaluation of criminal justice" (Butler 1015). It is apparent that this era's hip-hop had internal biases, such as homophobia, which undermined its ethical legitimacy and synthesized a contradictory vision of society at large. These conflicting ideals are problematic, but the more compelling aspect of this type of music has always been the political consciousness of the lyrics. Hence, it is imperative to explore the motives that are behind the artistry.

BY ALL MEANS NECESSARY: RATIONALE FOR CONTRADICTORY VALUES

The hybrid raps found in the 1980s and early 1990s resonated with the underprivileged populace primarily due to their socially and

politically astute lyricism. The endemic prejudices present in the music were an extremely unfortunate byproduct of the activism. Ultimately, the messages behind the artistry constitute a double-edge sword of morality; hybrid raps exposed the reality of the gritty street life that African-Americans experienced in urban communities while also promoting reckless and questionable values. In his journal article "Keeping It Real: Hip-Hop Culture and the Framing of Values for Contemporary African-American Students", cultural critic Louis B. Gallien observes that hip-hop in the late 1980s and early 1990s was "…underscored with a *Godfatheresque* backdrop and fantasy combined with real-life violence… [which] further legitimized (and valorized) gangsta rappers who were willing to 'keep it real' to their impressionable audiences" (5). He goes on to allude to a particular music video by The Notorious B.I.G., further highlighting hip-hop's potpourri of viewpoints. Gallien claims that the value base of many gangster rap artists is wholly described in the aesthetic of Biggie's music video, noting that, "… the message in this and similar videos is clear: You can lie in bed, operate your illicit business enterprises, and make millions – all by being a player, a slick gangster…" (5). The Mafioso lifestyle reflected in Biggie's music initially seems predicated on nothing but a masculine drive or nihilism. However, in the opening lines of his timeless classic "Juicy", Biggie emphatically rationalizes his involvement in the business of narcotics distribution. Addressed to The Notorious B.I.G.'s haters and naysayers, "Juicy" begins with "Yeah, this album is dedicated… / … To all the people that lived above the buildings that I was hustlin' in front of / Called the police on me when I was just tryin' to make some money to feed my daughter / And all the niggas in the struggle" (3-6). It appears, then, that the relationship between the belying elements of gangster and conscious rap is symbiotic in nature. The authenticity present in a gangster's chronicles of black street life is used to justify the disingenuously lavish and indulgent lifestyle portrayed in the same songs.

Philosophically speaking, such dialectical thinking is representative of the consequentialist field of thought. Claiming that "an act is morally permissible if and only if it has better consequences than those of any available alternative act", consequentialism is the principal philosophy that conscious-gangster rappers adopted when relaying their thoughts (Kagan 1). It is best understood through the phrase "the end justifies the means", an adage coined by philosopher Niccolò Machiaveli. In his mother-oriented ballad "Dear Mama" (1998), West Coast rap legend Tupac Shakur, who went by 2Pac and also, coincidentally, Makaveli, embodies

the consequentialist nature of the "thug life". When speaking about hustling drugs in his community, Tupac reminisces, "I hung around with the thugs, and even though they sold drugs / They showed a young brother love… I ain't guilty cause even though I sell rocks / It feels good putting money in your mailbox" (32-33, 36-37). When it comes to providing for his mother, Tupac certainly believes that the end justifies the means. He acknowledges the potentially destructive nature of his illicit distribution of narcotics, but admits that the camaraderie he shares with his fellow gangsters makes his life fulfilling. Shakur then puts his hustling money to good use by giving it to his mother. While the path to such an act of kindness might have been morally questionable and dangerous, Shakur rationalizes such behavior by illustrating the emotional gratification that taking care of his caretaker gives him.

REASONABLE DOUBT: WHAT THE NAYSAYERS THINK (AND WHY THEY ARE WRONG)

Many a hip-hop fan would object to the idea that the politically charged music of artists like N.W.A. could ever constitute conscious rap. These individuals would cite the artistry of KRS-One or Run-D.M.C. to prove that conscious hip-hop without the violent rhetoric of gangster rap was very much alive in the 1980s and 1990s. However, artists that adhered to a strictly socially conscious style of rapping never achieved the same level of popularity as the hybrid rappers. As this discussion is specifically concerned with the changing culture of hip-hop at large, it is important to focus on artists that resonated with the public the most. The idea of dialectical ethics was clearly mainstream in the messages that hybrid rappers put in their music. Along with N.W.A., influential political hip-hop group Public Enemy was known for pioneering the abrasive attitudes of socially conscious rap. Their 1991 studio album *Apocalypse 91… The Enemy Strikes Black* peaked at number 4 on the *Billboard 200* and number 1 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart. Given these numbers, it is clear that Public Enemy was extremely popular during their time, even while putting out aggressively politically charged music. The group's premier emcee Chuck D once described the role of rap music as "black America's TV station" (48). Like N.W.A. and Tupac, Public Enemy created music that revealed what was really going on in the streets. To put things in perspective, if Public Enemy were the black CNN, then Chuck D would be Anderson Cooper. While the group's view on the role of their music

is admirable, much like their other politically charged peers, they added some questionable morals to their image. In an interview with The Washington Times, group member Professor Griff boldly asserted, "Jews are responsible for 'the majority of wickedness that goes on across the globe'" (Pareles 1). The toxicity of anti-Semitism surely does not blend well with the "Fight The Power" outlook that Public Enemy helped to make relevant. However, the group's commercial success might indicate that there simply was not enough room for clean-cut conscious rappers to thrive when controversial rap groups dominated the industry and the culture. The nature of hybrid rappers during this time was a necessary evil, but the distinctions between gangster and conscious rap were to become much clearer in the years following this era.

ENDTRODUCING… THE END OF AN ERA AND THE BIRTH OF A NEW ONE (THE EARLY 2000S AND ONWARD)

While the 1980s and 1990s saw an ambiguous boundary between the realms of gangster and conscious rap, the early 2000s spawned styles of hip-hop that were much more clearly defined in style and attitude. Gangster rap of the 2000s generally embraced materialism, senseless violence, and misogyny without a hint of political or social astuteness. The leader of this new wave of gangster rap, Curtis Jackson a.k.a. 50 Cent implemented all of these characteristics in his music. On the chorus of his song "Don't Push Me" (2003), 50 Cent elaborates on what would happen if another competing gangster were to step up to him, warning, "Right now I'm on the edge, so don't push me / I aim straight for your head, so don't push me / Fill your ass up with lead, so don't push me / I got something for your ass, keep thinking I'm pussy". Unlike songs of the social or political variety, typical gangster rap songs promote violence rather than report it. Hip-hop like that of 50 Cent's style is solely meant to entertain listeners through excessive images of unnecessary violence, providing perspectives on "a nihilistic and ruthless way of life…" (De Genova 113). Statistical analysis shows that violent and controversial hip-hop is as relevant as it is because it sells. In her article "Changing Images of Violence in Rap Music Lyrics: 1979-1997", Denise Herd analyzes, "… sustained violence in rap music lyrics in the late 1990s [and onward], despite the downturn in societal rates, seems, at least in part, orchestrated and driven by commercial forces" (403). 50 Cent creates music that is inher-

ently nihilistic and cynical, capitalizing on the sensationalist lens through which the public views violence in media. The general public is more likely to gravitate towards music that entertains with violence than music that advocates social equity. The fourth wall between an entertainer and a consumer ensures that references to even the most heinous of actions can be enjoyed from a distance; this disconnect between the musician and the listener gives overt violence and bombastic lyrics a fantasy-like backdrop. Combined with the fantastical extravagance that is portrayed in 2000s era gangster rap, the increased commercialization hip-hop contributed to gangster rap's absolute dominance of the industry.

In the early 2000s, gangster rap was indubitably the most commercially successful form of hip-hop, with conscious rap taking a back seat in the vehicle of mainstream music. However, socially aware hip-hop was on the rise and the art form arguably gained crucial momentum in relevancy with the release of the album *The College Dropout* (2004) by Kanye West. An understudy of famed drug dealer-turned-multi-millionaire Jay-Z, West brought the braggadocio and flare associated with the gangster rap persona while retaining a softer and sensitive side to his music. In an age where records like "In Da Club" (2003) were topping the charts, Kanye West brought soul-sampling production and socially astute lyrics to the mainstream in full force. Satirizing gangster's rap tendency to glorify the drug game and violent street life on the track "We Don't Care" (2004), West and an accompanying chorus of gleeful children sing, "Drug dealin' just to get by / Stack ya' money 'til it get sky high / We wasn't supposed to make it past 25 / Joke's on you, we still alive". Here, Kanye West, a 2000's era rapper, is providing a tongue-in-cheek commentary on the culture of popular hip-hop, unlike rappers like 50 Cent.

Kanye is also shedding light on larger social issues without referencing dubious values, as Ice Cube and Tupac did. Eventually, West reached the status of the leader of the new school on September 11th, 2007. Dubbed by *Complex* magazine's Chief Content Officer Noah Callahan-Bever as "The Day Kanye West Killed Gangsta Rap," this date saw a competition between 50 Cent's album *Curtis* and Kanye's album *Graduation* in their sales numbers, with West eventually surpassing 50 Cent in sales. In the aftermath of their battle, Kanye was the obvious victor, "[emerging] as your new favorite rapper while [50 Cent] was relegated to being your older brother's favorite rapper" (15). While deeming Kanye's victory as a death blow to modern gangster rap may seem misleading, it is anything but once the scope of 50 Cent's influence and relevance is taken

into perspective. Callahan-Bever clears up any doubt of 50 Cent's omnipresence in the rap game, stating, "Then he signed with Eminem and Dre – two masters of marketing a clinical lack of fucks... from 2003 to 2005 – in terms of record and ticket and merch sales, radio spins, TV appearances, international acclaim, you name it – 50 Cent was bigger than the next five rappers combined. Maybe the next 10" (5). The dwindling popularity of 50 Cent and, subsequently, gangster rap was a sign of things to come in the near future. While senseless violence and misogyny are still relatively prominent elements in popular commercial hip-hop today, its relevance has certainly decayed with the advent of more socially conscious raps.

NOTHING WAS THE SAME: HOW THE GAME IS CHANGING RIGHT NOW

A paradigm shift was evident in the hip-hop industry once gangster rap was supplanted by more conscious hip-hop. Voices in the new school that were influenced by those of the old school began to spring up and let themselves be heard. The nature of conscious hip-hop today is accurately described through A.A. Akom's fundamental elements of critical hip-hop pedagogy. While the specific tenets are numerous, most relevant to this discussion is the idea that conscious rap, "is participatory and youth-driven… is an empowering process through which all participants can increase control of their lives… seeks a balance among critical thinking, reflection, analysis, and action… [and] emphasizes a union of mind, body, and spirit rather than a separation of these elements" (56). It can be said that conscious hip hop is a sort of spiritual practice in its ability to nourish the spirit of the artists in their expression and the fans in their exposure to the music.

At the forefront of both the mainstream hip-hop culture and the conscious rap movement is Compton rapper Kendrick Lamar. Due to his West Coast origins, activist persona, and poetic craft, Lamar is often seen as a spiritual successor to Shakur. He still maintains the hardcore and gritty lyrics concerning the black experience under a racially biased criminal justice system. However, he does not market himself as a promoter of illicit behavior as Tupac did. Shakur became excessively self-indulgent and began to suffer from personal issues "including drug and alcohol abuse… [which] interfered with his endeavor to become a consistent activist" (Stafford 20) At least according to his music, Kendrick seems to have a hopeful outlook on life. The exemplar of Kendrick Lamar's opti-

mistic worldview, the song "Alright" from his third studio album *To Pimp a Butterfly* (2015) is an anthem that promotes positive thinking amidst a world of oppression and moral bankruptcy:

> "Wouldn't you know
> We been hurt, been down before
> Nigga, when our pride was low
> Lookin' at the world like, "Where do we go?"
> Nigga, and we hate po-po
> Wanna kill us dead in the street fo sho
> Nigga, I'm at the preacher's door
> My knees getting' weak, and my gun might blow
> But we gon' be alright"

It is clear that there is a spiritual element of Lamar's conscious rap with relation to the church. It appears that Lamar's connection to Christianity gives him faith to keep going with his head up high. Like Lamar, Tupac also had his fair share of positivity-promoting tracks throughout his prolific discography. In his feminist anthem "Keep Ya Head Up", Shakur passionately advocates for women's reproductive rights, arguing, "And since a man can't create one / He has no right to tell a woman when and where to create one / So will the real men get up? / I know you're fed up, ladies, but keep your head up" (23-26). Tupac's lyrics advocate for a woman's right to choose whether or not she wants to have an abortion. However, the fact that Shakur released just as many gangster-glorifying songs, which demean women, is troublesome. His mysoginistic songs compromise the sincerity of the more heartfelt songs that he is known for. In his scathing diss track aimed at The Notorious B.I.G. and his crew Bad Boy, Shakur relentlessly raps, "First off fuck your bitch and the clique you claim / Westside when we ride, come equipped with game / You claim to be a player but I fucked your wife / We bust on Bad Boys, niggas fucked for life" (1-4). Rather than empowering women, these lyrics dehumanize women and portray them as sexual objects. It is odd to think that the same artist wrote these two opposing sets of lyrics but as the earlier analysis indicated, such a contradictory set of ideals was highly characteristic of hip-hop at the time.

In contrast, in the song "Alright", Kendrick Lamar abides by the critical hip-hop pedagogy tenet of using rap as, "an empowering process through which all participants can increase control of their lives" (56). Unlike Shakur, Lamar seeks music to find control over his life without

antagonizing others or contradicting himself in the next breath. Lamar's musical identity lacks the dual-character type that a rapper like Tupac embodied. For this reason, Lamar can be seen as a symbol of the changing ethics of politically charged hip-hop in the culture of today. Tupac was caught up in the zeitgeist of the gangster variety of hip-hop music, utilizing this creative outlet as a means to indulge in his vices, but also to inspire the masses to question unjust societal norms The duality of his music reflected the deep conflict he was having with his identity at the time. Kendrick Lamar recognizes the potentially destructive path of embracing the gangster rap genre and instead incorporated the core elements of '90s era gangster rap, politically charged and culturally aware lyricism, without the pomp and flare that the genre is often associated with.

IT TAKES A NATION OF MILLIONS TO HOLD US BACK: CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Hip-hop has always existed as a creative outlet through which African-American artists could relay their activism. However, like all forms of art, the musical outlet has always been subject to change. Rap has manifested itself as violence-encouraging warnings as well as positive life-affirming anthems. As for the future, anything is possible. Perhaps Kendrick Lamar will flop and be unable to provide creatively conscious music for the masses. Maybe he will regress from the social progress that his variety of music has brought thus far. Perhaps a 50 Cent-like rapper will knock Kendrick from his throne and bring back a musical era of bling, broads, and bands. Whether or not conscious rap wanes a bit in popularity, its relevance in the evolution of hip-hop culture will remain intact. For where there is struggle, people will find a way to express it and relate to others. As Tupac once said, "Don't ever change, keep your essence / The power is in the people and politics we address" ("Me Against the World" 1995).

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Understanding Opposition to Nuclear Power as the Solution to the Energy Crisis

By JENNIFER LOHF

ABSTRACT

There is consensus among the scientific community that nuclear power is the optimal solution to the world energy crisis. As the utilization of nuclear power becomes more crucial due to the rapid depletion of fossil fuels, the public's perception of nuclear power comes under greater consideration since it determines whether the nuclear power industry will be able to survive. This paper explores the history of the public's negative perception of nuclear power. It must be acknowledged that exposure to large amounts of radiation, though rare, can cause serious health effects; however, other forms of radiation and energy sources that threaten the public's health are used frequently. Although scientific evidence does not show that low levels of radiation are dangerous to public health, the scientific community has failed to educate the public about the safety and benefits of nuclear power. Additionally, the government has augmented the risks associated with nuclear meltdowns by failing to establish and enforce detailed regulations and protocols. Following nuclear meltdowns, the government hid the health effects of its inadequate response, which further attributed to the public's negative opinion of nuclear power. As explained by the Protection Motivation Theory, the public's perception of risks associated with nuclear power led to opposition towards the nuclear power industry. After analyzing the aftermath of nuclear disasters at Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and Fukushima Daiichi, this paper concludes that the public's negative perception of nuclear power, which is not backed by scientific evidence, can be attributed to the scientific community's inability to educate the public as well as the government's poor response to nuclear disasters.

INTRODUCTION

Nuclear power is a growing industry that is projected to replace rapidly diminishing fossil fuels as an energy source, but it is the public's perception of nuclear power and its risks that determines the viability of the industry. Acceptance of nuclear power by the public requires trust that the people's safety is the first priority of those managing the nuclear power plants, as well as an accurate understanding of the risks and benefits associated with nuclear power. Although there is merit in the

argument that the fears the public has in regard to nuclear power are justified due to the increased risk of cancer and other diseases following nuclear accidents, the occurrence of nuclear disasters is extremely rare compared to other energy-related disasters. Furthermore, proper preventative measures and safety protocols can minimize exposure to radiation. The causes and effects of the public's perception of nuclear power can be studied through the influence of nuclear disasters such as Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and most recently, Fukushima Daiichi. The inability of scientific experts to educate the public about the true risks and benefits of nuclear power has led the public to form a perception of nuclear power based entirely on the government, whose inadequate response has harmed public health, forming the public perception that nuclear power is much more dangerous than scientific evidence has shown it to be.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Understanding the public's opposition to nuclear power entails not only observing the shift in public perceptions, but also recognizing the effects of this shift. In "Risk Perception: Theories, Strategies, and Next Steps," Campbell Institute research associate Joy Inouye introduces psychologist R. W. Rogers' Protection Motivation Theory, which states that when people perceive risks, feel it is necessary to avoid these risks, and have the ability to take preventative measures, it becomes more likely that they will take action to protect themselves (5). The lack of basic education regarding nuclear power plants and their potential harms and benefits to society and the government's lack of transparency with the public have led the public to perceive nuclear power as something that poses a risk to public health. As the public becomes aware of the detrimental effects of nuclear disasters on public health, agriculture, and the environment, they feel the need to resist the growth of the nuclear power industry. Subsequently, as this theory explains, people do everything in their power to protect themselves from the threat they perceive nuclear power to be.

RESEARCH STATEMENT

Nuclear power offers the optimal alternative to fossil fuels because the planet's reserves of the radioactive chemicals used to produce nuclear energy are abundant and the process of producing nuclear energy minimizes the production of greenhouse gases which cause global

warming. As the only alternative to fossil fuels that can produce as much energy as is consumed by the world population, the public's acceptance of nuclear power is imperative; otherwise, much more research must be conducted to discover an alternative source of energy before not only the complete depletion of fossil fuels, but also the realization of the catastrophic effects of global warming (Oriolo and Forgione 141-147). This paper will show how the scientific community's inability to educate the public prevented them from developing an accurate understanding of the risks and benefits of nuclear power. Additionally, this paper will illustrate how governmental secrecy and manipulation of public knowledge has led to an environment of distrust.

HEALTH EFFECTS AND THE LACK OF PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE

Although it needs to be acknowledged that the occurrence of nuclear meltdowns and the health effects that exposure to radiation poses to the public are serious and dangerous, the analysis of the risks and benefits of nuclear power that is supported by scientific research shows that nuclear power plants are not as dangerous as they are perceived to be. Scientific data provides no definitive proof that the radiation emitted from nuclear power plants on a daily basis is harmful, furthermore the occurrence of nuclear meltdowns is extremely rare. Other, more dangerous forms of radiation or chemicals, such as x-ray radiation, are used by the public regularly, showing that the fear of radiation is not determined by health risks, but by social stigmas. The scientific community has attempted to initiate educational programs for the public, but they have failed because the facts pertaining to the risks of nuclear power are incongruous with the public's perceptions and a lack of clarity prevents the public from understanding the true risks and benefits of nuclear power.

Nuclear power, though rarely, can be dangerous to public health, but as long as a nuclear power plant is functioning properly, scientific research has not proven that levels of radiation exposure equivalent to those assumed by people living near nuclear power plants are dangerous to the health of the surrounding population. There is no question that the release of large amounts of radiation from a nuclear meltdown is dangerous to public health, since "data from studies of uranium miners in the United States suggest that alpha radiation from radon progeny is a risk factor for lung cancer even among nonsmokers" (Checkoway et al. 256). The term

radon progeny is used to describe the product of radioactive decay from radon gas, and as this radon progeny decays further, it releases damaging alpha radiation. Furthermore, "A new study says children living near the Fukushima nuclear meltdowns have been diagnosed with thyroid cancer at a rate 20 to 50 times that of children elsewhere" (Kageyama). As long as the nuclear power plant is functioning properly and is monitored regularly, "The increased risk, if any, from these low doses may be so small that it would take studies of millions or even billions of people to be certain such a risk exists" (Gale and Lax 32). Exposure to radiation from a normally functioning nuclear power plant poses very little, if any, risk to public health as long as proper safety protocols and regulations are followed. Areas surrounding nuclear power plants can continue to be used productively: "Access limitations at some plants have turned land into wildlife refuges, in other cases limited farming and cattle grazing have been possible, though adequate radiation monitoring was needed… Similarly, at shore locations the availability of heated water will enable use of some of the sequestered shore for fish farming" (El-Hinnawi 53).

Health dangers only occur when the safety guidelines are not followed; therefore, the nuclear power plants themselves do not pose a threat to public health, but it is the regulatory agencies' reliability and the government's response, or lack thereof, that puts the public in danger from these disasters. A recent study by the Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development looked at the incidence of severe accidents, characterized by five or more immediate deaths, related to the energy sector between 1969 and 2000. This study showed that during this timeframe, only one accident occurred in the nuclear industry world-wide, which was in Chernobyl and resulted in 31 deaths. In the same time period, the oil industry suffered from 397 accidents, resulting in 20,218 deaths, and the liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) industry suffered from 105 accidents, resulting in 3,921 deaths (Comparing Nuclear Accident Risks 34-35). The incidence of nuclear accidents is considerably rarer than accidents among comparable industries, showing that the public's perception of the dangers of nuclear power plants is dramatically skewed. Although rare, nuclear meltdowns caused by technical or human errors are bound to occur, but a proper evacuation of nearby communities would prevent high levels of radiation exposure and would limit the dangers of nuclear disasters. Though the public openly opposes nuclear power plants because they fear exposure to radiation, which has already been proven to have little to no impact on public health, people

voluntarily subject themselves to other forms of radiation on a daily basis.

Radiation comes in many forms; yet, people oppose nuclear radiation while they accept other forms of radiation and other chemicals that are equally as harmful, showing how values regarding radiation safety are skewed. In the case of medicine, people tend to be much more accepting of high levels of radiation exposure, considering "a head CT scan delivers a dose of radiation to the head equivalent to that of someone who was about four miles from the Hiroshima A-bomb… Some people continue to go to radium hot springs and caves for treatment of chronic diseases such as eczema and fungal infections" (Gale and Lax 59-60). People tend to accept x-rays and therapeutic forms of radiation because the public sees no risks involved with the use of these types of radiation, but these other forms of radiation are equally as harmful to public health as nuclear radiation. The fact that the public's perception of different forms of radiation does not parallel the perception backed by scientific evidence shows that the public's judgment of radiation is based on biased or ill-informed sources. Not only does the public's opinion depend on information, but it is also determined by trust in the operators and regulators of the radiation to which they are being exposed. This is demonstrated when, "just as medical uses of radiation are perceived much more favorably than nuclear power, prescription drugs- a very potent and toxic category of chemicals to which we are often exposed at high doses- are perceived more favorably than other chemicals" (Slovic 70). The only difference between drugs and nuclear power is in who oversees their effects on the public. Physicians who prescribe drugs are required to have doctorates, which ensures the public that physicians are well-qualified and more knowledgeable about the drugs that they are prescribing, than the people who are taking the drugs.

On the other hand, the public is not aware of the training in which managers of nuclear power plants are required to participate. This further proves that the publics' opposition to nuclear power is based not only on the negative effects of nuclear power plants on health, but also on the stigma surrounding nuclear power and its operators. Attempts have been made by scientists and engineers to educate the public about what happens in a nuclear power plant in order to make people more accepting of the nuclear power industry. Unfortunately, these attempts failed due to the use of technical terminology unfamiliar to the public and the presentation of facts that are incongruent with the public's perception, ultimately preventing the public from understanding the underlying message that

nuclear power is a beneficial industry.

Although educating the public about the scientifically proven risks and benefits of nuclear power would improve people's perception of nuclear power, the attempts at spreading information have been ineffective. Notifying the public about the real risks and benefits of nuclear power would require a comprehensive dispersion of information in support of nuclear power, but one promising study "concluded that higher educational background and deeper knowledge of radiation was linked to lower anxiety about radiation" (Yoshida et al. 11). This study, performed on dental students who have a relatively high level of general education but minimal education pertaining to radiation and nuclear power, bolsters the idea that properly educating the public about nuclear power would succeed in gaining acceptance for it from the public. Therefore, the flaw that prevents the public from developing a "deeper knowledge" of nuclear power lies within the scientific community's inability to disseminate information that the public can comprehend.

The main reason this acceptance has not yet occurred is because the scientists who tried to educate the public did not have an effective means of doing so because "[Engineers] used technical jargon throughout the releases, including such terms as deenergized power distribution buses, automatic actuation, and redundant valves. Most science writers, let alone general assignment reporters, would have trouble with such terminology" (Friedman 119). When scientists use technical terms that the public does not understand, this information becomes useless, and the public learns nothing. Regardless of the level of general education an individual may have, if the scientific community learns to transmit information that is understandable, nuclear power would gain acceptance from the public. Additionally, advocates of nuclear power would give comparisons between nuclear power and everyday sources of radiation, but "a statement such as 'the annual risk from living near a nuclear power plant is equivalent to the risk of riding an extra three miles in an automobile' fails to consider how these two technologies differ on the main qualities that people believe to be important" (Slovic 72). The public has accepted the use of automobiles as an essential and conventional tool for traveling and has become comfortable with being exposed to a certain amount of chemicals and radiation from this specific source. Although nuclear power plants emit a comparable amount of radiation, the public rejects nuclear power because they do not have the education necessary to accurately compare the risks and benefits of nuclear power. The pub-

lic's perception of nuclear power is so misaligned from that of scientists, that the public does not believe the factual information in these types of comparisons, resulting in many people becoming angry or frustrated.

When the scientific community fails to negate the fears people bear regarding nuclear power with factual evidence, the public misjudges nuclear power as a hazardous industry. As the Protection Motivation Theory explains, if the public perceives risks and is able to take action in order to avoid these risks, then people will make an effort to protect themselves (Inouye 5). Thus, public opposition to nuclear power is the mechanism people adopt in an attempt to protect their health. Because the attempt to align the public's perception of nuclear power with the perceptions of risks and benefits established by scientific evidence has failed, it is the government's response to nuclear disasters that determines the public's perception of nuclear power, though the government has played a major role in augmenting health risks following nuclear disasters.

IMPACT OF THE GOVERNMENT ON PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS

Though governments have instituted safety regulations and emergency protocols to protect the public from exposure to large amounts of radiation following nuclear disasters, these policies and regulations are ill-defined and can be circumvented easily by politicians and nuclear power plant managers. As each nuclear disaster unfolded, a lack of communication between the government and the public regarding the severity of the disaster resulted in the mitigation of the threats of the nuclear meltdowns to public health. In an attempt to hide the effects of its inaction, the government intentionally kept the extent of the damage from each nuclear disaster a secret from the public while distorting health data, leading to an environment of distrust.

Government regulations and policies that are created to protect people from the harmful effects of nuclear disasters are not well established and are often ignored intentionally due to either political incentives or a lack of good judgment. Following the nuclear meltdown at Fukushima Daiichi in Japan, "Investigations into the accident have established that the crisis response was improvised and inadequate because of lack of preparation, institutional flaws in emergency procedures and poor communication within the government and between officials and [Tokyo Electric Power Company]" (Kingston 39). Responders to the meltdown

were woefully unprepared, which meant that the Japanese government could not evacuate the necessary region in a timely manner and people were exposed to a greater amount of radiation than they would have, had the government had been prepared. Ensuring the safety of the public requires strict procedures, but it also becomes necessary that the government makes sure these procedures are followed because "private firms have the incentive and, often, the political and economic power to resist effective regulation. That resistance often results in regulators being captured in some way by the industry" (Perrow 45). When the people who manage nuclear power plants are bribed or somehow convinced to overlook the lack of adherence to safety protocol, it increases the public's risk of being harmed by nuclear disasters.

In the case of Chernobyl, while workers were testing the safety of the nuclear power plant during a planned shutdown, it seemed "that not only were there errors, but safety procedures were deliberately disregarded by operators because of their desire to complete the experiment" (Liberatore 66). Though the choice to ignore safety procedures was a result of poor judgment rather than malicious intents, the consequence of a nuclear meltdown had detrimental effects on public health. The absence or ineffectiveness of preventative measures within the nuclear power plant also contributed to the augmentation of the risks associated with nuclear power. Well-defined and strictly enforced prevention methods that were not in use during these nuclear accidents could have minimized the public's exposure to radiation and contained the nuclear accident. Seeing as prevention techniques were bypassed, public wellbeing relied on the government's response immediately following each nuclear accident. Though the safest response to the Chernobyl meltdown would have been to evacuate the surrounding areas as soon as possible, "In order to reduce panic, the government increased the level of the permissible annual dose of absorbed radiation in the Ukrainian capital, Kiev, avoiding mandatory evacuation of millions" (Meybatyan 64). Regulations were created to keep the public safe, but when the government freely changes the regulations to fit its needs, it amplifies the risks faced by the public; therefore, the risks of nuclear power that are posed to the public are not completely dependent on the extent of the nuclear disaster itself, but also on the response, or lack thereof, of the government. While a strong, honest governmental regulatory presence in the nuclear power industry would have minimized the dangers of nuclear disasters, such incidents perpetuated the public's fears that nuclear power is an unpredictable and

uncontrollable industry. Just as there was no well-defined protocol for preventing and responding to nuclear disasters, there was no set protocol for communicating with the public as the disasters occurred.

As the disasters unfolded, government officials did not inform the public of the potential negative effects on health from radiation exposure, thus denying the seriousness of the nuclear disaster. Following the Three Mile Island accident, "There were no provisions by political leaders of federal agencies to routinely channel accident information intended for the public through local emergency personnel" (Perry 50). A lack of communication to the public was not unique to the United States, but was evident after the Fukushima Daiichi explosion when "the Japanese government was slow in informing the municipal governments and the public about the accident and its severity. Many people were unaware of the crisis and did not take essential items when they were evacuated" (Meybatyan 64). Because the public does not know which areas are put in danger when a nuclear disaster occurs, people do not evacuate their homes or respond to nuclear disasters until they are given instructions from government safety officials. When the government does not communicate with the public, it encourages people to believe that the disaster will not threaten their health. The fact that people left personal items in their homes, assuming that they would be able to return in the near future, shows that the government did not adequately inform the public of the extent of the disaster. The prompt spread of information from the government to the public is crucial in protecting the public from the harms of nuclear disasters. Since communication from the government was nonexistent, or significantly delayed, the public was exposed to even more radiation than they would have been if the government had kept the public informed. Knowing this, the government attempted to hide the consequences of its poor response, from the public, creating distrust in the government, as well as distrust in the nuclear power industry.

Once the government became fully aware of the damaging effects of the delayed response to nuclear disasters, it kept certain information a secret, therefore manipulating data and creating an environment of distrust. After Chernobyl, the Russian government built new houses and various community buildings so people living near the meltdown could resettle; yet, this did not support public health because these buildings were located a few miles from the original homes. As Ukranian politician and journalist Alla Yaroshinskaya describes, "Women were picking potatoes out of the soft earth. Next to them children were playing in

the sand… And radioactive ash showered down on the vegetable plots and orchards, and on children's heads" (4-5). People were expected to live regular lives and continue farming and surviving off the land, even though radioactive ash was in the air. Instead of fixing its misdeed, which increased the risk of disease in the communities, the government hid this information from the rest of the public. In order to appease the damaged communities, the Russian government constructed houses for the people who had been harmed by the nuclear meltdown, but by keeping these communities near the disaster site, the government isolated those who had been harmed by its inadequate response. In doing so, the government attempted to prevent the general public from attaining knowledge about the disastrous effects of the government's inaction on these communities. The government was able to conceal its misdeeds following the accident and avoid criticism and blame. Government officials issued a statement that was directed towards other officials, saying, "It is imperative to make the public consequences of radioactive contamination in the Narodichi District, hitherto carefully concealed from the people" (Yaroshinskaya 34). In classifying the data that involved the incidences of cancer and other diseases in affected districts, the government effectively erased this data from the statistics that it released to the public—falsifying data so people who had been affected by the nuclear meltdown were depicted as much healthier than they actually were.

A similar instance was observed in Japan when "just four hours after the tsunami swept into the Fukushima nuclear power plant, Japan's leaders knew the damage was so severe the reactors could melt down, but they kept their knowledge secret for months" (Yamaguchi). When the public eventually found out about the information the government was aware of but hiding, they realized that the government could not be trusted to protect the well-being of its people, amplifying the degree of risk the public perceives regarding nuclear power. As explained by the Protection Motivation Theory, nuclear disasters expose the public to the potential dangers of nuclear power, and the public does not believe the government will nullify these risks with strict regulations and proper evacuation procedures. Therefore, people perceive nuclear power as a threat that they need to protect themselves from and do so through opposition (Inouye 5).

CONCLUSION

Failed attempts at educating the public about the scientifically-backed risks and benefits of nuclear power have generated a public perception based solely on the improper governmental response to nuclear disasters. Although scientific research has found no indication that living near nuclear power plants causes any health damages, attempts at public education have failed to prove to the public that nuclear power is much safer and has many more benefits than the public continues to believe. The ambiguity of safety protocols following nuclear disasters exposed the public to an unwarranted amount of radiation, and the public came to believe that the government could not be trusted to protect its citizens from the effects of future nuclear meltdowns. As explained by the Protection Motivation Theory, the public perceives nuclear power as a risk to public health and people feel as though they can prevent themselves from being harmed by the risk that they perceive, so people oppose nuclear power in order to protect themselves. If the perceived risks of nuclear power can be reduced, then it increases the likelihood of nuclear power becoming an accepted source of energy. Once the problems in public education and governmental regulatory practices are solved, the public will be able to consider the risks and benefits of nuclear power more realistically and logically. Therefore, nuclear power can be rightfully acknowledged as the potential global energy source of the future.

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Perception Deficit: The Semiotics of Money and The True Impact of Campaign Contributions on American Politics

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By HUNTER MAENNER

ABSTRACT

With the growing visibility of money in the American political system over the course of the past few decades, many Americans have become disenchanted with the system as a whole, fearing that their voices in government have been drowned out by the large special interest groups and corporations that have flooded the political system with cash. In the wake of the Citizens United Supreme Court decision, which was made with the intent to broaden the scope of American democracy to include the treatment of corporations as people, an increasing number of lower and working-class individuals have stopped taking part in the political process because of their beliefs that the wealthy have a disproportionate influence in American governance. However, research done on the effect of campaign contributions on election results does not show a correlation between money and votes, meaning that the appearance of large quantities of money in the American political system is not in and of itself of much significance. Instead, it is the symbolism that the populace places on the importance of campaign contributions in American politics that gives these donations their real impact, causing the bottom part of the electorate to become more disengaged, which serves to transfer a larger amount of political influence to the affluent. Thus, disengaging the lower and working class from the political system results in greater authority over governance for the wealthy relative to their proportion of the population and serves as the true influence of money in American politics.

In January of 2010 the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in favor of the political organization Citizens United in the landmark case known as *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*. This ruling struck down many of the last existing barriers standing between private institutions and unlimited amounts of political expenditures, creating an unfettered marketplace where the influence of multinational corporations is put on equal footing with average, everyday citizens. At the root of the ruling were the democratic ideals of inclusivity and expanded deliberation, giving an equal voice to the private corporations that are vital to

the economy of the United States. In theory, this ruling was supposed to strengthen the democracy of the United States, but the unintended consequences of this ruling have shown effects to the contrary. As a result of the infusion of great amounts of political contributions and donations into the American political system, many citizens feel as if their voices have been drowned out. Contrary to popular belief, though, the real effect of large amounts of money in the political process is not because of the value of said money, but because of the meaning that the public attaches to it, also known as semiotics. Thus, it is because of the semiotics of money that the democratic electorate perceives a rising wave of political inequality, which only serves to disengage them from the political process and results in additional influence for the wealthy. This further accumulation of political power by the wealthy only serves to affirm the public's misconceptions about the impact of money in politics.

Before moving any further, it is important to start with a framework for a democratic system of governance. One such framework that is used by many political scholars and theorists is that of a "deliberative democracy." Aaron Heresco defines a "deliberative democracy" as a system of governance that relies "on ideas of dialogue and equality," and "it is through rational discussion among equals, that a dialogic approach to political decision making can function" (Heresco 25). This form of democracy is built on public participation, specifically through political discourse and voting, thus making it a good basis for the modern-day democracy of the United States, which is built on the ideals of debate and compromise between its two major political parties. A successful deliberative democracy is one in which its participants are active and where its "contents… can be subject to publicity." By allowing all its contents to be susceptible to the "attention… [of the] public," a true deliberative democracy is transparent to its citizens and allows equal access among all people to all relevant information (Adut 244). This access to all relevant information allows for the population to be well-informed and well-equipped to make decisions. This transparency within a true deliberative democracy also works towards the benefit of the public because "the gaze of strangers can compel us to be civilized and altruistic," which leads people to "discipline [their] appearances in public spaces" so as to put forth the best appearance of themselves as possible (Adut 244). Because of the propensity of people to behave in a way that further advances their public appearance, people often aid in supporting the public good, which is the basis for how a truly open deliberative democracy functions in the best interest

of its citizenry as a whole. This concern for the common good in a deliberative democracy—even if conceived in selfishness— is spurred on by all of its contents being visible within the public sphere. Through visibility, the populace is allowed access to all important pieces of information necessary to public decision-making, which both allows and encourages public discussion on meaningful topics.

      The shortcomings of a deliberative democracy, though, are mired in the "elemental inauthenticity" of the public sphere, which is best described as the ability of the public gaze to "falsify our conscience and behavior" (Adut 244). This element of the public sphere can actually work to undermine the deliberative democracy that is reliant on its full functionality on matters of public discourse. This paradox between a deliberative democracy and the public sphere is best described by Ari Adut, who writes in his essay *A Theory of the Public Sphere* that: "Action geared toward the welfare of strangers usually requires public spaces. Yet the public sphere is a superficial world: it reduces singular beings to appearances and types" (Adut 244). By inherently being superficial, the public sphere is hamstrung by the fact that its inhabitants are always focused on how they are perceived by others within the space. While the focus of individuals on how they are perceived is an important component in people acting in the best interests of others, the negative side of this inherent superficiality is that the meaningful dialogue that is necessary to a deliberative democracy can often be overshadowed by other more trivial matters, because it occupies the same space as these other entities. Adut writes about this dynamic in public discourse, saying: "The more publicity a public space is expected to receive, the more central that space within the general public sphere will be" (Adut 245). This quote points to the constant altering of the discourse within the public sphere based on what its members are currently interested in. The consequence of determining topics of importance by way of popular selection, however, is that the populace is often more interested in debating gossip than politics, as evidenced by the reluctance of many to discuss politics for fear of initiating an argument. In his research, Heresco refers to this public space for dialogue as the "marketplace of ideas," the place where members of the public sphere can share their thoughts and opinions with everyone else within it. However, because of the *Citizens United* Supreme Court ruling, large private entities are now entitled to the same public space once reserved for average citizens. By granting the rights of "corporate personhood" to multinational corporations, the ruling has allowed these

corporations to function "in the same marketplace of ideas as individual citizens" despite the fact that "corporate speech is fundamentally different from political speech by a citizen (Heresco 26-28). The effect of the introduction of large-scale political actors to the marketplace of ideas is to further disengage the population from the deliberative democracy because of individuals' perceptions that their voices are being drowned out. This negative perception of politics results in people leaving the political arena in favor of the other aspects of the public sphere, which average citizens are already predisposed to be interested in and where they still feel as if their voices can be heard.

As a result of the continued rise of money in politics, most notably because of the *Citizens United* decision, large sums of money have entered the American political system, leaving many people to speculate as to its impact on American governance. It is a common belief among the general population that money is a key influencer in political decision making. This belief is only further perpetuated by the time spent by legislators courting campaign funds, sometimes through events and other times by "'dialing for dollars'" (Krumholtz 1133). However, the question of whether money is as big an influencer as it is perceived to be is not the point. The point is that just discussing the possible ties of private, outside money with government legislation and corruption is enough to drive people away from politics. In reality, the people have good reason to be skeptical. The continued allowance of money to flow through the political system is a marked shift from as recent as forty years ago, when American politicians were "trying to combat corruption and prevent even just the appearance of corruption" (Krumholtz 1131). Just the appearance of money in politics leads many people to speculate about its corrosive impacts on democracy. It is through this speculation that the semiotics of money is born. It doesn't matter the extent to which money actually impacts elections, because many people are already under the impression that it does. Ari Adut references the public sphere as a "space of signs" (243). These signs are then interpreted by the general public to give them meaning, otherwise known as semiotics. Thus, it is the visibility of money, and the clear impacts that it has on the political process, that spreads the notion that money is the ultimate tool in the American political system. It is through the semiotics of money that the true influence of money in the political system is seen. This true influence of money is not due to its inherent value, but rather its perceived meaning in the eyes of the population.

Contrary to popular belief, campaign contributions do not have as large an effect on the electoral process as many people believe. Adam Brown of Brigham Young University has done significant research on this very issue, comparing both how much money candidates received and the origins of that money. Using gubernatorial candidates between the years of 1998 and 2008, Brown finds an interesting discrepancy between self-financed candidates and candidates who received outside donations. His findings were: "Of the 290 gubernatorial candidates who self-financed at least $50,000 between 1998 and 2008, only 26% won. Of those who self-financed at least $1 million, only 18% won." Where the interesting discrepancy of the influence of money in politics lies, however, is that the same study found that "whichever candidate raised the most external money funds won over 83% of the time." To a layman this would serve as clear and concise proof of the phenomenon that "money buys votes," but "this discrepancy points to a deeper theoretical misunderstanding" (Brown 22). While some large campaign contributors donate to candidates based on policy positions and ideology, most contributors use their resources as an investment opportunity: "These so-called "investors" are less concerned about who wins office than about being on the winner's good side. As a result, investors give to likely winners—usually incumbents—of any ideological persuasion" (23). This idea of large money interests investing in the political system is further supported by research done by Robert Craig and Lawrence Soley, whose study of Senate elections found that "the ability to raise campaign funds is closely related to incumbency" (Craig and Soley 193). The reasoning behind donating to incumbents is much like the thought-process behind buying into a stock on Wall Street. Incumbents are usually more experienced campaigners and therefore more strategic and efficient in their usage of campaign funds. They also usually bring with them a very high name recognition and normally have more connections than their challenger, thus making them a safer investment. With that said, the influence of money on the electoral process isn't as linear as many people might think. Even though large private interests employ the strategy of courting the favor of political candidates, that is not the same thing as buying votes. It is this societal misunderstanding of the influence of money in politics that has led to the semiotics of money among the public. The deleterious effects of these semiotics only serves to disenfranchise large segments of the population who have a false perception of the actual effects of money on politics.

In the Supreme Court's majority opinion in the *Citizens Unit-*

ed case, Justice Anthony Kennedy—on the topic of limits to corporate speech—stated aloud that: "By taking the right to speak from some and giving it to others, the Government deprives the disadvantaged of the right to use speech to strive to establish worth, standing, and respect for the speaker's voice," 558 U.S. 24 (2010). While based on the ideal of inclusivity, the ruling has had many harmful side effects regarding the political debate in the United States. The majority ruling also mentions how "political speech is 'indispensable to decision-making in a democracy'" no matter whether it comes from a person or a corporation. The result of the opinion in this case that speech from people and speech from corporations are equally necessary in a democracy has spawned the idea of "corporate personhood," where corporations are not in any way, shape, or form restricted in a different capacity than an average person. In reaffirming its position that corporations and people should not be treated distinctly, the court said that "the concept that government may restrict the speech of some elements of our society in order to enhance the relative voice of others is wholly foreign to the First Amendment," 558 U.S. 33 (2010). On the question of the importance of political speech in a democracy the Supreme Court failed to specify the types of political speech that are actually necessary for the survival of democracy. For instance, a deliberative democracy thrives off of "open and free deliberation" where "social and economic inequalities must not factor into political discourse" (Heresco 28). However, this lenient definition of what language is constituted as vital toward a democracy leads to the allowance of "negative, deceptive advertising" with the "lack of disclosure" of the group that put the message out (Krumholtz 1129). Because of this ability to put out messages from shadow sources, the political inequality between people and private interests is clearly shown. Because a deliberative democracy is founded on the equality of its members, the rights of "corporate personhood" only serve to further destabilize the democracy as a whole and to raise doubts among its members. This destabilization is due to the many differences between people and corporations, which had previously been ameliorated through campaign finance reform, the goal of which was to put all political speakers on equal footing. These inherent inequalities between people and private institutions illustrate why past campaign finance reforms were put in place to peel back the political voice of private entities relative to the public. Even with these inherent inequalities, however, the Supreme Court still ruled in favor of the "disadvantaged" persons, even if they did unexpectedly disadvantage even more people in the process, 558 U.S. 24 (2010).

When comparing the validity of the argument that people and corporations are equal, it is vital to explore how each maneuvers throughout the public sphere. Using the main principle of visibility in Ari Adut's Theory of the Public Sphere, one can deduce that a member of the public sphere is "subject to spectatorship," or under the watchful eye of the rest of society (Adut 244). However, large corporations do not follow these rules when it comes to political donations, as evidenced by the fact that donations to 501(c)(4) nonprofit political groups are rarely made public. In fact, "only 40 percent of all outside spending is fully disclosed" and "another 30 percent was not disclosed at all" (Krumholtz 1129). This capacity to bypass the public sphere means that large corporations are able to slip around the same rules that private citizens are expected to follow. The consequence of the rules of the public sphere not pertaining to "corporate persons" is that corporations are allowed to live outside of the same public sphere that normal people are fixed to. Therefore, the result of the *Citizens United* ruling being that "corporations are operating in the same marketplace of ideas as individual citizens" doesn't serve to improve the democratic election process but rather spawns the construct of a "tiered democracy," which undermines the effectiveness of a deliberative democracy because the "inherent social and economic distinctions undermine notions of trust and fairness" (Heresco 28-29). Also, because of the increasing amounts of money in the American political system resulting in more information being hidden in privacy, the public is inhibited from having equal access to all pertinent knowledge, thus undermining the democratic process, as a result. This diminished public visibility over the political process is detrimental to public engagement through debating and voting and breeds a negative attitude towards politics (Krumholtz 1134). This negativity towards the political system stems from the influence of money, which has shifted many aspects of the democratic process into private, closed-door meetings where the public is completely left out. Because of this political exclusion, the general public perceives money as the ultimate influence over policy decisions and, as a result, the ultimate influence over American politics. It is because of the treatment of private entities like people, even with their intrinsic differences, that so many voters are scared away from the political process that they perceive as bought and paid for by the same people who keep continuously funneling money into it.

The treatment of corporations and people as equals serves as the basis for the distrust of money in politics by the poorest of people.

Whereas the average citizen may donate a small amount of cash to a political campaign from their limited supply of resources, newfound corporate persons are able to donate seemingly unlimited quantities of money to both sides of the aisles. "Here the 'individual' rights of corporations runs up against the ideal of deliberation existing of and for the public" (Heresco 27). While it is believable to the public that the average person is supporting who they deem to be the best candidate, the double-sided donations to both sides of the partisan aisle by corporations are not perceived by the general public as gifts to the democratic process but rather as political investments in a government aimed at benefitting the will of multinational corporations at the expense of its citizens. The inherently different mindsets present when these supposedly equal entities donate to campaigns are also a cause of concern for many citizens. "PAC dollars are significantly related to incumbency and election results... individual contributions are not correlated with votes received or incumbency" (Craig and Soley 193). These clear differences in donation trends point to the contrasting mindsets between people and corporations as it pertains to the political process. Whereas people donate money towards candidates who espouse policies and ideas that they support, corporations donate in order to gain favor and goodwill with political actors. Krumholtz decries this type of behavior by corporations when she says that it "breeds cynicism at a time when we need citizens to engage" (Krumholtz 1134). However, this perceived political inequality by large swaths of the population is not just based in cynicism; it is also a consequence of the rising levels of economic inequality, which only further drives the narrative of the semiotics of money.

Because of the further perpetuation of economic inequality in America, many people have become disaffected from the political process, which only serves to ensure that the status quo is upheld and that the circulation of the narrative of the semiotics of money in American politics is continued. This decline in political participation is supported by statistics that show that "among the poor... turnout is very low" but "over four-fifths of those with incomes over $150,000 reported voting" (Bonica 111). This trend serves as evidence for the continued rise of economic inequality in America even though "the notion that inequality should be at least partially self-correcting in a democracy has a long pedigree in economic theory" (Bonica 103). Researchers such as Ross Burkhart of Boise State theorize that "the increasing international presence of democracy should decrease the incidence of income inequality" (1). However, Nancy

Bermeo of Oxford University illustrates that democracy is "a system of governance for 'the public realm,'" and thus cannot deal with the "inequalities of many sorts [that] derive precisely from these private realms" (23). It is the inability of democracy to govern the ever-expanding role of the private sphere in American politics that leaves many people discouraged about their voice when it comes to political discourse. However, the shortcomings that befall democracy on the topic of economic inequality are not the fault of the populace, but rather get to the heart of the inherent flaw of democracy as a purveyor of equality.

Contrary to scholarly thought dating back to the time of Aristotle, democracy is not meant to be a mechanism for the reversal of any types of inequality except for political inequality. The reason for democracy's lack of ability to reverse other types of inequality is that "the emergence of democracy 'was a political revolution but not an economic one'" (Bermeo 23). In studying the history of governance in Britain, Christopher Ellis and John Fender found that democracy was actually used by oligarchs to quell "the threat of rebellion" and serve as a "commitment device" in order to gain credibility with the public and force all oligarchs to go through with their promises to the public (120-121). The way these oligarchs kept power was to spread the political power, although they were still rewarded greatly when it came to money. Ross Burkhart offers an idea quite contrary to the notion that democracy only corrects political inequality, stating that "Democracy lessens income inequality because it spreads political power, decreasing the likelihood that economic power will be concentrated in the hands of the few" (3). This oversimplification, however, is apparent in American politics, which is a democracy with large amounts of economic inequality. Although one would expect that a democracy with large amounts of wealth inequality would vote for candidates in favor of economic policies of redistribution, there are other confounding factors that make this line of thinking too simple. The biggest of these factors is the non-participation of large segments of the voting population, leaving the wealthy with more of a say over a system that benefits them. This political inequality is made possible by the very negative participatory reaction had by the population when it comes to a political system influenced by money, which has served to negatively impact the conditions under which discourse occurs in American politics.

Deliberation within a deliberative democracy also serves as a key component in the public acceptance of the semiotics of money. In their research studying the psychology of politics, Hugo Mercier and

Helene Landemore have narrowed down two separate occasions in which deliberation can occur— normal and abnormal conditions. Under normal conditions individuals find themselves in a group with diverse opinions, while under abnormal conditions individuals are either by themselves or with other like-minded people. Whereas under normal conditions deliberation "can be expected to lead to better outcomes," abnormal conditions can lead to confirmation biases or "the tendency to search for arguments that favor our opinion" (Mercier and Landemore 253). Under the ideals of a true deliberative democracy, deliberation that occurs under abnormal conditions is not true deliberation and is more or less a "staged" and "superficial" discussion of ideas. This is because of the innate biases that urge people to confirm what they already believe rather than look at the entire scope of the issue objectively (Adut 244). It is this appetite to confirm one's own opinions that has done the most harm to American democracy. The belief among the poor and working class that politics only works for the wealthy has led to the steady decline in voting from poorer economic groups, thus increasing the impact that the wealthy, who do vote, have on the political process (Bonica 104). This dynamic of the wealthy being given a greater influence over politics because of the lack of participation of the poor has only served to confirm the pre-existing notions held by the poor. This societal confirmation bias has paved the way for the attainment of greater amounts of political capital by the affluent as a result of the disengagement in the political process by an increasing number of average Americans.

In conclusion, although contrary to popular belief, the great influence of money in the American political system is not due to its actual monetary value but rather how it is perceived by the general public. Specifically in the wake of the Citizens United ruling, which was based off of the ideals of ultimate inclusion of all entities in the democratic process, the unintended consequences that have spawned as a result have only served to undermine the very ideals that the ruling was meant to preserve. With the further inclusion of corporations and other big-moneyed interests known as "corporate persons" into the political system, many people have deemed the political system to be broken (Heresco 28). The perceived influence of money in politics is also aided by the added focus on fundraising by the candidates (Krumholtz 1133). The fact that candidates are forced to fundraise and focus large amounts of their time and resources on courting large, private interests only serves to further separate candidates from their constituents. The biggest consequence of

this added focus on the rich and wealthy is the exclusion of those without great amounts of resources, thus leaving the average person with the notion that their well-being is not the focus of American politics. This great attention on money rather than on the average person leads many people to overestimate the actual value of money in politics today.

The accepted notion of the semiotics of money has led many people to believe that the greatest asset in politics is money. However, this misconception serves as the greatest influence that money delivers in American politics. Research done by scholars such as Adam Brown has found that "campaign spending does not have much of a causal relationship with vote shares" (22). Although contradictory to popular belief, campaign contributions are not spent with the hopes of buying votes. Instead, this money is spent by private interests in order to gain favor with the likely victors so as to build up a good working relationship with those in positions of power. This methodology behind contributions from private entities is supported by the work done by Craig and Soley, who found that money from PACs has a strong correlation between two factors— incumbency and the results of the election (193). Even with all this research, however, large bands of people still decide not to show up on election day because they feel as if their votes don't matter. This trend points to "the traditional character of American grassroots politics… eroding" (Craig and Soley 194). This erosion in public participation in elections is where money has indirectly made its biggest impact on the electoral process. Because of the semiotics of money, much of the population has lost sight of the fact that their vote is the most precious resource in a democratic system. This is resulting in an increasing number of lower and working-class people not making their voices heard on election day, which only serves to transfer political influence to the wealthiest individuals.

As illustrated in the findings of Adam Bonica, "low turnout of the poor [has] combined to make the distribution of voters more weighted to high incomes than is the distribution of households" (104). This decline in turnout by the poor only serves to further advance the narrative that the wealthy have a disproportionate influence on the political system, even if much of that is due to the lack of participation from poorer groups of people. It is because of the indirect funneling of political influence from the poor to the wealthy that this societal confirmation bias, on the topic of money in politics, is advanced. This confirmation bias is made possible by the political climate, which can be best described as abnormal

because of the equal treatment given to the two distinct entities that are people and corporations (Mercier and Landemore 253). Although less emphasis seems to be put on the poor compared to the wealthy relative to their numbers as a percentage of the population, candidates are tasked with courting those who actually show up to vote. Until the poor become reengaged with the political process, it is unlikely that anything will actually change in American politics. However, even with the seemingly grand influence of money in the political system, the voters themselves can never be unseated as the true drivers of change, provided they actually proceed with their right to vote. Until then, the semiotics of money will continue to serve as the true impact of money in American politics and will only serve to further exclude a large portion of the population from the political process, even if it is because of their own doing.

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Prison Video Visitation: A Breakthrough in Technology or a Breakdown in Communication?

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By MORGAN MOHLMANN

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project is to examine the usage of video visitation within United States Correctional Facilities and what this usage can imply for the prisoners and their visitors alike. Much of current research on prison visitation has focused on the implications and effects of in-person visitation within the prison system on the inmates and their visitors. This project aims to take the findings of these studies and apply them to video visitation using real-life testimonies of those who have used a video visitation system while also looking at the history of visitation and technology within prisons. This project suggests that technology, such as video visitation utilized by correctional facilities, can have negative outcomes for inmates and their visitors.

INTRODUCTION

The process and act of visitation within the prison system are complex and multifaceted. A controversial topic in recent discussion of visitation has been the adoption of video visitation within the prison system. Among those jails that have chosen to adopt this process, seventy-five percent of them have decided to eliminate in-person visitation completely, showing the growth in popularity of video visitation within this era of mass incarceration and technological advancements (Haverty). The complexities of visitation are shown through the written accounts that many have kept on their own visitation experiences. One such testimony comes from Maya Schenwar, in an article she wrote called, "A Virtual Visit to a Relative in Jail." In this article, she writes about some of the emotional and technological struggles she faced when attempting to use video technology to visit an incarcerated relative. This testimony, along with others, offers insight into the issues surrounding video visitation and the emotions that can be evoked through experiences prior to, during, and after visitation (Schenwar). Scholars have discussed, argued, and conducted research on the complexities of visitations, but little of their work focuses on the effects of video visitation, possibly due to how relatively new the system is. In Jonathon J. Beckmeyer and Joyce A. Arditti's article, "Implications of In-Person Visits for Incarcerated Parents'

Family Relationships and Parenting Experience," through data collected from structured interviews, the researchers argue the strong importance of in-person visitation and the dual effects it may have on family relations. These effects may be both positive and negative for the family relations (129-132). Beckmeyer and Arditti's work, along with other scholarly work, reports a great deal about in-person visitation but focuses little on video visitation. Studies on in-person visitation have indicated an important and profound effect experienced by inmates and their families. However, it is not clear how the conclusions derived from these studies apply to the process of video visitation. Yvonne Jewkes and Helen Johnston's article "Cavemen in an Era of Speed-of-Light Technology" discusses the idea that as social media, the internet, and other technologies expand, the potential for feelings of disconnect is greater between prisoners and society, as the prisoners are provided limited access to these technologies. Through this idea of the expansion of the feelings of disconnect and a review of the history of past visitation systems in prisons, they argue the importance of providing technology usage to inmates (135). Further, they argue that the inmates are being denied these technologies, which could result in harmful effects (137). This may not hold true in the realm of video visitation implementation within correctional facilities. The topic of video visitation is beyond the scope of the specific topics within their articles: therefore, Jewkes and Johnston fail to mention some of the drawbacks that can also arise from the technological advancements that are seen through Schenwar's experience and others with similar experiences. Maya Schenwar's experience, together with current research on in-person visitation, highlights the idea that the way both parties perceive the visitation has a profound effect on how beneficial the visit is for those involved.

HISTORICAL ROOTS OF VISITATION AND COMMUNICATION WITHIN PRISONS

The privileges and perceived rights of the prisoner regarding visitation are not new points of contention in any debate concerning correctional facilities. The history of how prisoners have been allowed to communicate shows how the views on communication within and beyond the walls of the prisons have evolved but have also, to an extent, stayed the same throughout the passage of time. It is important to recognize the evolution of the systems in place and the causes behind these changes. In their article, Jewkes and Johnston mention historical points

on the timeline of prison systems that are important for the basis of visitation debates. This history shows the perception of communication and visitation in the past, which aids in the understanding of the current positions and ideas on visitations. They mention that 19th-Century prisons practiced what they referred to as "the separate and silent systems." These systems rejected any form of communication with others, which sometimes resulted in insanity among prisoners. Seen as a positive practice, the implementation of separate and silent systems was thought to prevent "contamination" among the prisoners. For example, the belief was that keeping first-time offenders away from repeated offenders would be beneficial to the first-time offenders by limiting any corruption and spread of criminal behavior among the prisoners themselves. Furthermore, it was believed this would benefit not only the future lives of the inmates, but the prison system entirely. However, prisoners were physically and mentally unable to handle the separation and silence. Despite the mental deterioration of inmates, the media of the time deemed prisons facilities "too soft" on incarcerated individuals (Jewkes and Johnston 137). There have been changes within the rules and policies associated with communication since the 19th century.

Although not as severe as the complete silence rule practiced in the past, a new silence rule, one could argue, exists between the incarcerated and their attempted visitors. This may be seen through the current policies and systems inhibiting the communication the individuals were once accustomed to in their daily lives prior to incarceration. Denying a prisoner communication and visitation in the past was a way to prevent further corruption and thus, an attempt to manage the inmate's behavior. Just as the denial of communication was used in the past, in the current day, allowing prisoner communication and visitation is used as a control management tool. As shown through rules adopted and presented in Florida Administrative Code, "…visits' impact could begin previsit because correctional staff can use restrictions on visitation privileges as a behavior management tool." According to one study, "The promise of visits could be an especially useful tool because incentives and disincentives work best when they are linked to inmates' normative commitments" (qtd. in Siennick, Mears and Bales 422). If inmates value their visitations then the use of policies to either deny or grant their visitations can have the ability to affect the inmates' behavior up to weeks prior to the visitation. If an inmate desires visitation with anyone beyond the walls of the prisons then they should be more likely to avoid violating any rules of the

prison to ensure they can obtain a visitation (Siennick, Mears and Bales 422). Although the policies have shifted from complete denial of communication to allowance of communication, the purpose behind the choices have remained the same; to control the inmate's behavior to the extent deemed necessary by the correctional facility.

Securus Technologies, the largest provider in inmate communication, is one such company that currently provides video services, as well as other services, to correctional facilities across the country. This company was the service provider used by Maya Schenwar in her attempt to visit her incarcerated sister via video (Schenwar). Securus Technologies' website reads, "Securus Technologies – *Connecting What Matters.*" This phrase makes the service seem attractive to the users and companies they provide for. The service targets the emotions of those who visit the site, who might already be experiencing hardships with their loved one currently in the correctional systems. Securus Technologies' website also states that they use "superior communication services" to connect inmates to those with whom they are trying to communicate and that they aim to aide in the maintaining of relationships between the inmates and those on the outside through "easy" options ("About Us"). However, the experience shared by Schenwar showed that using Securus to communicate with her loved one did not result in being connected to what mattered. . .or to anything at all. (Details of her experience will be discussed later.) Schenwar's experience does not stand alone as a single case of experienced hardships with video services, as legislative bills and court cases highlight some issues surrounding prison experience and visitation.

In December of 2016, Senator Tammy Duckworth introduced a bill in The Senate on the topic of video visitation services within correctional facilities. This bill's aim is to require the Federal Communications Commission to make regulations more widely known and to make amendments to its regulations, as needed, based on details discussed within the text of the bill to guarantee the regulations are just and reasonable (Duckworth). This bill, currently still in circulation, shows that the debate and issues arising from this new system of visitation are not limited to those who are directly affected by the policies and visitation but have been widespread enough to travel all the way to Congress. The issues have entered the courtroom as well. In 2003, a U.S. Supreme Court case, *Overton v. Bazzetta*, ruled on issues surrounding general inmate visitation in Michigan and the correctional facility's ability to set restrictions on the visitation process. Joshua Cochran and Daniel Mears analyze the decision

from this case in their article. They state, "… although the Court did not explicitly declare that inmates have a right to visitation, its [sic] ruling implied that inmates' right to outside association is not forfeited as a result of incarceration. Viewed in this light, prison visitation is, to an extent, a right afforded to prisoners" (Cochran and Mears 253). Although many rights are forfeited once an individual enters the prison system, this court ruling suggests that visitation is not among them.

Other scholarly sources also suggest that general visitation should be viewed within this context. Within current debates on incarceration, the question arises, "Where is the line regarding what should and should not be available for prison inmates?" (Tewksbury and Mustaine 174). One answer to this proposed question is known as the principle of least eligibility. This principle is explained as,

> the idea that 'prisoners should not be given programs and services or live under conditions that are better than those of the lowest classes of the noncriminal population in society'. According to this way of thinking, convicted and incarcerated offenders should not be provided with anything better than that provided or accessible to anyone in the general population. (Tewksbury and Mustaine 175)

Visitation and communication to others are services available to the lowest classes of the noncriminal population. Therefore, providing inmates with this service does not violate the principle of least eligibility. Viewing prison visitation as a right as opposed to a privilege gives a new perspective to the implications surrounding visitation within this context. Furthermore, it gives a new meaning to the rules, regulations and practices, such as video visitation, implemented by those who govern these proceedings. To begin to formulate an understanding of video visitation and all that it entails one must analyze the systems and practices of traditional visitation.

TRADITIONAL VISITATION

There has been plenty of research done on in-person visitation. In the article, "Inside the Black Box: Prison Visitation, the Costs of Offending, and Inmate Social Capital," written by Siyu Liu, Justin T. Pickett, and Thomas Baker, they mention, "The key theoretical assumption underlying prison visitation research is that inmates who are visited may be more insulated from the negative effects of confinement, such as the knifing off

from conventional others and the associated reduction in social capital" (767). This would mean that the action of receiving a visitation while incarcerated protects these inmates from some negative effects associated with their current situation. The authors posit that these negative effects have the potential to impact the prisoners' lives beyond their current situations in prison. Theoretically, the visitation should increase inmates' perceived costs of committing another crime, in turn, influencing their own post-release outcomes (Liu, Pickett and Baker 772). If inmates saw the true cost of their crimes then their post-release outcomes should be more positive than if they had not received visitation. Through their own empirical study, they argue that child and family member visitation could predict a higher probability of the inmate being able to arrange employment following their release from prison (Liu, Pickett and Baker 781). This is important, as many inmates must face the harsh realities of the job market with an even extra burden than those without a criminal record endure. Finding post-release employment is imperative to newly released individuals, because without it, the odds of reoffending may increase (Liu, Pickett and Baker 772). As suggested through this study, traditional visitation creates several outcomes. There is no one singular result stemming from a visitation experience.

The multiple facets of the visitation can all have strong contributing factors on the outcome of the visitation. Beckmeyer and Arditti discuss some of the complexities of outcomes that may arise from visitation. Regarding family visitation, they argue that it "has been described as a *developmental paradox* that can foster family relationships but can also remind family members of past traumatic events" (132). This idea of a developmental paradox provides a glimpse into the intricacy of the family visit. It can be potentially beneficial to the family but it can also bring up harsh memories or repressed feelings. What can lead to a positive outcome or negative may be, as argued by Beckmeyer and Arditti, the quality of the visitation, which they conceptualize "in terms of the type and severity of problems encountered during in-person visits" (131). They also argue, "for family relationships it does seem that quality not quantity is the standard, highlighting the complexity of visitation processes. Higher quality visits (i.e., those that are perceived as less problematic by offenders) appear to facilitate offenders' feelings of closeness with their children, but the frequency of visits does not" (144). This counters any argument that the more frequent and accessible visitation is, the better the visitation experience will be. Paul Brown, a death row inmate, details his one and

only visit of the year that he received, as he has no family living in the state where he is incarcerated in. In this account, Brown writes,

> But how can I ask them not to visit, when just to see them soothes my soul? They're a part of me. I miss them. It's a real treat for me to see them. On the other hand, sitting on opposite sides of plexiglass is only a reminder of our separateness, not our closeness. Any intimate gesture appears awkward and just a bit off – while the distance between us is magnified by the filthy plexiglass and reinforced by all the concrete and steel.

The experience described by Brown is not unique. Most prisons have policies stating an inmate on death row can only have non-contact visitation, as described by Brown as he mentions the plexiglass barrier (Sharp 184). Brown's description of his experience both proves the developmental paradox that Beckmeyer and Arditi argue and gives insight into their research of visitation quality. Having the chance to see his family brings him joy, but it is hard for him to completely relish in that moment when there is a clear and physical divide between him and his loved ones to remind him of the mental divide as well. This physical boundary experienced throughout their already limited visit emphasizes the lack of high-quality visitation. Although Brown's family rarely visits because of distance, this is not the most important factor of his visitation experience. It is the quality of that singular visit that has the most important effect. The lack of physical closeness and presence of boundaries set in place for the visitation helped to foster the negative feelings and mental distress felt by Brown. The dirty plexiglass furthers the feelings of separation felt by Brown and ultimately leaves him wondering if it would be better if they had never visited at all. These feelings conjured by the non-contact visit present Brown with some negativity surrounding the visitation, resulting in a low-quality visitation by the standards set by Beckmeyer and Arditi and decreasing the chances of a beneficial visitation experience. This plexiglass is like the computer screens that divide individuals within video visitation, thus suggesting video visitation can also foster similar effects and feelings as mentioned through in-person visitation situations.

VIDEO VISITATION

After Maya Schenwar's visitation experience, she expressed similar negative feelings as Brown. This provides a direct example of how

video visitation can further the divide between inmates and their visitors more so than the plexiglass that inhibited any chance of high-quality visitation for Brown. In the visitation experience she had with her sister, Schenwar explains, "Her face was dim and her words were delayed and didn't sync with the movements of her mouth. For much of the visit I saw only half her head, and neither of us could look each other in the eye, no matter how much I fiddled with my setup." Brown felt at a distance from his relatives who sat just before him behind the plexiglass. Schenwar sat separated from her sister by a form of glass. However, in her case, she could not experience the communication in real time or even have the luxury of looking her own sister in the eyes, something even the lowest class of the general population experiences. This suggests that video visitation strengthens any unavoidable negative effects experienced with types of in-person visitation and further lowers the quality of visitation, removing any potential benefits from the experience.

The use of technology is seen as a means to broaden people's interaction and knowledge, but in certain situations, technology can have the opposite effect. Jewkes and Johnson discuss this unfavorable reality of technology and the consequences of hindering communication within their article. They argue that, "denying prisoners Internet access might thus be seen as an example of technology being used as a strategy of social exclusion" (137). They also argue that controlling the communication inmates can use goes beyond the realm of just communication because, "as Foucault (1997) reminds us, in bureaucratic institutions such as prisons, knowledge (and information) is power, which makes the control of communication paramount" (138). Restricting and controlling sources of communication can prevent the inmate from gaining knowledge and information. Maya Schenwar's visitation with her sister during her sister's incarceration exemplifies this relationship between control of communication and power. Schenwar explains, "When she first called me from the jail, I planned to drive over immediately to see her. My sister had been incarcerated before, and I'd always relied on regular visits to help show my love and support. But I discovered that in-person visits were not allowed. All "visits" were to be conducted via video, through Securus's system." The first attempt at a visitation resulted in no visitation at all because of technical difficulties. She writes, "I sat on the phone with a helpless tech person, crying. I knew my sister would be devastated. I was worried she'd think I hadn't shown up." This failure in visitation could thus further her sister's feelings of isolation and exclusion if she believed her sister had not

shown up. The use of this "glitchy" system, which may not always work, hinders proper and full communication. Whether intentional or not, this can be seen as a method of social exclusion and can therefore also be seen as a method of control. The quality of the communication experienced by these sisters is poor and does not give a proper setting to exchange knowledge and information. This choice of mandatory video calling for visitation can be viewed as a systematic way to gain control and further feelings of exclusion.

Some argue video visitation is beneficial on all accounts. As discussed in an article by Juan A. Lozano, some correctional officers argue that "video visitation has been a boon to their efforts to improve security and increase visiting hours." These increased hours should, in theory, allow for more access to visitation, thus lessening the negative effects associated with incarceration and heightening the chances of forming employments arrangements after release, as mentioned by Liu, Pickett and Baker. On paper, this seems to be a beneficial solution for prisoners, visitors and correctional officers, but stories such as the one told by Schenwar offer a different reality.

Schenwar was unable to connect with her sister and then experienced a poor connection and video quality. This would suggest her sister would be unable to achieve the benefits that can arise from in-person visitation. Schenwar's experience is not atypical. Dawn Herbert, whose son is incarcerated, experiences difficulties as well with video visitation. Herbert, who lives ten minutes away from where her son is incarcerated, sits separated by walls, screens, and locks a few hundred feet away as she conducts her visit with her son. She states, "He is in that building, and I can't get to him … I can't stand it 'cause he's on the screen in front of me, and I can't touch him" (Haverty). She is physically quite close to her child but metaphorically far away-a feeling felt by Brown as he sat in front of his loved ones without physical contact (Brown). Herbert's few statements show a glimpse of the frustration that she feels from the beginning to the end of each of her visitation experiences. On most days, she is unable to even hear her son through the services provided by Securus in this particular prison. The sound may cut out and the screen may even freeze during the visitation (Haverty). Schenwar experienced those similar difficulties. The benefits of clear communication shown through in-person visitation are again, as with Schenwar, lost among the wavelengths of the video screen.

CONCLUSION

The prison system within the United States affects the incarcerated individuals, but also their families, friends, and society. An inmate gets sent to prison as punishment for a crime that they have committed, namely breaking a rule governing society. After the sentence is over, the inmate will have to habituate back into society. Having the ability to effectively communicate with others while in the correctional system allows for more positive future prospects for the individual. The problem is the limited research on the complicated topic of video visitation. However, these testimonies offer an intimate insight into the realm of video visitation. Although scholars, such as Jewkes and Johnston, have argued that the implementation of technology within prisons is beneficial and that the inmates are being denied access to this technology, other research suggests different outcomes for this implementation. Research on in-person visitation and in-depth analysis of real-life accounts suggest that video visitation removes the potentially beneficial aspects of the visitation experience while also potentially perpetuating a sense of social exclusion felt by the inmate. These benefits can relate to, among other things, future jobs following their release and understanding the entire scope of their criminal behavior. The negative emotional experience of the inmate and visitor can be heightened through the process of visitation via video, thus reducing the overall perceived quality of the visitation by the parties involved. The lower the perceived quality of the visitation, the less effective the visitation becomes. Although technological advancements can enhance the prison experience, using technology in the case of visitation provides more adverse effects than positive contributions.

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Gaining Insight into Psychological Disorders through Dreams

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By SARAH E. PAKAY

ABSTRACT

By looking at the significance of dreams, this paper evaluates the ways in which dreams can be used as a practical tool by people with psychological disorders to gain personal insight into their own minds. The theory of decoding manifest content into latent content to decipher meaning in dreams is used as a frame throughout the paper. The Problem Solving Theory shows how dreams follow a narrative, starting with a core problem and following through to a solution. The differences between waking consciousness and dreams are determined by the lack of logical reasoning in dreams. Dreams are connected to psychological disorders in terms of bizarre events and lack of logical reasoning. There is also shown to be a category of overarching themes that present themselves in the dreams of people with psychological disorders. The sleeping brain has a process of reorganizing deeply suppressed memories. Insight is gained through the spontaneous nature and emotional content in dreams.

INTRODUCTION

Psychological disorders are described as "clusters of psychological, emotional, or behavioral symptoms that cause a person to experience serious distress or significant mental impairment; these symptoms must be unusual or unexpected, or the patient must show evidence of more than one behavior that deviates from normal social expectations" (Williams & Piotrowski, 2016). Data presented by The National Institute of Mental Health (2015), estimates that over 17.9 percent of all Americans adults, 18 years and older, suffer from a diagnosable psychological disorder. This makes up about 43.4 million people in the United States who experience mental health issues. Psychological disorders are broken into five main groups, which include anxiety disorders, mood disorders, dissociative disorders, schizophrenia and personality disorders (King, 2013, p.480). According to The National Institute of Mental Health (2015), one of the most common mental disorders in the United States is depression. In 2015, 6.7% of adults and 12.5% of adolescents in the U.S. reported at least one episode of major depression within the year. Depression can disrupt a person's life with symptoms relating to cognition, behavior, and

physical being (King, 2013, p.454). Those who suffer from psychological disorders often become overwhelmed with feelings of hopelessness and a lack of self-worth. They can begin to lose track of themselves and feel confused and lost as to where their life is heading. These thoughts can sometimes lead to self-harm and thoughts of suicide.

How can the evaluation of dreams be used as a practical tool to gain personal insight for people with psychological disorders? Dreams are a series of ideas, images, and emotions which stream through a person's mind, most commonly during the Rapid Eye Movement portion of sleep. Rapid Eye Movement (REM) is the last of five stages in the sleep cycle where most dreams occur. REM dreams tend to be more vivid, last longer, are more memorable after waking, and are often more bizarre. Questions arise surrounding the meaning of dreams, where they come from, and what effect they have on a person's normal cognition (Chara, 2016, Introduction, para. 1). Dreams have been documented and studied in many ancient civilizations and cultures for millennia. Records of dreams and their interpretations date back as early as 5000 B.C.E. (King, 2013, p.143). Dreams are universally relevant and people from all around the world even tend to share similar themes within their dreams (Yu, 2016). According to Edwards et al., themes of death, hostility, and nightmares, as well as highly bizarre or highly emotional content are some of the indicators, within the dreams, to psychological disorders (Edwards et al., 2015, p.11).

Controversy arises between whether or not dream content has a profound meaning. Sigmund Freud (1970), one of the leaders of dream theory, believes that dreams are rooted in a person's deepest desire (Chara, 2016, Origins and Significance, para. 2). He defines two layers of dream content. Manifest content is the surface narrative of the dream, embedded with symbols which contain the dream's meaning. Latent content is the hidden meaning to those embedded symbols (King, 2013, p.143). The manifest content therefore needs to be interpreted into its latent form in order to derive its meaning. More recent psychologists, including J. Allan Hobson (1970), state that dreams are just a combination of recent memory and external environment. They believe that dreams do not have any psychological significance (Chara, 2016, Origins and Significance, para. 1). Using the Problem Solving Theory, Ruggeri, Mosca, and Zei (2011) are able to decipher dream narratives and decipher them into an algorithm used to not only prelude meaning, but also to show how the dream content works to solve problems. "Problem Solving"

(PS) in dreams is the process which conducts "mental organization" and preservation within the mind. The process is controlled by the unconscious, as it is not usually determined by the external world (Ruggeri et al., 2011, p.247). The "Problem Solving Grid" establishes three distinct parts that the narrative follows within a dream. Those components are the "Core Problem" (CP), the "Elaboration Process" (EP), and the "Problem Outcome" (O) (Ruggeri et al. 2011, p.249). The study of dream content and activity is important because dream analysis can communicate the root of a person's problems or reveal unknown desires that the person might seek to pursue. By bringing unconscious memories and concerns to a conscious level, dreams divulge meaning and can detect the root of psychological disorders. In this way, dreams work to produce practical insight to achieve positive psychological change.

Analyzing and breaking down the arguments of Giuseppe Ruggeri et al. (2011), Simone Cavallotti et al. (2014), Barbara Schwerdtle et al. (2016), and Christopher L. Edwards et al. (2015) will lend to the study of the "Problem Solving Theory" as it relates to dreams, and subsequently psychological disorders. The first section, "Finding Meaning in Dreams," looks at Freud's theory of manifest and latent content, in order to lay the foundation of decoding the content of dreams into useable material. The next section analyzes "The Detection of Psychological Disorders Through Dreams," which establishes the lack of logical reasoning in dreams to be the main difference between the dreaming state and waking life. The section then investigates the various themes in dreams to show how to detect psychological disorders. The final section "Using Dreams to Elicit Insight into the Cause of Psychological Disorders" will bring the theories all together, using the Problem Solving Theory, to prove the hypothesis that dream narratives can be deciphered and constructed into applicable content used to find insight into psychological disorders.

FINDING MEANING IN DREAMS

According to the Problem Solving Theory dreams have the ability to uncover and solve problems through the decoding of manifest content. Freud originated this idea through manifest and latent content. The analysis of the dream narrative can directly reveal the core problem within that dream. Freud (1970) states "These wishes and phantasies, which analysis discloses in our dreams at night, often present themselves as repetitions and refashioning of scenes of infancy. Thus the dream facade may

show us directly the true core of the dream, distorted through admixture with other matter" (p. 29). In other words, the analysis of dreams can reveal deep desires and ideas within a person's imagination which originate from moments of the earliest days of life and are then brought back to the surface through a dream. Therefore, dreamers' deep wishes are disclosed within the manifest content, but can be observed and decoded through a translation of dream analysis. Freud's theory divulges the idea that a dream's meaning is hidden under layers of manifest content. The meaning is present, it just needs to be translated from manifest content into its latent form. This theory has been the basis for many psychologists since Freud. Ruggeri et al. (2011) uses this methodology in the Problem Solving Theory which works to organize dream content in order to prompt the identification of innate problems. The autopoietic process refers to the action of reproducing and regenerating oneself. The authors define their theory within the context of dreams as "the expression of a specific activity aiming to identify problems inherent to the mental organization and to promote their reorganization. The basic assumption is that dream activity is involved in wider autopoietic and structuring processes of the mind" (Ruggeri et al., 2011, p.248). Within dreams, the Problem Solving Theory relates to the communication between pinpointing a prominent innate issue and bringing it to the foreground of mental organization. It is assumed that dreams are a part of a larger mental process which works to maintain and regenerate structural processes of the mind. The Problem Solving Theory is important because it provides a basis for establishing the connection between the dream consciousness and waking life. If dreams can identify a problem, that problem can be evaluated in a waking life state of consciousness. This opens a broad spectrum to be further discussed and discovered through psychotherapy.

Dreams are created through a highly scientific process within the brain. Some scientists argue that dreams have no validity in the context of meaning, so they cannot be useful for gaining practical insight. Yu (2016) describes the idea that brainstem-driven theorists are convinced dreams are formed through a random process due to the uninvolved forebrain (p. 84). The activation-synthesis theory derived by Hobson (e.g. 1988, 1997, 2009) states that "dreaming is a form of delirium... in which the cortex tries to make sense of random firings from the pontine tegmentum during REM sleep" (Domhoff, 2011, p. 1163). In other words, dreaming is nothing but madness. As some areas of the brain shut off, others try to make sense of the random reactivations, resulting in incoherent dream

images. In this way, dreams do not contain meaning because the content is formed merely by accident. Dreams are simulations which do not connect to the external world. As stated by Domhoff (2011),

> [dreams] may simply be dramatic simulations of our conceptions, concerns, and interests... there is no engagement with the external world. If that proves to be the case, then psychological meaning and cultural usefulness have to be distinguished from each other and from the issue of adaptive function (p. 1172).

According to this theory there is no practical usefulness in dreams. Thoughts and concerns of the dreamer may appear in the dream, but they are simply imitating situations of waking life and do not connect to deeper meaning. Dreams therefore must be separated from psychological insight. The theory of "the dream as a product of an emergent process" described by Kahn (2016) states that the process of dreams is unpredictable, formed by incongruent images merging together into a single narrative (p. 2). According to this school of thought, if the dream is entirely random, it cannot hold insightful content. However, most psychologists still agree that dreams have a significant meaning which can be applied to waking life. There is scientific relevance to analyzing dreams, according to Carl Jung (2011), because dreams act as a direct window into psychic unconscious. As he says, "the unconscious possesses an aetiological significance, and since dreams are the direct expression of unconscious psychic activity, the attempt to analyze and interpret dreams is theoretically justified from a scientific standpoint" (p. 88). The unconsciousness provides a significant expression to the clarification of mental activity. Since dreams come directly from unconscious thoughts, there is scientific justification to believe that the analysis and interpretation of dreams can lead to further discovery into an intrinsic resolution. With the acknowledgement of science and how the brain functions, there is good reason to study the content and analysis of dreams.

The frame established by Jung (2011), that dream interpretation is scientifically relevant, can be exemplified by the cognitive process of dreams which is distinctly separated from the conscious brain. The notable differences between waking and dream states are described as a lack of logical reasoning within dreams. The cognitive process of dreams alters perception from that of waking life, which in turn guides the dreamer through a dream narrative as a passenger rather than the driver. During

REM sleep, increasing "activation in centrencephalic, paralimbic, limbic and unimodal sensory regions" causes bizarreness in dreams (Schwerdtle, Häfner, Kübler, & Hobson, 2016, p.177). The centrencephalic refers to the center of the brain, which "relays information between the lower and higher brain centers." The paralimbic cortex is contained in the temporal lobe and is involved in "hearing, language processing, and memory." The paralimbic cortex is directly connected to the limbic system, which is "important to both memory and emotion." The unimodal sensory regions, or the associative cortex, are involved in processing sensory information such as vision, sound, and smell, it is also a big role in the intellectual function of thinking and problem solving (King, 2013, p. 60-70). As stated by Schwerdtle et al. (2016),

> This selective reactivation, which may be even higher than during waking, while simultaneously excluding executive regions, can be linked to cognitive dream aspects, such as the uncritical acceptance of bizarre dream content, lack of logical reasoning, altered time perception, lack of control over dream scenario, and the fragmented memories of episodic dream elements (p. 178).

The increased activation within the sensory regions of the brain, while also turning off some of the brain's main power sectors, causes the creation of particular dream elements. These elements include reduced logical reasoning, open acceptance to bizarre events, disoriented memories, differentiated time sense, and lack of control over narrative content. This process of reactivation, happening within the brain, can occur during waking life as well, though not usually at the same levels. The technical aspect, which discusses the activation and exclusion of brain regions from which dreams come, in addition to the characteristics of dream content, is important for understanding the basis of dreams and what they can do. Due to altered perceptions and lack of logical reasoning in dreams, the dreamer is lead through the narrative and brought to the resolution intuitively rather than having to think through a formal conclusion. The process of brain functioning while asleep is how dreams are analyzed through psychotherapy to resolve problems in waking life.

THE DETECTION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS THROUGH DREAMS

Dreams can be analyzed for their dissociative experiences, lack

of logical reasoning, and emotional tone to detect specific psychological disorders and find the root of the problem. One difference that separates waking life and dreams is the mental stability measured by cognitive bizarreness. For patients with psychological disorders, the difference between each state is found to be less distinct. Delirium and lack of logical reasoning in REM dreams are similar to states of psychosis. Schwerdtle et al. (2016) explain that dreaming can be compared to psychotic experiences within waking life because of the significant lack of logical reasoning that is present during REM sleep. Patients with positive symptoms of schizophrenia, as well as dissociated states caused by intoxication or medication, show similarities to the reduced logical thinking in REM dreams (p. 177). This evidence begins to form a link between dreams and mental disorders. The similarities found between dreams and mental disorders can expand within the exploration of psychotherapy to see how the two states of dreaming and psychological disorders can work together, and how dreams can work to heal those mental disorders.

The direct correlation between dreams and emotions in waking life is evident. Cavallotti, et al. (2014) discuss the relationship of the mental state of patients with psychotic major depression between their waking consciousness and dreams. They found that depressive episodes have direct correlation to dreams, in regards to length, emotional tone, and anxiety levels. Depressed patients tend to report shorter dreams with higher negatively toned emotions. The study shows the connection between treatment procedures and changes in these rates of pessimistic dreams. This is due to the fact that a person's waking emotions are carried over into dreams and have a strong interaction between both states. Therefore, depressed individuals with high anxiety are more likely to report pessimistic dream scenarios in comparison to the healthy public (Cavallotti et al., 2014, p.3). The consistency in variables relating dream reports to depressive episodes is crucial to the process of linking the two states. This idea enforces the practice of detecting psychological disorders through a person's dreams. There is an assortment of dream themes that occur more often for people with different types of psychological disorders and Edwards et al. (2015) mentions a variety of these cases. When evaluating the dream content of a control group in comparison to subjects with various psychological disorders, the occurrences of specific aspects of dreams or themes can be distinguished between the specified disorders. For people with depression, there tend to be fewer characters present in the narrative, and themes of death, hostility and masochism

appear more commonly within the dreams. Nightmares occur more often for people with dissociative disorders, and highly bizarre dreams are common for schizophrenia. Personality disorders are related to higher levels of emotional content and fewer social interaction within the dreams (Edwards et al., 2015, p.11). It is important to distinguish the different themes and associations because it shows a way to detect psychological disorders through the evaluation of dream content. The knowledge of these themes also lends a basis for understanding of the connection between dreams and psychological disorders, providing greater insight to the evaluation of dream content through psychotherapeutic discussions.

The notion of dissonance between internal and external environments is prevalent in both dreams and physiological disorders. As King describes, Sigmund Freud created a theory regarding the structure of personality, which consists of three parts: the Id, which is entirely unconscious, the Ego and the Superego, which are both mostly unconscious, but can break through the surface of consciousness. The ego is the part of the Freudian structure that is responsible for dealing with reality. "The ego helps us to test reality, to see how far we can go without getting into trouble and hurting ourselves" (King, 2013, p. 363-364). When the ego does not function properly a person can become disconnected from their own sense of self. Cavallotti et al. (2014) argue that many originators of modern psychiatry confirm a connection between individual interactions of psychosis and dreams. Similarities can be found in the fact that in both states the subjects are unable to distinguish that the stimuli, perceived as coming from the external world, are actually formed internally. The lowered rate of ego functions creates a disconnected sense of self, often resulting in dissonant and extreme emotions as well as absurd behavior and difficulties in understanding the physical world (Cavallotti et al., 2014, p.2). The loss of ego functions also lead to a lack of self-worth and an inability to distinguish the inward from the outward. The ego is essential for a person to function at full quality during waking life. Without having proper control of oneself, all that follows becomes confused and a person can lose their sense of perspective and goal orientation. Without these motivations, they may feel lost and depressed.

Furthermore, dreams can be used to find the root of the problem and reconnect ego functions. While asleep, the unconscious takes over and is able to uncover facets of the mind which the person may not be aware of and, through dreams, reveal details that apply to waking life. Dreams follow the structure of problem solving, which identifies the basic

components of each dream to show the way in which dreams follow an insightful narrative (Ruggeri et al. 2011). The differences between waking consciousness and dreams are why dreams are important to solving problems while in a conscious state (Schwerdtle et al. 2016). The logical reasoning that is present in waking life, but not in dreams, causes the structure of the Problem Solving Theory to work differently for each state. Since the dreamer is willing to accept bizarre events without question, he is easily led into a solution as opposed to in waking life where he is often inclined to think through the problem logically. The lack of logical reasoning and dissociative experiences within dreams are key factors in recognizing the differences between dreams and waking life (Cavallotti et al., 2014) (Schwerdtle et al., 2016).

USING DREAMS TO ELICIT INSIGHT INTO THE CAUSE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS

The profound meaning found in dreams, through the process of decoding and the connection that links them to psychological disorders, can be used as a discussion point to uncover practical insight to fight psychological disorders. Dreams have an unconscious system that works through a problem and arrives at conclusion promoting psychological change. The "Problem Solving Grid" breaks up the dream narrative into various elements. The "Core Problem" (CP) is the trivial aspect which the rest of the dream works to resolve. The "Elaboration Process" (EP) is the action within the dream narrative which searches for a solution to the problem. The "Problem Outcome" (O) is the solution to the core problem (Ruggeri et al., 2011, p.249). The process of problem solving is used by Ruggeri et al. (2011) to look past the dream content and onto how to discover its significance. The authors explain, "the implications of such complex phenomena go beyond the mere [Problem Solving] articulation of a dream and explore possible correlations between dream PS and the processes behind the psychological change during psychotherapy" (Ruggeri et al., 2011, p.255). The complexity of the dream narrative surpasses the Problem Solving grid and begins to explore the cognitive process behind the dream. The Problem Solving grid works as a tool to uncover the significance in a dream narrative, which can then be used to follow psychological progress in the patient through psychotherapy. This process makes apparent the psychological change that dreams can impart. Revelations in dreams serve as a basis of self-discovery for people with depres-

sion or other mental disorders, helping them to create positive change in their life.

Memories are brought to the forefront of consciousness through dreams, which make known the root of deeply set psychological problems. Freud (1895) valued the theory that problems residing deep within the unconscious can result in physical manifestations. In the case of Anna O., who suffered from hysteria, she was cured of her mental and physical illnesses through the revival of repressed memories. Her hysteria was centered around a fear of drinking. Through therapeutic discussions with her doctor, Josef Breuer, it was found that her fear was set within a memory in which a dog that she hated drank from her glass. These fears then began to show physical symptoms later on in life as she cared for her sick father (McLeod, 2013, The Case of Anna O, Para. 2). The fears that Anna O. carried were suppressed within her unconscious. As Freud defines, the unconscious "is a reservoir of unacceptable wishes, feelings, and thoughts that are beyond conscious awareness" (King, 2013, p. 131). Anna O. was not aware that these fears existed, yet they became outwardly present through her hysteria. Once the memories became known on a conscious level, she was able to work through her problems and move past the mental trauma that caused her physical harm. Dreams are able to elicit responses from deeply repressed memories. Through the functional reorganization processes of dreams, insight can be gained from the fabrication of repressed emotional memories. Edwards et al. (2015) state that,

> dreaming reflects emotional memory consolidation, functional reorganization and neural processes of insight occurring during sleep… It is possible that the sleeping brain state, for non-necessarily functional reasons, allow dream content to represent waking life matters about which we are more normally defended or even unaware when awake, because active inhibition of attending to these is suppressed during sleep (p. 11).

Dreaming constructs a multitude of activity within the mind while a person is asleep. These actions include combining emotional memory, reorganizing brain functions, and initiating internal insight. While the brain is asleep it is possible for the mind to reach information that may be blocked off by a person's consciousness while they are awake. This allows dream narratives to consist of aspects of consciousness that the person avoids or is not even physically aware of. This allows for specific personal insight to be gained through dreams which can be applied to waking life

and dealing with psychological disorders.

Dreams work spontaneously, collecting and creating associations between different memories; it is this free range within the mental organization of dreams that has the power to instill more insight than the conscious mind. Edwards et al. (2015) declares, "insight outcomes will be greater for the dream than for the event condition, because the dream content reflects the associative state of the brain during sleep and/or the functional reorganization changes in sleep, and specifically REM sleep" (p. 4). The practical application of reorganization that happens within the brain during sleep, and increases during REM sleep, creates an active combination of associated memories to form dreams. As dreams have the capability of bringing together these various ideas, they are able to offer more insight than that of waking life events. This is important to note because the reorganization system of the brain during sleep acts as direct evidence of the insight that dreams provide. By associating distant memories, dreams are able to make connections with personal life and relations that the conscious mind would not make otherwise. This also comes from the spontaneous nature of the sleeping mind and the lack of logical reasoning that may stand in the way while awake. The insight within dreams, along with psychological awareness, are two key components that people with mental disorders often lack. Lucid dreaming is introduced as a way to take control of mental functions. Dresler et al. (2015) discuss the components of insight within psychosis, explaining that the two main measures that are typically comparable are the awareness of one's mental disorder and the recognition that abnormalities within the mind are part of that mental disease. In the "dreaming–psychosis model," lucidity is the awareness or clarity that one is having a lucid dream; they recognize in the moment that they are dreaming and that they are in control of the circumstance which they are in (p. 3). In that way, lucid dreaming is able to give patients with psychosis what they lack, a full awareness and insight into the state that they are in. Lucidity is a trainable function. With it, someone with a mental illness may be able to not only take control of their mind but also learn to apply insight from their subconscious dreaming into their waking life. Whether lucid or not, dreaming creates a function of insight through the lowered resistance of consciousness while a person is asleep. The sleeping brain is able to put together pieces of information and stitch them into a cohesive whole. The mind's reorganization system that happens during dreaming knows where the deepest desires, fears, and aggressions are stored away, while the conscious brain

does not. These wishes, hesitations, and aggregations are put into a narrative which instinctively works through the given set of problems and arrives at a conclusion with ease (Dresler et al., 2015).

CONCLUSION

By bringing unconscious memories and concerns to a conscious level, dreams divulge meaning and can detect the root of psychological disorders. In this way, dreams work to produce practical insight to achieve positive psychological change. Psychological disorders are a prevalent problem in the United States, estimating over 17.9 percent of all adults suffering from a diagnosable psychological disorder (The National Institute of Mental Health, 2015). There are records throughout history of various cultures and religions interpreting dreams and implementing their meanings into waking life. The Bible gives the example, in Genesis, of Joseph interpreting Pharaoh's dream of cows coming forth from the Nile river. From the dream, Joseph made the prediction that after seven prosperous years, the land would come into a great famine for the following seven years. These events came true, but Egypt was prepared due to Joseph's interpretation of Pharaoh's dream (Genesis 41: 1-57, English Standard Version). Dream meanings can be decoded through manifest content into latent content to discover its narrative significance (King, 2013, p.143). In the dream of Pharaoh, the cows are the manifest content symbolizing seven years of plenty or famine as its latent form. Joseph was able to decode the manifest content to show the meaning that a famine will come. Dreams have great power to reveal insight, not only in historic times, but they continue to give forth meaning in present day. The Problem Solving Theory demonstrates the way dream narratives can be decoded into useable content for evaluation (Ruggeri et al., 2011, p. 248). While the mind is asleep, a multitude of activity happens. The specific activation within the sensory regions become increased, while also turning off some of the brain's main power sectors, thus creating a reorganization process that brings forth repressed memories. It is the emotional content from deep within that makes dreams especially insightful. The lack of logical reasoning in dreams serves as the main connection between dreams and psychological disorders (Cavallotti et al., 2014, p. 8) (D'Agostino, Scarone & Limosani, 2012, p. 2) (Schwerdtle et al., 2016, p. 177). Patterns of different themes can also be seen occurring in dreams of people with various mental health issues, some of which include themes

<figure>224</figure>

of death, hostility, masochism, nightmares, highly bizarre dreams, high levels of emotional content, and fewer social interactions (Edwards et al., 2015, p.11). These themes are important to understand because they can lead to greater insight into the specific psychological disorders through the analysis of dreams. Due to the reorganization of emotional memory, lack of logical reasoning, and patterns of specific themes, the evaluation of dream content in psychotherapy discussions leads to greater personal insight than the evaluation of waking events and results in psychological change for people with mental disorders (Edwards et al., 2015, p. 2).

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Ethical Perspectives of Veganism

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By SONAM PATEL

ABSTRACT

Increasingly, people in the United States are beginning to identify themselves as vegans. Vegans are people who do not eat animals or animal products including meat, fish, and dairy. Proponents of Veganism defend animal rights, believe that Veganism is better for the environment, and assert that it is healthier for the human body. However, there is also opposition to these claims. It is necessary to consider various ethical theories when analyzing research regarding these topics and justifying if a vegan diet is more ethically responsible than an omnivorous one. In regards to animal rights, ethical theories such as Freedom from Harm, Deontology, Utilitarianism, and Minimax support that sentient beings, such as animals, should not be sources of food, while other ethical theories, such as Desert, state that humans should be allowed to eat meat. Furthermore, the inefficiency of resources used in meat production can be interpreted as unethical through the applications of Utilitarianism and Tragedy of the Commons. Research also shows that meat and dairy industries contribute to the degradation of the environment by emitting greenhouse gases. This can be seen as unethical through Biocentrism and Anthropocentrism. Moreover, soy consumption has both health benefits and risks, making it neither ethical nor unethical. According to the ethical theory of Loyalty to Community, raising children under a vegan diet is healthier and thus more ethical so long as they meet recommended vitamin levels. Conclusively, a vegan diet is more ethical than an omnivorous diet because it is more beneficial to animals, the environment, and human health.

INTRODUCTION TO VEGANISM

For some, giving up meat and dairy altogether and sacrificing the ability to eat cheese, bacon, or even their favorite ice cream seems like a next to impossible task. However, people in the United States are increasingly making this choice. Recently, more people are beginning to identify themselves as vegans (Budgar 20). People who practice Veganism do not eat animals or animal products including meat, fish, and dairy. Many people advocating a vegan lifestyle also defend animal rights, claim that Veganism is environmentally conscious, and assert that it is a healthier way of life. However, there are many opposing arguments against these claims. Therefore, it is important to address whether it is more beneficial

for oneself, animals, and the environment to become a vegan. In addition to using research to speculate different arguments, multiple ethical theories including Equality, Desert, Utilitarianism, Deontology, Freedom from Harm, Loyalty to Community, Purity, Minimax, Tragedy of the Commons, Biocentrism, and Anthropocentrism will be used. Steven Pinker introduces many of these theories in his article, "The Moral Instinct." After researching the effects of Veganism and weighing various ethical theories to assess the importance of animal rights, environmentalism, and human health, it can be assumed that a vegan diet is more ethical than an omnivorous one.

ANIMAL RIGHTS

Not all people think about how their food gets to their plates, or rather, from *whom* their food comes. However, this thought is essential to activists who either support or undermine the ethics of Veganism. Proponents of Veganism argue the immorality in killing animals for food, whereas opponents of Veganism argue that it is perfectly moral to eat meat. In his article "In Defense of Eating Meat," author Timothy Hsiao explains a common rationale for why it is immoral to eat meat. He states that people believe it is wrong to cause harm to other beings, if they do not have a "morally good reason" (279). Eating meat should not be considered a morally good enough reason because meat is unnecessary to sustain the human body. Therefore, because humans do not need meat for sustenance, it is immoral to inflict harm upon animals and kill them for food (278). This rationale coincides with the ethical theory, Freedom from Harm, which Steven Pinker describes in his article "The Moral Instinct." Pinker explains that we should never harm anyone regardless of the circumstance. Alluding to Freedom from Harm, this argument creates a condition for when beings can and cannot be harmed. Hsiao explains, "The proponent of the basic argument is committed to the thesis that sentience is a morally salient property, the possession of which is sufficient enough to confer moral standing" (279). This means that because animals are capable of feeling pain, they should be free from unwarrantable harm. This argument explains that sentience is enough to grant beings that possess the trait a right to be treated equally. This follows the basic principle of the ethical theory Equality, which states that all beings should be treated equally.

In his article, Hsiao also argues that although animals are sen-

tient, this does not grant them the right to be free from harm, unjustifiable or otherwise. He believes that animals, unlike humans, do not have moral status because they lack the "capacity for rational agency" (285). A being is rational if it knows why it does what it does and if it has the capability of acting in a morally correct way, a quality which he believes animals lack (285). He explains this argument by stating, "A lion that devours a zebra does not act immorally, since neither the lion nor the grizzly is capable of having duties of any sort. If I am mauled by a grizzly bear, the grizzly bear is not morally blameworthy for mauling me because it has no duty to respect my rights" (285-6). Since animals are not expected to possess moral intelligence, Hsiao asserts that granting animals moral status would be misguided (290). Moreover, Hsiao believes that those with moral status – humans – should be given privilege over those without moral status – animals. Therefore, if humans want to eat meat, regardless of whether or not it is necessary for their diet or causes harm to animals, they have the ethical right to do so (290). This notion coincides with the ethical theory of Desert which states that people should be given what they deserve. Hsiao states that due to their moral status over animals, humans *deserve* and thus have the right to eat meat if they desire.

Nonetheless, this is only one argument for why sentience should not be used as the basis of who can and cannot be harmed. In his article "The Core Argument for Veganism," Stijn Bruers defends the immorality in killing animals for food and explains why sentience should be used in determining who deserves to be free from harm. He explains, "The minimal basic right is the right to not be intentionally used as merely a bodily means for the non-vital ends or needs of others" (272). By killing animals for food, humans use animals as a means to an end. Furthermore, Immanuel Kant, a philosopher of Deontological ethics, defines his Categorical Imperative, a principle he believes can determine the morality or immorality of actions, by stating that it is immoral to use others as a means to an end under any condition. Using this concept as a framework for understanding Veganism, it is unethical to consume meat or use animals for human purposes because in doing so, humans are using them as means to an end. In addition, Bruers believes that any sentient individual should be granted this "basic right." This is because even from an unbiased perspective, the sentience and well-being of an individual is significant, which is further exemplified in his statement: "Imagine that you will be born as something or someone, but you do not know who or what you will be. Then, as you value your well-being, you would want to

take into account the well-being of all beings in a serious and impartial (non-arbitrary) way" (283). As Bruers states, this is an example of the Veil of Ignorance. Applying the ethical theory of Minimax, articulated by John Rawls, to the Veil of Ignorance, if all people were unbiased and put on a "veil of ignorance," they would want to maximize the benefits for all sentient beings (Bruers 283). By wearing a figurative Veil of Ignorance, humans choose to protect animals from harm because if they were in the same position, they would not want to be harmed either. Furthermore, the right for sentient beings, thus animals, to be free from harm can be defended from a Utilitarian perspective as well. In her article, Evelyn B. Pluhar states, "Founding utilitarian Jeremy Bentham was the first to argue that the well-being of *everyone* capable of experiencing pleasure and pain must be taken into account as one determines the rightness: the greatest good for the greatest number" (458). Therefore, because sentient beings are capable of feeling pain, they should be considered when protecting certain beings from harm.

Up until this point, in discussing multiple theories that either sanction or condemn harm inflicted upon animals, it has been *assumed* that meat production causes them harm. However, the importance of the following paragraph is not to ethically defend any argument already presented but rather to prove the assumption that there is indeed harm caused to animals in meat production. In his article, Michael B. Gill states, "The vast majority of meat consumed by Americans comes from factory farming" (202). Factory farming and the associated pain inflicted on livestock is clear evidence of harm caused in the animal-to-meat process. For example, Pluhar describes, "There was general outrage in the U.S. when clandestinely made recordings of a sick downer cow being kicked and even forklifted on their way into the slaughterhouse" (461). Stories of animal cruelty in factory farming such as this one provide further support in favor of vegans who abstain from eating meat.

The morality or immorality in eating meat depends on the weight assigned to each ethical theory in regards to animal cruelty. Most of the ethical theories discussed seem to condemn harm caused to animals and thereby do not support eating meat. The harm in itself can be looked at as unethical if interpreting Freedom from Harm. In addition, Utilitarianism and Minimax discourage the harm of sentient beings. Deontology maintains that it is wrong to use animals as a means for consumption. Therefore, it is substantive to say that it is more ethical to support a vegan diet as opposed to a diet containing meat.

Not only is it important to consider from whom food comes when contemplating the ethics of a vegan diet, but it is also important to consider the impact food production has on the environment. A significant argument in justifying the benefits of Veganism is the inefficiency in meat production. Ilija Djekic discusses the inefficiency in producing meat. He states, "Meat is one of the food products with the greatest environmental impact due to the inefficiency of animals in converting feed to meat. It is assumed that 75-90% of the energy consumed by livestock is needed for body maintenance or lost in manure and by-products such as skin and bones" (Djekic 61). Intuitively, this process is counterproductive as, for example, one would never invest twenty dollars for a return of ten dollars. The substantial resource requirements needed to produce an inconsiderable amount of meat is unfruitful, which Pluhar further explains in her article: "The USDA documents that animals fed plant proteins edible by humans yield large net protein losses. 1lb. of beef requires 7lbs. of corn, 1 lb. of pork requires 6.5 lbs. of corn, and only 1lb. of chicken results from 2.8 lbs. of corn" (459). Aside from using mere intuition, two ethical theories can be used in speculating and disapproving this wastefulness in meat production. From a Utilitarian perspective, using feed that can be consumed by humans to produce meat is an ill-considered practice. If it is possible to feed more people with 7 pounds of corn than with 1 pound of beef, the greatest good is certainly not going to the greatest number of people. In this sense, meat production is unethical according to Utilitarianism. The root problem with the inefficiency in meat production is not the fact that resources are being used to feed these animals; the problem is that multiple parties are competing for the same valuable resource. This is an application of Garrett Hardin's Tragedy of the Commons. Both humans and animals are able to consume grain for some sort of intrinsic benefit and although grain is not necessarily being depleted in the process, Hardin's Tragedy of the Commons sheds light on the debate concerning the efficiency of grain distribution.

However, in his article, "I Was Wrong about Veganism. Let Them Eat Meat (But Farm It Properly)," George Monbiot makes the argument that a vegan diet is not necessarily the only ethical solution for efficient food production. He explains that there is nothing wrong with consuming meat if it is done more efficiently, which he makes clear by stating, "If pigs

are fed on residues and waste, and cattle on straw, stovers and grass from fallows and rangelands – food for which humans don't compete – meat becomes a very efficient means of food production" (Monbiot). Nevertheless, this does not make a concrete argument as to why a vegan diet is not preferred, because the statement is only an idealistic hope for the future. *If* the process of meat production changes, then an omnivorous diet may be more or equally efficient. As the current process stands, however, it is more resourceful and thus more environmentally conscious to adopt a vegan lifestyle.

In addition, the environmental damage from meat and dairy production is substantial. The meat and dairy industries are responsible for emitting a significant percentage of greenhouse gases which contribute to higher temperatures and climate change (Petrovic 236). In one article Petrovic explains, "Beef and dairy farming operations produce the greatest amount of CH4 from human-related activities, so methane generated by ruminant production systems and its effect on global climate change is a cause of concern worldwide" (236). A diet without animal products would reduce the effects of climate change. Likewise, Pluhar substantiates this argument by explaining, "A typical American meat eater contributes to one and one-half tons more CO2 to the environment than a vegetarian. Mark Bittman brings this figure to life by noting that for a typical family of four to enjoy a steak dinner is equivalent to joy-riding in an SUV for three hours after leaving all the lights on at home" (457). Typically a steak dinner might be considered a splurge, but after understanding the environmental equivalent one might feel more guilty about devouring the delicious cow on his or her plate.

The moral importance of protecting the environment can be understood from two environmental ethical theories – Biocentrism and Anthropocentrism. Joshua Rottman, author of "Breaking Down Biocentrism: Two Distinct Forms of Moral Concern for Nature," explains the Anthropocentric and Biocentric views of nature. Anthropocentrism regards humans as the most important part of nature, whereas Biocentrism finds value in all living things (Rottman 1). For Anthropocentrists, the significance in protecting the Earth from climate change is to benefit the human race as "Anthropocentrism promotes the preservation of the environment as a means to an end rather than an end itself" (Rottman 1). However, according to the ethical theory of Deontology, it is wrong to use others as a means to an end – "others" in this case also referring to the environment. This does not mean that there is insufficient ethical support in

defending the morality of protecting the environment, however. Biocentrism on the other hand "can stem from a desire to uphold purity in nature" (Rottman 1). Rottman explains that Biocentrism is composed of the desire to protect nature, which some regard as pure. Biocentrists believe in protecting the purity of the environment (Rottman 1). Biocentrism is not only an environmentally ethical theory in itself, which speculates the importance of the natural world, but it also encompasses another ethical theory which Pinker discusses in "The Moral Instinct." Pinker states that the ethical theory of Purity is the need to protect the pure, in this case the environment, and repel the impure. Therefore, because there is inefficiency in meat production and dairy and meat industries emit "impure" greenhouse gases, practices that do not support protecting the pure cannot be tolerated if one is to protect the purity of the environment. Thus, it is more ethical to support a vegan diet and disapprove of an omnivorous one.

SOY CONSUMPTION

Similar to kale and avocado, soy has become another one of America's trendy and buzzworthy foods. Soy in particular has become popular among vegans as it is a complete protein and many of its qualities mimic the meaty taste one might find in a hamburger. In their article, Christopher R. D'Adamo and Azize Sahin state, "Highly processed soy protein has become the primary source of dietary protein for a growing number of Americans following a vegetarian or vegan diet" (40). A significant benefit of consuming soy is that it prevents heart disease (D'Adamo & Sahin 41). In his article, Gregory Curfman confirms this research and stresses the importance of preventing heart disease when he notes that heart disease is one of the primary causes of death for both men and women in the U.S. (1). Beneficial properties in soy help reduce cholesterol in the body, which in turn help prevent the risk of heart disease (D'Adamo & Sahin 41). For this reason among others, "The FDA has allowed food manufacturers to state that any food with 6-25 grams of soy protein per serving may help reduce the risk of heart disease when it's part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol" (Curfman 1). In addition to having heart-healthy benefits, soy is also helpful in protecting against prostate cancer (Craig 1628S). Researcher Winston J. Craig explains, "Data from the Adventist Health Study showed that consumption of soy milk by vegetarians protected against prostate cancer [36], whereas in other studies the use of dairy was associated with an increased risk of prostate cancer

[25, 37-39]" (1628S). This helps to understand the benefits of consuming vegan products, such as soymilk, over traditional dairy products, such as cow's milk.

Because soy can prevent certain health problems, it is at least partially successful in contributing to our well-being. Therefore, soy products are healthy and beneficial to the human diet. In addition, Pinker states that "people everywhere, at least in some circumstances and with certain other folks in mind, think it's bad to harm others and good to help them" (Pinker). This ethical theory that Pinker calls Freedom from Harm is what gives people the morality to say that anything that causes harm is morally wrong. By using the same principle, anything that frees one from harm is morally correct. Therefore, because soy has been proven to prevent harm to the human body, the consumption of soy is a morally ethical act.

Before it can be conclusively stated that soy consumption only frees the human body from harm, it is equally important to understand the potential risks of soy consumption. For example, soy is attributed to containing anti-nutrients that can limit capabilities of the human body. D'Adamo and Sahin explain that "soy also contains a number of anti-nutrients, such as phytic acid, saponins, enzyme inhibitors, and oxalates, which can inhibit absorption of vitamins A, B12, D, E, and iron" (40). The lack of nutrients can potentially cause other problems in the body such as the formation of kidney stones (D'Adamo & Sahin 46). There have also been studies indicating that the consumption of soy rather than regular cow's milk can cause hyperthyroidism (D'Adamo & Sahin, 46). For these reasons, it can be understood why consuming soy may not be as beneficial as some may claim.

The discussion so far proves that soy consumption can prevent and cause certain health problems in the human body. By looking at soy consumption from a Utilitarian perspective and weighing the prevented harms of soy consumption versus the caused harms of soy consumption, it can be determined whether or not consuming soy works towards the "greater good" of health effects. It is important to note that the reference to Utilitarianism is only in regards to choosing the option that provides the "greatest good," and not in reference to "the greatest number of people." Nonetheless, because the positive and negative implications of soy consumption are varying, incorporating soy in one's diet can neither be conclusively ethical nor unethical.

Children's diets are largely determined by their parents, so consequently it is a parent's responsibility to provide his or her child with a nutritious, healthy meal. Because children are dependent on the choices adults make for them, the decisions adults make must be morally right. This idea can be supported by an ethical theory mentioned by Pinker called Loyalty to Community which states that people are morally obligated to support and care for those that they identify with, and should never do anything to harm the ones they love. This means that people are ethically responsible for feeding children – members of the community – nutritious food. This brings up the question of whether raising children as vegans is more ethically correct than not.

Raising a child to follow a vegan diet may be a more ethical parenting approach because a vegan diet promotes healthy living from a young age. Virginia Messina and Ann Reed Mangels state in their article, "Vegan diets may reduce risk of some chronic diseases of adulthood that have their origins in childhood" (662). This means that children will be less likely to suffer from health problems later on in life. In addition, vegan children are introduced to more plant foods early on in life which may help them develop healthier eating habits for the future (Messina & Mangels 662). Vegetarians have lower risks of obesity, type 2 Diabetes, and cancer and typically, "Vegan children have lower intakes of total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol than omnivore children who typically have intakes of saturated fat and total fat that exceed the levels suggested by the Dietary Guidelines" (Craig, 1627S) (Messina & Mangels 662). Therefore, if it is the responsibility of a parent to discipline his or her child to grow up to be a successful individual with health as a factor of that success, it is only right for parents to feed their children the healthiest food. A vegan diet, proven to be better than an omnivorous diet then, is the more appropriate option. Moreover, Messina and Mangels explain that vegan children consume more fiber than lacto-ovo-vegetarians and omnivores (664). Getting the daily-recommended values of fiber is recognized as increasingly important because fiber is stripped out of commonly eaten processed and fast foods (Lustig 172). In his book, Robert Lustig mentions that many of the processed foods consumed by children today lack fiber and that "getting rid of fiber has obviated satiety, and exacerbated the negative impact of the carbohydrates, contributing to hyperinsulin-

emia, obesity, and metabolic syndrome" (172). This further contributes to the argument that a vegan lifestyle may not only be healthier but also important in reversing some of the effects that processed and fast foods have on one's health.

Despite these health benefits, a vegan diet also has its share of potential health risks. Many people suggest that vegan diets, which pose a number of restrictions, may not be sufficient to satisfy human health, let alone the health of a developing child. For example, vegans experience many vitamin deficiencies (Craig). As Messina and Mangels explain, "Calcium intakes of vegan children are below the current recommendations [3, 6, 9]. Fulton et al. [4] found average calcium intakes among vegan preschoolers to be 39% to 84% of the current Adequate Intake [6]" (663). In addition, vegans are more likely to be vitamin B-12 deficient and deficient vegan children may show signs of apathy and anemia (Craig 1630S). The potential vitamin deficiencies a vegan child may experience can deter parents from raising their child to follow a vegan diet. However, as Messina and Mangels mention, vitamin supplements and other initiatives such as increased sun exposure to achieve the recommended values of vitamin D can be taken to fill-in the nutritional gaps left from a vegan diet. If these supplements are adequate and the health benefits from raising a child to follow a vegan diet still exist, then it can be concluded that it is the more ethically responsible way to raise a child in terms of nutrition.

CONCLUSION

Overall, there are arguments both supporting and opposing Veganism in regards to animal rights, environmentalism, and human health. Different ethical theories also imply altered conclusions concerning the importance of these topics. Concerning animal rights, although the ethical theory Desert suggests that humans deserve to eat meat, an overwhelming number of ethical theories such as Freedom from Harm, Equality, Deontology, Minimax, and Utilitarianism indicate that animals deserve to be free from harm and should not be considered sources of food. In addition, the inefficiency of resources used in meat production can be interpreted as unethical through the applications of Utilitarianism and Tragedy of the Commons. Research proves that meat and dairy industries contribute to the degradation of the Earth by emitting greenhouse gases. Both Biocentrism and Anthropocentrism help in understanding the moral importance of preserving the Earth. Anthro-

pocentrism is less worthy of consideration because it violates principles of Deontology. However, as Biocentrism complies with the framework of Purity, it is considerable in defending the ethics of environmentalism. Moreover, it cannot be conclusively determined whether the consumption of soy is more ethical or unethical in terms of its health effects as it prevents and causes harm to the human body. Finally, the ethical theory of Loyalty to Community deems the importance of feeding children nutritious food a moral issue. According to research, as long as a vegan child meets the recommended values of vitamins which can be satisfied with the addition of vitamin supplements, a vegan diet is more preferable as it provides a child with a healthier diet that may prevent future diseases. Therefore, based on the ethical significance of animal rights, environmentalism, and human health, and the meaningful research supporting Veganism as more conscious and beneficial in regard to all three of these matters, it can be said that a vegan diet is more ethical than an omnivorous diet.

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The Funny Thing About Depression:
Using Humor to Cope
—

By KARINA PEDETTI

He's turned his life around. He used to be depressed and miserable. Now he's miserable and depressed. – David Frost

ABSTRACT

Humor is often seen as a tongue ill-suited for the topic of depression, one that is not well equipped to express its severity. However, depression is becoming an increasing epidemic, and yet the stigma prevails, leaving victims at a constant loss when battling with the illness. This paper aims to challenge the predominant view of the harmful effect of using humor to alleviate one's own depression by viewing this phenomenon from a different angle—as the appropriate language for depression. Considering different comedians who suffer from depression illuminates a concealed relationship between humor and depression and exactly how humor can portray more about the mental illness than what meets the stage. In doing so, humor performs as an ultimate coping mechanism and guardian of one's identity in the midst of the anguish and despair. Both personal and social psychological effects allow individuals to disengage from the burden of the mind and turn toward acceptance and control. Despite the silence that surrounds the problem of depression, humor can potentially be the most efficient way to break the stigma of mental illness.

INTRODUCTION

Humor and depression are censored in 21st century society, often considered ethically independent of each other. However, there is an underlying relationship between the two mentalities, alarmingly becoming more prevalent in some of the world's most well-known comedians. Yet, society does not acknowledge depression when buried beneath a constantly amused face, recognize its title as an illness, or even speak of it, and therefore the silence of depression grows stronger. On the other hand, although associated with pleasure, a humorous mind is seen as irresponsible and harm intending, and thus its lack of seriousness would be detrimental to the topic of depression. Considering the obvious unrelated features between a humorous mental state and that of an individual with

depression, how can a core relationship be justified? Can humor be the appropriate language to fight the stigma of depression?

In my research, I will evaluate the psychological effects and ethics of intersecting humor with depression. In the first section, *The Brain Has a Sense of Humor*, I will explain the hidden relationship between the two states of mind. The following section, *Laughing at Depression*, will assess the methods through which depression is transformed into a humorous subject. Closely looking at one adaptive humor style—self-enhancing—and one maladaptive humor style—self-defeating—will establish the groundwork for why a humorous approach should be considered. The second and third sections, titled *A Personal Weapon* and *A Social Bridge* respectively, will each focus on the inner benefits of humor, both in the of midst of and targeted at a depressed mental state, the former centering specifically on personal benefits and the latter on those that are social. Exploring comedians who battle depression, such as Maria Bamford, Aparna Nancherla and Ruby Wax, and how each uses humor to express their despair, will help support the notion that humor and depression have a codependent relationship. Bamford's wit in dealing with her depression and Nancherla's serious yet positive outlook or even Wax's form of self-identification in the midst of her mental illness all advocate how humor's attack on depression can be therapeutic as well as informative. Understanding this connection between humor and depression will allow us to tackle the notion of the role of humor in regaining control of the mental illness, which will be expressed in the final section, *Losing the Mind*. Although seen as two far seen as two extremes, a humorous and a depressed mental state are actually two sides of the same coin, psychologically interconnected. Despite moral standards, a humorous outlook on depression relieves the stigma by allowing one to comfortably cope, both personally and socially, and to slowly gain control of the mental illness that imprisons the mind.

THE BRAIN HAS A SENSE OF HUMOR

Of course it is [in my head]. Where else would my depression be? In my toenails? – Bob Mckay

There is something funny about the human brain: the expression of humor and the mental illness of depression are psychologically linked to express the same underlying emotions. To get a clear understanding of this complex association, it is important to first identify the

neuroanatomy of both mentalities. The amygdala is a group of nuclei found in the temporal lobe of the brain that is responsible for processing decision-making, memory and emotions, especially fear. According to *Harvard Health*, "the amygdala is activated when a person recalls emotionally charged memories, such as a frightening situation. Activity in the amygdala is higher when a person is sad or clinically depressed" ("What Causes Depression"). On the other hand, studies on the function of the amygdala provide evidence of increased activation during humor appreciation (Vrticka et al. 865). Therefore, there is a clear indication that both humor appreciation and depression are associated with amygdala activation. Considering the amygdala is the portion of the brain that is associated with fear when activated, there must be a relationship between humor, depression, and fear. Goldstein suggests, "laughter is precipitated by the abrupt removal of intense fear or anger" (59). While humor and depression seem to be two responses to fear, humor attempts to withdraw fear while depression is an abyss of fear. Humor and depression are interchangeable in the sense that they are both possible responses to fear, which is why it is not unusual that both mentalities are present in many individuals. When both are present, however, humor has a therapeutic effect in the battle against depression.

LAUGHING AT DEPRESSION

"Cheer up, things could be worse," and so I cheered up and sure enough, things got worse
– Kristin Bertrand

Maintaining a humorous outlook on depression halts the social stigma of the mental illness, substituting a form that is less serious but still informative and deemed acceptable in public discourse. Through self-enhancing and self-defeating humor styles, the symptoms and emotions of depression are twisted and turned into a positive light. Self-enhancing humor is the ability to be amused by the inconsistencies of life and maintain a humorous outlook (Martin et al. 53). Self-defeating humor is humor that attempts to amuse others at one's own expense (Martin et al. 54). Maria Bamford, a comedian who suffers from depression, uses self-enhancing and self-defeating humor styles simultaneously while expressing thoughts and emotions associated with her mental illness. Her stand up performances, her homemade show titled *The Maria Bamford Show* and her recently aired series *Lady Dynamite* "share laughter that

is deep and dark and wildly cathartic, laughter that finds the humor and absurdity in the grimmest of subject matter" (Rabin). Incorporating a witty attitude in her performances as she speaks of suicidal attempts, her experiences being hospitalized, and the ongoing anguish of depression, all while remaining positive, Maria Bamford uses her humor to make both herself and her audiences laugh. Goldstein proposes, "humor turns an event that would otherwise cause suffering into less significance" (13). Maria Bamford's humorous twist on her tender experiences lowers the stigma and severity of her pain, making it less significant or traumatic for her, while simultaneously promoting more significance in the acceptance of her mental illness. However, at first glance, laughing at depression can appear to be quite alarming, and as John Morreall says, "humor can have harmful effects" because it can be irresponsible, block compassion and promote prejudice (102). Although Morreall is not incorrect, humor does not always intend to harm. Bamford says "when every moment is kind of unacceptable and you cannot get yourself out of it… I just think people need to know that maybe there is hope" (Power). Her focus on using humor to ease depression rather than promote harm supports humor's positive function. A humorous lens is the general approach to destigmatize the illness; however, laughing specifically holds a vital role.

Laughing at depression serves as an alternative way to express the inescapable emotions of despair. Humor and laughter are sisters, not twins; therefore, it is important to treat them as separate entities, although they are reflective of each other. While humor is the general witty outlook on life, laughter is merely the body's physical expression of humor. However, humor does not necessarily always elicit laughter, and by the same token, laughter is not always the response to humor. Handling depression with humor and laughter is vital, as each carries significant value. Drowning in thoughts and emotions, the body accumulates an abundance of negative energy, which humans release either through laughing or crying, given that both "belong to the same genus of expression, or in other words that they are both 'expressive reactions of disorganization" (Prusak 62). Therefore, laughing at depression substitutes, and may even prevent, crying, since both are equally capable of releasing the same energy. If laughing and crying are comparable expressions, why is laughing more favorable? Unlike crying, laughter is an outlet to bliss. "Laughter is not an expression of pleasure at all – rather a generator of pleasure" (Goldstein 19). On the other hand, crying is just an exodus of negative energy with no production of positivity. Furthermore, laughing and crying suggest

two distinct relationships with others. Prusak proposes that "the crying person has a tendency to withdraw from the world" while the "laughing person is open to the world" (62). The difference can be explained by laughter's ability to "transcend [one's] immediate, self-absorbed situation, even when that state is uncomfortable," which Mordechai Gordon refers to as "self-transcendence," or the ability to view oneself from the perspective of others (743). Nevertheless, humor and laughter have a positive implication when handling depression by weakening the stigma, and also endorsing psychological effects.

A PERSONAL WEAPON

My self-esteem fluctuates between "report as spam" and "block this user" –
Aparna Nancherla

Taking the humorous path down depression has psychological effects that intimately help with the coping process. Both voluntarily and involuntarily, humor is used as a defense mechanism and a healing power in confronting depression. In the midst of the anguish, vulnerability, and the constant thoughts consuming them, sufferers are continuously using humor as a distraction or compensation for their own unpleasant mind. "The background noise of everyday pain and existential dread is turned and tuned by the humorist," allowing the negative emotions to transition into something that can relieve symptoms (MacRury 189). The essence of humor's role as a filter of emotions is to tune away from the negative connotations of depression—the negativity that once obtained is tortuous to overthrow. However, John Morreall suggests that humor is like "whistling in the dark, a way to suppress legitimate concern" (102). Contrary to Morreall, humor is a form of distraction that does not deny the severity of depression, but instead alleviates it, and is very much engaged in its complexity. A comedian well known for her humorous imprint on her depression, Aparna Nancherla, discusses why she chooses to associate her depression and her comedy in an interview. She says, "I think I first started talking about [depression] in my work as sort of a way to write myself out of my own head… If this is all that's going on with [me] right now, maybe just try writing about that" ("Comedian Aparna Nancherla"). Nancherla's comic tactic advocates the notion that escaping the negativity of depression is possible by means of actively engaging in the illness, as she uses self-enhancing and self-defeating humor to find positivity. Cleansing the mind of pessimism and focusing on optimism helps her

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view depression from a corrective perspective in hopes of distinguishing sources of depression.

The ability to laugh at one's own depression, as in, being able to find humor in it, lays the groundwork for healing from the illness, but how exactly does it heal oneself? As Mordechai Gordon argues, "someone who is able to laugh at [oneself] can more easily acknowledge the 'painful truths about oneself'" (744). With a humorous mindset, it can be much easier to not only acknowledge the existence of depression, but also to accept it. However, Gordon claims, "people who suffer from mental illnesses such as depression and paranoia (having a very stern superego) are typically not able to recognize and appreciate humor" (740). A recent study examined the difference in humor appreciation among patients with depression and patients without depression. The results showed no difference in the preferred humor type and both groups "considered the respective humorous items equally funny" (Falkenberg et al. 101). Therefore, one's sense of humor is not hindered by depression. Still, arguments suggest that the presence of a sense of humor does not prove that individuals suffering from depression can find their illness humorous. Morreall argues that in order to find humor in an aspect of the situation, the humorist must be "disengaged, idle, distanced," as in personally not affected by the matter (101). On the contrary, individuals suffering from depression can indeed find humor in their mental illness. Maria Bamford, in response to her ability to joke about her depression, claims, "I think once you've experienced something, you become more comfortable with it" (Power). Evidently, the more engaged someone is in their depression and when done in a positive way, as with humor, the higher the chances are of finding enlightenment. Although the power of humor is immense, it is important to distinguish that humor is capable of healing, not curing, depression. Nancherla's personal insight on depression is that "depression is one of those things that sublets space in your head, so no matter how far away you get away from it, it exists as a somewhat permanent houseguest" (Eldredge). Humor is an exceptional remedy for depression, but a chemical imbalance cannot be cured by humor. Attacking depression personally is salutary, but a communal attack on depression serves to break the silence that is associated with the illness.

A SOCIAL BRIDGE

I told my psychologist that everyone hates me. He said I was being ridiculous – everyone hasn't met me yet – Rodney Dangerfield

Humor serves as a psychologically sound and socially acceptable approach to coping with depression by finding support and joy through others. "Humor is fundamentally a social experience" (Gordon 167). Therefore, considering the role of others in coping with a depressed mental state can make a personal mental illness less personal through means of communication and connection. Ruby Wax, a mental health activist who suffers from depression and uses humor in her campaign, addresses the lack of consideration toward mental illnesses. In one of her TED talks, *What's So Funny About Mental Illness?* she asks, "how come when people have mental damage, it's always an active imagination? How come every other organ in your body can get sick and you get sympathy, except the brain?" ("What's So Funny"). Her question refers in return to the censorship society has placed on depression, as an illness that many do not understand. By means of destigmatizing, humor serves as a tool of communication, or 'universal language', in expressing the obscurity of depression. "Behavior expressed in a humorous manner (including laughing) becomes a 'healthy' or socially adaptive way of handling one's problems" (Goldstein 29). How can humor use as a defense against depression be 'socially adaptive'? Cris Mayo suggests, "the operations of joke telling offer a way to think through how listening might be improved by allowing the unfamiliar to emerge through a play on the familiar" (177).

Unfortunately, the topic of depression is unfamiliar to many because of its censorship. However, when sufferers express their despair in humor, society responds favorably because a joke and a witty comment are more socially comprehensible than an assortment of words attempting to describe the perplexed mind of a depressed person. Furthermore, the censorship on depression is simultaneously collective as it is independent: censored by society and censored on its own. Society represses a depressed mental state because of a lack of knowledge; on the other hand, individuals internalize their own depression because they lack the adequate words of expression, cycling back to society's censorship and forming a vicious cycle. Humor's function is thus "beneficial in getting people to speak the truth and be more honest with each other" (Gordon 744). Masking the harsh reality of hopelessness and despair in the act of humor "make[s] palatable what is otherwise hard to swallow" (Basu 391). Once communicated efficiently, humor can then serve to nourish emotional connections that can otherwise be difficult among individuals who are emotionally at different stages or merely trapped in their own mind.

An emotional connection induced by humor carries great signifi-

cance in publicizing depression, allowing a sense of belonging and a reassurance to victims that they are not alone. Comedians battling depression choose to broadcast their emotions "to provoke and prod, to share, to display and (together with an appreciative audience) to overcome the traumata, inconsistencies and glitches that make up experience of the everyday world" (MacRury 193). Expressing their emotions out loud, in a humorous manner that highlights positivity, individuals who are suffering are able to convert this personal identity, as a victim of depression, into a group identity. Maria Bamford actively breaks down the barriers of her mental illness by "[using] humor to take risks and disclose [her] deepest feelings and beliefs" (Gordon 170). Exposing her deep emotions and making herself vulnerable, Bamford expresses the very intimate identity that depression has left her with. In an interview with Slate, Bamford reveals her motivations behind her humor:

> Slate: By talking about these things in your act, you're countering some of the silence that otherwise clouds them. Is that something you're conscious of as you work on your material?
> Bamford: Well, a lot of it is selfish, I think. If I talk about it, then maybe somebody will talk about it to me. (Haglund).
> Humor, by weakening the censorship around the topic of depression, is also Bamford's way of seeking emotional support from others by establishing connections with individuals who can relate. The reassurance that depression is a shared human experience is therapeutic by urging individuals to cope with a personal illness, such as depression, together. The role humor plays in coping with depression creates a breakthrough that releases the illness from its confinement and elicits a state of acceptance and control.

LOSING THE MIND
Of course I'm out of my mind, it's dark and scary in there! – Unknown

When the emotions and negative thoughts bury one deeper into the depths and darkness of one's own mind, laughter is the rope that guides one back to the lights. "We laugh in a different sense from the sense in which we sneeze or cough – and yet laughter, too, is an automatism that seizes and shakes us" (Prusak 43). As powerful as a sneeze, as uncontained as a cough, and equally natural, laughter consumes the body and jumpstarts the mind. A laugh can easily shake one out of undesired emotions instantly, and into emotions that resemble positivity. "During

laughter, the subject feels released from present cares and worries, and a mood of joy prevails" (Askenasy 322). If for a split second while laughing, someone is preoccupied with a lighter form of his or her depression, that individual is already taking the lead in the fight against the mental illness. However, laughter's capacity to seize and even 'remove' one from a negative state of mind refers us back to John Morreall's notion of the "practical disengagement of humor" (101). Humor and laughter certainly do not distance one from one's depression, as it has already been proven that one is still very much engaged. However, laughter specifically can disengage one from depressive *behavior*, or the emotions, burden and darkness that devour an individual. Highlighting this distinction validates laughter's corrective ability to guide individuals suffering from depression out of mental arrest, while still remaining very much engaged. When the darkness is suddenly brighter, victims can take a step back and begin to escape the burdened mind by accepting depression as what it is—an illness.

To accept the mental illness of depression is to distinguish the self from the mind. "In Zen, the most basic attachment that we need to break is our belief in a detached, disembodied "I" that has an enduring and separate existence from the rest of reality" (Gordon 741). Considering oneself as a separate entity from depression promotes better understanding and acceptance because one can begin to see their identity beyond what the disease has left them to believe. In agreement with Gordon, Iain MacRury sets forth that stand-up comedy is "an art that takes place between our sense of ourselves as person and as thing, subject and object, thinking and thoughtlessness, matter and memory, 'I' and 'it'" (192). The exchange of "it" for "I" is the essence of accepting the illness as merely an illness and not letting it define an individual. In the act of stand-up, flaunting one's depression can be helpful to someone who suffers from the illness and is labeled as having "it," in finding the "I" who is not the illness, just purely has it. In the words of Ruby Wax, "I can say, 'There is depression' rather than 'I'm depressed.' It's the little things that count. I'm trying to ride the wave rather than go under" (Molloy). As she withdraws her 'self' from her illness, Ruby Wax is engaging and taking control of depression, rather than having it take control of her. Laughing at depression, by oneself and with others, can promote the realization that a mental illness is something one has, it is not who one is.

CONCLUSION

I have a new philosophy. I'm only going to dread one day at a time – Charles M. Schulz

The dual presence of humor and depression is becoming increasingly more common in today's society. Evidence indicates there is a strong psychological resemblance between humor and depression since they are both two expressions of disorder. Suffering as hostages of their own mind, individuals battling depression are using humor as an alternative in coping and finding themselves within the illness. Humor's role as a distraction and healing force is an effective personal antidote, and its communicative and connective skills help broadcast an understanding of mental illness to the community as a powerful form of language. When the burden of depression becomes progressively more oppressive, humor anchors down one's identity and carves the path toward enlightenment. The notion that depression hinders a sense of humor is refuted by evidence that demonstrates equal humor appreciation between those who are affected and those who are not. A one-sided argument of the unintended harm of using humor on depression neglects its positive and even healthy attributes. Suggesting that only individuals who are emotionally distant can find humor fails to recognize the frequent usage of humor by individuals who suffer from the illness themselves. An underlying connection between humor and depression can suggest causes and/or treatments of depression. Although its capacity to heal is clear, the extent to which humor can cope with depression will require further research. Thousands of people suffer from depression, and when the overpowering voices in their heads are telling them to give up, humor is the voice that reminds them to keep going. Finding humor in depression, victims do not have to feel confined within the walls of their misery and can finally cry (or laugh) for help. It is time for society to reconsider humor, not as harm but as a remedy. It is time to finally break the stigma of mental illnesses. Here is the funny thing about depression – it does not have to be depressing.

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More Than a Diet: The Struggles of Celiac Disease
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By REBECCA PYTELL

Celiac Disease is the autoimmune disease that causes the body to attack itself when a simple speck, as small as 20ppm, of the protein gluten is ingested, and causes the individual to suffer more than just a "tummy ache." Any food with gluten, commonly found in wheat, barley, and rye, sets off screaming alarms for a celiac patient. With no cure for this lifelong disease, the only way to keep the patient healthy and safe is with a strict gluten-free lifestyle and diet, free of cross-contamination from food and even beauty products. Compliance to this difficult lifestyle allows the body of a person with celiac disease the natural ability to properly regulate essential tasks such as nutrient absorption, protection against inflammation of the digestive tract, and clear cognitive function.

Over the past few years, the word "gluten" has brought sneers and fear from the general public and has created an explosion of interest from the media. Gluten is no longer something only to be avoided by those with celiac disease, but also by the many people seeking a "cure-all" for their health woes. Sadly, for those with the disease, "popularity of the diet has increased, totally out of proportion to any sense of awareness of celiac disease," as stated by gastroenterologist Norelle Rizkalla Reilly in "The Harm in Blindly 'Going Gluten Free'" by James Hablin (2). The public has begun to "mistakenly and blindly conflate 'gluten free' and 'healthy'," which adds more unnecessary social and safety burdens to a celiac patient's life (4). Lack of awareness around the severity of the disease causes problems involving false stigmas and misunderstandings of cooking and safety issues. Ironically, the market for gluten-free food has not improved the lives of people with celiac disease in terms of safety, availability, and price, heaping yet another unnecessary burden on the celiac community. Because the general public does not understand the medical necessity of the diet, there is potential harm in the process since "the traditional gluten-free diet which includes many commercially prepared gluten-free foods was nutritionally deficient compared with a regular diet," as found in A.R. Lee's article, *Economic Burden of a Gluten-Free Diet* (428). The "gluten-free frenzy" has transformed an incurable disease from a physical burden to an emotional, economic, and societal burden for all those involved. The lack of accurate awareness, respect for celiac disease, and the

true need for "gluten-free" has reached overwhelming proportions and needs to be reined in. The additional burdens celiac patients must face on a day-to-day basis are decreasing their quality of life and producing unnecessary anxiety, stress, and fear merely because of their medical need for a gluten-free diet.

NEED FOR ACCURATE AWARENESS

The ignorance pertaining to celiac disease creates one of the most alarming concerns for those with the disease and even those without. The overall lack of accurate information about celiac disease and why the gluten-free diet is a medical necessity for those affected is widespread. Due to the freely available and unregulated information on social media, television, from celebrities, and through traditional media advertising, the popularity of the gluten-free diet has increased and has become a societal trend. Without proper knowledge and guidance from a medical professional, there are many risks such as "increased rates of metabolic syndrome...due to poor nutritional quality of gluten-free replica products [leading to] developing deficiencies in folate, thiamine, and iron" (Hamblin, 3). If one chooses to embark on this complete overhaul of a traditional diet, proper nutrition education and dietary management must be given to the individual. It is critical to meet with a medical professional before making such dietary changes because the physician can "examine [the patient's] motives for this change," allowing the patient to make a more "fully informed decision" based on accurate facts, as suggested by Linda Johanson in "The Gluten-Free Frenzy: Fad or Fitting?" (215).

Since celiac disease comes with the burden of being difficult to diagnose due to varying symptoms, patient engagement and open communication with the physician must be used to avoid frustration for true celiacs. A physician should keep in mind that patients' "opinions may be influenced by irrational hopes or fears, or by the accurate or inaccurate imaginings of what the future holds" when they make an appointment in regards to changing their diet in hopes of healing a health ailment, which can be brought into context from the Al Mulley et al. article, "Stop the Silent Misdiagnosis: Patients' Preferences Matter" (2). The physician can use this intimate moment with the patient to decide whether the gluten-free diet is necessary and accurately inform him or her about celiac disease. It is easy to consider the media hype of gluten-free diets as being "the cure" for any health ailment, but that is not the case since only one

percent of the population is afflicted with celiac disease (Hamblin, 3). Having access to what is fact and what is myth about the gluten-free diet is only a step in cutting down on the widespread ignorance of gluten and the health implications of cutting gluten out of one's diet.

The ingrained mindset that is now imbued in society is greatly affecting those without a choice on the matter. With the gluten-free diet being seen as a "healthy alternative" to the traditional American diet, those with celiac disease feel "social anxiety" and are "worried about being disbelieved or being identified as a 'picky' type of person" when encountering social situations, as found by C. Rose and R. Howard in, "Living with Coeliac Disease: A Grounded Theory Study" (37). In reality, celiac patients run the risk of becoming extremely ill and debilitated if gluten enters their body. For example, this can include severe abdominal pain and cramping, diarrhea, brain fog, dizziness, seizures, and vomiting. This is not just being "bloated," picky about their food choices, or "following the testimonial from a celebrity on a late night television show" (Johanson, 213). The gluten-free diet is more than just a diet to be followed with an end goal in mind, but a necessary and permanent lifestyle change that has an effect on all aspects of a celiac's life. Although an increasing number of people are aware of the word "gluten," many still do not understand what it is. Celiac patients find themselves with the burden of constantly educating friends, family, and strangers about their disease and medical needs. They find this task to be "boring, irritating or embarrassing" with "other people's' reactions to being informed about CD [ranging] from acceptance to total dismissal" (Rose, Howard, 33).

These negative reactions lead people with celiac disease to withdraw from social events and interactions as they try to find a way to not have to deal with the unnecessary burden of explaining their disease. It is easier to not go to a social event, which often revolves around food, than to have to explain the reasons behind "passing up the bread" or questioning the host about how a certain food was prepared and what ingredients it contained. The social anxiety causes "those with CD [to feel] excluded or saddened by their family's response, or overburdened by the tasks of extra cooking and avoidance of contamination" (Rose, Howard, 38). This can have a significant impact on a child with celiac disease; fitting in with peers is an essential aspect of childhood and crucial for maintaining healthy emotional growth. Due to their vulnerable age, children have a more difficult time being assertive about their disease, explaining their needs, and feeling accepted by peers. As seen in the study, "Impact

of Gluten-Free Camp on Quality of Life of Children and Adolescents with Celiac Disease," by Tasce R. Simon Bongiovanni, BSc, et al., an all gluten-free camp "improved well-being, self-perception, and emotional health," as well as, "[alleviated] stress and anxiety around food, especially in regard to social interactions and self-perception" (5). When children are able to enjoy the typical childhood experiences, such as summer camp, with other celiac peers, not needing to explain or defend their diet and lifestyle showed, "a positive effect on all children in almost all quality-of-life categories" (4). It is easy for children with celiac to succumb to peer pressure and neglect their gluten-free dietary needs out of embarrassment or fear of "not fitting in." The consequences of this social stigma and the pressures it causes can be detrimental to the healing and growth of children with celiac if it causes them to neglect and fail to follow their required diet, inadvertently making themselves sick.

SAFETY AND PROPER TRAINING

The subpar awareness of medically defined food issues, such as celiac disease, not only causes a social stigma affecting one's self-perception and well-being, but also a dire food safety issue. It was noted by Ruchi S. Gupta et al. in "Food Allergy Knowledge, Attitudes, and Beliefs in The United States" that "the general public's attitudes and beliefs support the perception that the challenges of food allerg[ies] are not well understood" (48). If the public is ignorant of the general need for the gluten-free diet, it causes a lack of understanding of all the challenges an individual with the disease must overcome on a day-to-day basis. Because "many lifestyles depend on food prepared away from home," the challenges in maintaining a strict gluten-free diet, free from cross-contamination, can be extremely difficult (43). Buying one's own food and cooking at home allows the celiac and the celiac's family to monitor how foods are prepared and the ability to check packaged food labels for listed ingredients. It should also be noted that gluten is not always "explicitly listed on product labels" and "certain brands [such as potato chips] may be gluten-free while others may contain trace amounts of gluten," which Jocelyn A. Silverster M.D., Ph.D, et al. addresses in "Is it Gluten-Free? Relationship Between Self-Reported Gluten-Free Diet Adherence and Knowledge of Gluten Content of Foods" (778). It can be hard enough for well-educated and advised celiac patients to sift through safe foods and cooking procedures themselves, so it is not surprising a person ignorant of the

needs of celiac patients would have a difficult time understanding food safety. This is why many people with celiac disease decide not to eat out at restaurants or at social functions. It is easier to not eat out than to run the high risk of ingesting a food contaminated with gluten, which may cause derailing health issues for the celiac patient for days or even weeks.

Celiacs know all too well that the reality of eating out in restaurants is akin to putting themselves in the line of fire. In the study done by Aline R. Ajala et al. in "Food Allergens: Knowledge and Practices of Food Handlers in Restaurants," it was found that "managers agreed that in their restaurants, no training on food allerg[ies] was provided to food handlers" (1320). It should be noted that in addition to no training, "poor knowledge on the severity of food allergies, and of the importance of reading the list of ingredients shown on the label and of the avoiding cross-contamination during the preparation of meals" was also lacking in the training of food handlers (1320). If training and awareness are not standardized for food establishments and food preparation, a celiac will never have the burden of eating out lifted. Having food handlers and workers receive proper awareness and thorough training should be a top priority of government regulators.

The general public has gotten most of their "gluten awareness" from the media and Google, as highlighted in Hamblin and Johanson's articles. Not surprisingly, the food handlers in Ajala's study also obtained their minimal and inaccurate awareness, "from various means of communication such as radio and television" (1321). This inaccurate information plays into the lax mindset that many people have and explains why they perceive the gluten-free diet as a fad. They do not understand the importance and need for safety protocols since many people are following the gluten-free diet or simply avoiding gluten for "no reason," as noted by Hamblin. Thus, "increased food allergy knowledge and awareness among the general public is needed," which will "help to improve the quality of life" for celiac patients (Gupta et al., 49).

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT

With such a lack of awareness and safety protocols pertaining to gluten, there is still another hardship that celiacs and their families have to encounter. The economic costs and deficient availability of gluten-free food is staggering. The only treatment for celiac disease is to follow a strict gluten-free diet, but when medical care comes at such a high cost

with no prescription or help from insurance companies, some celiacs will never be rid of their symptoms. Kelly Lambert and Caitlin Ficken found "compliance to a gluten-free diet may be more difficult for some families due to the significant price discrepancy of gluten-free items" in their article, "Cost and Affordability of a Nutritionally Balanced Gluten-Free Diet: Is Following a Gluten-Free Diet Affordable?" (36). To have gluten-filled counterparts replaced, gluten-free items must be reformulated and processed differently, which causes manufacturers and food producers to raise the cost significantly. This "pain to the wallet" adds a "layer of burden to dietary compliance" (Lee et al., 428). A higher price does not mean these gluten-free foods are nutritionally better either. Because "commercially prepared gluten-free foods [are] nutritionally deficient compared with a regular diet," if celiac patients are not well-informed by a medical professional about how to eat a well-balanced diet without gluten, they may also "require supplementation of the diet with both vitamin and fiber supplements, adding to the cost of adhering to the diet" (428). The cost of maintaining a gluten-free diet with commercially produced replacements, the higher cost of gluten-free grain alternatives like quinoa, as well as possible supplementation severely place concerning "impacts on compliance with the GFD and quality of life" (Lambert, Ficken, 40). This should be a deterring factor for those without celiac disease from starting a gluten-free diet, yet it does not seem to be the case.

There is also a concern for the lack of availability of gluten-free products. Even though "there are increasing demands for gluten-free products...gluten-free food is not readily available" (Lee et al., 428). Manufactures and food companies are only just beginning to fully grasp the "gluten-free trend" and the need for affordable and widely available products. Currently, the best place to find and obtain commercially produced gluten-free products is in more expensive venues than the typical neighborhood grocery store. Lee et al. notes that, "not all regular grocery stores carry gluten-free products. This forces patients to purchase gluten-free products at either specialty stores or via the internet" (427). A medical illness with no cure but a strict gluten-free diet should not be so difficult for the average person to follow. Most medically defined illnesses, once diagnosed by a medical professional, are managed by a standard of prescriptions and treatment options.

With the prescription of a "gluten-free diet" handed to a celiac patient, all they can do to heal their bodies of the damage caused by their autoimmune disease is to throw away and buy new food, certain kitchen

appliances, and beauty products. Lambert and Ficken suggest looking into a solution to ease the economic burden on celiac patients. In the United Kingdom, "Provisions of GF foods in quantities adequate for healthy eating [are] made available via prescription," which 'enable[s] GF items to become affordable and accessible for all who require a lifelong GFD'" (40). People with celiac disease need access to affordable gluten-free foods to combat this chronic disease that has no cure or solution but to alter one's diet.

THE DIRE NEED FOR CHANGE

There could not be a better example that encompasses all the additional burdens a celiac patient must endure than the recent General Mills Cheerios scandal. To take advantage of the trending marketing opportunity, General Mills jumped on the gluten-free fad themselves by adding an uncertified logo and an unregulated claim of "gluten-free" on their cereal boxes. General Mills unveiled their use of "mechanically cleaned oats" in their Cheerios cereal and claimed they were safe and wholesome for everyone. Oats are inherently gluten-free, but often suffer from contamination in the crop fields and production lines they are processed on if they do not follow strict purity protocol standards and gluten-free certification testing. Only months after "reformulating the product," General Mills "announced that certain lots of Yellow Box and Honey Nut Cheerios produced at their Lodi, California facility labeled gluten-free actually contained wheat flour, making them not gluten-free and thus unsafe for the celiac disease community," as revealed by Alice Bast, CEO of Beyond Celiac, in her article, "Cheerios Recall: The Celiac Disease Community Is Constantly At-Risk." The practices taken by General Mills to "remove" gluten from their poorly sourced oats had already been questioned by industry professionals such as Gluten Free Watchdog, LLC and Beyond Celiac. These organizations advised celiacs not to consume the cereal even before the recall had occurred. The "cleaning process" used by General Mills may be fine for an individual trying to "avoid gluten," but for those with the medical diagnosis of celiac disease, the gluten levels and contamination of the non-purity protocol oats was too high. "Many in the celiac disease community have gotten sick from the contaminated Cheerios and we need to take this incident seriously," says Bast, and she also notes that the "recall is just another example of the challenges companies face in producing clean, safe gluten-free products.

Suppliers need to understand the importance of strong management practices throughout production from start to finish." This highlights the results found in Ajala's article on food handler safety, which revealed the overall lack of education, training, and awareness in the food industry. The health consequences of gluten contamination are not only physically devastating, but as Bast puts it, "It's the day-to-day challenges that make life with celiac disease hard. Really, really hard. Going to work functions, traveling, having birthday parties, weddings, holidays and other social functions become sources of fear and anxiety rather than the enjoyable social experiences." There can be no relaxation and ease of pure enjoyment when someone has to be on high-alert whenever an event or function outside the home involves food. A celiac is forced to live in the "fight or flight" response, which leads to the social anxiety, isolation, stress, and decline in self-worth that was seen in Rose's and Howard's article, as well as Bongiovanni's study. With the diagnosis of celiac disease, there is a "deterioration in quality of life," as Reilly notes in Hamblin's article (3). Each day there are threats to be avoided, even in the morning cereal box.

Beyond the physical burdens a celiac disease patient must overcome, the additional burdens including lack of accurate public awareness and understanding, safety, high costs, and overall social stigma lead them to live in a state of anxiety, stress, and fear. The media hype of the "gluten-free diet" has caused inaccurate information and misconstrued awareness around the true medical need for people with celiac disease to eat gluten-free. This has created social stigmas and a distorted sense of "unimportance" of the diet for a celiac who truly needs to be gluten-free. Having the "gluten-free diet" marketed as the new "healthy" way of eating has glamorized the diet to the public and has caused many to wrongfully and unnecessarily "villainize" and "fear" gluten while potentially harming themselves in the process. The lack of understanding pertaining to the true importance of the diet has only made eating out and food safety a huge cause for concern to a celiac. The lack of training on safety protocols, cross-contamination, and education seen in restaurants, manufacturers, and any personnel handling food, poses a threat to a celiac's health. The only "cure" for a celiac is to eat and live completely gluten-free, but with the high costs and poor availability of gluten-free products, another burden is deeply felt in the wallet. It is no wonder why someone with celiac disease may draw away from social gatherings, feel isolated, and seem to always be "on edge." These additional burdens impact celiacs of all ages and their families, leading to an overall decline in quality of life that goes

beyond just having to follow a restricted diet.

The frustration and lack of respect felt by the celiac community are vital hurdles that need to be overcome. The media, medical educators and physicians, schools, workplaces, and the entire food industry must play a part in providing accurate information about the real reason behind the gluten-free diet and the appropriate awareness around the autoimmune disease that requires such a diet. The media needs to stop glamorizing "gluten-free" and creating a false alluring hype around it. Those in the medical field must start providing proper training and more education on celiac disease and the implications of the gluten-free diet to the physicians that work one-on-one with real celiac patients and patients who "think" they should be gluten-free. Schools and workplaces need to begin destigmatizing medically mandated diets and be open to creating a safe, friendly environment for all. The food industry is in dire need of continuous training, education, and a defined set of strict standards and regulations for food allergy safety. A diagnosis of celiac disease should not come with unnecessary added burdens on top of an already life-changing diet and lifestyle change.

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Personal Bias Has No Place in Science

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By KOMALPREET SAGGU

ABSTRACT

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) is a powerful force within the scientific world. A manual of this importance should be held to a high standard of objectivity and fact-based science. Despite this fact, its publishers have a history of mislabeling conditions as mental illness due to public and personal bias at the time. This occurred during the 1950s with homosexuality, and there is significant evidence the DSM has again made a mislabeling error with paraphilias. The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the reasons why the public and the DSM categorize paraphilias as mental illnesses. Starting with the abnormality and the distress paraphilias cause the individual, this paper seeks to prove paraphilias develop as normal sexual desires do and should be removed from the DSM.

INTRODUCTION

Paraphilias are broadly defined as abnormal sexual desires and are diagnosed after a minimum of six months of recurring fantasies and urges. These urges are often very specific to people or objects. While the focus of various paraphilias differs, the symptoms remain similar and entail long-term obsessions that can create difficulties in one's life. There is no single known cause of paraphilias, although experts have identified several risk factors which can lead to a predisposition to deviant sexual behavior. In some cases, hormonal treatment has proven effective in treating paraphilias, especially in regards to the birth control shot Depo Provera, first used by Gregory K. Lehne and John Money with favorable outcomes (Lehne 216). While this seems to suggest irregular hormone levels could cause paraphilias, a direct correlation between hormone levels and paraphilias does not exist. Similarly, by observing the behavior of some of humans' closest relatives, scientists like John Money have found evidence of paraphilic behavior even among primates, implying a genetic or evolutionary component to paraphilias (Money 83-85). Despite this evidence, no single gene or gene group has been found to be the cause of deviant desires to date. Apart from this biological evaluation of paraphilias, many psychiatrists believe "nurture" plays a bigger role here than "nature," in that paraphilias may develop as a result of traumatic events which have occurred during key developmental stages in childhood. John

Money and Gregory K. Lehne's work at Johns Hopkins with a subject with several paraphilias supports this claim, as all three of the subject's paraphilias seemed to be linked to certain transformative events which occurred in the paraphiliac's lifetime (Lehne 63). Since neither a biological or experiential cause has been established, the scientific community generally agrees that paraphilias are caused by a combination of genetic and developmental factors, rather than any single cause ("Paraphilias"). What many in the community cannot agree on, however, is whether paraphilias should constitute mental illness. The controversy around this subject centers on the fact that paraphilias are included within the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, or the DSM. The DSM is a manual published by the American Psychiatric Association and used by psychologists and psychiatrists throughout the country to diagnose and guide their patients. The effects of a behavior being included within this important and widely used manual are far reaching. During the 1950s, it was believed that homosexuality was a mental disorder, perpetuated by its inclusion in the DSM at the time, illustrating the social influence it holds. Because the DSM is unarguably a powerful social influencer, more care should be taken in defining "normality" versus mental illness. This paper will be making a case for the removal of paraphilia from the DSM, on the grounds that paraphilias are merely another expression of human phenotypic diversity rather than mental illness.

THE QUESTION OF NORMAL SEXUALITY

Despite how varied sexuality and sexual behavior can be, all types of sexual behaviors are valid and natural. John Money, the renowned psychologist and one of the founders of the field of sexual identity studies, is a key authority on how exactly sexual desire might develop. The development of sexual deviance actually differs based on gender. While women have been known on occasion to develop paraphilias, usually tactile related, the vast majority of paraphiliacs are exclusively men (Money 79). This is because many paraphilias develop as a result of "imagery errors," also known as "programming errors," errors which result when an image or behavior gets wrongfully associated with feelings of arousal (Money 79). That these errors are far more common in men can be attributed to the fact that imagery is important to a man's sexual arousal. In the words of John Money, "the male appears more often responsive to imagery of the sense of sight to induce erotosexual initiative and as an adjunct to

genital arousal and orgasm. The paraphilic syndromes can all be viewed as errors of imagery: the paraphiliac is "turned on" erotosexually by a wrong image" (79). Essentially, men can be thought of as more "at risk" for paraphilic development, because their arousal is typically related to visual cues. While the exact mechanisms behind these mistaken associations of arousal are unknown, researcher Gene Abel, a psychiatrist at the Behavioral Medicine Institute of Atlanta, suggests that physiological arousal during the key developmental stages of childhood can sometimes be "...inaccurately perceived as intense attraction or sexual behavior, rather than as anxiety, guilt, or other confusing emotions that may contribute to stimulation..." (Abel 1). Negative or ambiguous childhood situations resulting in physiological excitement can therefore take on erotic significance even before the "sex drive" has fully formed. The event or stimulus that triggered the arousal then remains salient in the paraphiliac's mind as a visual fantasy and as a new sexual interest. These interests are acted upon in adolescence, by the pairing of the event or stimulus with the positive reinforcement of orgasm (Abel 1). Gene Abel agrees that "Conditioning and stimulus-pairing reinforce the arousal through the pleasures of masturbation and orgasm and often culminate in the individual acting on the arousing images/fantasies... Normal sexual arousal patterns likely develop in a similar pattern" (1). An imagery related fixation, resulting in masturbation and orgasm which conditions the person to find the same stimulus arousing in the future is a part of normal sexual development. It is likely then that this differentiation of sexual interest, or "programming error," may take place in everyone's childhood and result in the establishment of adult sexuality. Therefore, the image-oriented development of paraphilia can be categorized as normal.

However, the abnormal facet of paraphilias is then the unusual image that gets programmed as sexually arousing instead of the desired, socially acceptable image. One might imagine that there is no end to the diversity of paraphilias, since it would seem that any image may become excitatory during childhood and from there on develop into a sexual fetish. This too is a false assumption, as paraphilias are actually limited in their scope, and many are simply different expressions of the same broader paraphilia. As John Money explains, "The range of paraphilic pathologies is not infinite, despite the extent of their variety" (77). An example of paraphilic variety is paraphilic infantilism, a paraphilia that makes it so it's paraphiliacs are only aroused when wearing a diaper or engaging in infant roleplay with a partner who acts as their parent. This paraphilia,

while a subheading by itself, is listed in the DSM under the group of masochism. In this way, paraphilic infantilism can be thought of as an expression of the broader paraphilic range of masochism, in that the adults in question are simply giving away their power in a different, nontraditional way. Masochism, sadism, and fetishism are just a few of the major types of paraphilias listed in the DSM as headings, all capable of generally describing even the most obscure of sexual behaviors. This delineation of groups proves that there are common sexual fantasies and desires across all paraphilias, and that these "imagery errors" are not entirely random and mistaken. The fixation on these "imagery errors" is also seen as problematic and abnormal behavior. However, as Thomas N. Wise, the Director of Research in Sexual Behaviors at Johns Hopkins University puts it, "...each culture utilizes different accoutrements to enhance sexual excitement and add an air of mystery and risk to erotic arousal. Even when nudity is common, other attributes, such as the nape of the neck in Japan, produce great sexual excitement" (250). While the process of imagery fixation is natural and common to all, the objects of fixation usually vary by culture. In America, having large breasts and/or a shapely backside are instead viewed as sources of sexual arousal. Therefore, labeling the fixations of paraphiliacs as "wrong" or "unnatural" is biased science. The rules and cues for attraction are entirely subjective and often culturally produced.

THE STIGMA OF DEVIANT SEX

The stigma that surrounds paraphilias is unfounded and a significant impediment to research in the sexological field of study, defined as the interdisciplinary scientific study of sex. There are two perspectives which contribute to this taboo: that paraphilias are abnormal and that paraphiliacs are synonymous with sex offenders. The latter perspective is a direct result of the stigma around paraphilias. The vast majority of paraphiliacs engage in non-criminal, non-harmful behavior. However, the scientific community and popular culture are almost exclusively exposed to deviants who engage in unethical and criminal behaviors because they get caught and diagnosed. Those who live out their fantasies quietly without harming others never make it into the public eye, because of their non-criminal status and because, in the words of Jennifer E. Pate, a psychiatrist affiliated with Baylor College of Medicine, "As with all paraphilic disorders…there is rarely sufficient motivation for patients to change" (1936). Without any dissatisfaction with their way of life or a desire to

change, non-criminal paraphiliacs do not usually seek out psychiatrists and healthcare professionals. The stereotype of the criminal paraphilic sex offender therefore lives on. As for the former perspective, which focuses on the abnormality of paraphilia, research done by psychology professors Christian Joyal and Julie Carpentier into the prevalence of paraphilias has instead revealed that paraphilias are more common and "natural" than is typically thought. In the field of psychology and psychiatry, "normal" or "natural" sexuality is referred to as normophilic behavior, a term coined to express the opposite of paraphilic behavior. Paraphilic behavior is formally defined as "sexual behavior that deviates significantly from the norm," a definition that relies on the basic assumption that paraphilic interests are uncommon (Joyal 169). A study done by Joyal and Carpentier on the prevalence of paraphilic fantasies indicated that this assumption is wholly inaccurate. Using an internet survey as well as a telephone survey to reach out to 1,040 adults living within the city of Quebec, the authors found that "Of the eight examples of paraphilic behavior listed in DSM-5, four (voyeurism, fetishism, frotteurism, and masochism) were neither rare (less than 2.3%) nor unusual (less than 15.9%) in a nonclinical sample of adults, in terms of both experience and wish to experience in both men and women" (Joyal 169). From these results it is clear that the label of anomalous for paraphilic interests and behaviors is inaccurate because they are actually common among the population. If statistically, paraphilias cannot be described as rare, paraphilias must instead be "normophilic." These results indicate a need to redefine normal sexuality within the psychological community. Aside from the apparent normality of deviant sexuality, the "naturalness" of paraphilias is another concern of those who believe paraphilias are justifiably included within the DSM. For this aspect of paraphilias, scientists like John Money have turned to primatology, the study of primates. Primatology is a field which allows researchers to trace the evolutionary history behind common human behaviors using the closest living relatives of humans. Money examines the phyletic, or evolutionary development, behind paraphilias in his article, "Paraphilias: Phyletic Origins of Erotosexual Dysfunction." He connects smell related paraphilias to "...sexual pheromones, that is, odoriferous substances that act as erotosexual signals or attractants. In mammals these substances are secreted in the vagina at the time of ovulation or estrus...The same attractant substance exists in the human vagina at the time of ovulation. Even though the human male's eyes dominate his nose erotosexually, it is likely that some males, if not all, are affected by vaginal pheromones,

possibly subliminally" (Money 89). Money suggests the attractive powers of pheromones as an evolutionary reason behind paraphilias associated with smell. Such paraphilias, like the obsession with women's soiled underwear, can be explained by these evolutionary reasons, indicating that paraphilias are largely governed by evolutionary influences and can be therefore considered both natural as well as common. These insights signify a need for further research and work into determining both the prevalence and origins of paraphilias, as well as a potential reevaluation of its inclusion within the next DSM. However, for this research to be possible, the taboo associated with paraphilias must be shed first. Joyal's internet and telephone study exemplified how shame affects research in this field, even when study participants are granted anonymity. What they found was that "rates of acknowledgment of paraphilic interest [in the Internet study] were still higher than those obtained via the telephone, which was expected. A major limitation of this study, as for most studies on sexual behavior, is the relatively low response rate" (Joyal 169). These facts reflect the taboos around sexuality and its diversity among populations of people. The higher rates of paraphilic acknowledgement within the Internet survey can be attributed to the comforting anonymity provided by the Internet, as people are less afraid to show the more socially unacceptable sides of themselves when they feel their words cannot be traced back to them. In comparison, the telephone survey required that the participant's voice be heard by the interviewer. The lower rates of paraphilic acknowledgment within the telephone survey can therefore be attributed to the participant's anxiety and fear of their voice being recognized one day as the person who admitted they were into socially unacceptable sex. The stigma around paraphilic interests impedes studies and research into this area of psychology by inculcating a culture of shame among paraphiliacs. As a result, little data on paraphilias and their diversity can be found.

THE DSM SHOULD BE CONSUMED CRITICALLY

The greatest evidence for a reevaluation of paraphilias' place in the DSM is the inclusion of homosexuality in the 1950s, which was based on the cultural bias prevalent at the time. According to psychiatrist Rachel Bingham from the University College Hospital London, homosexuality "appeared in the first DSM in 1952, among 'sociopathic personality disorders'. It was re-categorized with 'sexual deviations' in DSM-II in 1968. In 1973, following years of debate, protests and ultimately a vote by

the Board of Trustees, homosexuality was removed from the classification" (1). Its inclusion within the early copies of the DSM reflected popular cultural attitudes towards homosexuality rather than being grounded in science. Even decades after homosexuality was removed from the manual, the idea of homosexuality being pathological lingered in the minds of conservatives and bigots and is still believed to be true in some circles today. Clearly, a publication as culturally influential as the DSM should be held to a high standard of authenticity and scientific objectivity. The barriers to objectivity are particularly obvious in situations where cultural bias collides with scientific inquiry. Especially in regards to the scientific investigation of homosexuality, "Theories of pathology tend to view homosexuality as a sign of a defect, or even as morally bad, with some of these theorists being quite open about their belief that homosexuality is a social evil" (Drescher 566). People's personal biases frequently intrude into their professional work, and these transgressions are even more likely to be forgiven when the general public also buys into the same biases. This concept ties into the current general attitude towards paraphilias. Since the public generally views paraphilias as taboo and abnormal, publications are more likely to get away with passing off paraphilias as mental illnesses, despite the lack of concrete scientific evidence. Besides homosexuality, "...masturbation, oral and anal sex...were not long ago regarded as perversions...," while they are now regarded as normal and acceptable (Hinderliter 20). What is seen as deviant and perverse is entirely culturally determined, but practicing good science demands objectivity and an imperviousness to these shifting cultural norms. Therefore, a reevaluation of mental diseases should be undertaken, especially when the illnesses in question mirror a current public attitude, as with paraphilias.

A CASE STUDY OF "JACK"

There are many theories which try to explain the existence of paraphilias and other sexual deviances, usually by relating deviance back to mental illness. For example, psychologists like John Money claim that people are born without deviance, and that it is traumatizing life events like deprivation, early sexual exposure, or punishment that potentially warp people's sexual desires (Hawkinson 863). For psychologists like these, the fact that their patients' paraphilias are rooted in their past humiliations proves that paraphilias are mental disorders that require treatment. The relation between the traumatic past these patients can-

not let go of and the sexual "problems" plaguing them in the present is evidence that paraphilias are mental illnesses. Gregory K. Lehne and John Money seem to exemplify this point in a case study, in which pivotally humiliating and traumatic events in childhood led to the development of sexual deviance later in a man's life. The man in the study, nicknamed "Jack" as a pseudonym in Money's published work, experienced a transformative event when he was six, when he was humiliated at school by being forced to wear a dress and sit with the girls as punishment for being disruptive. Later in his life, he was diagnosed with a multiplex paraphilia that manifested differently at various stages of his life, all beginning from this pivotal event. Multiplex is a word that means containing many elements in a complex relationship. In this way, to say that a person suffers from a multiplex paraphilia is to say that his paraphilia has many components that work together in a complex relationship. The man in question recounts this experience, during which he was forced to "remain in [his] shorts and T-shirt, and the dress was put over top that. For the day [he] sat on the girl's side of the classroom, took recess with them as well as lunch. At recess time the children in the class stood around, crossing their fingers. Sissy, sissy, shame, and millions of other things were said" (Lehne 63). This experience was formative for him as it was the start of his transvestite fetish and likely his overall multiplex paraphilia. Similar to this previous event, the man was again punished and humiliated when he was seven when his mother "paraded him around the streets of the housing project where he lived wearing a girl's blouse and skirt over diapers, with a hand lettered sign announcing that he was a sissy baby because he wet the bed" (Lehne 64). Like the previous humiliation, this deeply shameful experience also stood out starkly in his mind and was a major factor in the beginnings of his sexual deviancy. Humiliating and unforgettable childhood traumas like this supports the idea that paraphilias, like diaper fetishism, must be mental illnesses because they are rooted in childhood trauma. The strongest evidence here is that "Jack's" paraphilic infantilism which manifested later in his life featured the theme of the diaper his mother dressed him in. The transvestic fetishism was the first manifestation of the overall multiplex paraphilia, which transformed into adult baby fetishism later in life. This sequence of events illustrates how the two childhood traumas played into the development of this man's multiplex paraphilia and, consequently, both his transvestite fetish and his diaper fetish. The link between the girl clothes and the diaper used to humiliate him and the fetishes he developed later on in life is indisputable.

` The traumatic root to "Jack's" paraphilia seems to suggest his sexual deviance is a mental illness. Other mental illnesses, such as PTSD, also stem from a traumatic, pivotal event that goes on to hurt the person's quality of life. Eric R. Maisel, prolific author and California based psychotherapist, asserts that this qualifier is crucial; according to the DSM-IV, the illness must be causing the individual significant distress in order for it to be formally defined as mental illness (Maisel 1). The need for emotional distress is the reason most paraphilias do not make the cut as mental illnesses. In "Jack's" case, his wife and family were the ones who experienced distress due to his sexual interests. When his upset wife demanded he attend family counseling after a crossdressing relapse, Jack agreed in hopes his wife would be "counseled to accept his crossdressing. The outcome of their couple counseling was that the wife agreed that her husband could cross-dress while away from home on business trips, but not at home" (Lehne 216). Clearly, despite the paraphilia's traumatic beginning and the initial years of discomfort with his socially unacceptable desires, Jack experienced no distress or regret in regard to his sexuality later in his life and only wished to change his family's negative impressions. The absence of the individual's distress means Jack's paraphilia cannot be identified as mental illness as according to the language in the DSM. This rings true for numerous other paraphilias, because although many paraphiliacs' desires stem from childhood trauma, they do not begrudge the development of their sexual interests and are comfortable living with their "unusual" desires. The only real distress they experience comes from the derision of others who buy into the preconceptions of "abnormality" and that surround paraphilias.

CONCLUSION

The paraphilias currently included in the DSM should be removed, as they do not constitute mental illnesses in any way, shape, or form. Paraphilias cannot be defined as pathological, because they are both evolutionarily programmed and part of a natural process of sexual development. Regardless of the seemingly "unnatural" image fixated on the course of fantasy, sexual act, and positive reinforcement of orgasm is a feature of normal sexual development as well as paraphilic development. Similarly, although paraphilias seem atypical, they are common to the population and statistically significant. Even the DSM's definition of mental illness as a condition causing distress to the individual does not fit

many benign paraphilias. Evidently, it is the widespread public bias and taboo assigned toward paraphilias that has led to their inclusion within the DSM. As with homosexuality in the 1950s, paraphilias in the DSM merely reflect current social attitudes rather than being based in scientific fact. This is supported by Jack Drescher's finding that many scientists in the past have openly spoken of homosexuality as a "social evil" for reasons grounded in personal bias rather than science. In the future, a more stringent process of scientific investigation should be applied whenever publishing a new version of the DSM. Furthermore, past inclusions should not be included again only on the merit of having been included before. Science as a field is in a state of constant flux, and everything we thought we knew must be called up for reevaluation when breakthroughs are made. Self-satisfaction and personal bias have no place here.

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Social Constructs in Prison: How Do Prison Guards Reinforce Heteronormativity Among Inmates in Prisons?

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By LEANDELINE TEJADA

ABSTRACT

This paper will explore the intersection of heteronormativity, trans women and prison life from the theoretical premise that prisons reflect the same social forces and conventions that lead to discrimination, violence, and rights violations against transgender people. The structures and resulting inflexible policies in prisons create a context in which transgender people, and for the purposes of this paper, specifically trans women, are at risk of sexual violence, abuse, and dehumanization. By focusing specifically on the case of Neon Brown (Sandra Brown) v. Patuxent Institution, this paper will explore how prisons enforce the performance of cis-gender roles on inmates and create hierarchies based on the performance of those roles that affect the physical and psychological wellbeing of inmates.

INTRODUCTION

Prisons have long since developed as strictly male and female institutions. In a system divided along gender lines, transgender inmates have transitioned from being minorities in society to becoming minorities in the prison system. Erving Goffman's "On the Characteristics of Total Institutions" and Michel Foucault's Discipline and Punish describe total institutions, like prisons, as a reflection of society in which the same forces, phenomenon, and conventions of society act upon the individuals in these institutions (Goffman 4). Prisons are enclosed spaces, separated from the rest of society, that reflect and enforce the values or conventions of society. These societal conventions also apply to the gender binaries imposed on prisons as a result of the segregation of inmates based on sex. Valerie Jenness and Sarah Fenstermaker, authors of "Forty Years after Brownmiller: Prisons for Men, Transgender Inmates, and the Rape of the Feminine" describe the phenomenon of "gendered prisons", which have created hypermasculine male prisons and gender neutral female prisons. This creates a strict dichotomy that leaves little room for transgender individuals (2016, 16). Jenness and Fenstermaker present these sexually dichotomized prisons as a result of hierarchies that exist only among

prisoners. However, the hierarchy that Jenness and Fenstermaker explain does not factor in the behavior of prison guards which is shown in the case of Sandra Brown, a transgender inmate who was sexually assaulted by an inmate and sexually humiliated by guards at the Patuxent correctional facility. The problems resulting from prison gender binaries are a reflection of society's own binaries. As incorporated members of society, the prison guards at the Patuxent institution exhibited and enforced the very same gender binary or cisgender bias that society constructed. Lack of acceptance leaves transgender inmates vulnerable, underrepresented, and ostracized. These feelings intensify when transgender inmates are labeled as feminine representations in institutions polarized by hyper-masculinity. The presence of femininity factors into the victimization of these inmates. Current institutional segregation, according to binary gender as shown in the case of Sandra Brown, furthers the anomie that transgender women inmates feel by forcing them to conform to expectations of femininity in prisons that place both the prison guards and staff in the role of gender enforcer.

SANDRA BROWN V. PATUXENT INSTITUTION

Neon Brown (Sandra Brown) v. Patuxent Institution is a state appellate case that shows the extent to which gender binaries are engrained in the operation of prison systems and the following summary derives from transcripts from that case. Sandra Brown was transferred to the Patuxent institution from the Baltimore City Detention Center. When Brown arrived, she was removed from the line of newly arrived inmates who were awaiting a strip search in the intake room. Brown was led to a medical room for a strip search where staff would decide "if the inmate made the transition from female to male" (Brown v. Patuxent 7). Having no formal training on the processing of transgender inmates, a female officer searched Brown's upper feminine torso, while a male officer simultaneously searched her lower body because Brown possessed male genitals at the time. The strip search, which is traditionally used to check for smuggled contraband, was also used to ascertain Brown's gender. Patuxent staff explained the search as necessary because the determination of sex would decide Brown's housing arrangements in the facility. Because Brown was physically intersex, she was placed on "administrative segregation", which means that she was housed separately from other inmates. Brown was lodged in what Patuxent administrators called a "segregation

unit" for a period of fifty days, which Brown later reveals was really a solitary confinement unit. Brown was only allowed to go out for recreational activities once during her stay in the facility. Her placement in solitary confinement was rationalized by staff as a safety precaution to keep her safe, but that did not prevent Brown from being raped in a staircase by an inmate upon release from solitary or from being humiliated by prison staff.

Brown was the victim of extremely inappropriate observation. One such moment of inappropriate observation occurred when officers pulled back Brown's shower curtain and then proceeded to gawk at and mock her. According to Brown and another witness (another inmate who provided testimony), the prison guards would conduct this humiliating form of show and tell on a regular basis. The prison guards would laugh at Brown. During routine strip searches, they would often pull other guards out from the hallway to come and see the spectacle they considered Brown to be. Sandra Brown was ridiculed by Patuxent guards, especially Sergeant Dawn Halsey, who constantly called Brown "it". Sergeant Halsey was the ringleader of the abuse, she and other like guard Liquori Smith referred to Brown as "some kind of animal" (Brown v. Patuxent 7). The mental abuse was so extensive that Brown states one guard said "She told me I should kill myself and that I'm not a woman that I'll never be like her" (Brown v. Patuxent 9). During her stay at the facility, Brown clearly suffered extensive dehumanizing mental abuse.

Mental abuse aside, the Patuxent Correctional facility blatantly disregarded regulations delineated in the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), which illustrates the complacency of prison guards toward sexual abuse and harassment. The facility lacked a zero-tolerance approach to sexual abuse and harassment throughout the prison, failed to protect inmates against mental abuse, and demonstrated a lack of training for prison guards (Brown v. Patuxent 25). In its complacency in dealing with sexual abuse, the Patuxent Correctional facility failed to uphold several state and federal government policies that would have protected Brown against the mistreatment she suffered.

THE THREAT OF BLURRED GENDER

The presence of femininity and bodies that blur the male or female dynamic are posed as a threat. According to Chief Orlando Johnson (chief of security at Patuxent), Brown was quickly deemed as "a transgen-

der inmate and posed a possible threat to the security of the institution…
reasons exist to believe that [Brown is] dangerous to the security of the
institution and/or inmates and/or staff" (Brown v Patuxent 7). Brown's
sexual identity and feminized body compromised the security of the
prison, which is a hyper-masculine construction. The presence of any iota
of femininity in direct contact with the prisoners was what Chief Orlan-
do Johnson viewed as a threat to the order, processes, and policies that
encompassed the security and male constructed punishment the prison
was designed for. This is not to say that Chief Johnson was solely invested
in maintaining a traditionally male facility, but that the same forces that
make Patuxent a hyper-masculine facility, like gender-constructed pun-
ishment, would act on Brown.

Brown was labeled as a threat in Patuxent because her changed
body represented a visible sign of femininity in a space that bars against
it. *Enforcing Gender: The Constitution of Sex and Gender in Prison Regimes*
by Sarah Pemberton, analyzes the influence of social constructions of
gender on gendered punishment. Pemberton describes specialized gender
punishment when she writes,

> There are also different rules for physical appearance and dress in
> men's and women's prisons, which reinforce sex/gender stereo-
> types and create difficulties for transgender prisoners who may be
> denied clothing consistent with their sex or gender identification.
> (Rosenblum 2000, 549). Transgender prisoners may be reported for
> disciplinary violations for wearing banned clothing or for hair- styles
> that conflict with the gendered rules and norms of the institution
> (Sylvia Rivera Law Project 2007, 31). Further, there are higher rates
> of punishment for infractions in women's prisons than in men's
> prisons (Howe 1994, 147), which suggests that women are subject to
> a more restrictive disciplinary regime. These disciplinary infractions
> may be the result of tensions between competing ideals of femininity,
> and Mary Bosworth argues that prison regimes encourage traditional
> "passive feminine behaviour" (1999, 105) that conflicts with contem-
> porary values of autonomy and agency and thus provokes resistance
> from prisoners. (Pemberton 167).

Gendered punishments are an attempt to instill socially constructed
gender roles, spaces like prisons, become centered on the idea of what it
means to be a "real man" or a "real woman." The forces in hyper-mascu-
line facilities compel Trans inmates to assimilate to the heteronormative
space of prison. This leads to the pressured adoption of masculine or

feminine roles by transgender inmates. Christine Peek, author of "Breaking out of the Prison Hierarchy: Transgender Prisoners, Rape, and the Eighth Amendment" describes factors like inmate-on-inmate violence which perpetuate the "real girl" concept when she states, "At the top of the hierarchy, dominant men subjugate weaker men through physical violence or manipulation. In general, sexually dominant inmates consider themselves heterosexual…The bottom of the hierarchy is defined in terms of the feminine" (Peek 1226). Peek's writing suggests that the gendered hierarchy results in transgender inmates adopting cisgender roles which automatically label them as feminine. The role of a "real girl" superimposed on individuals that society does not view as natural women portrays the extent to which Heteronormativity structures a prison. Peek essentially describes two spheres, the first being a space in which Trans inmates are subjugated through violence and rape, the second sphere in which Trans inmates adopt the role of a heterosexual woman and initiate a relationship with a more masculine inmate for protection.

Sandra Brown's case differs in that she was placed in solitary confinement to avoid the "threat" she posed to the security of the facility and denied access to work, education, and programs that other inmates were allowed to participate in. However, such isolation did little in the long run to protect Brown from violence, abuse, and humiliation. On one of the rare occasions that Brown was released from solitary confinement and allowed to join outdoor recreation, she was corned in an unsupervised staircase by another inmate. Brown was raped by the larger male inmate; such instances of inmate-on-inmate violence seem to be perpetrated in spaces where authority is absent. A report of the rape was not filed and security tapes of the event were destroyed following the facility's procedural security regulations. The judge deciding on the Brown v. Patuxent case never referred specifically to the rape but did rule that the PREA regulations, which would prevent such instances of rape, did apply to Patuxent and that its correctional officers needed substantial training. The rape by another inmate or inmate-on-inmate violence can be explained in terms of Peek's "real man" theory, but can the sexual assault perpetrated by the prison guards also be explained using similar logic?

Not only was Brown victimized by an inmate but also by the prison administration. This victimization first began during the intake process in which Brown was cross examined by both a male and female guard. Chief Johnson claimed the purpose of the strip search (part of the intake procedure) was to ascertain where in the facility Brown would be

lodged. Brown claims that Johnson had "to find out what she was" also that "she shouldn't be what she was" (Brown v. Patuxent 16). Patuxent lacked the necessary policies to conduct a strip search on intersex inmates which explains why guards and even Chief Johnson referred to it as something akin to "make it up as you go" (Brown v. Patuxent 16). After the strip search, Brown was placed in solitary confinement which is illegal according to PREA regulations which state that "The agency shall not place lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex inmates in dedicated facilities, units, or wings solely on the basis of such identification or status" (Brown v Patuxent 17). Brown was placed in solitary confinement as a method of isolating her from the rest of the inmate population. Brown was harassed by guards who would point and laugh at her. On multiple occasions correctional officers would harass Brown while she showered. Testimony provided by Mr. Dietrich (an inmate) states that "they [the correctional officers] roll back the drape until it was fully exposed, and I've seen the COs [correctional officers] sitting there watching, you know. And I've actually seen a CO pull another CO from the corridor itself, come in and check this out basically" (Brown v. Patuxent 29). Other forms of severe mental abuse came in the form of name calling and officers coming to watch Brown in her cell for purposes that did not relate to security or checking on her wellbeing. The court awarded Brown a grievance sum for the suffering she endured at Patuxent.

THE GUARD: INDIFFERENCE TOWARDS RAPE

The social biases and stereotypes entrenched in Peek's "real man" theory are not solely seen in the relationship between prisoners but also extends to guards and the administration of prisons. Peek's "real man" theory and Jenness and Fenstermaker's prisoner hierarchy theory can be used to create the idea that prison guards, like inmates, make assumptions about the sexuality and gender roles of transgender inmates. Although prison guards may not appear to be as involved as the hyper-masculine inmates, their power and enforcement ability places them above the hyper-masculine inmates in the hierarchy because guards benefit and in a way oversee this hierarchy. Although PREA regulations require that prison officials and staff take preventative measures towards rape and victimization of inmates caused by prison hierarchies, many prison officials are in fact indifferent and take a "hands-off" approach to the problem. "Correctional Officers and their Perceptions of Homosexuality, Rape, and

Prostitution in Male Prisons" by Helen Eigenberg describes the relationship between rape and prison staff when she writes,

> Officers may contribute to a rape-prone culture…Officers may tolerate coercive sexuality as part of a divide-and-conquer strategy… Officers may contribute to a rape-prone culture in less direct ways as well. They may indicate their disdain and disrespect for victims by calling them derogatory names (e.g., "punks", "bitches", "queens") or may use female pronouns when they refer to these men. (416-417)

The lack of an authoritative stance on rape acted as a silent form of approval which perpetuates the prison rape culture. Patuxent staff made their contempt for Brown quite clear which could have facilitated her rape. The Patuxent correctional staff found the prison hierarchy to be an effective means of social control, in that the hyper-masculine, more violent criminals are allowed to continue raping and victimizing other inmates as long as they maintain cooperation with prison guards. This unwillingness to accept the sexual activity (whether consensual or not) in prisons combined with the lackadaisical, indifferent attitude towards prison rape works to normalize the nonconsensual sex that occurs in these facilities. This normalization becomes particularly effective to guards and officials who view rape as a product of prisons and the prison itself as a sex rampant institution. Therefore, guards often perceive rape as a common product of the prison environment and Trans inmates, who are viewed by society as sexual deviants, as understandable targets of the prison hierarchy. The normalization of rape places guards at the top of the prison rape hierarchy because they allow the rape to occur in some cases and in others rape is viewed as something that just happens in prison.

THE PROBLEM WITH THE ASSUMPTION OF SEXUALITY AND GENDER IDENTITY

This gendered hierarchy which is perpetuated by prison officials can lead to psychological dissonance in that trans inmates are forced to be in heterosexual relationships which may differ from their sexual identification. Assuming that a transgender inmate like Sandra Brown would have the same sexual inclinations as a heterosexual woman just because of her physical appearance is negligent. In fact, it is indeed quite possible for a man, who has transitioned into a woman, to still have sexual inclinations towards women. Jenness and Fenstermaker (2014) paint the role of

the Trans woman inmate as the following:

> The commitment to, and everyday practice of, acting like a lady sets the stage for a playful and serious competition among transgender prisoners for the attention and affection of "real men" in prison. The attention and adoration of "real men," in turn, is taken to be an important measure of gender status among transgender prisoners. These features of the competitive pursuit of gender authenticity are crucial to the social organization of gender in prison. The effort to be recognized as "a lady" is not something one finally achieves, but pursues as an ongoing proposition. (14)

Jenness and Fenstermakers' theory (2014) only addresses transgender inmates who are attempting to assimilate to social constructions of gender but does not describe what happens to other transgender individuals who may identify as genderqueer or intersex. However, Jenness and Fenstermakers' theory comes into question in the way that they use the term transgender. Shedding more light on the definition of the term is Megan Davidson, who defines the term as "an umbrella that encompasses a wide range of people who play with, disrupt, or blend Euro-American cultural beliefs about binary sex and gender…the category is said to include transsexual people (of all operative statuses)" (60). The assumption that a Trans prisoner is solely female or male excludes and ostracizes other groups of trans individuals. Transgender inmates (who consider themselves as male or female) face initial ostracization because prison guards do not consider them as truly male or female. These kinds of opinions were portrayed by Brown's case in which guards would refer to her as an "it." Despite the opinions of the guards, the gendered policies in prisons that guards enforce seem to retrofit transgender inmates into categories of male or female with no regard for how they might identify.

THE POWER OVER POLICY EQUALS THE POWER OVER IDENTITY

The stereotyping and social construction associated with cis-gender roles are reinforced by the daily procedures of the prison. Policies in prisons are reflections of constructions of gender. Take for example the intake procedure. At the very beginning of the intake procedure, inmates are required to self-identify, meaning that they must label themselves as a transgender inmate. This immediately begins the process of top-down harassment. Most states, if not all, document inmates as either male or

female, which is done by examining the inmate's genitalia. However, this process is complicated when guards must decide the gender of transgender inmates like Sandra Brown who at the time of her intake, had breasts but male genitalia. In the case of Patuxent Correctional Facility v Sandra Brown, Brown claims "that she was harassed during the strip search by Chief Johnson and other correctional officers. She alleged that Chief Johnson told her he had 'to find out what she was' and that 'she shouldn't be what she was' (Brown v Patuxent 16). Although Brown claimed that the main purpose of the strip search was to attempt and ascertain her gender, the court did not have enough evidence to ensure that her claim was true.

Prison guards must enforce the regulations that force transgender inmates to behave in roles they do not identify with. In many prisons, guards must refer to inmates by gendered prefixes related to birth sex. Guards also instituted mandatory dress codes and grooming policies that leave little room for any amenities like makeup, wigs, bras, or any other feminine article of clothing that would help to assert the gender identification of Trans inmates like Sandra Brown. While such small aspects might seem meaningless, clothing and titles are mechanisms that aid with the assertion and formation of gender identity and help people like Brown truly become recognized by the gender they want to be. Gagne, Tewksbury, and McGaughey, authors of "Coming out and Crossing Over: Identity Formation and Proclamation in a Transgender Community" offer an interpretation of the trans dimension of appearance when they write, "Frequently those who fall outside or between the gender binary are encouraged to conform to the dominant system. Those who cannot or will not conform may be counseled to alter their bodies or encouraged to perfect a new gender presentation so that they may "pass" as the other sex" (479). Trans inmates are revoked the tools that could help them physically and mentally assert their feelings and identity. These feelings of not belonging lead them into further isolation and damage their sense of identity.

Prison guards act as conscious or unconscious agents of social control. They exert the power of surveillance and authority in that they control multiple aspects of an inmate's life. As guards exert such pressures, they knowingly or unknowingly, enforce the values and conventions of society such as gender constructs. In a society where LGBTQI groups have campaigned for the equal treatment of individuals with "nonconventional" sexualities, it is possible to have this same sense of

equality instilled in prisons. However, what would this equality entail? Fair treatment does not always equate to equal treatment and different bodies, like those of transgender inmates, require different forms of treatment. Prisons have been created as a sort of universal prescription of punishment, in that one facility has been created to punish individuals with different needs, sexualities, gender, crimes, creeds, and religions. It is the refusal to accept or even the disregard for such differences that has diminished the effectiveness of the prison system.

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An Anomaly: The Black Swan

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By JULIA WASILEWSKI

ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to take a closer look at the exploitation and essentialization of the black female body during the institution of slavery, as well as the resulting stereotypes that have worked to exclude women of color from the classical ballet world. By examining (i) the portrayal of black female sexuality, (ii) the portrayal of black female physicality, and (iii) the role of colorism, I argue that all three factors work to devalue the ability and appropriateness of the black female body by marking it as morally impure, indocile, and inferior. While some may argue that ballet's diversity issue is one of class and economics (as ballet training is notoriously expensive), I conclude that the black female body is judged according to the "normative" female body, which is usually "white, desexualized, hetero-feminine and usually middle class" (Atencio and Wright 19). In this way, the interconnected nature of race, gender, and class produces an overlapping system of oppression and discrimination, in which class cannot be disentangled from race and gender. By understanding the ways in which the black female has been stereotyped over time, ballet can change beyond its roots as an elitist, European art form. This change, however, must not only seek to address the diversity among ballet dancers in companies, but also the diversity in the very definition of ballet.

INTRODUCTION

The ethereality and effortlessness of classical ballet dancers on stage certainly captures the hearts of audience members, yet it doesn't notice that what these dancers have in common is more than poise, grace, and overall talent. For the most part, the majority of ballet dancers dominating the stage are white. It is no wonder that the term ballet blanc exists, as it not only denotes the white color of the costumes worn by professional ballet dancers, but also clearly denotes the "white" attitudes of the ballet world, as well as its almost all-white demographic. Popularized and codified in the courts of Louis XIV, classical ballet has always been considered an elitist art form that was open solely to white nobility. Locked in tradition, there remains an unwillingness to shift this conventionally all-white, elitist art form into the present day, where both white and black swans equally dominate the stage. Yet ballet's long history is not

the only factor posing as a barrier that excludes women of color. While some barriers have been broken, the historical roots of the black female body, as well as stereotypes of African American women, work to devalue the ability and appropriateness of black bodies and ultimately exclude them from the ballet world.

Although ballet initially seemed resistant to evolving beyond its roots as an elite, European art form, it has unquestionably become more inclusive in ways that Louis XIV would have never imagined. The spotlight has been turned to ballet's diversity issue, and dancers of color have been slowly, but surely, making their way onto the stage with the other white swans. Many U.S. ballet companies have been making efforts to diversify ballet; for instance, Charlotte Ballet partnered with Dance Theatre of Harlem, a black classical ballet company, in order to select black dancers for their company. Furthermore, The Washington Ballet's program, "Let's Dance Together," also seeks to bring new dancers of color into the spotlight, provide pre-professional dancers of color with a stronger support system, and promote choreographers of color (Collins n. pag.). Many companies are working to diversify their dancers, as well as working to set up programs to encourage dancers of color to pursue ballet. Many of these efforts have been met with success, and Misty Copeland, who is the first female African American principal dancer in the American Ballet Theater, is a prime example. Her fame and recognition in recent years has sparked conversations about race and diversity in ballet and has brought necessary attention to the subject. Yet, celebrating these successes, like those of Misty Copeland, can be potentially dangerous, as they imply that a level playing field has been achieved for both black and white dancers, and that ballet has finally transcended the barrier of race, when, in fact, it has a long way to go. "Misty Copeland's rise to stardom has prompted diversification efforts, dancers of color still face huge challenges, particularly in classical ballet, which remains primarily white" (Thompson n. pag.). The celebration of one black female ballet dancer's success ignores the very systems that have worked to oppress the black female body and the very stereotypes that excluded black bodies from ballet in the first place. While small-scale accomplishments are undeniably a step in the right direction, they are simply not enough to say that the fight is over, and that ballet has become an all-inclusive art form. The systems and stereotypes that work to exclude women of color from ballet need to be analyzed to their core in order to be fully understood and, thus, dismantled.

Though there has been some recent success in diversifying ballet

companies, the practice of slavery in the U.S. left deeply ingrained, negative inscriptions on the black female body that continue to stand in the way of dancers of color today. Years of exploitation and abuse inflicted on the black female body throughout the 18th and 19th centuries have resulted in viewing and stereotyping the black female body, as well as black sexuality, in a very particular way. Dr. David Pilgrim, a professor of sociology at Ferris State University, explains,

> The belief that blacks are sexually lewd predates the institution of slavery in America. European travelers to Africa found scantily clad natives. This semi nudity was misinterpreted as lewdness. White Europeans, locked into the racial ethnocentrism of the 17th century, saw African polygamy and tribal dances as proof of the African's uncontrolled sexual lust. (n.p.)

Upon coming in contact with "scantily clad natives," white European men almost immediately concluded that the black female body was innately hypersexual and had an insatiable, uncontrollable desire for sex. These ideas and beliefs brought about "the historical image of the Black Jezebel - a hypersexual, seductive and manipulative slave woman," which continues to be a pervasive image of the black female body even today (Brown et al. 525). The Jezebel stereotype portrayed African American women as "out of control" both sexually and morally, which resulted in the notion that the black female body is inappropriate for ballet, a disciplinary and historically elitist art form. The association between "'classical' ballet training, corporeal discipline, and (moral) purity" led to the notion that the black female body, deemed morally impure and indocile, cannot be easily subjected to strict ballet technique (Picart n.pag.). The image of the sexually lewd black female body also created a discrepancy between the "normal" European women who were "models of self-respect, self-control, and modesty - even sexual purity" and the "abnormal," savage-like African women (Pilgrim n. pag.). European women were believed to be appropriate and docile enough for the technique, grace, and beauty of ballet, while African American women continued to get pushed into categories of "other" and "abnormal." Since the onset of slavery in the United States, the stereotype of the black female body as being "out of control" contributed to the notion that African American women are not suitable for a disciplinary art form that demands both corporeal control and moral purity.

The objectification and exploitation of the black female body during slavery has impacted the portrayal of African American features throughout history and today. The deeply ingrained notion that the black female body is out of control both sexually and morally has led to the exaggeration of physical features to further categorize African American women as "other" and "abnormal." Black female bodies have been portrayed as being "excessive" and "primitive," and thus not appropriate for the classical lines of ballet, as well as its demand for uniformity, beauty, and grace on stage (Atencio and Wright 9). The roots of this stereotype date back to the story of Sarah Baartman (also known as "Hottentot Venus"), who was kidnapped from her village in South Africa during the transatlantic slave trade and quickly became known for her large buttocks (Gilman 210-214). Her buttocks were a prominent feature that created a discrepancy between the physical appearances of white women versus "savage-like" black women. The physical appearance of Baartman marked the "sexual difference between the European and the black – a perceived difference in sexual physiology which puzzled even early monogenetic theoreticians…" (Gilman 212). Such generalizing stereotypes of the black female body have led to the excuse that the black female body is simply "too athletic" for ballet and cannot support its demand of grace, delicacy and classical lines. Furthermore, such stereotypes emphasize the black female body's inability to adhere to Eurocentric standards of beauty that are inevitably a part of an art form that originated among elite, white individuals. The biologized and essentialized black female body, constructed as "possessing a too-stocky bone structure, protruding buttocks, and feet that were too flat and too late" has led to the generalized stereotype that all African American women have large and abnormal features that are not in line with Eurocentric beauty standards (Gaiser 272). These stereotypical features are deemed disruptive to the aesthetic and classical lines of ballet, and work to further exclude the black female body from the classical ballet world.

As a result of the negative inscriptions imposed on the black female body, women of color are judged in comparison to Eurocentric standards of beauty, especially in the ballet world. In this way, "colorism" plays a large role in deciding which black female bodies are the exception to the long-lived stereotypes of the black female body. Colorism is a product of racism and has its roots in slavery, where "white slave owners sometimes gave lighter-skinned African slaves some additional privileges, such as working in the house as opposed to the fields, the occasional

opportunity to learn to read, and the rare chance for manumission" (Hunter 239). Slave owners favored lighter-skinned African Americans, as they were aesthetically more similar to white people, and granted them certain privileges. Privileging the "whiteness" of one's skin color has carried into modern times, where research shows lighter-skinned African Americans get ahead in areas such as income, education, housing, and the marriage market (Hunter 237). This form of discrimination also applies to the world of ballet. Despite all the progress women of color have made in the United States, there is a significant "skin color stratification" in ballet. Dancers of color who appear to be lighter-skinned and have many features that are deemed beautiful according to Eurocentric standards of beauty, like Misty Copeland, can get ahead in the ballet world. Angela Harris, Professor of Law, University of California - Berkeley, explains that "the hierarchy employed in colorism, however, is usually the same one that governs racism: light skin is prized over dark skin, and European facial features and body shapes are prized over African features and body shapes" (54). In an interview with *Black Voices*, Copeland, aware of her privilege as a lighter-skinned dancer of color, explains, "I've seen so many talented black women who come in with the perfect physique and still not get into this company or another one. I think it's probably about timing as well but it definitely may have been because they were too dark" (Pitterson n. pag.). While Copeland's achievements are undeniably significant in the world of ballet, her appearance has made her journey to principal ballet dancer significantly smoother. Furthermore, her representation as a black ballet dancer potentially poses a barrier for African American dancers of color who have darker skin than Misty, who may feel discouraged as a result. Ballet's heavy focus on Eurocentric standards of beauty continues to exclude women of color who do not adhere to such a standard. The skin color of dancers of color is already imbued with meaning and stereotypical associations, so that even if dancers possess the ideal physique for classical ballet, they are constantly judged in comparison to Eurocentric beauty standards and deemed inferior. Dancers of color who fall into the realm of Eurocentric beauty standards may receive benefits and get their foot in the door of the ballet world, while other dancers are excluded altogether.

While the lack of diversity has sparked much conversation about the issues of race and the negative perception of the black female body, it has also presented new perspectives that stray away from race altogether. While many believe that the stereotyped portrayal of the black female

body is the main barrier for dancers of color, others argue that it is largely an economic and class issue that results in the lack of diversity. Class stratification in the United States works to exclude women of color from an art form that is rather costly, as the roots of ballet lie in aristocracy and elitism. As a result of years of oppression, including slavery, African Americans living in the United States have not had the equal privilege of accumulating wealth in comparison to their white counterparts and "according to a study of the racial-wealth gap, 'if current economic trends continue, the average black household will need 228 years to accumulate as much wealth as their white counterparts hold today'" (Holland n.p.). This disparity prevents African American girls and women from exposing themselves to ballet, as both training and tickets to ballet performances are rather expensive. In a recent study, it was concluded that ballet training costs nearly $120,000 over the course of fifteen years; this includes attire, pointe shoes, summer intensives, tuition, and fees at top-tier studios (Abrams n.p.). Virginia Johnson, the artistic director at the Dance Theatre of Harlem, explains, "To see the diversity in ballet companies that many now desire, we need to increase the number of African Americans — girls in particular — who study seriously past the age of 12" (n.p.). Ballet training must start at a young age, yet, with serious training comes more expenses. African American girls from families without a disposable income are simply never exposed to ballet, while those who are exposed to ballet are then forced to quit before training becomes more serious and costly. While some ballet schools offer scholarships, they rarely cover all of the expenses and "don't always take into account a student's financial need…" (Abrams n.p.). As a result of this disparity, ballet is left solely open to middle and upper class white women who can afford its costly training, as well as afford tickets to performances.

While the high costs of ballet undeniably are barriers for dancers of color, it is not enough to say that class and economic issues are the sole culprits behind the lack of diversity in the ballet world. It is important to note that class and race are intimately intertwined and work together to produce intersecting social identities and systems of oppression. Therefore, the body of a lower class black female is met with a very specific gaze and Matthew Atencio, a professor at the University of Edinburgh, and Jan Wright, a professor at the University of Wollongong, argue that it is the gaze of the middle class. While conducting a study at "Thompson High," an "inner-city American high school," Atencio and Wright assert that amidst the efforts to raise the standards of the school's dance program, the

program attempted to adhere to white middle-class values, for the normative body is traditionally white and middle class (Atencio and Wright 19). As a result, the bodies of lower income, black women were considered "beyond the regulation and discipline required to be part of social and cultural exchanges," and were specifically regulated and marginalized through certain practices (i.e. "marked 'racial' and class divisions") employed by the dance program that maintained racial hierarchies (Atencio and Wright 15). Atencio and Wright's study highlights the ways in which the multiple identities (race, gender, class) of lower class dancers of color intersect and, under the scrutiny of middle class values, lead to the notion that their bodies are non-normative, "out of control," and "lacking in value" (Atencio and Wright 20). In this way, class and economics cannot be the sole reasons behind ballet's diversity issue, as class cannot be extricated from gender and race. While economic and class issues play a large role in the lack of diversity in ballet companies, class, race, and gender are intimately intertwined and cannot be disentangled; the interconnected nature of race, gender, and class puts the low-income black female body under the gaze of the middle class and works to further exclude dancers of color from classical ballet.

While there has been some success in diversifying the ballet world, it would be wrong to assume that ballet has fully evolved and grown into an all-inclusive art form. It is quite easy to overlook the historical roots of the black female body and to assume that the underlying systems that have exploited, oppressed, and abused the black female body for many years have been dismantled; it is also easy to turn a blind eye to the resulting stereotypes of the black female body that work to devalue the ability and appropriateness of black women, and ultimately exclude them from the ballet world. Yet dissecting these systems and stereotypes at their core and understanding *how* they work is crucial in taking the first steps to dismantle them and making necessary changes in ballet. With an understanding of these systems, ballet can change; yet this change must seek to not only address the diversity among ballet dancers by encouraging dancers of color to pursue ballet and supporting choreographers of color. The diversity in the very *definition* of ballet must change as well so that ballet can evolve beyond its roots as a strictly elite, European art form. Louis XIV's vision for ballet focused largely on aesthetics, yet what about an all-white dance company — each dancer a clone of the next — is so visually appealing? The world of ballet has the potential to alter its definition and ultimately become an all-inclusive space for the black female body.

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