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FOREWORD

I could not begin to choose a favorite from among the papers published in Volume 11 of *Dialogues@RU*, which showcases the work of undergraduate students in the Rutgers Writing Program. The papers engage a wide array of topics, but share in common the advancement of an important conversation from an original point of view. The writers have read scholarly texts, thought critically about them, and developed a written argument based on conceptually rich analysis.

You will be impressed with the accomplishments of these Rutgers students whose papers were selected from more than 250 manuscripts submitted for consideration. Their work engages with the ethics of chimpanzee experimentation, explores the history of the musical as a quintessentially American art form, and argues for institutional change to allow transgender people to express their identity in public spaces. They analyze structures of surveillance to prevent insider trading, critique sexism in video games, and shine light on the lack of care given to the social and emotional needs of people with cerebral palsy. Two papers analyze the role visual images of atrocity play in forming people's understanding of terrible events. Other papers look at contemporary medical issues like the anti-vaccine movement and the kidney donor shortage. The list of fascinating topics goes on, and I invite you to explore for yourself the students' fine work.

I hope you will also be impressed by the fact that the selection and editing of this journal is done by undergraduate students who participate in an Editing Internship offered by the Rutgers Writing Program. The intern team devotes long hours to reading and issuing reader reports on submissions after which they engage in a rigorous process of substantive and technical editing in partnership with the writers. This journal reflects their hard work and the editorial skills they developed over the course of the internship.

Great thanks go to my colleagues in the Writing Program who volunteered their time to help read submissions to *Dialogues@RU*, and who gave wonderful feedback on the papers they read. Thank you to the Department of English at Rutgers University for continued support

of this project. Thanks also to Diana Heisroth and Eunice Lim who provided endless support to the intern team and me.

Congratulations to all our talented writers and to those who submitted wonderful papers that were not selected for this volume. I am always so impressed by the skillful and thoughtful accomplishments of our students here at Rutgers University.

Lynda Dexheimer

Editor, *Dialogues@RU*

Assistant Director, Rutgers Writing Program

High-Stakes Testing: Monitoring and Improving Education or Making it Worse?

JULIAN BARATA
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Abstract: High-stakes testing refers to the use of standardized tests in grades K-12 for student assessment, teacher and school evaluation, and budget allocation. The use of an accountability and incentive system, which uses test scores to punish schools with low scores and reward those with high scores, seeks to encourage effective teaching practices and punish ineffective teaching practices. It also measures the quality of schools based on students' performances on standardized tests. However, what this system has actually done is drive teachers away from schools in need, restrict teacher autonomy, and emphasize test prep over content curriculum. Ultimately, the adverse effects of the high-stakes testing system on the quality of education that students receive far outweigh, and even counteract, the intended positive effects.

INTRODUCTION

High-Stakes standardized testing has been used as a means of comparing schools and students in K-12 in hopes of developing an objective measure that could indicate when schools are not providing quality education for their students. This could then be used to identify those schools and take action in improving the education provided for students. However, critics maintain that test scores are not very reliable measures and that the emphasis on the test leads to actions that adversely affect the quality of education.

Supporters of high-stakes testing argue that these tests are needed in order to provide information about the quality of schools and to hold students and teachers accountable (Jones et al., 2003). Supporters further argue that test scores measure school quality so that schools can be ranked, and low-performing schools can be identified. This provides parents with an idea of which schools are best for their children based on the quality of education at each respective school. Moreover, the high-stakes testing system provides a means of rewarding high-performing schools and punishing low-performing schools. This, supporters argue, not only encourages teachers to do a great job, but also allows

the state to identify those schools that need to be monitored so that the quality of education at these schools can be improved.

I draw on the arguments in *The Unintended Consequences of High-Stakes Testing* (Jones, Jones & Hargrove, 2003) to frame ideas about the drawbacks of high-stakes. First, I consider the effect that high-stakes testing has on teaching, and therefore the education provided to students. Next, to detail the influence of accountability on the use of test prep, I analyze the arguments in support of and against test prep as an approach to improving scores with an emphasis on how this affects minority students. Based on this analysis, I argue that the adverse effects of high-stakes testing on the quality of education students in K-12 receive far outweigh the intended beneficial effects.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE IMPACT ON TEACHERS

There are many arguments offered by critics of high-stakes testing, but some of the most powerful detail the way it affects teachers and the education they can provide for students (Hout & Elliot, 2011; Jones and Egley, 2007; Lomax, West, Harmon, Viator, & Madaus, 1995). Jones et al. (2003) argue that “the negative consequences of high-stakes testing programs... out-weigh the positive intended consequences” (p. 172). They further assert that the most impactful negative consequences are a decrease in teacher autonomy/creativity, increase in teachers leaving lower-performing schools, also asserted by Danielson (1999); decrease in instruction in non-tested subjects, an argument also made by Hursh (2008) and Crocker (2005); increase in pressure from teachers, principals, and parents for students to raise scores; increase in focus on lower-level skills, an argument also made by McNeil (2000); increase in testing preparation; and a shift of focus from learning to achievement as measured by tests (Jones et al., 2003). Taken as a whole, these points narrow down exactly what the main arguments against high-stakes testing are.

Pushing Quality Teachers Away from Poor Quality Schools

A severe consequence of the accountability/incentive system is that quality teachers, and teachers in general, are driven away from low-scoring, poor quality schools even though these are the schools in great need of assistance. From the perspective of Jones, et al. (2003),

“Lower-performing schools can have an especially difficult time in recruiting and retaining quality teachers... Although some teachers enjoy working with the lower-performing poor students, many prefer not to” (p. 143). Since teachers are held accountable for the performance of their students, some teachers are reluctant to take jobs at schools where scores are typically low and, as a result, where those teachers are likely to face scrutiny if scores don’t improve. In contrast, at high performing schools, students already do well on these tests, so teachers do not need to worry about being punished for low scores.

In addition to accountability, incentives serve to reward teachers for the scores of their students. However, this leads to the question of whether or not these incentives encourage good teaching habits. Couldn’t teachers just get jobs at schools that are already performing well on the tests in order to get those bonuses? Jones et al. (2003) quote Danielson (1999) as asking:

How are you going to get somebody to go to a *Low Performing* school . . . when they could get offered a job at an [*Exemplary School*]. . . . At [the *Exemplary School*] they have a decent chance at getting a \$1500 bonus each year, and at that other school not very much of a chance at getting a \$1500 bonus. (p. 143)

The incentive of receiving a reward may leave teachers disinterested in teaching at majority-minority schools as they understand their reputations may be at risk. Since test scores in schools with majority minority populations are often low, those teachers who do work in schools with large minority populations are even more likely to teach to the test. A study of teaching habits among teachers with students from a variety of demographics showed that “teachers with greater than 60% minority students in their classrooms were more likely to teach to standardized tests, to spend time in direct test preparation, and to spend more of their class time on these activities than were teachers in predominately white classrooms” (Lomax, et al., 1995). This effect of the incentive system may thus disproportionately impact students from minority populations. While rewarding those who do well and punishing those who do not is meant to encourage teachers to do a better job, it may serve to deprive students in low performing schools of good quality teachers. In addition, because of the performance of students at low performing schools

on high-stakes tests and the consequences teachers face as a result of accountability, many teachers (good or bad) are driven away from low performing schools. Thus, the accountability/incentive system deprives students in low or even average performing schools of the great quality education that is provided by great quality teachers. In this way, high-stakes testing can negatively affect the quality of education students receive.

Students near the cutoff score

In addition to the issues discussed above, the accountability system also influences which students will receive attention above others. Jones et al. (2003) note that a striking issue in the education system as a result of accountability/incentives is the emphasis on improving scores as opposed to learning. Nothing captures this issue more than the practice of directing efforts towards and focusing on certain groups of students. Under the accountability system, schools are often evaluated by the number of passing and failing scores on high-stakes tests. As a result, schools seek to increase the number of passing scores. Research conducted by Hout and Elliot (2011) indicates that this is best done by identifying and working with those students whose scores are near passing because it is much easier to improve scores by small increments. They indicate that the accountability system encourages teachers to increase the number of passing test scores. As a result, “‘marginal students,’ meaning those on the cusp of passing or failing a state exam used to judge the quality of schools, showed the greatest improvements because the accountability system provided strong incentives for teachers to focus on them” (Hout and Elliot, 2011, p. 44). So, accountability also has an effect on very high and very low scorers because some teachers focus their resources on those at the cutoff, so those already above and those well below get left behind. This consequence deprives those students well above or below the cutoff of the attention they need because teachers are preoccupied with efforts directed towards those near the cutoff.

TEST PREPARATION

Another result of the accountability system based on high-stakes standardized testing is teaching to the test. Teaching to the test, or test prep as it is often called, involves teaching skills and knowledge needed to do well on the test rather than providing students with authentic learning.

Authentic learning can be defined as learning through which students develop an understanding of the underlying material to the point that they can apply that knowledge to scenarios beyond the one in which the material was presented. So, to use what Hursh (2008) says as an example, test prep methods prepare students to pass the test, but the skills taught are often so exclusively related to the test that they don't help students develop an understanding of the world. In other words, these skills don't have many applications outside of the test.

Some scholars argue that students lose out on learning what the standard curriculum was intended to cover because teachers focus too much on test prep. Jones et al. (2003) claim that implementing test prep in many schools displaces important material in the curriculum. Furthermore, the content in these test prep lessons is so exclusive to the test that students aren't learning skills that will develop their understanding and their critical thinking skills. This reflects the shift in focus from learning to test scores. As McNeil (2000) points out, the common approach to improving test scores is by "substituting test-prep materials, devoid of substantive content and of respect for the ways children learn, for the curriculum" (p. xxviii). In this way, students lose some of the education they would have received had the test prep material not replaced content material.

In addition to this loss, the test prep material taught focuses so narrowly on the skills required to do well on the test that enriching learning opportunities are crowded out. Hursh (2008) argues that teaching to the test results in "the subsequent narrowing and simplification of the curriculum as schools focus on preparing students to pass the tests, rather than obtain a complex and sophisticated understanding of the world" (p. 3). Under the accountability system, schools attempt to improve test scores, and place such emphasis on this effort that it becomes more important than teaching students material that is meant to develop their understanding of the world.

The artificiality of the learning measured by standardized tests is apparent. Hout and Elliot (2011) provide evidence of teaching to the test and evidence that students are not authentically learning the material. They reported that test scores on a standardized test typically rise every year for the first few years after the test has been introduced. They suggested that this was evidence that students were familiar with the

format and content of the test as a result of learning to the test. As Hout and Elliot (2011) put it: “This explanation was supported by a study in which students were retested with an old test 4 years after a new test had been introduced in a large district (Koretz et al., 1991): while students’ performance on the new test had increased, their performance had dropped on the test no longer routinely used” (p. 41). What this suggests is that when students are prepped for the test they do not really learn the material, but rather the format of the test. Thus, teaching to the test does not result in authentic learning.

Yet another negative consequence of test prep is that it limits the creativity of teachers. Jones et al. (2003) note that “pressure felt by teachers has eroded their ability to teach creatively” (p. 43). This limited creativity means a limit to how adaptable teachers can be when determining which methods best suit the ways in which their students learn. This limited approach to teaching also affects students in another way. Jones and Egley (2007) reported in their study that many teachers felt high-stakes tests “stifled student creativity or pushed students into a mold” (p. 239). Thus, when students are instructed to do certain limited tasks, they develop the idea that this is the approach they should be taking mentally to answer other questions. In the long run, if they become too accustomed to this, their development could suffer as they think less creatively. Thus, test prep limits the creativity of teachers, which makes the education less rich and insightful and can cause students to think less creatively.

SUPPORTERS OF HIGH-STAKES TESTING SYSTEMS

Nevertheless, there are those who believe that teaching to the test is a means of providing economically disadvantaged students with the tools necessary to compete with their more affluent peers. Crocker (2005) argues in support of appropriate strategies for teaching to the test in *Defending Standardized Testing*. She claims that teaching to the test is a necessary measure used to provide equal opportunity for all students to succeed on tests that are gatekeepers to college, “particularly for disadvantaged students who often do not have access to additional educational resources enjoyed by their middle-class cohorts” (p. 160). Yet, is the playing field really being leveled as the result of test prep? If test prep

results in higher scores, but not necessarily authentic learning, then the argument that the high-stakes testing system provides a means by which to improve school quality is false because it is based on evaluation measures of school quality that are inaccurate. Since test scores do not reflect authentic learning, evaluating school quality based on these scores can be misleading. What supporters claim as evidence that teaching to the test improves what students learn, is really just evidence of students understanding the nuances of the test, but failing to grasp the underlying, important material. Thus, students who are prepped for the test receive a poorer quality of education than had they been taught the standard curriculum, undermining the argument that high-stakes testing levels the playing field.

Another argument in support of the high-stakes testing system as a mechanism for improving poor schools is that accountability and incentives provide a means of encouraging and reinforcing successful teaching practices and discouraging and punishing poor and unsuccessful teaching practices (Danielson, 1999). Again, this claim is only true if the measure that identifies successful schools and schools that “fail to ensure learning” is accurate. Jones et al. (2003) argue that test scores, and especially the methods used for evaluating schools based on scores, are inaccurate, so schools may be wrongfully rewarded or punished. This mistake can reinforce awful educational systems and discourage excellent ones. Jones et al. (2003) cite an article by Thomas and Debarros (2002) which reported that, “several schools identified by the federal government as Blue Ribbon schools (an award given to excellent schools) were also identified as ‘failing’ schools by their states” (p. 11). This shows a large discrepancy between the criteria used by the state and federal government to rank schools. The fact that a school can be identified as failing by the state and excellent by the federal government is alarming because it not only leads to questions about the quality of these schools, but also calls into question the validity of the system used on both the state and federal level. How are parents supposed to trust these methods and the information they provide? How can schools be punished or rewarded if their ranking is based on a system that cannot even identify those schools deserving of each respective action? Thus, each of these arguments in support of standardized testing fails to acknowledge the fact that the underlying assumption that test scores

alone can accurately assess schools may be false. In fact, the claims made may have negative effects on the quality of education provided at given schools.

When school quality is measured by test performance, an improvement in test scores is likely to be interpreted as an improvement in the quality of education being provided. So even though teaching to the test does not result in authentic learning, it can result in higher test scores. This can be a problem for students who are already subject to poor quality education because if education officials find that scores at a certain school have improved, they are not likely to target those schools for reform. But if the students have not actually learned anything authentic, then the substantive quality of their education remains the same. Jones et al. (2003) believe this can have serious consequences in that test prep can inflate scores and the interpretation of higher scores as improvements can be deceiving. Hout and Elliot (2011) also provide evidence that test prep can result in higher scores that reflect familiarity with the format of the test but not necessarily the content material. In these ways, teaching to the test negatively affects the actual quality of education that students receive, which is particularly harmful for students in poor schools.

To return to the argument that asserts that test prep is necessary to create equal opportunities for underprivileged students, the equal opportunities referred to in this argument are the opportunities to develop skills necessary to compete on an equal level on high-stakes tests with their peers. Certainly, students may have better scores on tests, but as mentioned, this is an indication of test familiarity as opposed to knowledge Hout and Elliot (2011). Rising scores may just create a façade of improvement and, as a result, students will be deemed above the level of assistance when their education is really in need of reform.

CONCLUSION

The accountability/incentive system uses high-stakes test scores to rate the quality of the education schools provide to children, and to reward great teachers and punish bad ones. In the research presented in this paper, many negative links were found between high-stakes testing and the quality of education. Claims about the positive effects of high-stakes testing on the quality of education made by proponents of high-stakes

testing are based on assumptions that were shown to be faulty.

As a result of the accountability and incentive system, great teachers are driven away from students in low-performing schools in need of them. Teachers are often responsible and accountable for the scores of their students; many teachers avoid low-performing schools because incentives given to teachers whose students score well push teachers towards high-performing schools where they are likely to get a bonus. Thus, high-stakes testing can deprive students at low-performing schools of great quality teachers. Schools being evaluated by these same scores are also more likely to focus efforts on those near the cutoff in an effort to improve the number of passing scores. As a result, students well above or below the cutoff are likely to receive less attention. This is particularly important for those well below the cutoff because they are in need of additional help. Students may also be deprived of a quality education as test preparation can lead to a narrow curriculum because test prep lessons replace enriching content material. In doing this, schools are depriving students of potentially important and authentic materials that the standard curriculum recommends they learn.

After weighing the arguments and evidence, it is my position that the negative effects of high-stakes testing on the quality of education provided to students outweigh the positive effects. Furthermore, the claimed positive effects are based on assumptions about the accuracy of assessing schools, which are themselves inaccurate. The points made by opponents of high-stakes testing are far more compelling than those of supporters. The adverse consequences far outweigh the beneficial consequences.

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Ta-“Boo”: The Stigmatization of the Paranormal

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Professor Dawn Lilley

Abstract: This research investigates the propensity of Western culture to categorize the paranormal as taboo and explores both the conflict between and coexistence of science and the supernatural. It analyzes the relationship between religious beliefs and spiritual beliefs that do not conform to a particular religion and suggests that the latter transgresses the authority of religious leaders. It also uncovers the as-sociations between science and a patriarchal society and between the supernatural and feminine ideas to further understand the cultivation of the paranormal taboo. Using terror management theory, this research presents how supernatural practices such as mediumship or shamanism offer psychological benefits and coping strategies that are applicable to real-world scenarios; health professionals must provide culturally competent care to patients with diverse sets of spiritual beliefs.

In Western culture, the supernatural is an unknown abyss teeming with taboos. Although our society often doubts metaphysical claims, the mystery of the paranormal intrigues us, evident from the supernatural themes in the mainstream culture. Popular television shows like *The Twilight Zone* and *Ghostbusters* feed our fascination with the paranormal while also allowing us distance from this taboo. In a fictional context, the supernatural can exist in Western civilization without disrupting or challenging its norms, particularly its scientific ideology. Our confidence in science frequently overshadows our willingness to accept otherworldly phenomena; a lack of scientific evidence usually discredits the validity of paranormal events. As our civilization progresses, we believe that science will eventually reveal the answers to currently unexplainable occurrences, which introduces a dichotomous relationship between science and the supernatural.

Consider, for example, the juxtaposition of scientific words and supernatural words: “physics” and “metaphysics,” “natural” and “supernatural,” “psychology” and “parapsychology,” and “normal” and “paranormal.” According to Oxford Dictionaries (2015), science is defined as “the intellectual and practical activity encompassing

the systematic study of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment,” while the paranormal is described as “denoting events or phenomena such as telekinesis or clairvoyance that are beyond the scope of normal scientific understanding.” It seems as though the supernatural only exists in opposition to the physical world, which reinforces the idea that the paranormal is both a taboo and a transgression in society: “It [the paranormal] does not have an existence unto itself but is rather a moving target defined by its current relationship to religion and science” (Laycock, 2014, p. 13). If science and the paranormal are two mutually exclusive domains, then science may never explain some aspects of the universe. As a concept untouchable by science, the paranormal transgresses society’s pursuit to fully comprehend our existence. The elusive nature of the paranormal unnerves our society, and we repress this uncertainty by stigmatizing the supernatural and its believers. Furthermore, society’s taboo of the supernatural stems from religious teachings that condemn spiritual beliefs extraneous to their own as well as from gender stereotypes that associate women with paranormal phenomena. Therefore, the main research questions for this paper are: How do influences from science, religion, and gender norms decrease the validity of paranormal claims and increase its status as a taboo and a transgression? And do the psychological benefits of paranormal beliefs make up for the lack of scientific evidence?

The theoretical framework for this paper is terror management theory (TMT), proposed by social psychologists Jeff Greenberg, Tom Pyszczynski, and Sheldon Solomon, in which people adopt religious or cultural beliefs in order to quell fears surrounding their own existence and mortality. These worldviews attempt to “imbue life with meaning, and the individuals who subscribe to them with significance (or self-esteem)” (Cox & Arndt, 2008). Using TMT, I will explore hindrances to the cultural acceptance of the paranormal by analyzing the influences of religion, gender roles, and science. I will also examine the dichotomy between the supernatural and science versus their coexistence, and investigate how the relationship between these two domains influences the progression of society. I propose that paranormal beliefs offer many psychological benefits, including grief management and coping

strategies, that will be presented through the analysis of mediums, people who claim “to be in contact with the spirits of the dead and ... communicate between the dead and the living,” and shamans, individuals “regarded as having access to, and influence in, the world of good and evil spirits... typically such people enter a trance state during a ritual, and practise divination and healing” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2015). Although paranormal beliefs may be deemed illogical, sinful, or dangerous, I argue that they allow a holistic comprehension of the lived human experience through their psychological benefits, which may render scientific proof irrelevant and outweigh its perceived transgressions of religion, gender roles, and science.

THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION

When paranormal concepts are not affiliated with any religion, especially with any major religion, they cannot be considered anything but taboo. The demarcation between socially-accepted religious spiritualism and paranormal belief systems, however, is often ambiguous: “First, we assume that paranormal beliefs and religious beliefs do not differ in their inherent qualities, but rather in their level of acceptance by and incorporation in conventional social institutions. Paranormal and religious beliefs both require the willingness to believe in things that are unseen and not amenable to definitive empirical proof” (Bader, Baker, & Molle, 2012, p. 707). The validity of religious teachings is as subjective as that of paranormal beliefs, but it appears that religious labels create a loophole. For example, since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Christians viewed shamans as demonic figures for their alleged superhuman abilities to contact the spiritual world and see apparitions (Benning, 2014, p. 61). Christian teachings strongly denounced supernatural powers used for one’s own personal gain (Bader, Baker, & Molle, 2012, p. 709). Christianity, however, often venerates saints like Padre Pio who claimed to have the abilities of levitation, prophecy, bilocation, and miraculous healing (Pettinger, 2013). Pio also discussed his apparitions of Christ and “stigmata,” or divine manifestations that symbolize the wounds that Jesus Christ acquired when he was crucified (DiGiovine, 2009, p. 481). Skeptics argue that Pio’s wounds were self-inflicted, but the Church asserts that his account was indeed verifiable. In Buddhism, the Buddha preached about

psychic powers and telepathy. He claimed that supernatural abilities are obtained by the use of certain charms (Smith, 2012). Both Padre Pio and the Buddha are highly regarded in their respective religions, but if they were ordinary individuals and not religious figures, terror management theory suggests that they would most likely be ignored, discredited, or ridiculed. “Because religious worldviews are an important part of how most people deal with their concerns surrounding death, believers in a particular worldview resent skeptics posing challenges or attempting to replace it with some other worldview” (Ellis & Wahab, 2013, p. 151). In other words, outsiders of a religion can threaten the solidity of particular teachings that followers use to cope with existential crises. Therefore, the categorization of paranormal beliefs as taboo may be interpreted as a defense mechanism to defuse conflict surrounding the unknowns of human existence.

Although many religions believe in an afterlife and incorporate spiritual aspects into their teachings, religious leaders denounce other forms of paranormal phenomena incongruent with their doctrines because such beliefs threaten their authority. The article “Conventional Christian Beliefs and Experimentation with the Paranormal” discusses a quantitative study that assesses the likelihood that Christians would partake in paranormal experimentation not approved by the Church. Using the Baylor Religion Survey (BRS), the researchers discovered that the level of church attendance affected a person’s paranormal experimentation. Devout Christians who attend Mass regularly reinforce each other’s religious beliefs and are less likely to experiment with the supernatural (Mencken, Bader, & Stark, 2008, p. 194). In other words, by attending Mass, a person is frequently exposed to certain social norms that influence his or her beliefs and behavior:

The more a person spreads these resources around competing belief systems, the less s/he has to provide to any single system. Therefore, it is in the interest of religious organizations to discourage outside experimentation, lest members who belong but provide little of themselves in return—“free riders” in economic terms—plague them (Bader, Baker, & Molle, 2008, p.707)

Perhaps religions forbid certain paranormal experimentation because it is transgressive to their gods, but leaders also seek to maintain

their power. Selective beliefs not only retain the exclusivity of a religious group but also preserve the authority of its leaders and assure the allegiance of their followers. The cultivation of the supernatural as taboo discourages people from exploring other beliefs by manipulating their fears of religious ostracism or spiritual punishment. As explained by terror management theory, “Most pertinent in the present context is the theory’s implication that those who have strongly committed themselves to a shared religious worldview are certain that their conscious existence will last forever” (Ellis & Wahab, 2013, p.15). The idea that one’s legacy will transcend death may appeal to religious leaders; therefore, it is in their interest to ensure their eminent statuses.

THE IMPACT OF GENDER ROLES

Society may mandate paranormal experimentation as taboo in order to maintain the patriarchal agenda and eliminate female agency. This preservation of authority is a recurring theme in the establishment of the paranormal as taboo: “Mystical experiences and expressions are considered—negatively—to be ‘women’s things,’ which is to say that they are considered to be ridiculous, exalted, immature, irrational or exceedingly full of emotions, and thus very subjective or ‘barely credible,’” (Puerto, 2011, p. 293) as opposed to the male perspective, which is often equated with logic and accuracy. Mediumship is frequently associated with women for the same reasons stenographers, telegraphers, secretaries, and typists are primarily women’s professions: the societal view of women, especially in older societies, was one in which they were mere instruments of communication with no voice or opinion themselves. Perhaps this is why “the male medium was associated with emasculation” (Wynne, 2012, p. 268); what separated women from men was the entitlement to their own opinions and the ability to express them. This stereotype of women holds origins in terror management theory:

Because stereotypes provide people with an orderly and stable conception of reality, they exist as part of people’s cultural worldviews that offer protection from existential fear. By viewing groups stereotypically and preferring stereotype-consistent individuals over stereotype-inconsistent individuals, people confirm the validity of their cultural worldviews, making these worldviews

more effective buffers against existential angst. (Hoyt, Simon, & Innella, 2009, p. 376)

Therefore, the association between women and paranormal beliefs represents society's resistance to changing its prevailing paradigms, most specifically the patriarchy, and its scientific foundation. It is also necessary to consider that "the heightened authority of scientific rationalism had shifted the political significance of wonders" (Laycock, 2014, p. 7). When religion dominated as the main form of social authority, the patriarchy asserted its institutional control by assuming positions as religious leaders: "Spiritualism [was] linked to larger issues such as the cultural authority of professionalized medicine, religious freedom and gender norms" (Laycock, 2014, p. 11). As science became more acknowledged, the patriarchy recognized how it could become yet another vehicle to assert its authority.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN SCIENCE AND THE SUPERNATURAL

The suggestion that paranormal beliefs are unsophisticated may stem from the dominant scientific worldview in Western society, but the authority regarding the designation of taboos is arbitrary. Paranormal beliefs are often associated with more primitive societies and not modern ones, but "to exclude these ideas from analysis because they are somehow 'not scholarly' produces an inaccurate portrayal of the contemporary religious landscape" (Laycock, 2014, p. 11). Skeptics provide explanations for why the supernatural world cannot exist, including the famous psychologist Sigmund Freud who argued that human beings conjure images of God that mirror images of their fathers, and that the relationship they have with God also reflects their relationships with their fathers (Freud, 1913). In other words, Freud explains that the existence of God is wishful thinking and stems from a person's early childhood interactions with his or her own father (Collins, 2006 p. 37). Although religious and paranormal beliefs may be integral aspects of the human experience, Western society dissects and criticizes them in order to bolster its "superior" scientific rationale. However, "when a European Professor of anthropology declares that all shamans are mentally deranged, what gives his statement more authority than anyone else's?" (Benning, 2014, p. 61). Many scholars reject

spiritualism because they do not reflect scientific principles and cannot be empirically perceived. Therefore, the replacement of traditional beliefs with scientific evidence may generate the paranormal as taboo; it becomes transgressive to accept supernatural ideas when science offers a more logical perspective:

This dichotomous view gives rise to a hierarchical arrangement of scientific knowledge as a more refined, advanced, and realistic form of knowledge. Such a paradigm places tensions between traditional and scientific knowledge, which positions them as oppositional and promotes the singular existence of one or the other, which is in most cases scientific knowledge. (Shein, Li, & Huang, 2014, p. 783)

The dichotomy between the supernatural and science therefore reflects the concept of terror management theory in which an individual rejects any opposition to his or her worldview; a society reliant on science to understand the existence of the universe feels threatened by supernatural beliefs because it infringes on the authority of its scientific paradigm.

THE COEXISTENCE OF SCIENCE AND THE SUPERNATURAL

Although science provides rational explanations to phenomena in our universe, paranormal beliefs may allow a comprehensive, phenomenological perspective of the human experience because they add significance to our existence. The coexistence of these two domains may be deemed difficult but perhaps not impossible: “Analytical processes and knowledge do not replace intuitive processes and contents as analytical thinking matures; rather, both types of processes and knowledges exist and develop through an individual’s life” (Aarnio & Lindeman, 2007, p. 2). Without analytical thinking, advancements in civilization may be difficult; without intuition, our society’s innovation and creativity may be diminished. Perhaps the establishment of a balance between analytical, scientific thinking with abstract, paranormal beliefs allows an individual to fully understand herself. For example, through science, she can understand that she is a mortal human being. However, it may be disconcerting to accept one’s mortality; paranormal beliefs may help people “cling to cultural constructions of meaning and

strive to adhere to the standards of value espoused by their cultural worldview because, although death is inevitable, they can attain a sense of symbolic immortality through these means” (Morris, Goldenberg, & Heflick, p. 182). A person can understand that she is more than the formal, biological definition of a human being and can recognize how abstract aspects—spirituality, emotions, or ideas—constitute her humanness. Although religion and science are often viewed as two separate, and perhaps conflicting, concepts, renowned physicist Albert Einstein explains that they may actually have a complementary relationship:

Even though the realms of religion and science in themselves are clearly marked off from each other, nevertheless there exist between the two strong reciprocal relationships and dependencies. Though religion may be that which determines the goal, it has, nevertheless, learned from science, in the broadest sense, what means will be contributed to the attainment of the goals it has set up. (Einstein, 2005)

Therefore, the coexistence of science and the supernatural may help achieve a holistic understanding of oneself in relation to the rest of the universe. Perhaps Albert Einstein may represent the physical manifestation of the convergence of scientific genius and spirituality.

COPING STRATEGIES OFFERED BY THE PARANORMAL
The effectiveness of paranormal beliefs as psychologically beneficial coping strategies is not necessarily diminished by scientific evidence, or lack thereof. Skeptics denounce shamanism or mediumship because they argue that it does not hold scientific resonance. People who claim to have extrasensory perception or paranormal abilities are accused of conducting research prior to the reading, falsification, or “cold readings,” in which the medium/shaman/psychic uses a client’s body language or external cues to deduce information. Although this deception is transgressive, clients may find spiritual healing and comfort in readings or other paranormal practices. For example, “Hunter-gatherer societies, all of whom practice shamanism, observe that their trance rituals alleviate physical, social, and psychological problems” (McClenon, 2012, p.802). Evolutionary theories state that dissociative behavior rooted in

genetics along with hypnotic rituals were coping mechanisms of earlier civilizations but now predispose individuals to psychological disorders like schizophrenia. While shamanism may be refuted through medical explanations, it may be worth mentioning that religious-based cognitive behavioral therapy is often used in treatment.

In addition to shamanism, mediumship encourages people to dissolve any thoughts or feelings, such as guilt, that prevent them from finding closure. People who are grieving simply need reassurance that their loved ones are at peace after death, especially in the instance of trauma, and the idea that their deceased loved ones remain with them in their spiritual forms validates the bonds that they cherish and soothes their fears surrounding death (Darghawth, 2013, p. 84). The American television show *Long Island Medium* follows the medium, Theresa Caputo, as she provides healing and comfort to those whose loved ones have passed away and demonstrates the role of a medium in the grieving and healing process. Caputo often stresses that her goal during a reading is not to prove that she can communicate with spirits, but rather to help people address their grief, overcome their pain, and heal from their loss: “They [her clients] even tell me that they’re less afraid of dying and some have a renewed faith in God. Most important, they begin to embrace life when all they knew before was grief” (Caputo, 2013, p.xiii). Mediums affirm the existence of an afterlife and quell a person’s anxieties regarding the finality of death, which is reminiscent of terror management theory. Both shamanism and mediumship suggest that religious/paranormal beliefs are effectual coping mechanisms: “These nonrational beliefs, rather than being an exception to otherwise ideal human reasoning, may best be understood as deriving from a side of human personality that functions implicitly and automatically and... grasps the world through a meaningful (if illogical) story” (King, Burton, Hicks, & Drigotas, 2007, p. 916-7). Supernatural beliefs as coping strategies therefore provide meaning to an otherwise systematic view of illness and death.

CONCLUSION

Perhaps the greatest obstacle in overcoming the taboo of the paranormal is how science cannot explain or establish its valid existence. While society may reject the implementation of other taboos, such as cannibalism, it cannot ignore that they indeed exist in the world.

However, with the paranormal, we cannot ensure that these supernatural phenomena exist, and it is easy to ignore or reject something that cannot be proven true. This uncertainty complicates research because most articles involve a lot of speculation and assumption. However, most studies agree on one idea: supernatural beliefs have psychological benefits and help people cope with their existential purpose and mortality. Although paranormal beliefs may be deemed taboo or transgressive, their psychological contributions to understanding the human experience may necessitate their existence in society.

The nursing profession may illuminate the significance of paranormal beliefs in the larger society. Nurses must treat the physical condition of a patient while also being culturally sensitive to his or her beliefs in order to provide holistic care. A paternalistic approach, which is one in which the patient does not take an active role in his or her treatment, may neglect the humanistic considerations critical to the patient's welfare. "If nurses are unable to view the client through the lens of the service user, how therapeutic can their relationship be?" (Stickley & Timmons, 2007, p. 156). For example, in treating a patient with mental illness, two common diagnostic opinions are that the patient has a chemical or psychological imbalance, which is the typical medical definition, or that the patient has a spiritual affliction, such as demon possession or a misalignment of energy fields: "These seedling psychologies... may emphasise either supernatural or natural causes for mental disturbance. These disorders are considered as due to demonic possession, and effective interventions are thought to require expulsion of the responsible demons by means of deliverance (exorcism)" (Mercer, 2013, p. 595). If the patient believes that his affliction has paranormal origins, it would be unwise for the nurse to not provide treatment that has been proven effective for a disorder like schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. However, the patient may benefit psychologically from ritualistic healing customs provided by spiritual healers such as shamans, given that there are no contraindications. Religious and paranormal beliefs may be especially important to a patient with terminal illness: "It is concluded that the palliative care environment, in which end of life care is given, is conducive to providing spiritual caring... The main recommendation is for an increase in RNs' spiritual awareness and spiritual caring" (Ronaldson, Hayes, Aggar, Green, &

Carey, 2012, p. 2133). Therefore, nurses must act as intermediaries between the domains of science and religion/the paranormal to provide multidisciplinary therapy conducive to recovery, treating the physical manifestations of disease while also healing a person's spiritual, emotional, and mental ailments.

Taboos surrounding the paranormal mainly stem from the preservation of authority of religious leaders, the patriarchy, and the scientific paradigm. Supernatural ideas not tied to religion are rejected because they threaten the cogency of religious beliefs and the loyalty of its followers. Since paranormal experimentation is also associated with women, the ruling of the paranormal as taboo also stigmatizes female empowerment and preserves the patriarchy. In addition, although Western society's scientific worldview becomes more influential, the judgment of what is taboo belongs to no one: paranormal beliefs should not necessarily be discounted because of the waning acceptance of them. Science offers the means to understand how our universe operates, but paranormal beliefs allow insight to the lived human experience and can provide meaning to our existence as explained by terror management theory. Supernatural and religious beliefs may help individuals cope with their own mortality and allow them symbolic agency after death, in addition to grief management and coping mechanisms. Therefore, scientific evidence may not be necessary in reaping the psychological benefits offered by paranormal beliefs. It is possible that the paranormal will remain taboo, but whether individuals use supernatural beliefs as a coping mechanism or for the reinforcement of beliefs in religion, gender norms, or science, it is clear that the paranormal plays an integral role in the function and progression of society.

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Insider Trading: The Importance of Market Surveillance

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Abstract: This research paper examines the application of Jeremy Bentham and Michel Foucault's work on the Panopticon and the panoptic presence to the modern issue of illegal insider trading. Insider trading is fundamentally known as a crime that hurts the integrity of the Stock Market, and in turn hurts the economy in total. The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission is entrusted with the difficult task of preventing insider trading, but so far has been incompetent in doing so. This paper applies the deterring effect of the Panopticon as a solution to the insider trading problem. By applying research done by numerous scholarly authors, this paper attempts to illustrate how and why a Market Panopticon can be a solution.

INTRODUCTION

Market capitalism is an economy that functions voluntarily and with absolute freedom because it does not function within the control of a central authoritative figure. To ensure that a capitalist economic system performs optimally, government intervention must be limited, and all participants of the market must be operating with the same information meaning that private information cannot be used to influence market decisions. When private information is used in such a manner, it is termed as insider trading. The issue that occurs as a result of insider trading is lowered market liquidity, which is the ability to sell assets quickly without the value of the assets depreciating by much. It is because of this detrimental effect that insider trading has been deemed a criminal offense by the U.S. Congress. In order to enforce this legal statute some government intervention is needed to regulate the market and so the U.S Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the nation's primary enforcer for federal securities laws, is relied upon to ensure a fair market by using market surveillance to prevent and detect violations.

Insider trading is a crime in most countries, but the punishment for this crime varies greatly. In the United States, insider trading is a criminal offense, and to be convicted of a criminal offense, two key

factors must be proven in the court of law: Actus Reus, and Mens Rea. Actus Reus is Latin for “guilty act,” and in a court of law, this term is used to refer to the process in which prosecution works to prove the defendant committed the crime. After proving Actus Reus a prosecutor must then prove Mens Rea, which is Latin for “guilty mind.” To prove Mens Rea, the prosecutor must prove that the defendant had a culpable state of mind, meaning that the defendant was neither insane nor unaware of the criminal nature of their actions. Proving these two factors has been difficult for the SEC because insider traders work in a secretive manner and because of the lack of clear factual evidence that the SEC is able to obtain. With an enhanced market surveillance directive, the SEC can better their chances of not only catching insider traders, but also successfully prosecuting them. The SEC’s goal is to completely eradicate insider trading from the market and to do so it must create a panoptic presence.

THE PANOPTICON SOLUTION

The SEC’s insider trading problem can be solved by creating a Panopticon. Bentham’s Panopticon is an architectural breakthrough that allows for a single guard to see every inmate without the inmates knowing whether they are being watched. Foucault (1995) elaborates on the Panopticon by illustrating the effects of a panoptic presence affirming, “...the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of the power” (p. 201). The Panopticon creates a state where the inmates feel that they are always being watched. This situation allows for the prison guards to affect the inmates in a way that they are forced to conform to the will of the guards. Richards (2013) further expands on the concept of surveillance affecting actions when he writes, “It is a claim that when we are watched while engaging in intellectual activities, broadly defined—thinking, reading, web surfing, or private communication—we are deterred from engaging in thoughts or deeds that others might find deviant” (p.1948). According to Richards, it is because of the surveillance that those being watched are influenced to conform to the watchers. When Richards writes about people being observed, he is describing Foucault’s panoptic presence. Foucault’s theory on the effects of a Panopticon can be the SEC’s solution to

prevent insider trading.

To establish a Panopticon, Foucault believes that one would first need to display power and the ability to surveil the actions of those interacting within the Panopticon. For the sake of the SEC it would want to apply Foucault's ideology to surveil the actions of those operating within the stock market. Chira and Madura (2013) detail a list of previously noted results where market surveillance was successful saying, "Bhattacharya and Daouk (2002), find that the first prosecution of insider trading in a country reduces the cost of equity... Jayaraman (2012) finds that the increased enforcement of insider trading laws in countries results in higher quality of financial reporting" (pp. 325-326). Once the presence of surveillance is established, insider traders will not be as inclined to resort to deviant behavior. By furthering the use of market surveillance and researching to understand which variables become abnormal as a result of insider trading, the SEC can increase the scope and efficiency of its Panopticon.

BENEFITS OF A PANOPTICON

The prevention of insider trading is proven to lead to a more productive market. Brown (1996) writes that "to detect unusual trading behavior is an important tool for building market confidence, thereby increasing market liquidity, and ultimately decreasing the cost of capital to business" (p. 625). While Chira and Madura explain that after the first prosecution and increased enforcement, cost of equity and quality of financial reportings are positively affected; here Brown explains that the market surveillance and successful detection of insider traders also leads to increasing market liquidity and decreasing the cost of capital to business (Brown, p. 625). The cost of capital to business is simply the cost of funds used for financing business activities. By lowering the cost for financing business activities, businesses incur less debt and thus receive more net profit. More productive businesses stimulate the economy, which brings in more revenue, meaning that there is more money to use to expand the operation. This leads to more jobs, greater asset turnover, and a more prosperous country, further proving how essential market surveillance and the deterrence of insider trading are to a capitalist economic system.

In order to supplement the formation of a Market Panopticon,

the SEC can use elaborate surveillance techniques that find economic variables that help predict the presence of insider trading. Chira and Madura expand on the idea that market surveillance is a proven deterrent of insider traders when describing their analysis of price run-up after enforcement of insider trading laws, stating:

A reduction in the stock price runup of targets could reflect a decline in trading by adept traders who use publicly available information to anticipate mergers, or a decline in illegal insider trading by other traders who capitalize on inside information. We have no reason to believe that the government's efforts to enforce insider trading laws should discourage adept traders who use publicly available information to anticipate mergers. Therefore, we believe that the reduction in informed trading is attributed to a reduction in illegal insider trading (2013, p. 345).

This means that the only subgroup of the market that is affected by enforced insider trading is the subgroup that partakes in illegal activity. Chira and Madura's claim is an important finding, because it means that there were no observed negative outcomes to the enforcement of insider trading laws. Those operating in the market under legal information continued to make transactions, while those operating using nonpublic information were lessened as a result of the deterring attributes that surveillance has against deviant behavior, which supports Richards's claim. Chira and Madura use the reduction in stock runup (p. 345) as an abnormality to predict insider trading supporting Brown's case that surveillance to detect unusual trading behavior is an important tool for building market confidence (Brown, p. 625). Madura & Marciniak (2014) offer an additional predictor from their research, "Measures of abnormal returns tend to better differentiate SEC targets from non-SEC targets in longer pre-bid windows, while measures of abnormal trading volume tend to better differentiate SEC targets from non-SEC targets in shorter pre-bid windows" (p. 18). Based on analysis of a large sample size of previous SEC insider trading cases, Madura & Marciniak discovered a trend that showed that the SEC could target trading violations, based on abnormal returns or trading volume. This is a strong predictor of insider trading because the general outcome of insider trading is the trader making a large sum of money from his/

her transaction. Furthermore when a trader acts on insider information the trader usually buys a large amount of stock to maximize the return from their investment. Chira and Madura point to the sudden reduction in the stock price runup as another predictor (p. 345), but in this case as a predictor of the result of market surveillance. This outcome is plausible because stock runup is the sudden increase in the price of a stock. If traders are prevented from using insider information the price run up would decrease among the observed companies because the predictability of the performance of a stock lessens greatly, and so there will be less abnormal trends in transaction volume regarding a certain stock that has a high price runup. With a more aggressive surveillance system the SEC will be able to discover more predictors to prevent insider trading as well as trends that show the outcome of increased surveillance and enforcement. Trends such as a reduction in stock run up are also important because they allow the SEC to work backwards and monitor the market variables that were the most affected by greater enforcement because it is clear that those are the variables that are affected the most by insider trading. These predictors are also essential to distinguish in order for the SEC to allocate its surveillance resources with more efficiency, in hopes of eventually creating a market Panopticon.

CURRENT SUCCESSFUL TECHNIQUES

Rawat, Raj, Manoharan, & Vineet apply SEC investigative techniques to real world examples in (2013) discussing the case of Raj Rajaratnam and Rajat Gupta:

On April 15, 2010, the Wall Street Journal reported that federal prosecutors in the US were investigating Gupta's involvement in providing insider information to Galleon hedge-fund founder Raj Rajaratnam, in particular the \$5 billion Berkshire Hathaway investment in Goldman Sachs (that Warren Buffet made) at the height of the financial crisis in September 2008 (p. 45).

The SEC detected unusual trading activity, such as abnormal returns and trading volumes, when looking at Rajaratnam and his partners' trading activity. When the SEC discovered that the group made a large investment of \$5 billion in Goldman Sachs at the peak of

a financial crisis in September 2008, it was seen as highly unusual. This is due to the fact that, typically, in times of economic distress, there is less trading volume. Rawat, Raj, Manoharan, & Vineet discuss the methods that the SEC used to successfully prosecute Rajaratnam and his associates, “The trial focused on Gupta’s phone call to Rajaratnam on 23 September 2008, immediately after attending a private conference and learning about the investment of \$5bn (£3.2bn) by Warren Buffett’s company Berkshire Hathaway in Goldman Sachs” (p. 46). Using more aggressive techniques such as a wiretap the SEC won the case and sentenced Rajaratman to 11 years of prison and fines of over \$150 million, the longest sentence ever given for insider trading, while Rajat Gupta was sentenced to 2 years of prison. If there was a Market Panopticon already in place before Rajaratnam and Gupta’s crime, they would have been deterred from their actions, would not have committed the crime or been convicted and confined to prison. The prosecutions of Raj Rajaratnam and Rajat Gupta show how crucial market surveillance is to detect and prove insider trading as well as why a Market Panopticon is useful. By creating a Market Panopticon those with the resources to commit insider trading would be deterred from actually committing the crime because the chances of detection would be more likely, and so their inclinations towards greed driven actions would be suppressed by the fear of getting caught.

INSIDER TRADING AS A CRIMINAL ACT

By making insider trading a criminal offense, Congress used fundamental economic laws such as Cost-Benefit Analysis to rationalize with their decision. Cost-Benefit Analysis is the idea that a rational person makes decisions based on a comparison of the possible costs and the possible benefits of his/her actions. The rational person will choose to do the action if the benefits are greater than the costs, and the rational person will choose not to do the action if the costs are the greater of the two. Frijns, Gilbert & Tourani-Rad (2013) apply this concept when they say, “criminal penalties may carry a stigma that civil prosecution does not. This reputational harm may be a significant deterrent” (p. 209). They use the concept of Cost-Benefit Analysis to pose the possible rationale behind the decision of making insider trading a criminal offense. Frino, Satchell, Wong & Zheng (2013) further

support this concept by saying, “If it is easier to establish possession of information for employees of the company in question than those that are separated from that information, then direct insiders will trade less, if at all, because their probability of sanction is higher” (p. 245). Frino, Satchell, Wong & Zheng describe that if the probability of sanction is higher, traders with insider knowledge will trade less, if at all. This may be because criminal penalties carry a stigma that civil prosecution does not, relating to what Frijns, Gilbert & Tourani-Rad discuss. Just the act of being accused of a criminal offense negatively affects the reputation of a person, especially if the person is in a professional occupation such as the positions that are held in the business field. An individual charged with insider trading, although he/she may not be convicted, will receive the punishment of negative stigma, and possible job loss. To add on to the costs there is also the probability of being convicted, and that would mean several years of jail-time, a substantial fine, loss of credibility amongst his/her peers and permanent negative stigma. Based on Congress’s rationale behind making insider trading a criminal law, a Cross-Benefit Analysis would lead to the conclusion that traders would avoid insider trading.

Although it is shown that the prevention of insider trading is vital to a capitalist economic system, the current legal standards needed to prosecute has proven to be a hindrance to the SEC. Cohen, Malloy, and Pomorski (2012) in their work state that, “U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) must demonstrate that a person ‘trades a security while in possession of material nonpublic information in violation of a duty to withhold the information or refrain from trading’” (p. 1010). The act of proving that a person ‘trades a security while in possession of material nonpublic information’ has been difficult because insider trading is deemed a criminal offense by the U.S. Congress. This means that the standard of proof needed to convict a suspected insider trader is beyond a reasonable doubt, which is based on the “Due Process” Clauses of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments,” the highest standard needed to prove guilt in the U.S. court system” (nationalparalegal.edu, para. 5). Frijns, Gilbert & Tourani- Rad (2013) supplement the difficulty of proving insider trading by describing that the “U.S. Securities Exchange Commission in 1998, who argued that illegal insider trading, is largely inferential. Cases often are based around

circumstantial evidence relating to meetings, phone calls, and presumed possession of information, making it difficult to establish guilt” (p. 206). Insider trading by its definition is the use of information that is not in the public domain. In order to prove that a stock market trader has used such information the SEC bases its prosecution on evidence that is circumstantial at best and is difficult to verify. Furthermore, to successfully prosecute someone of a criminal offense, Actus Reus and Mens Rea must be proven. First to prove Actus Reus prosecutor needs to accumulate enough clear and factual evidence to persuade the jury that the defendant committed the act without a doubt. In general, in a case pertaining to insider trading prosecutors rely on evidence that is significantly inferential to persuade the jury. It is because of the secretive manner that insider traders act on, as well as the type of evidence that the SEC is able to obtain, that makes proving the standard of evidence very difficult. Although there is plenty of research that proves that Cost-Benefit Analysis is a good predictor for the likelihood of an outcome to occur, in this case it is irrelevant because the increase of costs is undermined by the difficulty and unlikelihood of being convicted because of the problematic specificity of the definition of the crime. As a result of low enforceability or the capability to enforce (or prosecute) a law, making insider trading a criminal law has been a weaker deterrent than expected because the actual costs are not a probable outcome. As a result of this the current legal standards to prosecute insider trading have become a large roadblock in the SEC’s mission to fight insider trading.

After successfully proving Actus Reus a prosecutor then needs to prove Mens Rea; or whether the defendant had a “guilty mind.” Ginther et al. (2014) describe Mens Rea stating, “To be guilty of a crime, generally one must commit a bad act while in a culpable state of mind... The influential Model Penal Code (MPC) of 1962 divided culpable mental states into four now-familiar kinds: purposeful, knowing, reckless, and negligent” (p. 1329). This means that a person cannot be guilty of a criminal offense if he/she is legally insane, or if he/she is genuinely unaware of the crime and did so without negligence or recklessness. This illustrates how important it is for the SEC and prosecutors to discern the difference between an insider trader and a trader that is simply skilled at predicting future company performance.

In his work in economics Oberg (2014) applies this concept to the problem of prosecuting insider trading: “Proving the defendant’s fraudulent state of mind beyond ‘reasonable doubt’ is a daunting task that is often very hard for the prosecution to accomplish. For instance, it is very difficult to ascertain a trader’s intent in the context of a ‘suspicious’ market transaction” (p. 125). Oberg writes about the difficulty of proving the defendant’s innocence, or justifying their intentions. This correlates to Mens Rea. Ginther et al. state that in order to prove Mens Rea, one would have to prove that the defendant performed their actions with utmost awareness and purposeful behavior, or negligent intent. Proving this when it pertains to insider trading is difficult because the evidence that prosecutors rely on is largely inferential. For as long as the defendant has no clear and condemning evidence against his or herself, his/her defense is simple. All the defendant needs to prove to the jury is that he/she is adept at predicting stock performance. By proving this fact, it will be enough to convince the jury of his/her innocence. The SEC understands this and so they are usually wary to prosecute without some kind of direct, incriminating evidence.

THE ISSUES WITH INSIDER TRADING AS A CRIMINAL ACT

In the previous case example Raj Rajaratnam and Rajat Gupta were successfully prosecuted and charged, but Green, McGinnis, & McClain III (2013) describe the more common situation of not having enough evidence to convict when describing Mark Cuban’s case: “Cuban, the owner of the Dallas Mavericks, had been charged with insider trading for the 2004 sale of his Mamma.com stock. The sale allegedly helped Cuban avoid losing \$750,000” (p. 9). Cuban was detected by the SEC after a large sale of his Mamma.com stock[s]. By avoiding the \$750,000 that he would have lost, it alarmed the SEC illustrating another example of Madura and Marciniak’s “abnormal trading volume,” but instead of it being “abnormal returns,” it was the opposite: an abnormal amount of losses prevented. After detecting Mark Cuban’s unusual trading activity the SEC attempted to prosecute Cuban, but after four years of litigation Cuban was eventually found innocent by the jury. Green, McGinnis, & McClain III go on displaying the SEC’s problems, “Since the verdict

was announced in October, there has been widespread debate over its significance. Some view it as a blow to the SEC's enforcement efforts because the SEC spent substantial resources litigating the matter for the past four plus years" (p. 13). The SEC spent a surplus of resources, over nearly four years, and was still unsuccessful in swaying the jury's opinion. This shows the difficulty that the SEC has in proving the defendant's guilt in trial, since one cannot prove, or infer, his or her frame of mind. The Mark Cuban case is the perfect example of how the current legal standards hinder the SEC in their fight against insider trading, demonstrating the need for change in either the standard of proof needed to convict, or the methods used to obtain evidence and deter violators.

A more aggressive surveillance approach can be the answer to the issue of prosecuting insider trading. A Panopticon can give the SEC the ability to obtain more clear and convincing evidence as well as be a strong deterrent to others considering insider trading. Foucault (p. 201) states that a Panopticon creates a state of permanent visibility, meaning that the actions of those subject to the surveilling are always known by those observing them. Even though this is not always the case, it is typically believed to be so by those being surveilled, illuminating the deterring trait of a Panopticon. By creating a stock market of permanent visibility, the SEC will be able to observe all of the actions of suspected insider traders, and thus case evidence will change from the circumstantial evidence that Frijns, Gilbert & Tourani-Rad stated as the current issue, to clear and articulable evidence to prove the Actus Reus component of a criminal act. Furthermore by creating a more elaborate and intensive market surveillance system, the SEC can also use methods such as phone-tapping and video surveillance to find better evidence to prove the intent or Mens Rea, which has been the harder of the two components to prove in the court of law. Oberg (p. 125) stated that it is tough to determine a trader's agenda, within the context of market transactions. By creating a Market Panopticon it makes the task of ascertaining the trader's intent much easier as a result of the permanent visibility and the more intrusive and aggressive surveillance methods.

If the U.S. government does not opt to more aggressive surveillance methods to obtain more clear and incriminating evidence, the only other solution to the insider trading predicament is to lower the

burden to prove guilt from beyond a reasonable doubt to preponderance of the evidence. By doing so the SEC will be able to be more aggressive in their prosecution of insider traders, and much more successful at proving their accusations, which will result in more insider traders facing the consequences of their actions. As an outcome of lowering the sanction to a civil offense, insider trading will be decriminalized and so offenders will not face the possibility of incarceration. Nevertheless, to the majority of traders, who are inherently risk-averse, just the possibility of the negative stigma to be labeled an inside trader will be enough to deter people from committing the act. This solution would require the cooperation of corporate America as well as Congress to be successful. Businesses must be very strict on their policies with dealing with employees who have been successfully prosecuted of insider trading and with hiring candidates that have insider trading offenses on their background. Doing so will further the deterrence of insider trading. Furthermore Congress will have to be cooperative as well. Congress in 2013 scaled back its insider trading laws, appearing to make it easier for Congress to commit insider trading (Keith, 2013). This action creates a double standard, as well as distrust between citizens and the government. By repealing that act and making insider trading illegal to all citizens of the US, it will allow for the Stock Market to run as efficiently as possible.

CONCLUSION

Insider trading has been proven to be detrimental to the U.S. economy. To aid the SEC in preventing and detecting the insider trading Foucault's Panopticism can be applied as the solution. There is plenty of evidence that supports how effective market surveillance is in preventing further insider trading, as well as adequate research done to improve the possibility of detection. Foucault's own work on the efficiency of the Panopticon in detecting and deterring deviant actions further proves that the creation of a Market Panopticon will only help the SEC. The only factor that has been seen as a roadblock to a Market Panopticon has been prosecuting a suspected insider trader and proving "beyond a reasonable doubt" that the crime occurred. This issue has been under constant debate recently and unless a method that changes insider trading evidence from being "largely inferential" to clear and articulable,

which can be achieved by creating a Market Panopticon, the only other possible solution would be to decriminalize insider trading and make insider trading a civil crime. This would result in lowering the standard to prove guilt from “beyond a reasonable doubt” to preponderance of evidence and in turn make it easier for the SEC to prosecute insider traders. A viable solution must be met for the SEC such as the creation of a Market Panopticon so that the U.S. capital market can move closer to performing to the best of its capabilities, free from the use of nonpublic information.

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Chimpanzees in Invasive Experimentation

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Abstract: Chimpanzee use in invasive experimentation has been debated for decades, but new research supporting the cognition and human-like behaviors of chimpanzees has emerged. This has been the source of ethical controversy, as invasive experimentation on chimpanzees will cause extreme harm and distress to animals that could potentially be considered humanlike. As our closest evolutionary relatives, chimpanzees are unique in their physiological similarities to humans, but also have a number of differences as well. The similarities they do share with human beings warrants concern for their treatment in invasive experiments. In addition, a majority of invasive experiments that have been conducted on chimpanzees have also contributed very little to overall biomedical progress. This paper will examine the differences between the two species, how those differences affect how each is treated, and the ethical conclusions that can be drawn from that.

INTRODUCTION

Each year, many parents drag their children to the doctor to receive their annual flu shot. Despite the shrieks of over-exaggerating children, the administration of the shot is relatively painless. Most of the pain will be from only a tiny prick in the arm followed by a bit of soreness lingering after. With the vaccine, the child's immune system can start preparing to combat the flu and avoid unwarranted pain and suffering the virus could have inflict. It's quite astounding when you think about it. Science has advanced so far that a simple poke in the arm can prevent many viruses looking for a human host.

However, these wonderful discoveries do not simply produce themselves from thin air. It takes the dedication of many scientists who spend thousands of hours conducting research to achieve such miraculous breakthroughs. Unfortunately, this research subjects thousands of chimpanzees to painful procedures and experiments. These procedures can range from being sprayed with cosmetics, paints and other potential toxins, to infection with known deadly diseases, induced

genetic mutation, and even vivisection, which is a procedure in which a subject is dissected to examine its living internal structure. Outside of a scientific context such treatment of animals would be considered cruel and inhumane, and would be punishable by law. In fact, there are few industrialized nations that still allow invasive chimpanzee research, and the United States is included in this minority. This begs the question: to what extent are both invasive and noninvasive experiments ethical to perform on chimpanzees?

The question has important implications for the way research dollars are allocated. An estimated \$1 billion of the National Institute of Health's total budget goes to nonhuman primate research centers just to maintain the cost of the care and upkeep of the animals (Conlee and Rowan 32). This is a significant figure that only represents a fraction of the total expense of this testing in the United States. The Institute of Medicine's Committee on the Use of Chimpanzees in Biomedical and Behavior Research addresses the ethical concerns of chimpanzee use in invasive experimentation. In its book, *Chimpanzees in Biomedical and Behavioral Research: Assessing the Necessity*, the Committee proposes additional conditions and rationale for scientifically justified use of chimpanzees, providing a framework for future use of chimpanzees in behavior and biomedical research. Currently, there is a debate about the length that the limits of invasive experimentation on chimpanzees can be pushed to. The criteria the Committee set forth are particularly strict for the usage of chimpanzees in invasive experimentation and suggest an ethical stance taken to protect chimpanzees from this type of research. In short, while the advancement of biomedical research is beneficial for humanity, performing invasive experiments on chimpanzees to further human interests is highly unethical and cruel.

BACKGROUND

In its simplest terms, a chimpanzee experiment is any experimental procedure carried out on an organism from the zoological category *Pan Troglodyte*. Typically, there are two main categories of research that can be done on chimpanzees and other animals, which are invasive experiments and noninvasive experiments. The term "invasive experiments" refers to experiments where the subjects are physically or emotionally harmed. This type of research can range from forcibly

introducing the subject to diseases, performing surgical tests on them, exposing them to known toxins, and even socially isolating them. It is important to note that the scientists conducting these experiments are fully aware that invasive experiments will inflict some degree of harm to the subject, which can possibly result in the subject's death.

On the other hand, the term "noninvasive experiments" refers to experiments in which the subject is not physically or emotionally harmed. Experiments that fall under this category include brain tests with electrodes, behavior tests in well regulated, laboratory communities, and observation tests of the subjects in their natural habitats. There is a distinct difference between the two categories of experiments and most of the ethical concern is derived from the complications of invasive research.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN HUMAN AND CHIMPANZEE BEHAVIOR

There is strong evidence that chimpanzees and humans demonstrate significantly similar behaviors. For instance, there are cases where chimpanzees and other great apes have successfully learned sign language and were capable of conversing with researchers and interpreters. The most commonly known examples are Koko and Washoe, a gorilla and chimpanzee respectively, who both learned American Sign Language while in captivity. Using sign language, the two could express emotions such as joy or sadness in conversation, and even communicate to their human partners that they wanted to eat or be tickled. Several other behaviors are common between humans and chimpanzees as shown by studies conducted by the German Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology. To determine if chimpanzee behaviors such as food sharing, grooming, and consolation are driven by self-interest or genuine altruism, the Institute proposed an experiment where one chimpanzee would retrieve an object another chimpanzee desired, in both the presence and absence of reward for the retrieving subject (Warneken et al. 1414). Despite claims that altruism was a uniquely human characteristic, the study concluded that over 50% of chimpanzees would repeatedly act altruistically, "even in a novel situation when no reward is expected and no previous rewarding could have trained them to act accordingly" (Warneken et al 1418). While

chimpanzees may not have the capacity to help others to the same extent that humans are capable of, the evidence suggests that chimpanzees can exhibit altruistic behaviors, and therefore possess some level of selflessness and kindness for others.

Furthermore, chimpanzees display a strong level of awareness of themselves and problems within their communities. In an experiment done by psychologist Gordon Gallup Jr., chimpanzees who had been shown a mirror demonstrated behavior that suggested self-awareness by actions such as grooming in parts of the body normally not visible such as the forehead (Gallup Jr. 238). In their own communities chimpanzees have demonstrated the ability to recognize conflicts between members within their group and have even intervened to solve them. A study lead by the University of Zurich's Anthropological Institute & Museum in Switzerland concluded that chimpanzees use passive and aggressive interventions to settle disputes within their communities. Out of all 438 conflict cases, 69 (15.75%) had a response from at least one of the two chimpanzees that had been delegated to the role of intervening in conflicts, and of the 69 cases in which an intervening response occurred, 60 had been successful in resolving the dispute between the conflicting parties (Von Rohr et al. 4, 5). While the 15.75% response figure may seem low for policing events, consider the number of conflicts that occur between humans that do not receive police attention or the attention of a third party mediator. This statistic suggests the chimpanzees have an interest to maintain their communities similarly to humans and will take action to resolve disputes.

Opponents argue that although there are some behavioral similarities between chimpanzees and humans, chimpanzees are still animals that lack the capacity to suffer in the same way as humans can, and therefore are acceptable subjects to use in invasive experiments. However, studies show that chimpanzees have demonstrated symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder following extended periods of mistreatment (Conlee and Rowan 33). For example, a study conducted by psychologist and ecologist Gay Bradshaw, described the chimpanzee Jeannie, who after enduring invasive research and social isolation for over a decade suffered a nervous breakdown and exhibited "abnormal behavior, including self-injury, bouts of aggression, and sudden outbursts" (Bradshaw et al. 15). Eventually, Jeannie was diagnosed

with complex PTSD and subsequently treated, though it is important to note “the costs of laboratory-caused trauma are immeasurable in their life-long psychological impact on, and consequent suffering of, chimpanzees” (Conlee and Rowan 33). It is apparent that the suffering of chimpanzees is very much in line with the level of suffering humans can experience. The symptoms Jeannie displayed in her case of PTSD are very similar to ones displayed in humans. Furthermore, the behavioral similarities between chimpanzees and humans warrant concern and protection for the chimpanzees in experimentation, not the encouraged use of chimpanzees as test subjects (Altevogt et al. 2). The Institute of Medicine’s Committee on the Use of Chimpanzees in Biomedical and Behavior Research responded that the use of chimpanzees in biomedical research should face the most stringent requirements for justification (Altevogt et al. 15). Chimpanzees are similar to humans in terms of cognitive ability, self-awareness and the capacity to suffer, and it would be as unethical to perform invasive experiments on them as it would on a human.

KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHIMPANZEE AND HUMAN PHYSIOLOGIES

It is commonly said that chimpanzees are the closest living relative to humans. However, many people do not exactly understand what is meant by that phrase. As professor of medicine Ajit Varki puts it “chimpanzees share nearly 99% of human genome sequences” (1065). As any microbiologist will tell you however, this 99% statistic can be misleading. The 1% between the human genome and the genome of the chimpanzee accounts for significant changes to protein structure and development, which will ultimately code for completely different organisms. A small change in DNA can lead to an extreme change in the overall organism. In case of chimpanzees and humans, the 1% difference serves to emphasize the physiological, behavioral, and biological differences between the two species such as their lifespans, metabolic rates, and immune responses (Varki 1066). A practical conclusion one could draw from this knowledge would be that chimpanzees have different susceptibilities to many diseases and different immune responses than humans, making them poor models to use in invasive experimentation.

Opponents argue that this is not always the case by giving specific examples of success. Gagneux et al. write that “development of the widely used hepatitis B vaccine and understanding of the hepatitis C virus would not have been possible without the use of captive chimpanzees” (28). While it is true that the Hepatitis B vaccine and current knowledge about the Hepatitis C virus owe their development to invasive chimpanzee experimentation, this does not necessarily guarantee that all diseases that affect humans will similarly affect chimpanzees.

In many cases, chimpanzees have completely different immune responses to diseases than humans do. For instance, a study led by the Division of Microbiology and Immunology of Yerkes Regional Primate Research Center in Atlanta, Georgia concluded that HIV progression to AIDS in chimpanzees occurs at a much slower rate contrasting with human progression. Typically in humans, HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) attacks the T cell lymphocytes throughout the body by hijacking their DNA and retroactively integrating their DNA into the T cell. The T cell becomes a host for the virus, producing materials to create more HIV viruses and finally lyses (cell burst) to allow for the newly created viruses to infect other T cells and proliferate. This destruction of T cells and proliferation of the virus lead to the condition known as AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) where the immune system is weak and body is rendered relatively defenseless against pathogens. However, according to the study, after a 15-year cycle of observation, out of 10 chimpanzees infected with HIV, only 1 had developed AIDS (O’Neil et al. 3). The T cells of the chimpanzees had continued to be normal for all but one of the subject’s years after infection with the virus, although an additional 2 chimpanzees’ T cells began to demonstrate signs of progression to AIDS by the end of the study (O’Neil et al. 1). Through thorough examination of these T cells in the chimpanzees, it was discovered that the HIV virus had mutated and was actually in a temporary symbiotic state with the chimpanzee’s T cells, whereas in human T cells, the virus would immediately attempt to destroy them. Furthermore, various forms of cancer, which cause about 1 in 5 deaths in humans, have a relatively small role in the deaths of chimpanzees. Less than 2% of chimpanzee and other great ape deaths are from cancer (Varki 1067). This statistic

can be attributed to several factors such as diet, environmental factors, and the shorter lifespans of chimpanzees in comparison to humans (Varki 1067). The significance of these statistics is that they indicate there are strong differences between the physiology and biology of chimpanzees and humans despite the similarities in cases like Hepatitis B and C. However, these cases are few in number and many more diseases do not have similar progressions in both species. This makes the chimpanzee an unreliable model to test for human diseases and it would be unethical to subject these animals to invasive testing.

THE VALUE OF THE LIVES OF CHIMPANZEE SUBJECTS

Despite the fact that chimpanzees have demonstrated pain, distress, sadness, and several other emotions, and despite evidence supporting physiological differences between them and humans that can negatively affect the results of testing, chimpanzees continue to be used in invasive research. But in reality, the results of a chimpanzee experiment testing for a human disease are not as accurate as using a human model for the disease would be. As Professor Joel Marks bluntly hypothesizes: “cancer and all other major human ailments would probably yield their secrets far more rapidly if we performed various grisly and fatal experiments on human subjects instead of on other animals” (16). So why aren’t humans used instead of chimpanzees in invasive research if that would produce better results? The obvious answer is that subjecting a human being to an invasive experiment is extremely unethical because it violates the rights of the person involved. Furthermore, the “lethal character of some animal research poses insuperable moral problems of justification if human subjects were used” (Beauchamp 219). When one weighs the risks of severe harm to a human subject against the possible benefits of the invasive experiment, the outcome will always be that the lives of an individual human supersede the benefits to medical research. However, when you weigh the benefits to human biomedical progress against the cost of the suffering chimpanzees will endure as a result of invasive experimentation, the scale will almost always tip in the favor of allowing the experiment. The suffering of the chimpanzees involved is of minimal concern to researchers compared to the benefits invasive research can provide to humans, and as a result humane research processes are often eschewed.

The differences between chimpanzees and humans emphasize that there are distinct characteristics that set us apart, but these differences do not encourage discrimination towards the chimpanzees. As moral philosopher Peter Singer elaborates, there is “an implication of this principle of equality that our concern for others ought not to depend on what they are like, or what abilities they possess” (Singer 275). This means that if humans are to display a concern for sentient beings, it should not matter who or what species they are. If the concern is for animals, then such differences between animals and humans have no negative impact on the level of concern. According to Singer, this “principle of equality [must] be extended to all beings, black or white, masculine or feminine, human or nonhuman” (Singer 275). If humans are to follow this principle of equality that we use for our own species’ differences, then we must also be willing to apply it to other species. However, the usage of chimpanzees in invasive experimentation is inherently hypocritical because it violates the “concern” humans placed on the safety of these laboratory animals and this principle of equality we would readily apply to children, different races or different genders. This introduces Singer’s concept of speciesism, which is “a prejudice or attitude of bias in favor of the interests of members of one’s own species and against those of members of other species” (276). Similar to racism and sexism, this prejudice seeks to irrationally prioritize the needs and desires of humans above all other species. It is irrational in the sense that there is no concrete scientific evidence to indicate that a human’s needs have to go above the needs of animals, just as there no evidence that one race or sex is genetically superior to another.

Opponents may also argue that the use of animals is justified because they lack intelligence and that their value as research subjects is important for the advancement and safety of human beings. This argument is inherently biased towards humans because it prioritizes humans’ future survival over the survival of the lab animals. It is also flawed because it uses intelligence as criteria to justify the animal’s use. There are some humans who lack cognitive ability or any sort of intelligence at all. For example, people kept alive in a vegetative state lack certain cognitive capabilities. Contrary to their criteria on intelligence, the use of these people would be highly unethical to these opponents because they believe all humans have rights, even in

a vegetative state. This exception begs the question, “if possessing a high degree of intelligence does not entitle one human to use another for his own ends, how can it entitle humans to exploit nonhumans?” (Singer 276). Simply put, if we do not use unintelligent humans in our experiments because they are human, then animals should be given the same treatment despite their lack of intelligence. From a purely scientific viewpoint, being human would not be criteria to allow exclusion from experimentation. In fact, what better subjects would there be to test for effects of various drugs and medications than humans themselves? If anything, to achieve breakthroughs in medical science, humans are the ideal candidates for experimentation. Yet this is an ethically and morally depraved concept, and the innate disgust of using humans in cruel laboratory experiments should extend to chimpanzees as well. This controversy is a reminder that the experiments we cannot even ethically perform on humans are cruel and inhumane and the usage of chimpanzees as subjects instead is a reflection of speciesism taking root in our societal norms.

ALTERNATIVES TO LIVE CHIMPANZEES

Alternative testing methods have been available for some time that would pose no harm to chimpanzees while continuing to advance biomedical progress. These alternatives include in vitro cell-based testing such as human skin and blood cells and computer models of animals based on collected data (Evans, Holgate, Jones, Langley 919). The advent of these advanced techniques has allowed scientists to conduct experimental testing on skin cells that they would have had to have tested on live animals in the past. These methods show more promise than in vivo animal experiments as well providing “improve[d] scientific and medical progress with fewer demands on time and finance (Evans et al. 918). For example, in a test to determine the potency of the yellow fever vaccine, usage of a cell culture assay to detect neutralizing antibodies, antibodies that inhibit or neutralize the effect of a harmful biological agent to protect the cell, was found to be more practical, accurate, and reproducible than the mice that had been tested to detect neutralizing antibodies (Evans et al. 919). While this experiment did use mice to conduct testing, what is important to understand is that the experiments that used a cell culture had achieved better results without

subjecting any animal to harm.

There are several reasons why using chimpanzee are limited, as some chimpanzee experiments have been declared too unreliable to use in the advancement of biomedical knowledge. The stresses that chimpanzees endure in the laboratory environment, such as total isolation and starvation, can create neurological, immunological, and endocrinological abnormalities that distort biological responses to disease agents test chemotherapeutics (Knight 299). A chimpanzee who is healthy is not the same scientific subject as a chimpanzee who is starving and psychologically traumatized, and the difference between the two would lead to significantly different results that may have no contribution to human biomedical advancement. Inherently, this would make any invasive experiment conducted on a chimpanzee unreliable because the factor of stress inflicted on the animal is not considered. Along with the stress, the complexity of an entire organism requires that numerous factors also be considered such as their immunological and neurological responses. Especially when the organism is a chimpanzee, these factors may be significantly different and can lead to results that may be applicable to chimpanzees but only give a crude indication of biomedical consequences in human patients (Evans et al. 920). Bioethicist Andrew Knight cites a study where out of “95 randomly-selected published chimpanzee experiments, 49.5% (47/95) were not cited by any subsequent papers, demonstrating minimal contribution toward the advancement of biomedical knowledge generally” (294). The significance of this statistic implies that out of 95 cited cases of chimpanzee experiments, assuming the chimpanzees were treated humanely and properly cared for as required by law, about half were of such minimal scientific value that other papers would not even reference them. This statistic demonstrates a large inefficiency in chimpanzee testing and suggests that even with our closest relatives, the experiments are very unreliable and alternatives should be considered.

Cell cultures and other alternatives such as computer models do not carry with them the same level of complexity that a live organism does and are much simpler subjects to use. They are much more accurate and are often cited in papers of significant biomedical value as a method to experiment on cancer (Knight 295). Computer models are also another scientific breakthrough in alternatives. These models are based

on clinical measurements of fetal growth rates, phenotypic features and weight distribution obtained through human ultrasound that can be studied problems such as pregnancy-induced hypertension (high blood pressure) and pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure and high protein in urine) (Evans et al. 920). Through the use of the logged in information from the ultrasounds performed on pregnant women, the computer models were able to find a mechanism that showed a “notch” in uterine artery blood flow in women at risk of pre-eclampsia and thus effectively give treatment as soon as possible (Evans et al 920). Without any harm coming to any animal, the computer models came up with a solution to help patients pre-disposed with pre-eclampsia.

Bioethicist Jeffrey Khan acknowledges that animal research can “provide otherwise unattainable insight into comparative genomics, normal and abnormal behavior, mental health, emotion, [and] cognition” (28). It is true that there are important discoveries to be made through experimentation on laboratory chimpanzees. However, Khan also stresses that experiments where there is another method for attaining new information that causes minimal harm to animals involved, or no harm to animals at all needs be preferred over an invasive animal test. There are limits to what cell cultures can accomplish because not every disease will affect a human cell in vitro as it would a human cell in vivo. Furthermore, although computer models have provided great insight into the physiology of human pregnancy, it is dependent on the information from the ultrasounds, limiting its availability (Evans et al 920). But these limits do not justify resorting to performing invasive experiments on chimpanzees. By the same thought, these alternatives can also provide otherwise “unattainable insight,” though the times at which they have the resources to do so may be limited. If one were to take it a step further, using humans would be the perfect way to obtain important biomedical information, but cell cultures and computer models are far more ethically acceptable. Continued use of chimpanzees in invasive experiments, when accurate and less harmful alternatives are readily available, is highly unethical and only subjects the animal to cruelty.

CONCLUSION

Chimpanzees’ behavior and physiology suggest that they are just as

capable of suffering as humans are, making it unethical to use them in invasive experimentation. Chimpanzees can experience human emotions such as pain, joy, and sadness and several other behaviors as well. These behaviors aren't mimicked from humans, as shown by studies where chimpanzees genuinely commit altruistic acts for their conspecifics and exhibit symptoms of PTSD in response to trauma. Despite their genomic similarity to humans, with a 99% similar nucleotide sequence, the 1% sequence difference still creates significantly altered immunological responses in chimpanzees, to the point where diseases like HIV may not even affect them for over a decade. The results of these studies support the claim that chimpanzees are not ideal models to use in invasive experiments testing for human diseases because what may harm human beings may not necessarily harm chimpanzees in the same way. Furthermore, continued usage of chimpanzees in invasive testing is unethical because it violates the right the chimpanzees have to be protected from cruelty. Ethical treatment is not for humans alone, and to deny a chimpanzee that treatment based on its species is biased and unfair and leads to the inhumane treatment of a species that requires protection. Chimpanzees are unique animals that have demonstrated considerable intelligence and have several human behaviors. Subjecting them to invasive experiments would be just as unethical as subjecting a human to the same experiment. There are plenty of safer alternatives available that would provide important biomedical information and it would be unethical to use them when a more accurate and safer approach exists. If a lack of consideration is given to chimpanzees for the benefit of medical research, the suffering of thousands of chimpanzees will go ignored for the selfish interests of their closest evolutionary cousins.

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Damseled and Distressed: The Prevalence of Sexism in Video Games

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Abstract: This paper examines how female characters are portrayed in video games. Research shows that women are severely underrepresented in video games. When women are represented, it is done in both benevolent and hostile sexist ways that conform to real life gender roles. These representations include a number of tropes that consistently present women as less important than men and as extremely sexualized objects. This paper further shows that these sexist representations can reinforce dangerous ideas regarding women's autonomy.

INTRODUCTION

Sexism has been an issue in the video game industry for decades, and the result is that female video game characters are constantly objectified and hyper-sexualized. The “Cultivation Theory” suggests that the more players expose themselves to a video game, the more likely their views are to align with the views in that game (Chong et al. 953). The relationship between people’s exposure to media and their perceptions of the real world makes these sexist representations within video games damaging to women in real life, especially as technology improves and video games become even more realistic. Furthermore, the influence of video games potentially amplifies the level of interactivity required to move the narratives forward; the player is an active participant in the progression of the story rather than a passive viewer of a show or a movie. There have been a number of studies that provide a correlation between gender portrayals in games to how women in general are viewed by society. The perpetuation of sexist views to tens of millions of people has the potential for creating real, negative consequences. To understand the scope, a staggering 59% of all Americans considered themselves to be gamers in 2013 - that’s roughly 185 million people, with women making up half of all gamers (Entertainment Software Association). Since video games possess such a powerful influence, the representation of female characters can have an impact on how women are treated in the real world. By placing women into degrading roles

more often than into positive roles in games, it reinforces the prevalence of multiple types of sexism as well as the objectification of women and other negative views like rape myth, which is the belief that women who have been sexually assaulted did something to deserve that abuse.

BENEVOLENT SEXISM

Benevolent sexism is one of two distinct types of sexism that is present within video games. This form of sexism is a much more old-fashioned type of sexism in that it “endorses more traditional attitudes towards women, particularly paternalistic, protective attitudes” (Summer and Miller 1032). Benevolent sexism was particularly common in the early years of video games and often resulted in female characters being portrayed as fragile, beautiful creatures that were completely incapable of protecting themselves. Female characters that are a product of this type of sexism are often placed in passive roles and frequently find themselves in harm’s way. This is the result of the imbalanced traditional gender roles in real life. Masculinity and femininity exist in a yin-yang type of relationship, and within this relationship masculinity is favored heavily over femininity (Dill and Thill 854). Where men are supposed to be powerful, strong, and fearless, women are expected to be attractive, weak, and submissive by contrast. Video games in particular have built an entire industry around personifying exaggerated versions of these gender roles. The most notable company to capitalize on benevolent sexism is Nintendo. *Super Mario Bros* and *The Legend of Zelda* were released in 1985 and 1986, respectively, by the Japanese gaming company and have each become two of the most recognizable franchises in the world. Despite being two separate games, the narratives are almost identical: in both *Super Mario Bros* and *The Legend of Zelda*, the player assumes control of a brave young hero who sets off on a perilous quest to save a helpless princess - one who is all but absent from the narrative itself. Although there have been minor improvements over the years, there remains the problem that many people “still [cling] to the deeply sexist belief that women as a group need to be sheltered, protected and taken care of by men” (Sarkeesian, “Damsel in Distress Part 1”). Even after twenty years, women continue to be cast as the weaker and helpless sex within video games. The popularity of these games and their numerous sequels further prove how generally accepted the hero and the

damsel gender roles are.

The helpless female character—referred to across narrative mediums as the damsel-in-distress trope—is the most common representation of benevolent sexism in video games and carries harmful effects with it. In essence, the damsel-in-distress role “works by trading the disempowerment of female characters for the empowerment of male characters” (Sarkeensian, “Damsel in Distress Part 1”). It is a type of plot device used to further the advancement of the male character’s narrative at the expense of a woman. In the damsel-in-distress trope, female characters are included as accessories to men and their stories. Generally, story arcs with this trope involve the kidnapping of a female character in order to create a dire situation in which a male character can prove his bravery by overcoming perilous obstacles to rescue her. Princess Peach plays the perfect damsel in *Super Mario Bros*, acting as the ultimate trophy for both the player and the main protagonist Mario. Like many other titles with a similar narrative, Princess Peach’s kidnapping is the driving force behind the entire game and provides a platform for Mario—and the player—to prove their heroism while excusing them of any atrocities they may commit along the way. *The Legend of Zelda* tells the same tale by merely swapping in Link as the heroic protagonist and Princesses Zelda as the helpless damsel. If Princess Peach or Princess Zelda were given the ability to defend themselves, Mario and Link would have had no need to trek through perilous lands to rescue them and would have thus been left without a way to confirm their bravery. Instead, Peach and Zelda remain accessories; they could just as easily be replaced by a pet or even a beloved piece of furniture without disrupting the narrative in any way. Aside from spreading the idea that women are replaceable objects, the representation of women as the damsel-in-distress poses other risks to the perception of women in society. By being subject to this theme time and time again, both men and women “may get the impression that women are helpless and need to be rescued by men” (Miller and Summers 740). In small doses, the damsel characterization might have been tolerable. As a reoccurring trope, however, it poses a danger in perpetuating benevolent sexism and the idea that women are inherently subordinate to men.

HOSTILE SEXISM

Recently, the presence of hostile sexism in video games has been a growing trend. Hostile sexism is an aggressive type of sexism that “endorses attitudes and behaviors that exploit women as sexual objects through the expression of derogatory characteristics” (Summers and Miller 1032). This form of sexism encourages the depictions of women as sex-objects in order to fuel heterosexual male fantasies. When hostile sexism began to overpower benevolent sexism in video games, a new type of dominant female character emerged. One of the most famous examples was introduced in 1996 when Edios released *Tomb Raider*, an action-adventure game featuring Lara Croft as the progressive lead female protagonist. Lara Croft and many newer female characters were granted more traditionally masculine personality traits, such as aggression and determination, to develop their characters beyond traditional, helpless femininity (Han 3). This shift mirrored a similar change in real life, where masculinity and femininity had begun to blend select traits between each other—such as strength in women and sensitivity in men (Tragos 541). This gender role evolution, however, emerged with a catch. Women were allowed to be strong, aggressive, and angry, which are all traditional masculine traits, as long as they still served men aesthetically. While Lara Croft may seem like a formidable woman who trumped the damsel-in-distress trope, a closer analysis invalidates these positives to an extent. Lara Croft’s masculine personality is overshadowed by her tiny waist and disproportionately large breasts, which peak through her revealing attire. This hypersexualization of female character design is laced in hostile sexism and portrays women as objects, just as the damsel-in-distress trope does (Janex and Martis 147). The sexual objectification of female characters in possession of otherwise dominant personality traits makes the woman less threatening to masculinity and the assumed male-dominated gaming market. Hostile sexism dictates that women like Lara Croft are only allowed to exist on male terms.

The hypersexual objectification of women has become increasingly more prevalent in video games over the past couple of decades. It is no secret that video games depict the ideal physical versions of both men and women in their character designs, but the divergence between the two representations in terms of realism

is disheartening. Male characters are often given massive amounts of muscle, presumably for the purpose of combating hundreds of treacherous foes. In contrast, female characters are regularly paired with “unrealistically sized and shaped breasts,” a design that serves no practical purpose and is “difficult to interpret as anything other than sexist objectification” (Burgess, Stermer, and Burgess 427). Lara Croft is a physically extreme woman and is dressed to accentuate that fact. She traverses through dangerous tombs while clad in a tight-fitting tank top and shorts that are only a few pixels away from being considered underwear—an outfit no actual female adventurer or archeologist would dare work in due to the severe impracticality [See Appendix A]. Despite women making up nearly half of the video game market, it is clear that men are unquestionably targeted as the primary audience. In order to make a game more appealing to men, especially if the game possesses a strong female character in some role of power, the women are reduced to sexual objects. Countless female characters have been and continue to be “constructed from the perspective of [this] ‘male gaze,’” forcing female video game players to either tolerate this sexualization or to not play the game at all (Crawford 74). In *Tomb Raider*, Lara Croft’s entire appearance serves only to be ogled by the player. This type of objectification can have incredibly harmful effects. Taking what would otherwise be a positive female character representation and degrading her for the pleasure of men “frame[s] female sexuality as something that belongs to others, rather than as something women enjoy for themselves” (Sarkeesian, “Women as Background Decoration”). The exploitation and hyper-sexualization of women in video games to fuel male fantasies could lead players to the view that women are meant to fulfill this sexual role in real life as well, perpetuating the objectification of women in society.

REPRESENTATION

Besides the degradingly weak and sexualized portrayals of female characters, women also face sexism from the video game industry through its lack of representation of female characters. Although this is one of the more difficult offenses to notice at first, realizing just how large the disparity in gender representation is within video games is alarming. Burgess et al. conducted a study in 2007 that found male

characters to be “four times more frequently portrayed than female characters” and that the males were “given significantly more game relevant action” than their female counterparts were (419). To put it in perspective, female characters make up only one fifth of the video game population, despite the fact that women make up half of the entire gaming demographic. As a general rule in society, women as a whole are often considered to be less important than men. As a result, video game developers often choose - consciously or subconsciously - to not include female characters in their narratives. In June 2014, for example, Ubisoft was in the process of developing two of their newest releases: *Assassin's Creed Unity* and *Far Cry 4*. When asked about the lack of a playable female character in either title's multiplayer versions, lead developers from both projects came forward that month to claim that females were too difficult to animate and were cut from their production because they “just couldn't squeeze it in” (Huntermann 165). The lack of priority, or even respect, for female characters from Ubisoft was so obvious that social media flew into a frenzy with both consumers and fellow game developers alike shaming the company for their poor excuses for not creating female characters. These comments made by Ubisoft vocalized the quiet ideology that countless other video game companies keep hidden behind the scenes. There is a clear gender bias in video games that has set the main character model default to male, leaving females as optional - something to “squeeze in” later if developers have the time.

This absence of female characters in video games perpetuates the sexist idea that women are less important than men. Even when women are actually represented in video games, the types of roles female characters receive, as shown earlier, are often disrespectful. This is especially true in terms of how video games present themselves to the public for consumption. In the same 2007 study mentioned previously, Burgess et al. also found a surprising statistic in regard to gender and video game box cover art displays: “56% of the male characters appeared on a cover [...] without females, yet only 18% of the females appeared without a male” (427). There is a perception within the gaming industry that women are unable to sell video games on their own. Even games that feature women as a main protagonist - like, for example, the *Mass Effect* franchise, a sci-fi action role playing game first developed by Bioware in 2007 - often let their female characters get sidelined by

their male counterparts. In *Mass Effect*, the player assumes control of a customizable character named Commander Shepard. At the start of the game, players are immediately given the option to choose a male Shepard or a female Shepard, and are able to play through all three *Mass Effect* games with this one customized character. Both the male and female Shepherds are given the same storylines with the same motivations—in fact, the only deviations come from the independent choices the players make throughout the game. Yet, when it came time for Bioware to market their game, they used the male Shepard almost exclusively in their advertisements for each game in the trilogy (Sarkeensian, “Ms. Male Character”). All three box covers, including the special trilogy edition, lack any visual evidence of a female Shepard even being offered in the gameplay [See Appendix B]. Regardless of the role females are given, whether they are a non-playable side character or a leading protagonist, their characters are all too often subjected to this sort of casual sexism that also tends to go unnoticed by the player. These representations - or more precisely, these lack of representations—dilute the importance and the presence of female characters.

POSITIVE REPRESENTATIONS

Not all female characters in video games fall subject to the rampant sexism within the industry, and as a result there are a number of positive female characters that rise above the generally negative representations. Lately, a number of video game developers have found inclusive roles for women that neither objectify nor sexualize them. These more progressive female characters are often regarded as “counter stereotypical” because they display characteristics that are not considered traditionally feminine “such as physical strength, independence, and power” (Behm-Morawitz and Mastro 819). At the same time, these female characters are also counter stereotypical with respect to the roles they are given within the narrative of the game. Take Commander Shepard from Bioware’s *Mass Effect* franchise that was mentioned earlier in this paper. Although she was excluded from advertisements, her character within the game is incredibly well rounded. Not only is she a woman in an extremely high position of power, but also is in command of her own narrative and exists outside of other male characters’ plotlines. She is a fighter who can be both

compassionate and brutal; furthermore, her physical appearance is not her defining feature.

Female characters like Commander Shepard reflect the newer gender roles that combine “both masculine and feminine characteristics” from real life, and they do this without being repressed by hostile sexism (Tragos 544). Positive female characters are able to be strong and sensitive or powerful and compassionate without being needlessly sexualized to compensate for their possession of traditionally masculine traits, like Lara Croft was in the early renditions of the *Tomb Raider* games. In all, the most important aspect to a positive female character is that they are essential to the narrative being told. Unlike Princess Peach, strong female characters cannot be replaced in the story without disrupting the narrative completely. They are essential—like Ellie from Naughty Dog’s *The Last of Us*. Ellie is a young teenage girl in a post-apocalyptic world who is presumed to hold the cure for the zombie-like infection plaguing the human population. Although she is only a playable character for a little under a third of the game, Ellie is still just as positive a representation as the female Shepard is. She is aggressive, independent, and resourceful, all while remaining completely unsexualized. Positive female characters are dynamically represented as real people, not women-shaped trophies or unnaturally feminine pin-up girls. They are, in essence, given the same amount of respect in their design that their male counterparts have been receiving for decades.

The representation of female characters with positive portrayals is essential for combating negative views towards women. For most of the industries’ history, “women have been traditionally marginalized as video gamers,” and this has resulted in the deficiency of female characters that are available to players today (Crawford 53). Recently, however, game developers have been making more of an effort to create positive female characters and to include them in their narratives. Since the 1990s there has been a jump in the number of female characters included in video games (Burgess et al. 427). The outcome has been a subsequent increase in the inclusion of positive female main characters, like Chell from Valve’s *Portal*, as well as even more positive female ancillary characters, like Elizabeth from 2K’s *Bioshock Infinite*. While women are still severely underrepresented, the number of game developers that are adding females to their character lineup is growing.

In fact, the newest installment of the *Call of Duty* franchise, one of the most traditionally masculine games on the market, will include the option to play as a female character in the game's campaign mode. *Call of Duty: Black Ops 3* is set to be released by Treyarch in late 2015 and will be the first *Call of Duty* ever to feature a female lead. The female character option in *Black Ops 3* will feature all her own animations and dialogue, instead of merely being an exact copy of the male character's animations with a female face (De Matos, "Engadget"). This is even a step forward from last year when *Call of Duty: Advanced Warfare* was the first to launch with the ability to pick a female character in the multiplayer game-type (Sledgehammer, 2014). These long overdue steps of inclusion that are being taken by a number of companies in the video game industry are incredibly important. The addition of positive female characters helps spread the idea that women can and should be included, and that they do exist as equals to their male counterparts.

Dynamic and respected female characters in video games can be powerful role models for both genders. As discussed earlier, the influential nature of video games results in a special type of cultivation theory, and players might "look to [video game] characters to determine appropriate behaviors and roles" (Summers and Miller 1029). If negative representations of female characters in video games perpetuate negative views towards women, then positive representations should promote positive views towards women. Including positive female characters in video games is essential to combating both the lack of representation and the negative portrayals that already exist in video games. Positive female characters provide a more realistic and humanizing representation of women in video games than their objectified counterparts do, and thus a more positive type of appropriate behavior toward the treatment of women. Telltale's interactive episodic series *The Walking Dead Game* features a young girl named Clementine, and the player follows her development through a zombie apocalypse through two "seasons" of gameplay. Over a total of ten episodes, the player has a hand in her growth from an innocent child into an intense survivor [See Appendix C]. Clementine's character is rounded, changing with each difficult decision she and the player are forced to make - the types of decisions that could get other characters killed in the process. Telltale manages to make a female child's problems and sacrifices

relatable to people of all ages and genders. The inclusion of positive representations of women is important because “powerful female video game characters may have a positive influence on [...] players” since “they are much stronger and more powerful representations of women than what is typical of many other popular media products” (Behm-Morawitz and Mastro 820). The developers that put the effort into making positive female characters are doing more than simply providing good representations - they are creating positive influences that break the sexist norm many other gaming companies seem to have become complacent in perpetuating.

THE EFFECTS OF SEXISM

The role objectification, sexual objectification, and the lack of representation that is so common of female characters are products and factors of sexism within Western culture. The effects positive female characters may have on society are being diluted by the overabundance of negative, sexist representations that are still so prominent in the video game industry. Male characters are still more frequently represented and are given better narratives while their female counterparts continue to be over-sexualized and cast as second-rate characters. While there are a number of factors in the degrading placement of women in video games, for example, the false perception that men make up a substantial share of the gaming market, another may come from inside the industry itself. In 2007, men made up 89% of video game professionals (Martins et al. 833). Consciously or not, the men within the industry are creating demeaned and objectified women in order to further the male characters narrative or to serve the male player sexually. The lack of representation and the abundance of stereotypical negative portrayals of female characters may as well be a consequence of the subsequent absence of women in the industry, who are unable to challenge these sexist designs.

Continued exposure to the resulting objectified and sexualized portrayals of women in video games can be harmful. It is suggested by a number of studies that “both passive and active exposure to sexualized video game content can have a dramatic impact on how players view and treat women in the real world” (Stermer and Burkely 528). The sexism that exists in video games is not isolated to those virtual worlds, and truly does have real world consequences as a result of the cultivation

theory. Gamers, but also society in general, are often susceptible to the influential nature of video games and other forms in media. Every time a woman is represented as helpless, sexualized, or is omitted from a narrative, it affirms to those participating in the gaming experience that these behaviors and actions are acceptable. Negative representations of women are more than upsetting: they are harmful and damaging in many ways.

The acceptance of rape myths is an unfortunate and one of the more dangerous results of sexism, and these ideas can be perpetuated by sexist representations of women in video games. Rape happens when an entitled person has non-consensual sex with another person, usually obtaining the sex through violent or other abusive measures. While both men and women are capable of being raped, women are at a greater risk and are generally the target of this malicious crime. Rape myths are the “cognitive justifications for sexual aggression” and are the result of a patriarchal society (Dill et al. 1403). Rape myths blame the victim for the aggressions of the abuser, saying that a woman in a revealing dress was asking to be sexually assaulted, or that an intoxicated woman is at fault for letting herself become an easy target for rape. Over the course of a number of studies, a grim correlation has appeared between sexism in video games and the acceptance of these rape myths. Stermer and Burkely found that “men who frequently play sexually violent video games were more likely to identify with [a] rapist in [a] scenario” (530). When female characters in video games are put into hyper-sexualized and objectified roles, it conveys to the players that this is an acceptable role to place women into in real life. It reaffirms the sexist idea that women exist to serve men sexually—a dangerous notion that furthers the acceptance of these rape myths. In another study, Dill et al. found that men who were exposed to sexualized images of women could be more likely to “disregard women’s report of sexual harassment, blame the victim, and assign weaker punishments to perpetrators” (1407). By presenting female characters as objects instead of as people in video games, women in real life are being dehumanized. The representation of women as hypersexual beings in video games only furthers the idea that a man’s sexual satisfaction is more important than a woman’s autonomy.

CONCLUSION

The types of representations women are given in video games matters. Confident, realistic female characters carry a positive influence just as objectified and sexualized female characters spread a negative influence. It is important to note that this paper does not necessarily call for a ban on weak or sexy female characters, as these are still features that exist in real women. However, these should not be the character's defining - or only - trait. Female characters in video games need to be included in narratives, and should be shown the same level of respect in their design as their male counterparts. Erasing a female character's personality and story to suit the needs of both the male character and the player dehumanizes and objectifies women. When this theme is repeated at the scale it is across all video games, it has the potential to perpetuate harmful stereotypes as well as reinforce dangerous ideas that affect women in real life. In order to counteract the historically negative representations that female characters in video games are generally given, positive female characters will need to be created in far greater numbers. This is necessary to curb video game's perpetuation of sexist ideas within society.

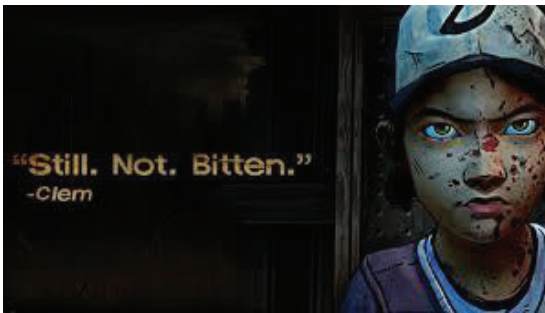
APPENDIX



Tomb Raider, 1996. Lara Croft's exaggerated physical appearance.



Mass Effect Trilogy Cover Art, featuring all three original titles. Male Shepard appears exclusively on each of the four covers



A bloody and aggressive Clementine from *The Walking Dead Game*, season two.

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Abstract: According to the apparatus theory, cinema establishes an ideological dominance through its representational technical modes (namely camerawork). The idea of a “gaze,” inherent in film, came forth through feminist film theory, which involved Lacan’s “look” in movies that was controlled by the white, middle-class males who dominated the Hollywood film industry. The male gaze dictates what is seen in a film, both literally through the lens of a camera and psychologically in the depiction and representation of women on screen. This is problematic for feminist film theorists because this male gaze objectifies and sexualizes women to the point where they cannot contribute to films as human beings. Feminist filmmakers try to create a type of female gaze as an alternative to the dominant male gaze, wherein there is no hierarchy of dominance but rather a mutual type of gazing between characters. Postmodern aesthetics allow filmmakers to develop the female gaze by encouraging a rejection of modern narratives through parody, pastiche, pre-fabrication, and intertextuality that question and mock pre-conceived standards of cinematic pleasure.

INTRODUCTION

Film relies heavily on a structured visual economy. In order for this medium to be recognizable as a consumable art form, the “gaze”—of both the characters, and the audience—is directed through selective editing. The choice of what to include and what to exclude in these frames obviously carries the bias of every individual who lends a hand to making the film. Since the majority of the people involved in the early development of film were white, heterosexual males, many problematic stereotypes and generalizations of women have been perpetuated in film. E. Ann Kaplan states that Hollywood films “reflect the unconscious of patriarchy...the domination of women by the male gaze is part of men’s strategy to contain the threat that the mother embodies” (135). The female gaze is a concept developed by feminist film scholars where the “look” in films is shifted from a patriarchal view to a more egalitarian view dedicated to creating a mutual gaze independent of a hierarchy of power. Yet, the female gaze must find itself in a postmodern context,

which at its philosophical foundations is antithetical to modernism (Felluga). There are three concepts that define postmodernism in film: parody/pastiche, pre-fabrication, and intertextuality (Hayward 2006). These elements affect the development of the female gaze by allowing filmmakers to subvert the typical ideological values inherent in modern films. Since cinema was founded during the modern era of art, its value and ideals are based on Western, patriarchal, capitalist conceptions that inform and drive the male gaze, but if postmodernism is a rejection of these ideals, then the female gaze can fully develop into its own distinct look in film. My paper will chart the development of female gaze as it is reclaimed in the postmodern era, specifically by analyzing Kelly Reichardt's film *Wendy and Lucy* and Sofia Coppola's *Lost in Translation*.

POSTMODERNISM AS AN ART MOVEMENT

Before speaking about postmodern film it is important to define modern and postmodern as art movements affected by their historical and social contexts, rather than just periods of time. Postmodernism formed as a reaction to modernism, which believed in the power of ideology as a means of progress. An example of a modernist film is Frank Capra's *It's A Wonderful Life*, where the protagonist finds joy in his nuclear family in an idealized American small town. Postmodern works differentiate themselves through either the mainstream system of reproduction as is seen in Hollywood remakes or through subversive means of irony as seen in Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction*, which uses allusions to comment on the films it references (Mircea 109). Scholars debate about the effect that postmodernism has had on society. Linda Hutcherson elaborates on parody and its effective political uses. Frederic Jameson posits postmodernism as having negative effects on people by separating history from humanity. Jean Baudrillard also takes a negative stance and speaks on the superficiality of works and their reliance on simulacrum, or "substituting the signs of the real for the real" (Felluga). Yet, each theory offers valid conditions through which to determine whether a piece of art is "postmodern." Regardless of the choice, it can affect society and the individual spectator in an either positive or negative way, which can be used by filmmakers to shape the cinematic experience of their audience.

Postmodern cinematic aesthetics have changed how films

are made in today's film industry. In her book *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts*, Susan Hayward defines cinematic postmodernism by pinpointing four specific aspects inherent in film: simulation (either through parody or pastiche), pre-fabrication, and intertextuality (302). Simulation, or imitation, is a way for postmodern work to situate itself in history, a history from which it is independent from and yet constantly situated within. Modern films rely on pastiche, a technique that replicates older works in order to tap into the viewer's sense of nostalgia. Pastiche creates a double-representation where the stereotypical images of the modern period are reproduced to build on and subvert viewer's understanding of the past. On the other hand, parody, when used subversively, is a way of employing irony and self-reflexivity to underscore the complex relationship that postmodern works have to their predecessors. This self-reflexivity enables a type of meta-criticism wherein filmmakers can not only critique earlier films, but also create a discourse surrounding their work and the message that they want to broadcast.

The next two concepts, pre-fabrication and intertextuality, also have a pastiche or parody effect. Pre-fabrication involves the use of images that have already been made, as in copying and pasting frames from older movies. In mainstream media, this includes using frame-by-frame shots from an older work. In deconstructive works, this is seen in the use of juxtaposition between already distinguishable images. The parody lies in the contrast (or comparisons) between the images or sounds placed before the audience. Similarly, intertextuality also has to do with other texts, specifically the relationship that one text has to another or to a body of texts. By establishing a relationship between their work and older works, filmmakers place their film in the context of a cinematic landscape, situating it amongst important, influential movies that give the film a sense of authority in its own message. When filmmakers want to promote a message that is subversive to common ideals, referencing films that were key in perpetuating said ideals directly undermines their origins and pervasiveness. Though prefabrication and intertextuality are important in cinema, another significant influence is the idea of "the gaze".

THE SHIFTING GAZE IN CINEMA

The gaze in cinema, in particular the male gaze, was first written about by Laura Mulvey in *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* published in 1975 and refers to how images are seen in film and developed through a Lacanian gaze and Freudian psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis focuses on the development of the individual through one's realization of the "self," which is shaped through culture and language. In film, the spectator identifies with the image on the screen, and this spectatorial identification is key in the interpretation of these texts. Since then, other feminist scholars have developed the idea further by introducing other aspects of the gaze that have to do with race and sexuality and criticized the effects of the male gaze on spectators. The gaze consists of different "looking relations," between the camera and the object it is filming, between the characters within the frame, and between the spectator and the images that appear before them on the screen (Gaines 336; Mulvey 46-7). Within these looks, preconceived notions of power are developed through scopophilia, or the pleasure in looking, which is then represented through voyeurism and fetishism that objectifies and relegates women to powerless non-entities. E. Ann Kaplan describes scopophilia, voyeurism, and fetishism as "mechanisms the dominant cinema uses to construct the male spectator in accordance with the needs of his unconscious" (120). The male gaze is problematic for that exact reason: it perpetuates the main ideology of the patriarchy, which depends on the domination of the female body. Women are made to be submissive objects that exist solely to fulfill male desire. The male gaze depends upon the use of dichotomy of male/female, active/passive, and dominant/weak, forming rigid oppositions that are exemplified through the two sexes. According to Lacan, when one begins to use language, they become the "signified other," wherein one is individualized as "I" in the realm of the "other" (Felluga). And since cinema finds its structure in language, a language that is phallogentric and designed for men by men, women are put on the fringes and are seen as the "other" (Kaplan 120). They cannot form their own sense of being within dominant Hollywood cinema since language relegates them to being the "other." Women thus become caricatures of humans that are either sexualized or marginalized.

The female gaze aims to move beyond the controlling male

gaze that perpetuates Western, capitalist, and patriarchal ideals and instead move towards a more egalitarian, mutual gazing between subjects (Kaplan, 135). The female gaze is not meant to institute a form of power dynamics that the male gaze does, but rather tries to abolish the hierarchy of power seemingly embedded in cinema. Kaplan points to two different methods through which the female gaze can be constructed: either as a negative, defensive tactic that creates awareness of how women are represented (and repressed) in film or by using questioning as a form of understanding (132). For example, female roles such as motherhood that have not been influenced directly by the patriarchal gaze can be constructed and viewed from the female gaze. The image of motherhood mirrors “the passion of the pregnant woman for herself: her destabilized ‘self,’ a loss of identity...motion of expulsion [of a child], of detachment, is essential” (Oliver 4). The image of the mother with a child that is a portion of herself, that she loves and cares for, is oppositional to a type of desire that involves fetishism for male desire. The mother is able to acknowledge herself through the child that acts as a symbol of her. By allowing the mother to maintain the relationship with her child, as opposed to the male gaze’s tactic of isolating the female figure from its biological abilities, female spectators can identify with a female figure in film. Where the male gaze fails to form a representation of women, the female gaze can provide a framework for thinking and creating an image of women that is not one of idealization or marginalization.

KELLY REICHARDT’S RECLAMATION OF THE GAZE

The spirit of postmodernism is in subverting established trends and creating an ideal space for feminine gaze to establish itself in film. Postmodernism influences the development of the female gaze by allowing the overbearing weight of the dominant ideology to be put under discussion, to create a discourse around what is assumed to be the modern, normal, prevailing ethics. Take into consideration the 2009 film *Wendy and Lucy* directed by Kelly Reichardt, a film that depicts the journey of a young woman named Wendy finding work in Alaska accompanied only by her dog, Lucy. As the title suggests, this film is about a relationship, one that is not typically seen in conventional films,

between a woman and her canine companion. This film is used as an example not simply because it is a female directed film (which would incorrectly assume a direct relationship between sex and the female gaze), but rather because it explores the relationships and perceptions of one woman. Wendy is set adrift in a town she is not familiar with, dealing with strangers, most of whom are male, while nearly losing everything that she is working to maintain. She is the isolated figure, the lone woman, unable to completely integrate herself within this world that, as she states, “[she] is just passing through” (*Wendy and Lucy*). Her spatial disorientation reflects the disorientation of the female spectators in the audience; they are able to relate to Wendy’s feeling of being lost in a world that is not for them.

In one particular scene, Reichardt displays the gaze as not only one of an individual’s desire and power over another, but of a systematic type of look that controls and dominates. Wendy goes to a supermarket to steal her dog something small to eat. During her maneuverings of the store, she exchanges several glances with the male workers that eye her from a distance. She is able to return these glances, as to state her own innocence in the situation. But she is unaware of the security camera – an invisible, omniscient spectator – that catches her in the act of stealing, causing her to be arrested. Joan Copjec writes that the subject of the gaze “cannot be located or locate itself at the point of the gaze, since this point marks, its very annihilation” (300). The gaze and its looking must remain unknown to its subject in order to be effectual. Although Wendy seems to have control over how she is being perceived, she is still confined to a gaze outside of her control that ultimately imprisons her, both literally and figuratively. She does not have true power of her situation, and is controlled by forces outside of her. There is the intent of Wendy trying to “reclaim” the gaze that is put upon her by the male employees, but she is not successful in doing so. Wendy’s inability to reclaim parallels the difficulties of reclamation and questions the ability of reconstituting the gaze in films. By even pointing to the difficulties and paradoxes inherent in the idea of the “gaze,” Reichardt is able to challenge the male gaze by placing its authority into discussion.

Reichardt is successful in creating a full character, a representation of a human being that is not meant to act as a stand in for all women. Postmodernism allows her to do so as it works against

societal metanarratives and is “no longer anchored philosophically... it becomes more pragmatic, ad hoc, contextual, and local” (Fraser and Nicholson 85). Reichardt employs postmodern dissolution of binaries, of ideologies, to construct an image of an individual that is lost within a society, rather than the modernist individual that goes against society. Here, the struggle is not between Wendy and American society, but rather Wendy contending with her lack of a sense of self. Through this struggle, the ideas of being a woman, being economically independent, and being physically safe in a society that fails to protect are contested and explored.

ABSTRACTIONISM IN FEMINIST FILM THEORY

If the female gaze is to exist in a postmodern context, feminist theory, specifically feminist film theory, needs to be re-contextualized and re-theorized to separate itself from modernist theory, in order to avoid the abstraction of women and a totalizing analysis of the patriarchy (Fraser, Nicholson 90). Feminist theorists rely too much on “metanarratives” that “tacitly presuppose some commonly held but unwarranted and essentialist assumptions about the nature of human beings and the conditions for social life” (92). Feminist theory problematically falls into the trap of over-generalizing issues by assuming universality amongst individuals. By ignoring cultural contexts, feminist film theory emulates the modern narratives by making its own metanarratives that try to explain oppression cross-culturally that end up being too broad and general, therefore ignoring important aspects and perspectives of oppression. Traditional feminist film theorists also relied heavily on apparatus theory--the concept that film is ideological because it aims to represent reality--which as Lucy Bolton points out, “sets out a rigid geometry and prescribes the structures of ‘the gaze’ and the voyeuristic scopophilia of the male spectator” (12). This essentialism and reductionism limits the ability for theorizing to go beyond explaining to the kind of analysis that can lead to a form of resistance. This essentialism reduces women to a Woman, an abstraction that is meant to stand in for all women (Bolton 12). Abstracting women creates a generalized Woman who is so far removed from the real experiences of women that she becomes impossible to relate to.

Mary Ann Doane suggests a method of resistance to the Woman

who is so often constructed in mainstream Hollywood cinema that involves "...producing remembering women. Women with memories and hence histories" ("Remembering Women"). This process ensures that the abstraction of women in film will be avoided. When a woman in a movie is making conscious decisions and choices according to her own desires, she garners control and power. Gillian Robespierre's film *Obvious Child* exemplifies this type of female character consciously making a choice, in this case, about whether or not to have an abortion. Robespierre literally tackled the idea of "choice" in women's reproductive health by having her main protagonist grapple with this issue and come to her own conclusion. By presenting a woman who is her own self, Robespierre creates a personal history of the character that is authentic to some women's experiences. Women who make choices create their own histories, thereby deconstructing the abstraction by adding complexities and truths to the representations of women.

A conflict occurs when postmodernism's ahistorical tendencies to deconstruct philosophical narratives come into contact with feminist film theory's use of historical context to root its analysis. Many feminist film scholars have pointed to how feminist theory must move beyond rigid, structuralized, modern types of theorizing and use specific, historical, post-structural modes of analysis. Fraser and Nicholson state that postmodern feminist theory must "be explicitly historical... inflected by temporality... framed by a historical narrative and rendered temporally and culturally specific" (101). Speaking solely in generalities that do not discuss specific instances oversimplifies the complex issues that feminist theorists aim to analyze. Postmodernism's emphasis on the deconstruction of metanarratives that have plagued modern philosophies aids feminist theory by creating fissures in a system that can be accessed and assessed. Instead of making grand, general statements that render their arguments reductive and essentialist, feminist theory must combine postmodernism's dismantling of structuralism in theory and shift its focus on individual histories to form a collective of experiences.

SOFIA COPPOLA'S CONSTRUCTION OF "WOMAN"

Women's bodies are constantly in contestation in film – either they are

completely objectified or they are not visible at all. According to Mary Ann Doane, “the female body is constituted as ‘noise,’ an undifferentiated presence which always threatens to disrupt representation” (“Woman’s Stake” 92). Representation, when defined in classical psychoanalytic terms, is a means by which to understand one’s self through symbols and language—which women are thought to be excluded from. Women lack this type of representation, which allows anything to be placed on their bodies.

Reworking the image of the body in order to create a means of representation is an important way of seeing the female body outside of the typical, patriarchal context. Feminist film aims to expose the “habitual meanings/values attached to femininity as cultural constructions” (Doane “Women’s Stake” 87). By subverting common images of the female form, the symbols become deconstructed, and their original meaning comes into question. In Sofia Coppola’s *Lost in Translation*, the very first frame of the film and the introduction of the main character, Charlotte, frames her rear in sheer pink underwear, a seemingly common depiction of the female body. But, as Lucy Bolton describes, this shot “signals that the usual meanings of on-screen femininity may be effectively ‘lost’ in their translation into a new filmic mode that foregrounds female subjectivity” (104). What has normally defined “feminine” in film has the ability to change when filmic representations also change. Coppola begins her film by asking whether or not it is possible to establish a non-voyeuristic, non-fetishizing yet intimate look at the female body. Charlotte’s body is not to be desired, but is rather a place that she possesses and occupies unapologetically. Referencing other films that have used this type of shot, Coppola is able to use intertextuality to not only comment on past works, but also to destabilize the use of the gaze in these older texts.

In order to constitute a place for the female spectator and extend female subjectivity, the concept of masquerade is used in *Lost in Translation*. Masquerade, as Doane uses the term, is a “realignment of femininity...constituted by a hyperbolisation of the accouterments of femininity” (“Film and the Masquerade” 427). By using symbols commonly associated with the concept of femininity through exaggeration, masquerade appropriates these symbols to allow women to distance themselves in film, removing them from the objectifying

eye. The male gaze in turn is confused by the destabilization of its own symbols, leaving its signifying language unable to speak for the female body, which it was able to do otherwise. Masquerade allows women to mimic male desire by ironically referring to their “femininity” as something that is unnatural to them, therein mocking male desire. Charlotte preforms her own masquerade in the karaoke bar scene, where she dons a pink wig and sings in a show-girlish manner while looking provocatively at Bob. She is not doing so to be desirable to Bob, but to parody the whole process of being desired in order to mock what is considered “desirable.” Charlotte is not to be looked at; she is looking, empowered by the masquerade that entitles her to choose how to present herself, to distance herself from the scopophilic gaze. This use of parody, which is established by Coppola through Charlotte’s masquerade, enables her to deconstruct the concept of “desire” and hence how it is constructed and reproduced in film.

CONCLUSION

Cinema is situated on an apparatus that constructs and validates ideologies that are inherent to the patriarchal society. One way of transmitting these ideologies is through the gaze, which is the “look” of the camera that reflects the perspective of not only the cameraman and the filmmaker but also the dominant, male way of looking. This male gaze affects how women are seen on screen, instituting scopophilia by positing the spectator as the fetishizing voyeur that objectifies the woman. Women are unable to formulate themselves beyond the disabling lock that the male gaze constrains them with. However, feminist filmmakers, by using certain aesthetic and philosophical effects such as parody and intertextuality, are able to construct a “female” gaze that subverts common ideologies inherent in the patriarchal system.

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Eating Disorders: An Exploration of the Transgressive Ideology of Beauty

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INTRODUCTION

An eating disorder can be defined as a maladaptive coping skill learned by an individual. When life does not go as planned, it is not unusual for a person to feel a little out of control. Eating disorders serve as a control mechanism for individuals who feel that an area of their life is unmanageable, therefore utilizing the act of eating as an aspect of personal control. However, this sense of authority is never actually obtained because the underlying issue is packed away and hidden by what seems to be a shallow attempt to lose weight. In fact, eating disorders are not about weight or food, but psychological illnesses that are characterized by a need to suppress difficult emotions by engaging in life threatening behaviors. Although various types of eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge-eating disorders are characterized by a variety of behaviors, the act of eating as a source of control is a key aspect to understanding and examining the disorders. One of the main contributors to modern era eating disorders are societal representations and standards of beauty and attractiveness. While social media is another contributing factor and plays a significant role in the increasing number of individuals diagnosed with an eating disorder, the media is not explicitly responsible for this occurrence. The examination of eating disorders in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries will prove that while the media undoubtedly encourages the illness, the disorder is not a vain aspiration to be a runway model; rather, it is a severe psychological struggle with one's sense of self. The media's portrayal of women deemphasizes the notion that eating disorders are a mental illness by glamorizing the lifestyle and encouraging transgressive behavior in order to obtain what is portrayed as perfection.

Erving Goffman's theoretical text titled, "The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life," explains the sociological view of human behavior. The text studies the interaction between individuals in social

settings, forming a framework that can be applied to any concrete social establishment. Goffman uses theatrical performances to advance his theory by conceptualizing human behavior and how the individual “presents himself and his activity to others, the ways in which he guides and controls the impression they form of him, and the kinds of things he may and may not do while sustaining his performance before them” (7). The controlled and calculated behavior that Goffman describes will help to better understand the societal and psychological processes involved in eating disorders, as well as aid in the exploration of eating disorders and the relationship between the transgressions of society and the taboos associated with mental illness.

PRE-MEDIA ANOREXIA:

Eating disorders existed before the exposure of traditional and social media, demonstrating that these disorders are not a recent trend based on body ideals, but a mental illnesses. While eating disorders existed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries before the desire to be thin was the norm, they were not identified as mental illnesses at the time. Individuals who became symptomatic were suffering from psychological obstacles regarding identity construction. In the article, “The Inversion of the Fall: On Identity Construction in Anorexia Nervosa,” author David Sollberger discusses the idea of identity construction in early history. He explains: “The process of individualization changes to the contrary of a crisis of identity: individuals become unsettled and start to permanently change all the imposed, mask-like ideals; they obsessively attempt to be distinct, individual and beyond other-directed, socio-symbolic entered roles” (26). An individual with an eating disorder often has feelings of uncertainty and bewilderment towards their identity and therefore is more likely to experience drastic changes in their behavior. The process of liberation from socially acceptable behavior is a desperate attempt to construct a personal sense of identity. Identity struggles result in anxious and relentless feelings of worthlessness that cause the individual to become fixated, even obligated, to develop an unusual lifestyle in order to feel valued.

The desire to be thin is explained as a longing to be different, unlike the present idea that eating disorders are strongly influenced by the images portrayed in the media. In the seventeenth century, eating

disorders demanded independence and the ability to refrain from behaviors that were necessary acts for human beings to survive. Jules Bemporad, author of “Self-Starvation Through The Ages,” focused his research on the pre-historical background of anorexia nervosa. He explains that the earliest recordings in history describe eating disorders as “the willful abstinence from a source of pleasure to prove one’s devotion to the gods” and in the later parts of the eighteenth century, those involved in the Christian religion thought “starving women” were “possessed by the devil,” “frauds seeking notoriety” or “either physically or mentally ill” (221, 223). The anorexic individual depends on starvation to prove an allegiance to his or her self, having the willpower to deny the substances that keep them alive. In turn, their attempts were viewed as acts of pure evil.

Bemporad also discusses how starving individuals were a form of entertainment for the public in the 1900’s. Unlike the present-day representation of emaciated women as beautiful, people in the eighteenth century viewed extremely malnourished individuals with a prurient fascination—a taboo that disgusted society yet attracted an intense desire to know more. According to Bemporad, “They became local attractions with visitors from everyday life as well as from clergy and the medical profession” (227). Individuals with varying interests in the phenomena would travel to see emaciated individuals, regarding them as celebrities whose tiny frames piqued the curiosity of even the most educated professionals. Even further, these individuals were viewed as “freaks at circuses and seemed to represent an egregious mode of making a living rather than victims of a disorder” (228). Without the knowledge or understanding of medical professionals, these complex disorders were viewed as a deplorable way to earn a living. It was not until the early 20th century that eating disorders were researched and accompanied with a medical definition. However, they were not referred to as mental diseases until recently. Before the media’s speculation of the disease, female beauty standards did not correspond with the thin appearance in those with eating disorders, making the illness visually taboo. Current media presence contrasts the public view of eating disorders as taboo, almost normalizing starvation as a way of life to acquire a socially acceptable appearance. This normalization of eating disorders often desensitizes the public to the fact that they are a severe

mental illness. The desensitization of the public's knowledge of the disease can contribute to the common misconceptions that minimize the disorder to a narcissistic obsession with physical appearance. In many ways, the media is promoting transgressive societal beliefs despite the overwhelming amount of psychological evidence that categorize eating disorders as a mental illness.

TRADITIONAL MEDIA & SOCIETAL INFLUENCE:

The media has portrayed unrealistic body standards for the Western world and in turn, society has transgressed into an environment that seems to promote or normalize eating disorder behaviors. Individuals in the United States are raised in an environment surrounded by airbrushed and photo-shopped images that bombard the majority of traditional and social media. Super models shown in the media promote the ideology that being thin equates to being beautiful. Erving Goffman's sociological approach to human interaction explains that this is "one way in which a performance is, in a sense, 'socialized,' moulded and modified to fit into the understanding and expectations of the society in which it is presented" (22). The understanding of success stems from the collective societal ideology of body ideals that are advertised in the media. Individuals customize their actions based on the ideals presented to them, resulting in skewed perceptions of what the female body should look like. Furthermore, unrealistic body types become so standard that individuals feel inadequate if they do not achieve them. Roxanne Kirkwood, author of "Support Choice, Support People: An Argument For The Study Of Pro-Anorexia Websites," admits the sad truth about media messages. She explains:

We bombard teenage girls (and everyone else) with images and expectations of what their bodies should look like. To these expectations we add the pressures from school, family, and relationships—both platonic and romantic—all of which create demands. Then, when the girls respond in a way that seems appropriate (do whatever you can to look ideal), we judge their response as inappropriate (118).

The overwhelming volume of media and its constant focus on appearance instills the idea that one must be thin in order to achieve

goals and gain accolades and acceptance from society for doing so. Steven Giles' article, "Predicting Disordered Eating Intentions Among Incoming College Freshman: An Analysis of Social Norms and Body Esteem" discusses the dangers of transgressive societal norms. He argues: "Norms may contribute to body dissatisfaction, especially when social comparison leads an individual to make inaccurate comparisons. For instance, norms that equate beauty with thinness may explain why women tend to think of themselves as larger and others, especially those held up in high esteem, as thinner than reality" (397). Standardized yet unspoken measures of beauty result from the media's false portrayals of the female body. The standard of appropriate weight has been skewed by the impractical representation of women, causing anxiety for those who do not meet the standard appearance. Healthy individuals begin to regard their own physical frames as unacceptable and feel pressure to change their appearance in order to achieve what is thought to be beautiful. At the core of traditional and social media, lie imposed expectations of beauty, placing a huge burden on individuals to attain a slim frame while doing so in a manner that seems natural. The ability to appear thin is widely accepted by society as long as the unhealthy ways of obtaining this look are not exposed to the public. Marilyn Lawrence, author of "The Control Paradox," expresses a condescending reality in her descriptions of the transgressive ideology of the female body. She concludes: "Finding one's way through a world... both demands bodily perfection but rejects one's methods for achieving it" (94). The representation of the effortlessly flawless frames of women overwhelm the media, advertising body perfection as a supposed naturally achieved state, yet ostracizing those who attempt these unobtainable body shapes through starvation. Goffman theorizes: "Interactions where the individual presents a product to others, he will tend to show them only the end-product, and they will be led judging him on the basis of something that has been finished, polished, and packaged" (28). A seemingly natural thinness is the societal epitome of beauty, while the unhealthy transformation of the body remains undisclosed. A grown woman weighing less than 100 pounds is thought to be someone worthy of recognition and shown off like a trophy. If one were to reveal the actual psychological and physical strain to achieve this ideal, society would most likely disapprove of the wicked treatment of the body and

deny that the woman is beautiful at all. The images of malnourished super models and celebrities not only influence the transgressive response of the public but also fail to acknowledge the disorder as a psychological illness. While traditional media is largely based on the image of feminine body ideals, social media and the Internet present the transgressive examples displayed in social forums, Instagram photos, and Tumblr posts, all of which may encourage individuals to continue to starve.

TRANSGRESSIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA:

Pro-anorexia websites—often referred to as “Pro-Ana” sites—are a recent development created to support anorexic behaviors and have been a phenomenon contributing to the societal shift of eating disorders from taboo to transgressive. Pro-Ana sites are free and available for public use. While eating disorders have been a historically lonely disease in which individuals engage in behaviors in private, Pro-Ana sites encourage social interactions between sufferers. The article, “Anorectic Testimonials In The Web,” written by Teresa Castro and António Osório, discusses the impact of social media on incidences of eating disorders. More specifically, they explain how Pro-Ana websites “became popular because they offer specific information, enable communication without geographical constraints, and provide a safe sense of community and belonging” (171). Social media groups like these have created a circle of individuals who acknowledge their behavior as unhealthy but then also encourage and offer advice to be successful in becoming more sick. This behavior goes far beyond the taboo of eating disorders, publicly composing strategies of starvation by promoting the illness with messages such as, “no food tastes as good as skinny feels,” and, “your stomach isn’t growling, it’s applauding” (Pro-Ana Lifestyle Forever).

The accessibility of these groups can be attributed to the technological advances and availability of social forums, but are also correlated to the definition of beauty portrayed by traditional media. Castro explains the transgressive sites as “providing high-levels of social support for an anti-medical explanatory model that would decrease recovery rates and potentially lead to the death or injury of its participants” (172). Members of the Pro-Ana community offer advanced plans without the medical expertise or authority to encourage such

dangerous behaviors. Individuals are involved in a circle of negativity fueled by mental instability, actively and knowingly participating in the deterioration of their body. Regardless of if the individuals are consciously aware, the website is encouraging women to swap information which may ultimately lead to their deaths. Traditional and social media both have a large influence on the increasing number of body image distortions in the twenty-first century. With the availability and advancement of today's technology, the media would serve a far better purpose in educating the public about the seriousness of eating disorders. Instead of continuing to transgress, the media could transform and create a more positive environment for those who are struggling.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK:

WHAT THE MEDIA FAILS TO ACKNOWLEDGE

Eating disorders are a mental illness not based on food or weight loss, but a deep-rooted psychological illness that has been considered taboo or a forbidden topic of discussion. The illness is minimized to a shallow attempt to perfect the human body backed by the societal acceptance of the anorexic appearance based on its popularity in the media. The control of food and the obsession with weight loss is merely a symptom of the disease used as a distraction from underlying feelings of distress. Individuals become symptomatic as they internalize their suffering by changing parts of their body, giving them physical proof of success. Marilyn Lawrence discusses the relationship between individuals who are diagnosed with eating disorders and the psychological thought processes they experience. She explains, "When anorexics talk about control, they invariably mean the power to regulate, command and govern their own lives and action" (93). The ability for the Anorexic individuals to exercise control through a restrictive diet is an attempt to compensate for their inability to control other aspects of their lives.

This presumed authority actually promotes a cycle of destruction that causes their lives to spiral out of control. Seye Obadina, author of, "An Overview of Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia and Binge Eating Disorder," identifies possible contributing circumstances that trigger this psychological thought process. She says: "life events such as bereavement, parental divorce, change of schools or moving house may

increase the risk of developing an eating disorder” (441). Life altering misfortunes inflict a significant amount of suffering on an individual and those who experience such distress struggle to find a way to survive under such extreme circumstances. Lawrence’s “control paradox” theory explains that those with eating disorders “exercise self-control, which we might understand as power turned inwards. The battleground then becomes an internal one; the battle is fought within the individual rather than between the individual and the world” (93). External conflicts are internalized, and the inability to manage the world around them results in a direct attack on oneself. This disoriented pattern of thinking is adopted unconsciously by the individual and is used to suppress the feeling of being out of control among the chaotic elements in their life.

This pattern of shame and hiding is evidence of the individual’s awareness of their publicly outlawed behaviors. In Obadina’s research, she explains that individuals with eating disorders engage in behaviors to “express their inner pain, get attention, suppress difficult to manage emotions, unite disintegrated family structure, manage anxiety” (441). The individual suffers with an internal discomfort that is out of their own control, attempting to fill the void by introducing a tangible way to systematically manipulate their body. As the public becomes more accustomed to the thin body types portrayed in the media, society adjusts and adopts tiny body frames as normal and even attractive. Today, eating disorders are not so much taboo as long as there is no mention of mental illness. The complex disorder is hard to understand from an outsider’s point of view because it is challenging for individuals to grasp the psychological processes. The minimization of eating disorders offers an easy explanation without having to discuss the psychological trauma involved. In the study, “Belittled, Avoided, Ignored, Denied: Assessing Forms and Consequences of Stigma Experiences of People With Mental Illness,” the authors explored the effects that mental illness diagnoses have on relationships. Researchers explain their theory of reactions to individuals who have mental illness as, “he or she may withdraw from contact, attempt tactfully to help, or opt for tacit cooperation, which is to ignore the disclosure of a stigmatized identity. All of these behaviors can be understood as attempts to reduce the tension that is evoked in this situation and serve to stabilize the existing social order” (31). Friends and family members

struggle to find an appropriate way to confront a loved one who is struggling with a mental illness. Reactions to confrontations regarding private struggles, like eating disorders, result in the uncomfortable attempts to consciously disregard the illness to avoid having to express empathy for the person suffering.

Individuals with eating disorders hide behind the influence of the media in order to avoid calling attention to the real psychological struggles they endure. Goffman refers to how individuals change their behavior based on their audience. He explains: “A performer tends to conceal or underplay those activities, facts, and motives which are incompatible with an idealized version of himself and his products” (30). The performer in this case can be identified as an individual with a mental illness, representing an impersonation of mental stability with the help of transgressive societal ideology of beauty. Individuals are careful to reveal only the socially accepted aspects of the disorder in order to avoid the social stigma associated with mental illness. The public then perceives the illness as a struggle with appearance alone, completely ignorant of the severity of the disorder.

CONCLUSIONS

Public perceptions of eating disorders have fluctuated between taboo and transgression for hundreds of years. As the media introduces new trends, society adjusts by adopting new ways for the American public to improve themselves and to set the standards of what they should aspire to be. Technological advancements provide the public with instant access to media that fosters an unhealthy relationship with the way human beings interact in the world. The personal psychological struggle with one's sense of self is swallowed by today's transgressive attitudes, which causes individuals to conform to so-called ideals to fit into a world in which they feel lost. While the focus of this project has centered on females with anorexia, the illness does not discriminate. Males suffering from eating disorders are also affected by the impossible standards that the media suggests. Transgressive societal norms simply decorate a ghastly condition with the enticing lifestyles of the rich and the famous, but fail to acknowledge the behavior as a mental illness. The taboo surrounding mental illness results in the absolute disregard of a topic that is socially prohibited or excluded from discussion. As

long as the media continues to promote inhumane ideas of beauty, transgressions will continue to overshadow the severity of the eating disorders. The normalization of thin beauty negates the fact that these illnesses require complex psychotherapy treatments as well as extensive medical attention in recovery. Although there has been a significant amount of medical progress as far recognizing these disorders as mental illnesses, individuals are still misunderstood by the public and fail to receive the social support they deserve in recovery.

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The Transformation of America through Images of Suffering on September 11th

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Abstract: The terrorist attack on 9/11 was one of the most tragic events in American history. It sparked the global war on terrorism and created an “image war”—a war in which American citizens faced the vivid images of their country being destroyed and tried to find a way to cope with them. When tragedies occur, individuals tend to undergo a “cognitive blindness” in which one witnesses an event but fails to register and make sense of it. The purpose of this paper is to show how images of 9/11 should be used as a reflection of America’s resilience and strength rather than as a passive reminder of the past. Images of suffering can relieve the “cognitive blindness” of those who were affected, allowing them to understand, react to, and, with time, mourn the tragedy.

INTRODUCTION

September 11th, 2001 is the most photographed terrorist attack in history. Why was a day full of death and suffering ambushed with cameras? How could such horror be so readily and eagerly recorded? Barbara Gimblett-Kirshenblatt discusses photography as the ability “to develop a new way of looking at and thinking about history, as well as a way of making sense of all of the images which continue to haunt us” (17). Viewing the most atrocious and heartbreaking images of 9/11 led mourners through the healing process and aided them in understanding such a devastating day.

On September 11, millions suffered from what Lee Clarke coins a “cognitive blindness.” A “cognitive blindness” is the ability to witness something, but the failure to register it as reality after a traumatic event. This lack of registration yields confusion and the sense that our country being attacked was more like a dream than reality. September 11 was witnessed both directly and indirectly, and in both cases witnesses suffered from this “cognitive blindness” that prevented them from expressing the testimony they were capable of. In Susannah Radstone’s analysis on *The War of Fathers: Trauma, Fantasy, and September 11*, she elaborates on how “...the shocking impact of the events leaves its mark as a gap or absence where memory should be”(118). Without the memory and comprehension of the 9/11 attacks, our country continues to suffer but cannot mourn and move on. From the global war on terrorism that resulted from the attacks extended another battle: the “image war” (Kirshen-

blatt-Gimblett 13). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett argues that that image war was won by the terrorists: images of airplanes ramming towers and buildings bursting into flames emotionally outmatched competing shots of waving American flags and Afghani landscapes in Americans' minds (13). But ignoring the reality behind the innumerable images from 9/11 puts America in a state of denial. This avoidance shows that we are sensitive to these images and not strong enough to appreciate their significance. The images used within the image war were intended to further diminish our country, yet they can also be used to aid in the mourning of our losses. Mourning is the process of overcoming something through acceptance rather than ignorance.

The most tragic images of 9/11 allow us to mourn because of their ability to put forward the truth of the reality of that day. These images will allow our country to nationally and individually undergo a transformation. In this paper I will argue that in order to successfully mourn, images of suffering must be pushed and utilized. Images of suffering contain the vivid, honest details of the events of 9/11 and have the ability to fill in the missing pieces of our "cognitive blindness." These images can be shared through testimony and lead to comprehension. Transforming through these images and allowing them to aid in the re-creation of oneself is critically important. Accepting these images will result in dominance of the image war and it will become evident that images of atrocity are both essential and useful in that they are able to heal our country and reaffirm our unity.

AMERICA'S GREAT DENIAL

Although the tragedy of 9/11 struck our nation's pride, its people stood to lose much more. Millions lost the ability to comprehend what unfolded during that historical event. Our country was attacked, planes crashed, people were dying, and yet no one could fully comprehend the harsh reality of it all. Millions stood in the face of trauma, where their injured minds failed to make sense of their surroundings. Lee Clarke, the editor of *Terrorism and Disaster: New Threats, New Ideas*, admits, "When the South Tower fell for a few seconds I could not see it collapsing. My blindness wasn't because of the smoke and dust. It was a cognitive blindness. I could not believe my eyes and so, somehow, my mind denied my brain the truth of the moment" (Clarke 1). When experiencing trauma, the shock and fear that streams throughout the body fails to let one take everything in. On 9/11, millions saw buildings collapse and people die, but many reported that in the moment it did not seem real. Later, when the environment was calm and there was nothing left to watch, we realized that we did not actually know what happened. This blindness is a part of what traumatized individuals so deeply. Susannah Radstone's discusses how "...the 'turn to trauma' appears to be deepening" (118). To turn to trauma is the excuse

used to dismiss oneself from interpreting reality. Not being able to register or accept the truth takes a toll on one's emotional state, thus making the image war a mental attack. According to Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "The events of 9/11 had the singular effect of making all of us tourists in our own lives by making it impossible to take things for granted...we think like tourists--or more accurately terrorists--in order to anticipate and protect ourselves from danger. It is our consciousness that was the target of the attack" (14). These events forced us into being strangers in our own territory. Having our consciousness attacked in this way is so traumatic because it impacts our emotions and mentality and leaves us vulnerable.

In order to fill in the gaps created by our "cognitive blindness," images of atrocity must be posted, viewed, and accepted by the nation. These images piece together the events that our consciousness has blocked out. It is in honest portrayal that atrocious images become impactful. Visual representations are integral because of this ability to capture the truth of the events that occurred. These images are permanent and accurate, allowing traumatized individuals to remember what actually happened, which is typically not possible. In Tom Junod's article, *The Falling Man*, he admires the benefits of images in a time of crisis: "[Richard Drew] inserted the disc from his digital camera into his laptop and recognized what only his camera had seen..." (213). On 9/11, cameras captured the most traumatizing, honest frames. Images of the buildings on fire, people jumping to their deaths, and rescue workers digging victims out of the rubble were all caught by the camera. These are the most honest and reliable images. Because of the gaps from our cognitive blindness, it is impossible to accurately recite every detail from this day. Even if trauma did not obstruct vision during 9/11, people's claims would still be unreliable and biased due to the mental incapacity to record every detail. Images of suffering on 9/11 contain the harsh details that we fail to remember because it is the mind's natural instinct to dissociate from such trauma.

Our enemies in the image war intended for these captured details to act as constant reminders of our country at its lowest. Yet, they can be used to our advantage. Tragic visual representations have the ability to satisfy the gaps from our cognitive blindness by filling in the details from our disassociation, as long as we accept them. Accepting these images does not show that we are okay with what happened, but that we are aware. Due to this awareness, we will do everything that it takes to

ensure such an event will never happen again. Filling in such gaps not only leads to awareness, but also leads us to an understanding of the events that occurred on 9/11, which in turn will initiate mourning.

THE MOURNING AFTER

The process of mourning over 9/11 is one that consists of understanding, testifying, transforming, and accepting the events of the tragedy— all with the help of the harshest images of that day. Mourning is an abstract process that varies significantly due to individual factors and what was actually lost. Sigmund Freud describes mourning as, “the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken place of one, such as one’s country, liberty, an ideal, and so on” (Freud 237). It is true that mourning is initiated due to the lives, the pride, and the comfort that was lost, but it is a much more elaborate process than a mere reaction. When people lose something that was part of their identity, they are automatically no longer who they once were. The first reaction of those mourning over loss is to replace it. In Judith Butler’s, *Precarious Life*, she explains what mourning is: “I am not sure I know when mourning is successful, or when one has fully mourned another human being. Freud changed his mind on the subject: he suggested that successful mourning meant being able to exchange one object for another...” (Butler 20). Substitution is not an effective way for one to mourn. Replacement is an impossible task in regards to abstractions. On 9/11, among the many things we lost was our sense of comfort and safety— two things that are irreplaceable. Instead of mourning through substitution, Judith Butler proposes it as a transformation:

I do not think that successful grieving implies that one has forgotten another person or that something else has come along to takes it place, as if full substitutability were something for which we might strive. Perhaps, rather, one mourns when one accepts that by the loss one undergoes one will be changed, possibly forever. Perhaps mourning has to do with agreeing to undergo a transformation. (21)

After September 11th, our country was changed in ways that turned out to be beneficial for people, both physically and mentally. The transformation of American culture can be seen as insane paranoia or proud protection. The incredible transformation of America was indeed im-

pressive, but more so inspiring. America set an example: despite weakness and devastation, one must get back up and keep pushing through. Recognizing the lack of mental recollection from that day and the losses suffered are the very first steps toward a transformation.

BARGAINING

Visual representations of 9/11 aid in the process of mourning by allowing both the direct and indirect witnesses to make sense of this attack through testimony. The importance of witnessing an event such as 9/11 is to be able to validate and come to terms with the truth of a nightmare. In Dori Laub's article, she discusses the importance of witnessing in relation to a different traumatic event, the Holocaust: "I recognize three separate levels of witnessing in relation to the Holocaust experience: the level of being a witness to oneself within the experience, the level of being a witness to the testimonies of others; and the level of being a witness to the process of witnessing itself" (75). In this case, the "witness to oneself within the experience" is the direct witness. This version of witnessing is the first hand, raw experience of being present for the traumatic event. For instance, on 9/11, it was the individuals within the burning building running away from the clouds of smoke, whereas in the Holocaust, it was those trapped inside the tortuous camps. "Being a witness to the testimonies of others" is the equivalent to the indirect witness.

This witness's testimony revolves around what was mediated to them. Regardless if one is a direct or indirect witness, the information that is transmitted is forced rather than voluntary. In Amit Pinchevski's article, he writes, "We become, through the media, impotent involuntary spectators" (261). This is another reason why witnessing is so difficult to overcome. One is not given the option of whether or not they want to witness something; it is involuntary. Like anything else that is involuntary, it is hard to adjust to. Laub also describes witnessing as "a ceaseless struggle," for witnesses struggle with the horror they are exposed to because they are being forced to deal with something unexpected and do not know how to handle it (75). Hence, cognitive blindness comes into play.

Images are such powerful representations that they have the ability to dramatically affect those who are exposed to them. Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School performed a study where

they examined a population of mothers and children who were exposed to the events of 9/11 through media. Results showed that the "...impact of media exposure...[caused] PTSD in 166 children and 84 mothers who had no direct exposure to the 9/11 attacks" (Michael W. Otto et al. 888). This shows the capability and power of an image. If an image is powerful enough to make an event so real as to result in PTSD, then it is powerful enough to bring the worlds of the direct and indirect witnesses together. The indirect and direct witnesses come together in the description of "being a witness to the witnessing itself" (Laub 75). Each witness has experienced the tragedy in one way or the other, but now both continue to witness the witnessing through innumerable mediums.

When testimony and witnessing come together, they begin to bring a sense of reality back into play. Using images to close the gap of cognitive blindness and testify what happened will further the progress of mourning, whereas resisting using images to testify will inhibit mourning. On 9/11, "witnessing was 'like a movie,' for this was an ending as unimaginable as it was unbearable..." (Junod 215). This is why confirming through the images that represent the 'unbearable' events that occurred will allow one to understand the 'unimaginable.' Susan Sontag strongly disagrees with such a claim:

To suffer is one thing; another thing is living with the photographed images of suffering, which does not necessarily strengthen conscience and the ability to be compassionate. It can also corrupt them. Once one has seen such images, one has started down the road of seeing more and more images transfix. Images anesthetize... After repeated exposure to the images it also becomes less real. (20)

Sontag claims that images do not aid one in coming to terms with the reality of what happened, but in fact desensitize people to what occurred and make the event seem less real. If this were true, then those who visited post 9/11 exhibits - plastered with atrocious images from that day—would not have had the "strong emotional responses to the exhibition" that they did (Fried 394). The Smithsonian's National Museum of Art History opened one of many 9/11 exhibits titled September 11: Bearing Witness to History. The intention was to "emphasize everyone's role as a witness," where witnesses could use their voice to testify and mourn over the images in the exhibit. One of the visitors/witnesses

at the exhibit admitted, “I think it was beyond our imagination at the moment...Now, you can see the image and it all seems so cut-and-dried” (Fried 394). These images give witnesses the ability to testify and let go of the immersed confusion of that day. This is an example of the “Freudian concept of the talking cure” (Mauro 588). The “talking cure” consists of accepting visual representations of death in order to comprehend that although losses suffered are unfortunate, they need to be accepted in order to move on. If images of suffering were desensitizing instead of nurturing, witnesses would leave the exhibit feeling unaffected and less in touch with the events that they watched occur.

DEPRESSION

The shock factor that is illustrated by images of suffering allows us to transform out of the “tourists” we have become within our own country. In regards to reacting to images, Mauro states that, “Walter Benjamin suggests that the flash or shock photography is the only means by which modern society is able to understand historical events” (Mauro 585). We react to these images because of the shock factor they carry. Once the brunt of 9/11 settled, missing persons posters took over the city. When referring to figure 2, Gardner states, “What exactly do missing persons posters, makeshift shrines, and commemorative art tell us about history? Certainly they are evidence of the grief evoked by the terrorist events, and they also tell us something about how our society mourns and copes with tragedy” (Gardner 42). If these “shock” images of missing person posters represent a way in which our society mourns, then why are we so quick to reject the other images and art of 9/11?

It becomes even more difficult to visualize 9/11 through art because of the aesthetic qualities that normally correspond with such representations. Marking the one-year anniversary after 9/11, a statue created by Eric Fischl called *The Tumbling Woman* was placed in Rockefeller center for all to see. The statue was that of a woman falling from one of the towers after deciding to jump to her death. This statue caused extreme controversy. For those who are avoiding a transformation, this statue is seen as assault, making them visualize the trauma of the many people jumping to their deaths in an aesthetically pleasing format. The witness who is avoiding a transformation is not yet ready for such exposure because they are investing their time feeding into their cognitive

blindness and refusing to learn more. However, to those who are undergoing this transformation, this statue is art.

Pieces of this kind, “large aesthetically striking pieces,” have the ability to “tell an important story” (Gardner 44). However, a visual representation such as this is as painful as it is helpful. There is an irony behind *The Tumbling Woman*. A sculpture representing death is the path to save the witnesses’ lives. In Susan Lurie’s essay, *The Horrifying Sight*, she defends Eric Fischl and the point he was attempting to make. According to Lurie:

The sculpture was not meant to hurt anybody. It was a sincere expression of the deepest sympathy for the vulnerability of the human condition. Both specifically towards the victims of 9/11 and towards humanity in general. The sculpture is meant to inspire a sense of shared subjectivity between the spectator and the tumbling woman, rather than inspire vengeance and/or repudiation. (108)

Images, art, and all other visual representations are not trying to depress or hurt citizens—they mean to do exactly the opposite. There is an attempt to establish a “shared subjectivity between the spectator and the tumbling woman” or a form of art. If this “shared subjectivity” is accomplished, the witnesses, both direct and extended, can come together in the mourning process. Eric Fischl says himself, “I was trying to say something about how we all feel, but people thought I was trying to say something about the way they feel— that I was trying to take away something only they possessed. They thought I was trying to say something about the people they lost” (Lurie 108). Fischl’s piece was an initiative toward “redemption” in the image war, where he was trying to show that we are transforming into stronger individuals who are beginning to understand and accept what happened.

Witnesses resist images of 9/11 because of the guilt they feel when a photographer takes an atrocity such as death and releases it as a piece of art. Turning atrocities into art is not diminishing, but developing. In Aaron Mauro’s article, *Photographic History of 9/11*, he discusses Richard Drew’s image of *The Falling Man* (figure 4). The image of *The Falling Man* is another controversial image of 9/11 that witnesses choose to ignore, for it “was deemed an obscene representation of a man’s death” (Mauro 584). Some critics argue that looking, visualizing, and rein-

venting the death that occurred on September 11th is a disgrace. In this context, though, visualizing the death of others is not obscene but just. Likewise, representing death through visualization is neither mocking nor insulting, but innocent. We have the right to try to understand what happened to our country at any cost. Masking the lives that were lost that day would be the true obscenity. Dealing with death and tragedy is complex and is the reason why there is a need for a proper mourning process. Images of 9/11 are in fact a representation, but not that of obscenity. Sulking in the sadness of history would make us failures in the image war.

Recovery workers rummaging around ground zero, trying to piece our nation back together, found a flag that was underneath all of the debris (figure 5). This torn, dirty, dead flag was framed and is used as a representation of the strength of America. In the article, *The Personalization of Collective Memory: the Smithsonian's September 11 Exhibit*, Amy Fried claims, "the flag is one of the stories of 9/11" (Fried 397). This broken flag was displayed in a memorial exhibit for 9/11, surrounded by the innumerable representations of "obscene" art. But why is this artistic remnant of 9/11 socially accepted while *The Tumbling Woman* and *The Falling Man* remain so unbearable? This flag, too, was a victim of 9/11. However, it is an accepted visualization. That day, the American flag lost something just as every American did. Witnesses need to connect with the other images of 9/11 in the same manner they connect with the images of the surviving flag in order to discuss with one another the realities of the event and, at last, properly mourn.

ACCEPTANCE

By accepting images of suffering, we allow ourselves to heal and live with the newly created history. Acceptance allows the emptiness of cognitive blindness to be completely refilled through the endless questions finally being answered. David Holloway looks into how photography opens up a new realm to where questions are tended to and answered in his book, *9/11 and the War on Terror*. He states that, "The major 9/11 photography collections...tended to absorb nagging questions about 'governmental and corporate power' into more emollient narratives about American victimhood and heroism, or about the attacks on 'liberty' or a way of life" (Holloway 131). The questions imagery raises make us closer to

what actually happened that day. Imagery provides us with answers to the questions that were ignored for so long. Answers contribute to the process of mourning by aiding individuals to accept reality. People are able to communicate with one another and become stronger and more accepting. Answers yield closure, one of the more essential attributes of mourning. Images provide us with what Katalin Oraban claims to be the ability of “[communicating] the incommunicable” (62). In figure 6, one can see a heartbroken father kneeling at the side of his son’s name carved in the Ground Zero Memorial. Although there is no blood or death directly captured, it is still suffering—the transformation that the nation undergoes through this type of mourning will allow one to see that. After accepting the most difficult images of suffering, we can then pay attention to the images of “Americans responding to the worst terrorist attack in the history of the world with acts of heroism, with acts of sacrifice, with acts of generosity...” (Junod 215). As seen in figure 7, these images are liberating and allow citizens to accept what has occurred, which is the final step of the mourning process. In figure 8, we can see our nation’s progression. With the blue lights extending from where the towers once stood—and thanks to our own transformation—we can respect such an image for the strength, progress, and suffering our nation has overcome and finally accepted.

CONCLUSION

In order to win the image war, our nation must successfully mourn. By doing so, our nation will reunite and become even stronger than it was prior to 9/11, with the help of images of suffering. W.J.T. Mitchell disagrees with ability of an image to help with the process and claims that, “the effect [of images] is never guaranteed” (Mitchell 120). The elaborate process of intricately using these images to mourn proves Mitchell incorrect. The events that occurred on 9/11 traumatized the nation, leaving us all lost in the gap of a cognitive blindness. Millions witnessed what happened either first hand or through the media, but could not process the information as reality. Failing to understand the trauma of 9/11 only makes the horror more difficult to overcome later. Therefore, we must piece together the cognitive blindness through testimony. Every witness, both direct and indirect, needs to address, admit, and believe what happened. The only way to do this is by viewing the atrocious images

that were taken that day. As hard as it may be, seeing images of people jumping off buildings and other events of that day recreated into sculptures and works of art depict that not only our selves are aware, but the nation as well. The voyeuristic approach to observing these images allows for one to overcome the initial shock and understand and accept what the images depict. Accepting the images allows us to undergo a transformation, in which we heal and grow stronger. Through this process, we strengthen our consciousness to cope with the events that unfolded on 9/11 and win the image war. Heinous images from 9/11 no longer yield remorse, but instead a proud reflection on our nation's vitality.

IMAGES



Figure 1. “We lost the image war. Osama wins an Oscar for ‘Best Director for Apocalypse in New York’”



Figure 2. Missing Person Posters



Figure 3. "The Tumbling Woman" Eric Fischl



Figure 4. "The Falling Man" Richard Drew



Figure 5. Flag Recovered from Ground Zero, Smithsonian September 11th Exhibit



Figure 6. The Mourning Father Justin Lane/AFP/Getty Images



Figure 7. “First responders: Lt. Fullam, far left, was one of the rescue workers carrying fatally-injured FDNY Chaplain, Father Mychal Judge, from one of the World Trade Center buildings on September 11, 2001”

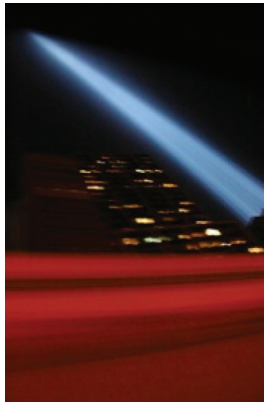


Figure 8. Blue Lights author unknown

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Solution for a Shortage: Providing Financial Incentives for Kidney Donations in the U.S.

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Abstract: Kidney shortage is an ever-growing problem in the United States. Currently, there are not enough transplantable kidneys donated by either living or dead persons to meet the demand of potential recipients, leading to unnecessary deaths among those awaiting donations. As a consequence, patients in first-world countries sometimes resort to organ trafficking, an illegal act of acquiring organs, by traveling to third-world countries with disadvantaged donors. Many researchers have proposed providing financial incentives to donors as a means to increase the supply of donated kidneys. Supporters of this proposal argue that providing incentives will help socioeconomically vulnerable patients overcome their financial obstacles, granting them self-determination as well as autonomy. Those opposed say that providing financial compensation will sully the meaning of altruism as well as exploit those who are in economic need. This paper will explore the ethics and practicality of providing financial compensation to kidney donors.

INTRODUCTION

The United States currently faces a critical organ shortage. According to data from “Organ Shortage Crisis: Problems and Possible Solutions” by G.M. Abouna, “one patient is added to the waiting list every 15 minutes, and in the year 2007, more than 95,000 patients [were] awaiting transplants” (34). In contrast to this alarming number of patients, the paper states that in 2006, only 28,110 organ transplants were performed, while 6,342 patients died waiting their turn. The stark difference between the relatively infinitesimal supply and immense demand for organs raises the question of what the United States can do to narrow this ever-widening gap. One solution is to provide a financial incentive to donation. The theory is that since altruistic donation is currently not enough to satisfy the need for organs, monetary compensation will increase the supply enough to meet the demand. Opponents of this idea predict that providing money will result in a black market in which the vulnerability of the poor will be exploited, according to “Organ Trafficking and Transplant Tourism: The Role of Global Professional Ethical Standards-The

2008 Declaration of Istanbul” by Gabriel M. Danovitch, et al. (1307). Addressing the threat of this potentially unethical behavior, proponents of financial incentives such as Benjamin Hippen and Arthur Matas, in their article “Incentives for Organ Donation in the United States: Feasible Alternative or Forthcoming Apocalypse,” state that it is equally unethical to allow patients to die when a method to acquire more organs is available and, in fact, it is the shortage itself that will allow organ trafficking to continue (140). With these conflicting views and so many lives at stake, it is vital to question whether or not the National Organ Transplant Act of 1984 (NOTA), which outlaws the giving and receiving of financial compensations for organ donations, should be lifted and financial incentives provided to donors.

The debate at the heart of the issue is one of practicality versus ethics: providing financial incentives to organ donors may save lives, but at the risk of sullyng respect for human dignity and autonomy. Financial incentives are expected to attract more donors, increasing the number of available organs, and alleviating Americans’ need to illegally acquire organs from third-world countries through brokers. However, some argue that remuneration for organs reframes these human body parts as goods to be purchased, and would thus be an affront to human dignity. This ethical dilemma forces people to weigh the value of saving lives against that of preserving human dignity. Those who support the proposal may argue that the price for human dignity is too high and immoral if the exigent need of patients on the waiting list are ignored and those patients are left to die. Those opposed may argue that the degradation of human dignity is unethical no matter what.

As a response to the ever-worsening shortage of kidneys, financial incentive in forms of health insurance should be given by the government to living persons over the age of eighteen who want to donate their kidneys. Health insurance takes the medical burden off donors while allowing the government control over how the incentives are being used. The government can then easily regulate a precarious transaction

that could otherwise turn into an illegal business. Furthermore, the government must have a strict physical, mental, and criminal background screening process for donors conducted by government-approved facilities. This time-consuming but necessary process will help avoid the possibility of tainted organs entering circulation, lower the number of criminal cases of organ trafficking, and ensure that the donor is fully aware of reasons for donating and is making his or her own decision without coercion.

In this paper, I will examine arguments surrounding the moral complications that arise when deciding whether or not financial compensation for organ donations should be provided. My first section will cover the background of kidney donation in the United States along with its complications such as long-term medical risks and organ-trafficking. Subsequent sections will focus on the ethical complications of providing financial incentives for organ donations and the definition of autonomy and altruism. In addition, I will analyze the emotional, health, and cost benefit of kidney transplantation over dialysis, an alternate method of dealing with End-State Renal Disease (ESRD), as well as the cost structure of providing health insurance as a means of financial compensation to donors.

BACKGROUND

Organ donation is a recent phenomenon: only in the 1950s did organ transplantation become a possibility. Peter K. Linden, in his article “History of Solid Organ Transplantation and Organ Donation”, states that the first successful kidney transplantation happened in 1954 (167). This exemplary case was improved upon with the discovery of cyclosporine, an immunosuppressant drug, in 1983. According to *West’s Encyclopedia of American Law*, cyclosporine aided immensely, facilitating recipient acceptance of transplanted organs, and leading to greater ease and success in transplantation procedures (Phelps and Lehman 651). However, the increasing success rates are accompanied by a shortage of available organs. This shortage leads to illegal activities such as organ trafficking. Patients in first-world countries in dire need of organs travel to other countries where enforcement of regulations against financial compensation for organs are lax, and where more of the population live below the poverty line and are consequently more willing to sell their organs for money.

This is not the stuff of urban myth and isolated incidents. While it is hard to determine the entire scope of this illegal trade because of its elusive nature, recent evidence shows that in 2007, at least 2000 illegal kidney transplants were performed in Pakistan, over 3000 in the Philippines, and at least 500 annually in Egypt (Budiani-Saberi and Delmonico 926). This appears to be a simple case of a demand finding a supply, but when so many transplants are occurring in developing nations, we must consider the ethics of these transactions. Socioeconomically vulnerable donors often do not receive sufficient financial compensation and are subject to abject medical treatments (Danovitch et al. 1306). According to a study by D. A. Budiani-Saberi and F. L. Delmonico, in their article “Organ Trafficking and Transplant Tourism: A Commentary on the Global Realities”, out of 93% of donors in Pakistan who sold a kidney to overcome debt, 85% reported no economic improvement in their lives and were still in debt or unable to achieve the financial goal they expected to meet through selling their kidneys (Budiani-Saberi and Delmonico 927). In addition to this unfair remuneration, 78% of donors in Egypt reported deterioration in their health conditions, 91% expressed social isolation, and 94% regretted their donation. These results mirrored findings in India, Iran, and the Philippines, clearly showing that the victims of organ trafficking consistently suffer social rejection, physical deterioration, and an inability to overcome financial vulnerability (928).

Consequently, in an effort to regulate organ transplantation, Congress prohibited the selling of organ and tissue with the National Organ Transplant Act of 1984 (NOTA), making it currently illegal for donors to receive financial compensation (Linden 173). Still, however noble the intentions of NOTA might have been, the need for organs cannot be met by the current rate of donations in the US. According to data from the National Kidney Foundation, as of 2014, 123,175 Americans were waiting for lifesaving organ transplants, and 101,170 of them were waiting for kidneys. However, only 16,896 kidney transplants took place in 2013. 11,163 kidneys arrived from deceased donors and 5,733 from living ones. This difference between the supply of and demand for transplantable kidneys led to the death of 4,453 patients who did not receive transplants in 2013. Unfortunately, the kidney waiting list increases by 3,000 new patients every month, further widening the gap (National Kidney Foundation 1). Recent advances in medicine have lowered the

probability of medical complications occurring in recipients and donors, but there is still a small percentage of patients who develop complications as a result of receiving kidneys from living persons. According to data collected by authors Gossmann et al. in their article “Long-Term Consequences of Live Kidney Donation Follow-Up in 03% of Living Kidney Donors in a Single Transplant Center”, the average blood pressure of the patients who had donated increased from $125 \pm 15/79 \pm 11$ to $134 \pm 19/81 \pm 9$ mmHg (normal blood pressure being 120/80 mmHg, and high blood pressure being 140/90 mmHg) (2419-2420). The percentage of those with hypertension, or high blood pressure, increased from 7% to 30%, which increases the risk of kidney damage and heart disease. Additionally, 56% of 115 donors developed proteinuria (>150 mg/day), a condition in which the body secretes proteins through urine due to inefficiency of the kidney. This high percentage does not mean that all of the 56% donors diagnosed with proteinuria were put in medically concerning conditions, for there are different degrees of proteinuria. Only 10% of the donors were found to have urinary albumin (more than 50 mg of albumin per Liter of urine), which puts donors at a higher risk for ESRD, or kidney failure (2420). The immediate effects of the surgery are minimal, as explained by Sally Satel in her article *Desperately Seeking a Kidney*; donors can be discharged from the hospital after two to three nights and the procedure leaves a three-inch scar. The chance of dying is extremely low as well: two in every 10,000 transplants.

RESPECTING THE SELF-DETERMINATION AND AUTONOMY OF DONORS

If financial incentives were to be given for organ donations, it can be expected that the majority of new donors would be those in financial need as the incentive would mean the most to them. This has already been shown to be the case in Iran, as Mitra Mahdavi-Mazdeh notes in the article “The Iranian Model of Living Renal Transplantation,” writing that “financial motivation was the main driving force for donation of an organ...” (630). Medel Salvador-Paguirigan notes a similar trend among Filipino donor experiences in the article “Sacrificing Something Important: The Lived Experience of Compensated Kidney Donors in the Philippines,” and to anyone paying attention, the pattern is clear. Financial vulnerability is the main reason for donation from low-income

donors around the world, and though these donors are the main source of organs when financial compensation is distributed, they are also the most vulnerable to exploitation. Financial incentives victimize the poor by stripping them of their autonomy (111-112). The argument is that once the decision-making process is tainted with the desperation for a “cash prize,” it is the cash that is making the decision for the donor, not his or her own will. In other words, providing cash for organs is a way of extorting organs from those in desperate financial need.

However, the definition of autonomy is a complex one; while some may view human dignity as essential to autonomy, others argue that self-determination, regardless of financial status, allows one to have full autonomy. Hippen and Matas believe that the poor should still be allowed to donate their organs despite their financial vulnerability. Allowing them the power to decide whether or not to donate grants them self-determination, and stripping them of that power discriminates against their socioeconomic status and goes against the ideals of democracy and liberty (143). Mahdavi-Mazdeh, too, worries about the dehumanizing effects of this sort of paternalism toward the poor when she writes, “poverty cannot interfere with individuals’ autonomy. As long as the donation is not coercive, it is the responsibility of the community to respect the dignity of the human” (631). In other words, providing financial compensation to poor kidney donors is a way of granting them the freedom to overcome their financial obstacles, and they should be free to choose this path to empowerment, regardless of the pressures they face. This interaction respects their human dignity as well as their autonomy, challenging the argument that financial incentives can corrode one’s autonomy.

The issue at hand is this: When relatively large amounts of money are at stake, to what degree are the poor really free to choose their own fate? This point is endlessly debatable, but it might be possible to transcend the dispute by changing the nature of the compensation from cash gifts to other incentives, ranging from tax reductions to health insurance packages. Likewise, Satel firmly states that “society has a moral imperative to expand the idea of ‘the gift’” (6). In other words, the current definition of “the gift” (in terms of organ donations) must be changed in order to stop the endless suffering and deaths caused by kidney shortage. Hippen and Matas have noted the potential benefits

of such a change, writing “there is a plethora of ways to structure incentives to be considerably less fungible than cash payments . . . which can concomitantly avoid targeting especially vulnerable populations, or routinely result in undue inducements” (143). The limits of cash incentives mentioned by Danovitch et al. would no longer apply. In fact, the current Iranian model of financial incentives for organ donation uses a combination of a \$900 cash gift from the government along with one-year of health insurance coverage, providing financial aid along with an overall healthcare system even after the donors provide their organs, and so far has been successful (Mahdavi-Mazdeh 629).

FAILURE OF ALTRUISM IN ITS ROLE IN KIDNEY DONATION/EMOTIONAL BURDEN OF RECIPIENTS OF ALTRUISTIC DONATIONS

Due to NOTA, all transplantable kidneys in the U.S. come from altruistic donations of both the living and the deceased, proving that selflessness is the main reason behind past and current donations. Consequently, providing financial compensations to what originally was a gift of altruism seemingly sullies the unadulterated motive of donations. According to Danovitch, “the central bioethical principles of beneficence and justice are equally abused by organ sales, which crowd out altruistic donations, leave paid donors worse off, and exploit the poor to benefit the rich” (Danovitch et al. 1307). Essentially, organ sales adulterate the basic ethics of generosity since they defile the meaning of donating from selflessness and consequently, dominate the organ market with the organs given in exchange for money.

However, Hippen and Matas prove that altruistic donations are not crowded out by any adverse effects of incentives (143-144); rather, the percentage stays the same, and when people are offered incentives, the rate increases. The researchers note that the offer of an incentive either makes minimal difference or causes an increase in commitment, depending on the donation (144). While this data does not prove whether or not financial compensations destroy the meaning of altruism, it proves that the offer of incentives actually leads to an increase in donations. Though the increase in transplantable organs may not have been fueled by genuine selflessness, they would help save lives that would have otherwise been lost, which is a moral gain for society in exchange

for altruism.

The emotional pain of the donors is often mentioned in the argument against providing financial incentives, but that of the recipients is rarely spoken about in many of the studies. The current model of kidney donation which completely depends on altruistic donations has many downfalls which cause emotional distress in recipients. One downfall of this altruistic model is that it fails to meet the required amount to fulfill the ever-growing shortage. Satel, in reference to her experience as a kidney recipient, states that “[a]ltruism is a beautiful virtue, but it has fallen painfully short of its goal” (7). Selflessness by itself is a respectable quality in society, but when placed as the motive behind donating, it fails to meet the expectations of ending the kidney shortage. In the Satel’s opinion, altruism as the impetus behind satisfying kidney shortages is a failure. Theoretically, selflessness alone should be able to meet the required amount of kidneys, since people can fully function with only one kidney. However, not everyone is altruistic. Thus, completely depending on altruism to meet the goal amount of kidneys is quixotic. Satel’s experience of failure from depending purely on altruistic donations is just a small example of how the current idea of “the gift” fails multiple expectant recipients. Instead of restricting the idea of “the gift” to altruistic donations, society must expand this idea to include donations received in exchange of financial compensations in order to meet the current shortage of kidneys.

Another flaw of altruism and its effect on recipients is the feeling of helpless emotional dependence it creates during the process of waiting for a transplant. The idea of responsible donorship, as defined by Satel, states that a donor should follow through with his or her promise to the recipient. Unfortunately, it is not unusual for donors to back out on their offer, leaving recipients with a great sense of loss: Satel recollects, “It was a sickening roller-coaster ride: hope yielding to helpless frustration, gratitude giving way to fury” (5). Refusal to continue with the promise of donation caused great emotional distress in the author who was in the position of a helplessly dependent recipient whose life could be altered with one simple decision of the donor. Throughout the interaction with the donor, the author had to make sure over and over again that the donor would follow through with his promise of a kidney. The author, as a recipient of a “gift”, tried her hardest to be on the donor’s good side,

reduced to “groveling and dependence” (5) towards the end of their interaction. The emotional damage altruism causes in recipients and the increasing shortage of kidneys shows that as the sole impetus for donation, altruism is a failure.

COST STRUCTURE OF PROVIDING HEALTH INSURANCE TO DONORS AND MENTAL, PHYSICAL, AND COST BENEFIT OF KIDNEY TRANSPLANTATION

The offer of insurance packages can actually save the government money, and will end up paying for itself. The cost of kidney failure treatment is expensive; according to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, “the average cost to Medicare per person in 2011 was almost \$88,000 for hemodialysis, a treatment...that filters blood outside the body, more than \$71,000 for peritoneal dialysis, a treatment...that uses the lining of a person’s abdominal cavity as a filter, [and] almost \$33,000 for a transplant...” Additionally, according to Sasa Perovic and Slobodan Jankovic, in their article “Renal Transplantation vs Hemodialysis: Cost-Effectiveness Analysis”, “incremental costs per obtained year for life have been USD 7,460.00 for transplant patients, USD 12,100.00 for patients on home dialysis, and USD 33,300.00 for dialysis performed in patients being at in-patient clinic” (642). As the combined cost of hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis is far greater than that of receiving a kidney transplant, channeling funds away from dialysis toward procuring organs for transplant might actually save the government money. Currently, most patients diagnosed with ESRD are eligible to receive Medicare, according to a law passed by Congress in 1972, and Medicare stops providing for patients three years after a successful surgery, while it must continue providing for dialysis treatment. Since there is little to no hope for full recovery from ESRD, (National Institute of Health), the savings extend throughout the lives of these patients.

The financially-incentivized donor system would not only pay for itself, but would also keep transplant recipients healthier than those who remain on dialysis. Perovic and Jankovic measured the quality of life in Serbian patients who received either dialysis or transplants by using the McGill Questionnaire, which measures “total life-quality: physical, emotional, social, spiritual and financial” as well as “physical symptoms,

physical well-being, psychological symptoms, existential well-being and support” (640). The results showed that transplant patients have about three times greater a chance of having a “good” life than dialysed ones, with an 18.12% higher total life-quality rating among transplant patients. What constitutes human quality of life is universal, with only minor cultural differences. While this data may be limited to patients in Serbia, we can extrapolate it from it to conclude that rather than allowing patients to suffer the inferior and costlier alternative of dialysis, it is important to consider how financial compensation for donors can increase the number of available organs, and, consequently, of successful transplantations, and thus provide patients worldwide with a better quality of life.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, to alleviate the growing shortage of kidneys in the US, the government should provide financial incentives in the forms of health insurance to live persons over the age of 18 who want to donate their kidneys. While it can be argued that providing financial compensation in exchange for kidneys may exploit the financial vulnerability of the disadvantaged and thus compromise their autonomy, the choice to donate to overcome one’s financial obstacles is an expression of self-determination that must be respected. Additionally, opponents argue that financial incentives will both sully the intent and diminish the supply of altruistic donations. However, research proves that financial incentives have no effect on the quality of the kidneys and increase the number of donations. Furthermore, more kidney transplants means more patients living better lives upon receiving their organs and abandoning dialysis. Finally, this proposal, counter-intuitively perhaps, actually minimizes government health spending.

The current kidney shortage and ban on paying for the organs forces patients to acquire them through illegal trafficking. The increase in kidney supplies gained through providing financial incentives will not only save the lives of those on the waiting list but also of donors in third-world countries who gave up their kidneys unwillingly. The incentive model of Iran proves that financial incentives can alleviate an organ shortage; however, research on the cultural differences between possible US donors and Iranian ones has not been conducted to prove that providing financial compensations will be a complete solution. Therefore,

the financial incentive model should be implemented and monitored for a set amount of time, perhaps for ten years as in the Iranian model, to test the possibilities of this potential solution.

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Photography of the Violence of the Mexican Drug War

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Abstract: This paper examines the various roles of different forms of photography during the atrocious events of the Mexican Drug War. In 2006, the newly elected Mexican president Felipe Calderón initiated the Mexican Drug War in order to put a stop to the illegal drug trade; however, this only made matters worse, making the drug cartels turn to the use of extreme acts of violence to intimidate and show their power. I will be mainly talking about the photographs taken by the drug cartel members of their brutally murdered victims. I discuss why these photographs are so powerful and effective as intimidation techniques, and through technical analysis of the photographs I will compare and contrast them to the ways in which artists and other photographers have used these photographs as art to raise awareness. By doing so, we see how photography can have various effects and uses for the same event.

INTRODUCTION

The Mexican Drug War is a war between competing drug trafficking organizations and the Mexican government. The Mexican Drug War is unique in that its publicity on the news is extremely limited, both in the United States and Mexico itself. In contrast to the in-depth coverage of the conflicts and tragedies taking place in the Middle East, the Mexican Drug War is not a popular topic that is covered here in the United States. In addition, Mexican news coverage of this war is taken with great caution for fear of drug cartel retaliation. Instead, photography is used throughout the war in two major and completely different ways: by drug cartels and by the lay people of Mexico.

The first way photography is used is through Narco-propaganda used by drug cartels themselves. The purpose of their photographs is to act as warnings; they take photographs of their murders to intimidate people and to prevent anyone from undermining them. Through these pictures, they show what would happen if someone were to stop their trade. The definition of propaganda is the spreading of information that is intended to persuade others into a certain way of thinking for a

specific group of people or cause. Ever since the Mexican Drug War, a new form of propaganda has emerged: *Narco-propaganda*. This form of propaganda was created by the Mexican drug cartels and it aims to intimidate the public by warning them that they are powerful forces that cannot be stopped. These warnings consist of widespread violence, banners, and words of influence. Many times in the past, journalists tried to expose the work of the drug trafficking organizations, but many have stopped due to consequences imposed by the drug lords themselves. These consequences include torture and death. Interestingly enough, these drugs cartels turn the tables and use photography of their victims to serve as intimidation tactics to control what information is exposed in the media.

This brings us to the second way that photography is used throughout the drug war: by artists of Mexico such as Brian Maguire, Joel-Peter Witkin, and Tochiro Gallegos. Because the news stations of Mexico are too afraid to publish the news of their present drug disaster situation for fear of the drug cartels' retaliations, the people of Mexico have become reliant on the information obtained by its citizens. The citizens' artworks have the ability to challenge the Narco-propaganda because they are able to bring out the beauty in their horrific circumstances. Art is able to make its viewers look past the gore and focus on the beauty of an image, while journalistic photographs make their viewers look at the reality of the situation displayed. The purpose of the artists is to spread awareness of the war to citizens because it cannot be publicized in the news. Furthermore, while many people would turn their heads at the sight of Narco-propaganda murder photography, the artwork keeps its viewers from looking away and informs them of the disasters that take place in the war.

In this paper, I will examine the use of photography, specifically Narco-propaganda, and discuss what gives it so much power in directing the war in favor of the drug cartels. This is done in various ways, including focusing on the different elements of a photograph and the ways in which it is distributed. I will also analyze the way in which artists alter photographs to emphasize the individual people rather than the gore to challenge the cartels and their photographed violence.

Though they are simply images, photography has the ability to pervade the hearts and minds of those who view it. Narco-propaganda

is a powerful type of photography and effective as a vehicle for violence because of the photograph's inherent objectification. Susan Sontag, author of *Regarding the Pain of Others* states that “[p]hotographs objectify: they turn an event or a person into something that can be possessed. And photographs are a species of alchemy, for all that they are prized as a transparent account of reality” (81). The photographs of the Mexican Drug War atrocities are able to objectify human beings by displaying them in dehumanizing and gruesome ways, such as being dismembered and beheaded, and/or when they are put in contexts that make them seem not human. Also, photographs of atrocity objectify humans by their nature because they deprive the people of their voice to speak: when humans are displayed as objects, they are viewed as weak beings that can be taken advantage of. It is in this way that the drug cartels emphasize their power over the people. In attempt to fight back, the artists use this same impact of photography to completely change the message behind these photographs of atrocities.

PHOTOGRAPHS' ACCESSIBILITIES CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR POWERS

Photographs act as an extension of the violence because they are snapshots of the violence, forever providing access to anyone who wants to view them; this consequently puts the violence on repeat. Photographs make the pain of the victims exposed to the public, and they become spectacles as objects. The victims in the photographs are no longer seen as people, but have been manipulated to be seen rather than to be mourned for. One of the reasons Narco-propaganda murder photography is so powerful in affecting the people of Mexico is because of the means by which it is spread; it has the ability to reach a wide audience through the use of the technological means of the Internet. The main source to access these photographs is through popular websites, particularly the website Blog del Narco. Curtis Marez, author of *Drug Wars: The Political Economy of Narcotics*, writes “... drug wars are also media wars: in modern history elite and subaltern struggles over the management and drug traffic partly take the form of struggles over media representation.” (31). In an age of advanced technology, the media and the Internet has had a profound effect on the war. Because of the Internet, the drug cartel's propaganda is able to circulate great distances. Publicizing the

photographs through blogs, YouTube, news broadcasts, etc., has enabled a wide range of viewers to witness the murders of the drug cartels. The idea of “strength in numbers” is relevant to this situation in that the atrocity of a disastrous event intensifies when it is spread to a large audience. “The disaster only looms large only through the mass media coverage of the event,” Hariman and Lucaites write, “The steady stream of otherwise localized accidents ... create and disseminate a consciousness of fatality” (278). Because the media gives the impression of our “fatality” and helplessness to the situation, the illusion of power of the Mexican drug organizations increases.

The photographs of their murders not only circulate to a large audience, but it affects a large range of people as well. “Drug trafficking in Mexico has always been an alliance between white-collar professionals—the respectable and well-dressed politicians and business people of the Harvard- and Yale-educated Mexican elite—and the unschooled delinquents of the criminal under class,” (6) Watt and Zepeda write. Therefore, the Mexican drug war deals with different classes of society, affecting different groups including almost all of Mexico’s citizens. The drug war deals with the drug cartels, their families, the government, and the people of Mexico. The killings photographed in Narco-propaganda consist of all of these different groups of people. Hariman and Lucaites write that “the coverage alerts a wide range of people to likely operational problems, and for some technologies, expands the pool of possible problem detectors and problem solvers. It also brings public pressure to bear on governments to exercise oversight and regulatory functions and on corporations to address the problem to retain customers” (278). Thus, the government also becomes involved in order to satisfy the citizen’s needs. In addition to these circumstances of accessibility and the photograph’s ability to affect a broad range of people, the photographs are also able to affect its viewers through the composition and details of its images.

ELEMENTS OF A PHOTOGRAPHS AND PERCEPTION

The arrangement of the body, the background, and setting of the picture affect the way an image is viewed, analyzed, and how a person feels about the photograph. The drug cartels display the bodies of the victims

in gruesome, atrocious ways. For example, in figure 5, the victim is not only killed, but put in an unusual display. This photograph shows that the drug cartel put thought into what would create a more stirring reaction from looking at this person. This idea is related to Sontag's idea that "in deciding how a picture should look, in preferring one exposure to another, photographers are always imposing standards on their subjects" (6). Sontag's idea suggests that a photograph can be crafted in a certain way to get a particular reaction from its audience. This placement of the head on top of an altar was most likely meant to draw attention to religious and spiritual aspects, probably signifying the man as a sort of ritual sacrifice for the wrong-doings of the Mexican people. Using this idea, we can then infer that certain elements of a photograph can determine the viewer's perception of the image.

Different elements of a photograph are capable of emphasizing certain aspects of the picture, whether it is the beauty of a person or the forces that made the objects and people in the picture look that way; the part of the photograph that is emphasized depends on how various forces in the photograph work together. Photography of the dead is not new to Mexican culture. Typically, Mexican culture does a great deal to honor the death of loved ones through extravagant ceremonies and practices, one of them being a Victorian practice known as post-mortem photography. Post-mortem photography attempts to display the bodies of the dead in a beautiful, life-like manner. Although deceased, the body of the individual still looks human based on the surrounding background, outfit, position, etc. In figure 1, the baby depicted looks like a normal baby in white clothing, sitting on a chair so the photographer can take a photograph, when really it is the dead body of a girl purposely arranged to look as if it is alive. Salvador Olguin, author of the article "Beyond Horror: Taking Pictures of the Dead in Mexico" writes "In post-humanism, the human identity is not perceived as something stable. It is seen as the result of different objects and forces" (187). Olguin is saying that what makes a person look like a person in a photograph depends on the elements that make up that photograph. This idea that "different objects and forces" (as Olguin says) are what makes a human look human tells us that the elements of the photograph play a major part in our perception of an image. Narco-propaganda displays individuals cut-up, beheaded, stacked, and other ways that take away from them looking

human. Drug cartel murders no longer display individuals as humans, but rather as sacrificial objects.

Let's compare figure 1 and figure 2. In figure 1, the post-mortem photograph of the baby displays her looking serene, with her hands folded gently. She is dressed in beautiful garments, and is sitting as if she is consciously prepared for a photograph to be taken. However, in figure 2, the bodies are placed in a stacked formation, as if they were just pieces of unwanted material. Most of them barely have any clothes on and are awkwardly and uncomfortably positioned. When bodies are displayed in such cruel ways, it is hard to even see them as human beings. Elaine Scarry goes as far as to say that viewing torture “goes on to deny, to falsify, the reality of the very thing it has itself objectified by a perceptual shift which converts the vision of suffering into the wholly illusory but, to the torturers and the regime they represent, wholly convincing spectacle of power” (1). In this quote, she speaks about the effects visual images of torture have on viewers. Her quote suggests that objectification of a person takes away from his or her humanness and makes viewers focus on the power of the torturers themselves. So, in figure 1 of the little girl, we see her beauty and view her as if she was an actual alive human being, but in figure 2, we no longer see the vision of a people, but we wonder what has happened to them. Thus, narco-propaganda is so powerful in that it specifically draws on the focus of the torturers and shows what they are capable of. The photographs distract what the people used to be and focus on what they have become because of the torturers. Therefore, emphasis is placed on the power of the drug-cartels themselves. In addition, the sacrificial and sanctimonious pretenses constructed by the Narco-propaganda creates an illusion of exaltation for themselves, emphasizing their power even more.

In photographs of atrocity where the body is disembodied or decapitated, the people have become objectified because the bodily orientation of the bodies are no longer in familiar positions of the normal human body. In relation to this idea, Elaine Scarry writes that “[c]ontemporary philosophers have habituated us to the recognition that our interior states of consciousness are regularly accompanied by objects in the external world” (3). She says that the internal state of something is impacted by external influences; since these two go hand in hand, what we physically see determines what we feel about that particular

object. Günther Knoblich asks, "... what collection and arrangement of stimulus properties must be present before I understand that I perceive a body like my own? Studies indicate the bodily orientation and the spatial configuration of limbs are particularly important factors" (6). Through these sources, it is evident that visual representation is important to how we perceive objects and people. If what we see corresponds to what we are familiar with, we will associate those things to what we know. If we see a human displayed in a humane way, we will feel and recognize that they are human. The configuration of limbs is important in how we view a body, and how we see the body determines how we see the person as a human being. Using Knoblich's idea with Scarry's idea, we can infer that the way we view the disoriented bodily parts of the photographs of the drug war atrocities affects the way we actually view the "internal aspects" of the people.

In addition to not being able to see the people in a humane light, when we are unable to hear the people, we also fail to see the real human beings that these people are. By a photograph's own nature, this medium takes away the voices of the people depicted; the voice is an important aspect in realizing the people displayed are human beings rather than objects. Susan Crane writes that "[p]hotographs render their subjects mute. They remove agency from their subjects, and cause them to be depicted in a format that literally takes away their voices, inarticulate or otherwise" (76). Photographs of atrocity make us see the people suffer, but there is no way they can communicate with us. Their silencing makes them more helpless and vulnerable. This is another reason why photographs of the Mexican drug war are powerful; they take away the voices of their victims. However, as the voices of the victims in the photographs are silenced, our attention is then drawn upon those that made the victims this way.

CHALLENGING THE PHOTOGRAPHED VIOLENCE

Several artists have appropriated the photographs of the atrocities and made it easier to gaze at. Instead of being horrific, they turned the photographed violence into beautiful art that people could ponder on and think about in order to bring awareness to the war without making them turn away. Though these victims do not have a voice, these artists have been able to give them one by exposing the disasters to the public. Brian Maguire is one of these artists. Journalists have given him their

photographs of the atrocities in Mexico, and Maguire recreates them in ways that are easier to look at. He says that he “wanted to bring the story of what was happening in Juarez through these paintings to New York to show what had happened because [he] feels that there is a sense in which our gaze is averted from this murder” (Castellanos). One example of his work is a piece called “Nature Morte” which portrays a beheaded man (Figure 6). Although the artwork depicts the same image as the journalist’s photograph, he was able to create a beautiful aesthetic out of it. In contrast to the photographs of atrocity by the drug cartels, Maguire hopes to “show respect to the victims of the violence” (Castellanos). His work also puts more emphasis on the people, so he shows not how these people were lost but who was lost. In both types of photography, atrocities are revealed, but different elements of the photograph are able to elicit different emotions.

Photographers such as Joel-Peter Witkin have taken photographs of the dead as well, but have been done so in ways that make the human more human-like and less of objects by displaying them in contexts that a live human being would be in. In Figure 3, Witkin takes one of the victims of the war and situates him in a life-like manner through the use of different features. We know that the man is dead; however, we only know this when we see that his head is missing and the blood stains on the floor. If we were to cover the top section of the photograph and ignore the stains, its audience would see a regular man casually sitting on a chair. Details such as the stains and the missing head, make this picture seem very awkward because there is a combination of both living and dead attributes incorporated into this picture. Nonetheless, Witkin was able to bring out some sort of life into the man. Many artists have also taken photographs of atrocities dealing with the drug war, but have been able to create a different quality and mood. Another example of a photographer is Tochiro Gallegos. Gallegos took the figure 4 photograph. This photograph was artistically staged, and brought out a different feeling than normal photographs of the drug war catastrophes bring out. In this particular photograph, the man is looking up to the sky. He looks nervous, but through the lighting and angle, the photograph almost looks beautiful. A main difference between these artists’ works and the photographed violence is that these artists try to lessen the blood and gore. The more gruesome and gory the display of the violence looks, the more it shows the strength and fearlessness of the drug

cartels. Blood and weapons displayed in the image are usually associated with great pain, and great pain is usually associated with an inflictor of pain. In many instances of the drug cartels' killings, we see knives, chain saws, and ropes being displayed in the photograph along with numerous amounts of blood all over the bodies. The drug cartels make the display look even more violent by including these tools. In addition, after the people in the photograph have been objectified and shown as helpless, we turn our attentions to what caused the atrocity.

CONCLUSION

The Mexican drug cartels have been using violence to warn the people of Mexico what it would be like if they were to go against them or try to undermine them. The drug cartels use photographs to their advantage as an extension of their intimidation. They use them as vehicles to depict their atrocities and deliver messages of what the consequences would be to those who defy them. The photograph itself contributes to the pain because it puts the pain on repeat. Crane writes that "a photograph of an atrocity depicts something awful to behold, because it participates in the atrocity...because regardless of motive they are indulging the creation of pain in the depicted victims and the photographer's intention to replicate that pain interminably by recording it" (76). Crane writes that although the people that capture these atrocities only do so to warn the public and make known their situation, they are unintentionally "participating" in the violence by replicating the person's pain.

The Narco-Propaganda is so effective in giving the drug cartels an illusion of power because of its ability to objectify its victims through the gruesome acts of beheading and dismemberment, and by taking away the voices of the victims. When we look at the photographs of the slaughters in the Mexican Drug War, it is hard to envision the victims as people in the manner they are shown to us, but rather as powerless objects. As Elaine Scarry has said, photographs of torture and atrocity have the ability to "deny, to falsify, the reality of the very thing it has itself objectified" (1). She means that the photographs of atrocity are capable of making humans seem even less human by the gruesome ways they are portrayed. Photographs of atrocity have the ability to change humans into spectacles of gore, making viewers avert their eyes from the image.

Pictures of the victims when they were alive should be exposed to the public adjacent to the photographs of the atrocities so the viewers

are reminded that they were people as well. By bringing back a perspective of what they used to be and look like, we humanize them. Also, because they can no longer speak for themselves, we need to find a way to expose their stories. Susan Crane writes that “photographs render their subjects mute. They remove agency from their subjects, and cause them to be depicted in a format that literally takes away their voices, inarticulate or otherwise” (76). However, this does not mean that we cannot give them a voice. The way the Mexican Drug War is revealed is important in the way people view the war. Television and movies have been mistakenly providing a false glamorous and romanticized vision of this war through heroic and entertaining story lines. This provides a false idea that the United States is intervening with this problem although in reality it has really been distancing itself from the problem to which it has contributed. By the artists’ appropriations of these images, however, they were able to give the victims a voice and have been able to spread awareness to the people about this war in a less glamorized light. Unlike the movies and television shows that portray the conflicts with satisfying ends to their stories, art is able to make these conflicts aware to the public, giving them a feeling that the problem is not yet solved. The art has been beneficial in calling its audience to action and awareness of the ongoing struggle. Just like the artists of the Mexican Drug War who have appropriated the images of atrocity, we also need to bring justice to those affected by wars, informing the public of their atrocities and shedding light to their stories.

PHOTOGRAPH APPENDIX



Figure 1

Photographer: unknown

Date: 1800s

Current Owner: unknown

Current Location: obtained from www.stevhuffphoto.com



Figure 2

Photographer: unknown

Date: 2010

Current Owner: unknown

Current Location: obtained from www.Jeannie-ology.com



Figure 3: “Man Without A Head”

Photographer: Joel-Peter Witkin

Date: 1993

Current Owner: Museum of Contemporary Photography

Current Location: Museum of Contemporary Photography

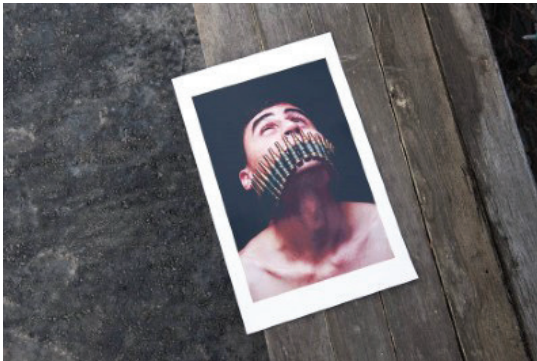


Figure 4

Artwork by: Tochiro Gallegos

Photograph of art: Stefan Falke

Date: 2000s

Current Owner of artwork: Tochiro Gallegos

Current Location: Houston Center for Contemporary Craft



Figure 5

Photographer: unknown

Date: 2010

Current Owner: Blog del Narco

Current Location: obtained from book *Dying for the Truth: Undercover Inside the Mexican Drug War* by: Blog del Narco



Figure 6: “Nature Morte”

Photographer: Brian Maguire

Date: 2014

Current Owner: Fergus McCaffrey

Current Location: Fergus McCaffrey gallery in NY

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An Examination of Punk Fashion Through a Feminist Lens

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Abstract: The emergence of subcultures suggests disenchantment with traditional avenues of societal life, spurring youth to search for an alternate culture to identify with, such as the punks in the 1970s. With each subculture comes a particular set of styles that create a common sense of identity amongst a group and symbolically resist the mass culture they aimed to reject. This paper seeks to examine the impact of punk fashion as an instigator of change, namely in relation to the dismantling of gendered clothing, suggesting it may have had an impact on feminism. To examine the significance of punk fashion, I will explore the historical context of punk and its ideology in order to discern whether it manifests in the style, legitimizing any cultural and political significance it may have had. These findings will be applied to an interpretation of punk fashion with regards to unisex clothing, as well as second wave feminist ideologies concerning dress, to determine if there are any correlations to support the claim that punk fashion impacted feminism.

INTRODUCTION

In the 1970s, the punk subculture sparked outrage amongst members of mainstream society, from the threads with which its members were adorned to the music to which they listened. With roots in New York City, punk began to truly make waves in London, and subsequently around the world, with the formation of iconic bands such as The Sex Pistols, whose music carried with it a political connotation that resonated with so many at the time. During a period of disarray and dissatisfaction with the establishment and society of the time, punk developed into a lifestyle with an ideology of rebellion that its members believed in with all their hearts. Corresponding to the punk notion of rejecting the norm, punk fashion made waves as a style that completely deviated from societal expectations, especially concerning gender roles. The sheer sexuality of punk fashion ignited questions about gender and cultural taboos, signifying that punk may have had an impact on feminism, whether intentional or not. This paper will explore the effects of punk fashion on gender equality, honing in on its contribution to the dis-

mantling of gender roles as represented by clothing, and if punk fashion ignored impositions of gender on clothing, for what purpose did it do so. In order to answer these questions, there must also be a focus on the outrage sparked by punk fashion, as well as whether the gender subverting aspects of their clothing go beyond a fashion statement to extend into the punk lifestyle.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Dick Hebdige's *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* will serve as the theoretical framework for understanding punk and its impact as a subculture. Hebdige describes a subculture as a community bonded by a common set of ideals that begins to express itself through its fashion and ideology as a means of resisting an undesirable parent culture. In order for a youth subculture to exist, the rise of youth culture after the Second World War had to come about, which inserted a gray area between childhood and maturity. This gave rise to the notion of the 'teenager' that we know today, whose position in society was unprecedented as a new youth class. As Hebdige explains, "each subcultural 'instance' represents a 'solution' to a specific set of circumstances," suggesting that a subculture addresses disillusionment with a certain issue by how the community carries itself (81). The notion of a "parent culture," or the normality and conformity of everyday life, illustrates the ethos of the mainstream society, emblematic of everything that a subculture seeks to oppose. Hebdige's theories concerning the expression of a subculture's ideology through its respective style will be employed in this essay in order to examine how punk fashion reflected a rebellion toward gendered clothing. Even within a subculture, however, the parent culture may continue to thrive; Brian Cogan's examination of women in punk in "Typical Girls?" suggests that despite the movement's disdain for its patriarchal parent culture, it developed into a predominantly masculine environment, which prompted women to go to greater lengths to establish their legitimacy. Cogan's theory suggests that if a subculture never fully rejects its parent culture, but only bits and pieces of it, then it cannot fully succeed in creating change due to eventual internal strife between movement members. Furthermore, in "Did Punk Matter?" Kevin Mattson de-emphasizes Hebdige's claims of the importance of stylistic elements with regard to the impact of subcultures, placing a greater value on the subversion of corporate pro-

duction through the establishment of independent production. Mattson essentially claims that while style had a certain value to a subculture, the cultural artifacts they produced, such as music or independent news networks, added more to the impact and legacy of that movement. This paper will examine punk and its controversial role in England and the United States during the 1970s and 1980s and argue that as the punk movement aimed to reject all conventional societal norms, and the corresponding fashion did in fact reject the idea of gendered clothing, it took on a quasi-feminist role that contributed to its impact and legacy as a subculture. The first section of the paper examines the historical context of punk with regards to England and the United States, which lays the foundation for a discussion of punk ideology and its representation in the corresponding fashion. Following this will be an analysis of punk fashion in relation to gender and feminism in order to determine if it subverted gendered clothing to aid in feminism.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The origins of the punk movement are often claimed by London and New York, and the scene developed in a different context in both places. Even so, the ideologies associated with punk concerning disillusionment with mainstream society resonated with so many that it eventually found its way to every corner of the globe. Even before what came to be known as “punk” emerged, however, the seeds were sown during the mid-1960s to the mid-70s by an underground rock movement in the United States, spearheaded by bands such as The Velvet Underground and The New York Dolls as recounted in Legs McNeil and Gillian McCain’s *Please Kill Me*. This movement of glam rock and proto-punk seemed to serve as a testing ground for the audacity that would later be a pivotal aspect of punk shows; the jarring, in-your-face music and performance activities, such as flashing or the destruction of instruments, all with the intention of shocking the audience. For punk to take hold as it did, however, there had to be the right political and social climate to create a scene that “contained distorted reflections of all the major post-war subcultures,” as punk borrowed from the various subcultures that preceded it in past decades (Hebdige 18). The movements before punk, such as the hippies and the Beats, laid down the foundation for youth rebellion and the rejection of traditional society, suggestive of their influence in the develop-

ment of punk.

Punk arose as a class-conscious youth subculture, influenced by political, social, and economic woes, and it created enough dissonance to attempt to orchestrate change in 1970s Britain. The post-war economic boom began to wane as miners went on strike in 1970, resulting in power cuts and the decline of various industries and sending the nation into a period of economic decline which saw inflation and the rise of the unemployment rate from 1.3% in 1965 to 4.6% in 1975 (de Castella & McClatchey). The decade also saw the attempts and failures of prime ministers to remedy the fragile economy despite a series of International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans, generating a mood of hopelessness toward the future as well as creating a rift between the nation's leaders and its people (Sandbrook 240). With rising unemployment and a decrease in the demand for labor, fascism and racism in Britain intensified as the notion of "us" against "them" became a factor in one's survival, furthering societal tensions and discontent.

The United States in the 1970s saw the lingering effects of the activist laden and hippie counterculture influenced '60s with regards to social issues. Public opinion remained negative toward American involvement in the Vietnam War until its end in 1975; the universal messages of the Civil Rights movement in the '60s morphed into ones of isolation as progress seemed to revert; the Stonewall Riots of 1969 sparked the gay liberation movement; and second wave feminism raised concerns about the social inequality of the sexes. Furthermore, the U.S. also saw the consequences of stagnation, in which high inflation coincides with high unemployment rates. In 1971, the U.S. broke the Bretton Woods accord, with Britain later following suit, which transferred the value of the dollar from that of the gold standard to the currency itself, leaving it vulnerable to the fluctuations of the market (Masouros 57). The expansion of the nation's reserve deflated the value of the dollar, resulting in the rise of oil prices from the Middle East to make up for the decreased value of currency worldwide. The first ever global Oil Crisis in 1973 resulted in gasoline rations throughout the U.S., a heavy blow to the consumer automobile culture central to U.S. society and a shift in the norm for everyone. Combined with an unemployment rate of 7.7% in 1976, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, American society seemed to reside in the cross-hairs of protest and resignation, setting the tone for the birth of punk.

PUNK IDEOLOGY

The foundations for punk stemmed from a sense of disillusionment and hopelessness about the future as a result of the political, social, and economic turmoil of the times. This nihilistic attitude arose as unemployment, racial tensions, and general dissatisfaction with societal constraints and expectations inspired teenagers, mostly white, to seek an outlet for their emotions. As Wayne Kramer is quoted as saying in *Please Kill Me*, “We knew the world generally sucked and we didn’t want to be a part of it. We wanted to do something else, which amounts to not wanting to get up in the morning and have a real job” (McNeil and McCain 46). Kramer voices the disillusionment felt by many in the movement who joined out of a sense that their generation would not find the same happiness or opportunities afforded to their parents, igniting a spirit of rebellion which would inspire them to actively reject their parent’s culture before them. Between 1974 and 1976, the punk movement’s anti-establishment dogma shifted from a vague agenda to become a full-fledged subculture, as societal outrage gave it legitimacy in discourse. Jesse Prinz argues in “The Aesthetics of Punk Rock” that the punk philosophy could be understood through the amalgamation of the three central pillars: irreverence in its call for chaos and anti-authoritarianism, nihilism in its tendency to emphasize destruction and hopelessness, and amateurism in its rejection of a professional attitude toward music (585).

The aspects of Prinz’s classification of punk ideology physically manifest themselves in punk fashion, portrayed in Figure 1, as a means of non-verbally portraying the philosophy for everyone to see and react to, corresponding to Hebdige’s claims that style served as the symbolic representation of a subculture’s rebellion toward the mainstream. The punks’ utter rejection of societal standards with regards to dress, such as their unisex and explicit styling like the woman’s short hair and the man’s piercings, emphasizes the notion of irreverence with regard to fashion. In terms of nihilism, the general mood of punk fashion radiates a sense of hopelessness, as ripped and burned clothing do not offer the promise of a bright future but rather tell the story of a miserable past. The punk peculiarity of accessorizing with safety pins furthers this postulation, as it may be perceived as a futile attempt to hang on to the threads of an unattainable past. Furthermore, the obvious amateurism present in punk fashion correlates to the imperative DIY nature of the

style, which is pivotal to the expression of its individualistic and authentic nature.

PUNK FASHION AND GENDER

The punk ideology lends itself to a visual examination through punk fashion, as a large aspect of the style focused on reflecting scorn and irony through an androgynous and anti-sexy appearance. Androgynous, or unisex, clothing focuses on combining masculine and feminine elements, or completely rejecting them, as a statement against the traditional gender expectations of fashion and society. As Jo Paoletti describes in *Sex and Unisex*, there exist different expectations regarding “feminine” and “masculine” clothing; societal expectations of males dictate their adherence to conformist and somber clothing - expectations that starkly differ from those requiring females to keep a consistent and obedient balance between the ladylike and seductive aspects of their dress. To anyone within the mainstream culture, the blurring of gender distinctions fixed upon by clothing, paired with unanticipated provocation, results in a general reaction of outrage to the defiance of traditional society and confusion about how to process something so outside of the norm. Punk fashion’s very nature, then, goes against these established gender norms as women donned androgynous clothing, as portrayed in Figure 2, taken from Andrew Bolton’s *Punk: Chaos to Couture*. In this image, one can only guess the sex of the models through a careful examination of their facial features, as the graffiti littered jumpsuits they wear hold no socially prescribed gender identity. On the other side of the spectrum, Figure 3 displays a woman revealing her breasts, as far from the ladylike expectation of femininity and modesty expected of women in society as one could get. By wearing only the outline of a bra, the model suggests that covering her breasts fuels legitimacy in deeming them as something specifically feminine and overtly sexual that must be hidden from everyone, save a romantic partner. The male model also reveals his breasts, though his choice to do so would not be as sexually demonized as his female counterpart’s, implying that biologically they exist equally but one of them will receive more backlash than the other. This raises the question of sexism with regards to the presentation of one’s gender identity, with the corresponding outrage suggestive of the lack of acceptance of an “other” in society. In terms of gendered clothing,

the “other” relates to individuals who oppose the fashion expectations set for socially accepted genders, female and male, or the socially accepted “self.” Any rejection of these expectations constitutes transgressive behavior and can result in collective backlash and disapproval due to that person’s rejection of conformity and standards dictated by the societal canon. In order to dismantle the oppressive cultural standards set by society in terms of clothing, one must be prepared to face discontent and scorn, which is exactly what the punks purposely sought to achieve with their aesthetic.

PUNK AND FEMINISM

The United States in the 1960s saw the emergence of the second wave of feminism, which originally sought to end workplace discrimination toward women, but expanded to focus on the collapse of gender discrimination on a public and political level. The more radical women’s liberation movement “borrowed the notion [...] that ‘the personal is political,’” such as a woman’s everyday roles that she plays with regards to her marriage, housework, and fashion, as a way to destroy cultural and social constraints imposed by an oppressive patriarchy (Hillman 158). Although these different approaches to feminism created a divide within the movement, the notion that an individual could hold political power came to light as a means of rebellion on the most personal level. As described in Betty Hillman’s “The Clothes I Wear Help Me To Know My Own Power,” by picking away at the framework of sexism in society at the most private level, such as the length of one’s hair or skirt, the entire patriarchal establishment weakens as women take back control over their own bodies. Those who rejected the culturally imposed gender expectations placed on people regarding their dress were thus seen as those furthering the feminist agenda. This is an idea can extend to the punks, as a key aspect of punk fashion revolves around unisex clothing and hairstyles without feminism explicitly having a place in punk ideology. The notion that the “personal is political” appears within the punk frame of reference as “physical appearance was a chance to make a statement, to get someone’s attention,” suggesting that if what one chooses to wear results in an extreme deviation from the norm, the outrage sparked could result in societal introspection, which is indicative of the impact of a subculture’s stylistic choices (Bartelt 6).

By correlating the political nature of punk fashion to the second wave feminist agenda of liberation on a personal level, Mattson's dismissal of Hebdige's emphasis on the importance of style with regards to a subculture's impact loses credence as changes in fashion can facilitate societal discussion and introspection. Mattson argues that the analysis of subcultures should emphasize the independent creation of cultural artifacts as methods of resistance over style (73). Cultural artifacts could range from musical commodities to original methods of performance, such as the Sex Pistols' tendency to insult the audience to illicit a reaction, which often ended up in anything from cans to beer bottles being thrown toward the stage (Moser). While independently created subcultural products have validity in challenging the domination of mass media and corporations, the extent to which it facilitates rebellion remains largely within the confines of the subculture. Acts such as independent music production reject the corporate takeover of the music industry, but the general public's knowledge of punk generally scratched the surface, highlighting the importance of style as it served as the initial introduction of the punks to mass society. Independent cultural production spurred creativity and involvement within the scene, but punk fashion appeared to a greater audience as the telltale signifier of one of its members and consequently what they stood for. Hebdige's emphasis on the importance of subcultural style, therefore, reverberates with the feminist notion that at the most personal level, by one's stylistic choices, there exists the potential to ignite outrage and fuel rumination.

Although punk fashion may have been progressive in terms of the destruction of gender distinctions in clothing, the scene itself had an overwhelming male representation suggestive of the inherent sexism within the movement; perhaps what encouraged women to wholeheartedly grasp the radical ideals of punk was the opportunity to carve their sense of identity and legitimacy within the movement despite their continued suppression. With regard to the sexism within punk, Brian Cogan claims in "Typical Girls?" that "for all of its bravado, for all of the constant and insistent rhetoric on social change and political realignment, in the end, punk rock may have been as ultimately restrictive as the very systems that it had hoped to change" (122). Cogan suggests that despite the punk ideology revolving around a rejection of societal norms, which in theory should include any misogynistic practices, the

movement's over representation of men allowed little room for women to create an impact and thus kept sexism alive internally. Despite the embrace of unisex styles, punk "highly valorizes the norms of adolescent masculinity, celebrating displays of toughness, coolness, rebelliousness, and aggressiveness," creating a context in which the female identity must not only struggle to escape the oppressive norms of mainstream society, but also the conforming masculine norms of punk (Leblanc 8). Instead of looking at the androgyny of punk fashion as the most prominent means of resistance against gender roles, Leblanc claims that instead the women within the movement embraced the ideology of punk to facilitate change. Caroline Evans and Minna Thornton in "Fashion, Representation, Femininity," however, claim that "[Punk] was one of the most aggressive styles for women within any of the post-war youth cultures in Britain and represented a corresponding emancipation of subcultural style," suggesting that fashion for punk women existed as a means of creating an identity for themselves within a male-dominated subculture (58). For instance, Figure 4 portrays women in bondage gear; they are equipped with straps, suspenders, and shiny vinyl, bringing to mind images of a dominatrix fitting of the sexual revolution that advocated free love in the '60s. By wearing clothing so outside of the norm of feminine sexiness, punk women embraced a sort of anti-sexiness as their sexuality could no longer be dictated by societal expectations, but rather autonomously by the women themselves and their personal libidos. Clothing that seemed overtly sexual was worn without any sexual context, as these women were not prostitutes, yet they could not aspire to achieve conservative representations of femininity. This helped to position punk women in a place where they could stake a claim in their own sexuality and confuse society's perception of it. By overtly embracing what society deems sexual without consent or approval, the implications become lost and suggest a reimagining of the boundaries crossed.

CONCLUSION

In exploring punk fashion and its potential impact on the subversion of gendered clothing, thereby potentially contributing to feminism, Hebdige's *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* formed the framework for my examination of fashion's potential to incite change by suggesting that a subculture utilizes style to symbolically resist an undesirable parent

culture. To better understand the zeitgeist that inspired punk, a historical analysis revealed that the 1970s found Britain and the U.S. at the crux of social tensions and economic downturns, generating the ideal mood for the emergence of the punk subculture. Punk arose as disdain for the mainstream culture contextualized into a clear ideology centered on nihilism, irreverence, and authenticity, which are the three aspects of punk that its members symbolically portrayed by the movement's distinctive style. By analyzing images of punk clothing and delving into unisex fashions, which ignored gender impositions on clothing by combining masculine and feminine elements or rejected them altogether, my research suggests that punk fashion embraced the former in an effort to abandon all notions of societal norm and elicit outrage. In this sense, punk fashion expressed the ideological call for chaos by combining the masculine and feminine to oppose societal expectations, thereby aiming to dismantle gender impositions, a task also undertaken by second wave feminists. Although Mattson de-emphasizes the value Hebdige places on style, focusing on the production of cultural artifacts as a means of analyzing subcultures, the similarities between the punks' affinity for ideological expression through fashion and the second wave feminist belief that the "personal is political" conveys the notion that fashion can take on a political meaning. Therefore, since punks symbolically represented their beliefs via their dress, which subverted gender roles, punk assisted in furthering the feminist agenda, albeit unintentionally, as the movement itself remained steeped in sexism, according to Cogan. By going so far as to attempt to reclaim the notion of female sexuality by sporting bondage gear, a choice few punk women put an end to traditional fashion constraints by setting a new standard for fashion's shock value; bleached and dyed hair and scandalously short skirts paled in comparison to a topless woman casually enjoying her evening. Thus, the risqué styles of punk fashion expanded what is accepted in the mainstream conceptions of femininity and masculinity, pushing the boundaries so far out that now we hardly bat an eye what caused such societal outrage some four decades ago.

IMAGES

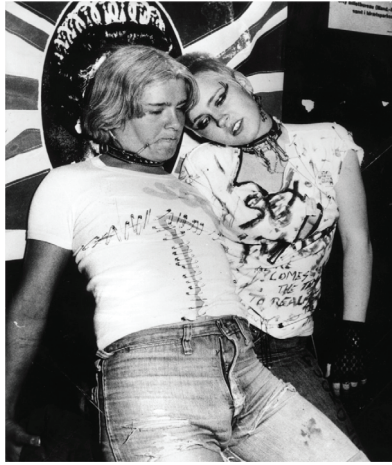


Figure 1
Sex Pistols Fans
Buzzfeed



Figure 2
London Punks
1977-78
Photo by Ku Khanh
Bolton, p. 160



Figure 3
Siouxsie Sioux and Steve Severine
1976
Photo by Bob Greun
Bolton, p. 230



Figure 4
Vivienne Westwood, Bondage Collection, 1976.
Evans & Thornton, p. 59

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Why Isn't My Joke Funny Everywhere? How Humor Crosses Cultural Lines

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Abstract: The universality of humor has long been a point of contention; while appreciating humor is largely believed to be universal (all cultures can laugh), there also exists great diversity of humor types across cultures which are not directly transferrable. I will analyze humor through the incongruity-theory framework and examine how this humor process fares under two culture-specific dimensions: individualism-collectivism and uncertainty avoidance. We find that individualistic cultures tend to use more aggressive humor, while collectivist cultures tend towards affiliative and self-enhancing humor. Conversely, high uncertainty avoidance cultures tend towards resolved incongruity humor. Contrary to the popular mantra, this research supports the notion that humor is not universal; individuals express their sense of humor in certain ways that reflect specific personality traits, values, attitudes, and beliefs shaped by particular cultural orientations.

INTRODUCTION

Joe Wong, a Chinese born and raised comedian who has become critically acclaimed for his performances before American audiences once delivered the line: “I used to be really scared about marriage – 50% of all marriages end up... *lasting forever!*” Most members of the US audience responded with waves of laughter and thunderous applause, but the joke fell completely flat in cringe-worthy silence when he performed the routine for an East Asian crowd (Cui 1). Why is it that some jokes and comedic situations are funny in some cultures yet unfunny in others? Even across countries with a common language, humor can be lost in translation. Researcher Neil G. Martin, a Life Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and author of 13 books on psychology, finds in his humor research across the US, UK, and Australia that “although preferences and liking for certain types of humor are more consistent within ‘Western’ cultures, a preference that is helped by a shared language and an appreciation of how this language is used to produce laughter, there are national differences in what is regarded as humorous” (Martin, 378). Under-

standing the fundamental nature of humor across a range of cultural contexts is key to successfully delivering humor across cultures, and is consequential in both interpersonal cross-cultural interaction as well as in commercial use of global advertising and entertainment. Dr. Yih hwei Lee and Dr. Elison Lim, renowned faculty from the National University of Singapore Business School, note that “failed humor is counterproductive: It not only confuses the audience, but may also give offense. Since the audience plays a key role in determining whether humor succeeds or fails, clarifying the relationship between audience and message factors is especially important for advertisers” (Lee 79) By identifying the culture-specific conditions necessary for humor to succeed, we are better able to minimize the gap between the intended humor of the performer and what his or her audience perceives. Moreover, this strategy will help the former reach a wider audience and earn laughs around the world.

A major prevailing school of thought regarding why something is funny revolves around the notion of incongruity, which occurs when a situation deviates from expectations. Immanuel Kant outlines this idea in a comedic context, and he finds that incongruity is actually a humor-generating process. Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* gives us a picture of this incongruity humor process: “In everything that is to excite a lively laugh there must be something absurd. Laughter is an affection arising from the sudden transformation of a strained expectation into nothing” (Kant 54). In many cases, a great deviation, or “transformation of a strained expectation,” will garner many laughs. Dana L. Alden, a professor of Marketing at Shindler College of Business and prolific contributor to cross-cultural consumer behavior research, has extended Kant’s incongruity theory to include additional conditions. According to Alden, “a humorous response depends on (1) rapid resolution of the incongruity, (2) a “playful” context, that is, with cues signifying that the information is not to be taken seriously, and (3) an appropriate mood for the listener” (Alden 66). Joe Wong’s one liner invokes this incongruity-resolution humor process for the joke – he sets up an expectation from which he deviates, establishes a playful tone to cue humorous intent, and finally resolves the incongruity by delivering the punchline. In this framework, the humor comes from the ability to reconcile the punchline with the information presented earlier in the set-up. This allows the audience to get the joke and understand the playful nature of

its intent.

Despite following the formula for a theoretically proven humor-generating process, Wong's joke is met with a wide range of responses in different cultural contexts. Understanding why the same humor process can have a drastically different reception in different cultural contexts will be the focus of this paper. Of the 196 different countries in the world today, each one has a unique cultural flavor that influences the way its residents perceive humor. Nations are often pigeonholed into the basic "Eastern" and "Western" categories. However, as Martin notes, "East and West may be too broad a short-hand category with which to classify these cultures. States of the U.S., for example (collectively, a Western sample), have been found to differ in the degree of personality traits they express..." (Martin 378). If a single country can include a wide range of comedic tastes, then we must analyze the cultural-specific qualities that have direct effects on the interpretation of humor. Professor Geert Hofstede, critically acclaimed researcher recognized as the founder of comparative intercultural research, developed models of "dimensions" of national culture which he defines as "the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others" (Hofstede 25). Two of the cultural dimensions he establishes, individualism-collectivism and uncertainty avoidance, have powerful implications in the field of humor.

Using incongruity and incongruity-resolution theory as a framework for the humor generating process, we will examine individualism-collectivism and uncertainty avoidance to understand how cultural context affects the reception of humor. While all cultures certainly do laugh, the interpretation of humor is not universal – the type of humor that is most well received in any given cultural orientation will be the type that best compliments its culture-specific characteristics. There is no universal joke, as the psychological attitudes of a given society have a consequential effect on the way the same humor process is interpreted across cultures.

INCONGRUITY HUMOR ACROSS INDIVIDUALISM-COLLECTIVISM

The cultural dimension of individualism versus collectivism is essentially the degree to which a society's collective image identifies with "I" or

“we.” Hofstede explicitly defines individualism as “the preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of only themselves and their immediate families,” and collectivism as “the preference for a tightly-knit framework in society in which individuals can expect their relatives or members of a particular in-group to look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty” (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov 167). Simply put, nations such as the US, Germany, UK, and Australia are more individualistic in that their respective societies tend to favor freedom of action for individuals, while others such as China, Thailand, Singapore, and Korea are more collectivist and prioritize the needs of the entire group or society over the individual. Alden and Lee expand upon Hofstede’s dimension as they recognize individualism-collectivism as a distinct psychological dichotomy across nations that affects humor in their study of humor in advertising (Alden 67). Since fundamentally collectivist cultures view their people as a unit and individualistic cultures see individuals as independent entities with needs apart from the group, the humor that works best in each category should include these cultural and psychological predispositions.

This cultural psychological difference is a driving force behind why it is difficult for the same type of humor to be universally acclaimed – incongruity and resolution may be what initially makes a joke funny, but a joke based on individualistic qualities will thrive in individualistic cultures rather than collectivist ones, and vice versa. In a study of humor in collectivist China, Guo-Hai Chen notes that “people express their sense of humor in a certain way that reflects their personality traits, values, attitudes, beliefs, and so on. Thus, people who have a more collectivist orientation tend to express a style of humor towards other people that reflects this trait, whereas those with a more individualist orientation have another style of humor” (Chen, 67) Alden and Lee’s multi-national analysis of humor in advertising exemplifies this as they identify two countries that highly value individualism, the United States and Germany, and two countries that prioritize collectivism, Thailand and Korea. The pair analyzed individual responses to various types of humorous advertisements in their respective countries and found that “most television advertising from diverse national markets in which humor is intended exhibits incongruent contrasts” and “the number of individuals or characters playing major roles in ads in which humor is intended

is greater in high collectivism (low individualism) cultures than in low collectivism (high individualism) cultures” (Alden 68). In particular, the sample of US and Germany (individualistic) advertisements featured two or fewer individuals 75% of the time compared to Thailand at 20% and Korea at 31% of the time. On the other hand, the sample of Thai and Korean advertisements featured three or more individuals 80% and 69% of the time, while the ads in the United States and Germany only had three or more individuals 25% of the time (Alden 70). These empirical results exemplify a critical fact: while incongruity can make something initially funny, it is the context in which that incongruity is delivered that makes it work. Chen’s research takes this one step further by identifying additional “styles” or “humor types” of incongruity that are more associated with individualism-collectivism. He finds that “aggressive humor was found to be consistently and very significantly related to vertical individualism, suggesting that those who are competitive and strive to win at the expense of others, tend to use humor to enhance themselves by disparaging others” (Chen 66), which may be a soft reflection of the personality traits and attitudes cultivated by an individualistic society. Chen is not entirely alone in his claim; an independent study by Ofra Nevo published in the *Journal of General Psychology* also found that students in the U.S. were far more likely than collectivist Singaporean students to make aggressive and sexual jokes (Nevo 152). It is likely that the individualistic culture of the US allows these jokes to still remain playful and appropriate, thus allowing for the incongruity to be understood and resolved. In contrast, “horizontal collectivism was positively and significantly related to two beneficial humor styles, affiliative and self enhancing humor” (Chen 66), suggesting that people who see themselves as part of a larger egalitarian group tend to use humor to empower all members of the group. Aggressive style jokes thus understandably fall flatter in these cultures, where the cultural norm is to empower your fellow neighbors and workers collectively rather than for personal achievement. Ultimately, the most effective humor will be the one that best reflects the level of individualism or collectivism within the joke’s social context.

INCONGRUITY HUMOR ACROSS UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

A culture's level of uncertainty avoidance is essentially its risk tolerance. Hofstede defines uncertainty avoidance as "the extent to which members of a culture feel threatened by uncertainty or unknown situations" ("Cultures and Organizations" 167). Specifically, individuals from cultures with low uncertainty avoidance are more tolerant of variability and risk-taking, while those in cultures with high uncertainty avoidance prefer stability, predictability, and generally avoid taking risks. These qualities often manifest themselves through strict rules, laws, policies, and regulations to avoid risk and instability. In weak uncertainty avoidance countries, anxiety levels are lower, and aggression and emotions are less prominent (171). Uncertainty avoidance has been studied across many countries, and has been well documented and quantified on a culturally relative scale. For example, Arab countries scored a 68 on uncertainty avoidance, while the United States had a score of 46, indicating that Arab countries have a lower tolerance for uncertainty in comparison to the United States (Kalimy 127). Uncertainty avoidance as a dimension is not mutually exclusive of individualism-collectivism; for example, a society could be both risk averse and individualistic.

The type of incongruity humor that works best in high uncertainty avoidance cultures will inevitably differ from the type that works best in low uncertainty avoidance cultures. High uncertainty avoidance cultures will likely enjoy minimal uncertainty, and conservative and clear resolution, while low uncertainty avoidance cultures may enjoy higher uncertainty, and riskier and open-ended humor. Dr. Yih hwai Lee and Dr. Elison Lim conducted an empirical studying on the moderating role of uncertainty avoidance in advertising humor. They first asked 222 MBA students to respond to a questionnaire to identify their preference for uncertainty-avoidance. They were then randomly assigned to watch two humorous advertisements employing incongruity humor with a follow-up Likert Scale questionnaire on their reactions to the ad exposure (e.g., This ad is very funny to me. 7 = strongly agree). It turns out that "ads using the incongruity resolution humor process with resolved incongruity will elicit more favorable responses among consumers with higher (versus lower) uncertainty avoidance" (Lee 73). Additionally, they also find that the inverse is true, with their results showing that "ads

using the incongruity resolution humor process with unresolved incongruity will elicit less favorable responses among consumers with higher (versus lower) uncertainty avoidance” (73). Thus Lee and Lim develop Hofstede’s cultural dimension of uncertainty avoidance by defining a clear correlated effect on incongruity humor: Audiences with higher uncertainty avoidance tend to prefer humor with resolved incongruity, and vice versa. If we recall Guo-Hai Chen’s humor theory that “people express their sense of humor in a certain way that reflects their personality traits, values, attitudes, beliefs” then this empirical result should not be surprising (Chen 67). Risk-averse cultures enjoy more conservative jokes that have clearly resolved incongruities as it reflects their conservative attitudes, while risk-taking cultures enjoy open-ended, cliffhanger jokes that derive their punch from that incongruity in the spirit of embracing risk and uncertainty.

Furthermore, while these results seem to solely affect the audience - what the listener prefers given his or her risk tolerance - uncertainty avoidance can also contribute an effect on the initiator, or person telling the joke. Individuals in risk-averse and high uncertainty avoidance cultures may tend to shy away from aggressive and risqué humor because they are inherently “riskier” to deliver since they aren’t sure how well their joke will be received by the audience (Kalliny 127). In a cross-cultural study of differences between Egyptian, Lebanese, and American humor styles, Morris Kalliny finds that risk-taking societies like the U.S. use aggressive humor more prevalently than risk-averse Arab culture societies (127). A risk-taking individual is more likely to take the chance of an awkward or uncomfortable interaction if the joke fails and the audience gets offended for the possible reward of a stellar response to an aggressive joke. Kalliny’s claim that risk taking societies use aggressive humor builds on the research by Guo-Hai Chen on humor styles and the correlation of aggressive humor to individualism and self-enhancement by establishing a link of aggressive humor to low uncertainty avoidance and showing that the effects of cultural dimensions on humor are not mutually exclusive. Furthermore, Rod A. Martin’s theory of four fundamental styles of humor defines aggressive humor by its uncertainty, stating aggressive style humor has “the tendency to express humor without regard for its potential impact on others (e.g., sexist or racist humor), and includes compulsive expressions of humor in which one finds it difficult to resist the impulse to say funny things that

are likely to hurt or alienate others” (Martin 54). Therefore the person delivering the aggressive joke must have low uncertainty avoidance and higher risk tolerance to be able to deliver humor in the way that Martin describes. Lee and Lim acknowledge that this phenomenon, in the realm of humor in advertising as well as in the level of uncertainty avoidance in the “message factor,” has a noteworthy effect on not only the type of humor delivered, but also how well it is received (Lee 72). Thus the uncertainty avoidance dimension of a given culture has a substantial effect on the way its people both deliver and perceive humor, which ultimately supports the notion that humor has significant variation across cultural landscapes and is subsequently relative and non-universal.

AN OPPOSING VIEW: A COMMON DENOMINATOR OF HUMOR

It is important to note that although humor differs vastly across cultural contexts, there exist fundamental aspects of humor that seem to be understood universally. For instance, the incongruity *process* itself seems to manifest across all cultures. In the Alden and Lee study on advertisements across individualism-collectivism, they found that despite the content difference in jokes, incongruity-based humor was used in a majority of television advertising that was intended to be humorous despite significant differences on major cultural dimensions (70). This suggests incongruent cognitive structures are central to humor generation regardless of cultural orientation, which seems to be echoed in other independent studies as well. Professor Lynette S. Unger of Miami University conducted a study of humor in and found that “despite its variation in form, humor is pan-human” (Unger 66). This is crucial in the realm of advertising, as it is imperative that companies are able to convey messages to the widest possible audience, even across language and cultural barriers. Unger notes that “copy elements must often be universal enough to promote product benefits and image among different cultures [and] humor may offer such universality” (66). She substantiates this claim with a cross cultural experiment of presenting advertisements to American and Finnish audiences, finding that “there were no national differences on the nine path analyses results, indicating linkage between perceived ad funniness, liking the ad, and liking the product” (68). The result of this study is consequential: Both of these countries were able to appreciate humor in the same fashion. However, there is a clear distinc-

tion between humor as exactly the same across all cultures and humor as a universal force. The former implies that any single joke would have the same reception in any context, but the latter suggests that while every culture has humor, the process by which it is appreciated varies greatly.

CONCLUSION

So what is funny? It depends on who you ask and where that person is from. Everyone can laugh and humor exist across all cultures, but often times the content that drives the laughter is not directly transferrable across these cultural lines. This result can be attributed directly to the fact that a society's sense of humor is shaped by its cultural dimensions such as collective programming of the mind and psychological attitudes. We find that two such cultural dimensions, individualism-collectivism and uncertainty avoidance, strongly affect the way incongruity-based humor is both delivered and perceived in those respective cultures. Specifically, the types of humor that fare best in any given culture are the types that reflect and compliment the psychological predispositions of that culture. Individualistic societies seem to favor aggressive humor styles that draw upon the individual, while collectivist societies favor affiliative and self-enhancing humor styles that work for the benefit of the group. Cultures that avoid uncertainty desire stability and typically prefer humor with resolved incongruities, while cultures that enjoy risk-taking qualities and characteristics have no qualms about embracing open-ended incongruity and the risk of telling offensive, aggressive, or sexual jokes. This analysis explores a unique perspective of the non-universality of humor, and the wide array of empirical studies suggests that cultural differences in humor are more complex than they may appear. Research still has much more room to explore the field of cultural dimensions such as power distance, masculinity, femininity, and facework. We recognize that humor is not limited to any specific culture; the incongruity humor process is a pan-human phenomenon that belongs to all people. However, for comedians, marketers, advertisers, and anyone who wishes to share a laugh across a cultural line, it is important to remember a joke that is funny here may not be funny there as the various cultural-specific dimensions of a society shape both the psychology of a people and the types of jokes they appreciate.

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How Does It Feel To Be One Of The Beautiful People? : Marilyn Manson's War on Conservative American Culture

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Marilyn Manson, born as Brian Warner in Canton, Ohio, emerged from the Florida music scene in the early 1990's with his band Marilyn Manson and the Spooky Kids. His stage name is derived from Marilyn Monroe, an American beauty icon, and Charles Manson, a villain glorified by the media despite the violent murders he committed. Marilyn Manson broke into the mainstream in 1995 with a cover of the Eurythmic's "Sweet Dreams (Are Made of This)." He later went on to achieve widespread mainstream success with his albums *Antichrist Superstar* (1996) and *Mechanical Animals* (1998). Manson's goal was to challenge American values through his music, aesthetics, and performances. Manson often attacked sensitive subjects such as religion and violence. While Manson was able to achieve mainstream success, he faced adamant resistance from conservative audiences. Throughout Manson's career, he made calculated artistic decisions in an effort to rattle the consciousness of conservative Americans consequently being perceived as a genuine threat to widely accepted American traditions and values. While Manson utilized fabricated artistic personas throughout his career, he obtains authenticity as an artist through his ability to engender genuine emotional reactions from both his fan base and his conservative opposition.

Despite the fact that Marilyn Manson is a prominent figure in American counter-culture, Manson managed to infiltrate mainstream media channels. Robert Wright's "I'd Sell You Suicide," analyzes Manson's manipulation of mainstream culture. Wright states: "Not only does Manson know his own place in the rock pantheon; he has an uncanny sense of the relationship of mainstream rock culture to the margins - and he exploits its tensions at every opportunity" (Wright 379). Wright suggests that Manson understands the role of mainstream musicians and their ability to influence American culture. However, Wright fails to acknowledge how Manson manipulates and evokes reactions from his intended audiences. Although Manson displays adamant resentment

towards America's fascination with popular culture and the prominence of organized religion in American culture, he has a strong understanding of the culture that he has grown to despise. Manson uses this fluency in American culture and his influence as a mainstream artist to evoke genuine reactions from his intended audiences.

Manson displayed his fluency in American culture at the 1997 MTV Music Awards with a performance of his song "The Beautiful People." Manson utilized the MTV Video Music Awards as a platform to dismantle traditional American values while making the artistic decision to perform in a setting that was visually familiar to the average American. In this performance, Manson is welcomed to the stage by a marching band playing "Hail to the Chief" and is followed by secret service agents. The stage is shrouded in patriotic decor; however, the backdrop features a large American flag with Manson's logo replacing the 50 stars, signifying his efforts to contaminate America's youth with his ideals. The scene represents a presidential inauguration as Manson steps up to a podium, addressing the crowd:

My fellow Americans: We will no longer be oppressed by the fascism of Christianity! And we will no longer be oppressed by the fascism of beauty. As I see you all sittin' out there trying your hardest not to be ugly, trying your hardest to fit in, trying your hardest to earn your way into Heaven, but let me ask you: Do you want to be in a place that's filled with a bunch of assholes? ("Marilyn Manson Beautiful People")

While a presidential inauguration traditionally includes the reiteration of national integrity and American tradition, Manson uses this platform to demolish the very values that America has come to accept and embody. Manson aesthetically represents this uprooting of American tradition when he proceeds to remove his furry, black trench coat to reveal him only wearing a women's corset and leather g-string. Manson's speech makes his agenda obvious to those unfamiliar with his music or his ideals. He condemns Christianity, conveying his resentment towards organized religion, proclaiming that heaven is "full of a bunch of assholes." He also criticizes American culture's infatuation with beauty and fame in a venue that is occupied by mainstream pop stars, actors, and actresses. Manson's inauguration scene essentially replicates a platform

that is traditionally used to signify a continuation of traditional American values and ideals. Rather than celebrating these values, Manson mocks and violently attacks them. This performance is iconic and essential for Manson's success as an artist. He uses this mainstream platform to send a chill of discomfort down the spine of conservative American culture while capturing a counter-culture audience that refuses to conform to societal expectations and cultural norms.

While Marilyn Manson's music conveys a message of resentment towards mainstream American culture, he seemingly accepted and thrived in his role as a mainstream star throughout the 1990's and early 2000's. This contradiction ultimately poses a debate about Manson's authenticity as an artist. In Emily Borowska's "Transgressing Capitalism in Kathy Acker and Marilyn Manson's Punk and Goth Aesthetics," the author analyzes Manson's role within mainstream American culture. Borowska presents the point of another scholar, Theodor Adorno, who states, "He (Manson) skillfully takes advantage of capitalism's reliance on counter-culture to create new markets, turning the youthful rebellion into a business opportunity" (Borowska 14). Adorno suggests that Manson's main focus is not the quality of his art but instead the establishment of a brand that is used to generate revenue. Adorno argues that Manson's authenticity as an artist is diminished by his acceptance and promotion of the mass consumption of his brand. While Adorno's point has a certain level of validity, he neglects to address Manson's artistic creativity. In his book, *Authenticity as a Form of Worth*, Michael Strand, defines "inspirational worth" as an important attribute that validates an artist's authenticity. Strand defines "inspirational worth" as "an outpouring of emotion, spontaneity, passion in creation, and the cult of uniqueness" (Strand 62). It can be argued that Manson fulfills every criteria that Strand establishes for an artist to achieve "inspirational worth" and validate authenticity. Manson's music is teeming with raw emotion and agony. As a "shock rocker", Manson also thrives on spontaneity, showing the willingness to commit obscene acts in his live performances. While Manson's numerous personas are purely fabricated, his obsession with aesthetics and musical evolution displays a genuine passion for his art. Strand also mentions the acquisition of a "cult of uniqueness" in his criteria for the establishment of an artist's authenticity. Utilizing his music and influence, Manson is able to create a widely androgynous fan

base with a distinct stylistic identity that replicates Manson's aesthetic choices. Through Strand's theory of authenticity, it can be argued that Manson wasn't consciously attempting to obtain a commercial fan base in an effort to sell records and merchandise. Rather than making efforts to establish a counter-culture in which his brand can thrive, as Adorno suggests, it can be argued that Manson's authenticity as an artist attracts consumers belonging to these counter-cultures.

In 1996 Marilyn Manson released the album, *Antichrist Superstar*, a metal opera with an anti-religion theme that spans throughout. The title of this album is inspired by Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Jesus Christ Superstar*, a rock opera detailing Jesus's last week on earth. Upon the Lloyd Webber album's release in 1972, it was deemed to be blasphemous by some Christians. Ted Neeley, the actor who played Jesus in the 1973 film depiction of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, analyzes the significance of the film's title and its relationship to popular culture in America. Neeley explains:

Jimi Hendrix had just died of a drug overdose and he was a 'superstar.' 'And the same with Mama Cass. All of those 'superstars' had shown themselves to be very human, so if I was a religious person, I could see they wouldn't want to be juxtaposed to that element. I'm more open-minded, but a lot of religious people are taught, 'Here, take this, this is what the preacher said.' (Morse)

Neeley proposes that the concept of *Jesus Christ Superstar* humanizes religious figures who are considered to be omnipotent and makes them susceptible to the indiscretions associated with troubled stars within popular culture. This concept is closely associated with the messages that Manson is attempting to convey in his music. Manson attempts to portray a message of self-empowerment and discourages reliance on religion. With the release of *Antichrist Superstar*, Manson ultimately created an enormous controversy among conservative Christian audiences by contorting traditional evangelical teachings and tainting them with satanic influences and themes associated with the vulnerability of modern rock icons.

Despite the prominence of controversial themes in popular music throughout history, Marilyn Manson is one of the artists who has been publicly condemned for his lyrical content and the crass nature of

his music. Robert Wright discusses the prevalence of suicidal themes in popular music throughout the last 60 years, targeting Gilbert O'Sullivan's 1972 hit song "Alone Again (Naturally)." This song is a narrative about an emotionally broken man who is driven to suicide. It features O'Sullivan singing, "Visit a nearby tower and climbing to the top, Will throw myself off in an effort to make it clear to whoever wants to know what it's like when you're shattered" ("*Alone Again (Naturally)*"). O'Sullivan's song was widely accepted by a broad commercial audience, spending six weeks atop the Billboard charts. This song's lyrical content closely parallels Manson's song, "Minute of Decay", where he sings "I've been black to back, I've whited out my name, a lack of hope, a lack of anything to say, there is no cure for what is killing me, I'm on my way down, I've looked ahead and saw a world that's dead to me" ("*Minute of Decay*"). While O'Sullivan received universal acclaim for his song, Manson was met by resistance from conservative organizations seeking stricter censorship regulations. Robert Wright analyzes this phenomena, writing:

Yet as Gilbert O'Sullivan's appeal to the highly conservative Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences attests, musical threats of suicide did not provoke anything even remotely resembling a moral panic in those years. Rather, the theme of suicide was integrated into mainstream pop culture in a thoroughly romantic and ultimately bourgeois fashion, just as it had been in earlier mass mediated incarnations from romance novels to tragic opera. (Wright 367)

It can be argued that this is because Gilbert O'Sullivan's suicidal message was paired with a particularly melodic instrumental arrangement that drowns out his feelings of despair. O'Sullivan's composition gently tiptoes around the theme of suicide. However, Manson's "Minute of Decay" is remorseless and calls for an immediate end to suffering and emptiness. He conveys this message through an extremely exerted vocal performance that is paired with an eerie bass line and thrashing chorus. Manson wildly exclaims, "Shoot, Shoot, Shoot, Motherfucker!" in his song "The Reflecting God" while artists such as O'Sullivan present their internal anguish in a way that is delicate and underwhelming. Manson's volatile manner of presenting suicidal feelings is earnest and genuine, conveying a refusal to repress feelings of emptiness and depression. Manson's ability to honestly present his emotions contribute to his

authenticity as an artist and his music consequently serves as an outlet for listeners who harbor similar emotions.

Upon the release of *Antichrist Superstar* in 1996, Marilyn Manson successfully instilled a genuine sense of concern into conservative American culture. During this period, Manson depicts himself as the Antichrist Superstar, an androgynous prophet with distinct satanic influences. Through the creation of this fabricated persona, it can be argued that Manson was attempting to establish himself as a horror figure in mainstream culture. In Paul Santilli's "Culture, Evil and Horror," he discusses the concept of horror and its relationship to cultural standards. Santilli describes the concept of a "horror monster" in film, writing, "In F. W. Murnau's 1922 moving picture *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror*, the vampire is portrayed as an awful blend of the living and the dead, male and female, man and animal, nourishment and blood, sexuality and death. Wherever this creature materializes, there are filthy rats, pestilence, and plagues" (Santilli 177). Manson's face is portrayed as lifeless and bleak, covered in pale make-up with wispy black details that indicate a sense of death. His eyes are asymmetrical, one of his eyes accentuated with a strikingly polar contact lens. He is clothed in women's lingerie, lacking a true gender identity. Santilli goes on to explain, "They (horror monsters) do not fit the scheme; they violate it. Thus, monsters are not only physically threatening; they are cognitively threatening. . . . For such monsters are in a certain sense challenges to the foundations of a culture's way of thinking" (Santilli 177). Santilli suggests that horror monsters cognitively threaten human understanding and distort preconceived notions and Manson successfully does this within the pantheon of mainstream popular musicians. While onstage, Manson spits on his audience and performs acts of self-mutilation. He is covered in a grimy solution of blood, sweat and smeared cosmetics. His lyrics are vulgar and destructive and his voice is shrill. Conservative audiences understandably perceive Manson as cognitively threatening. He presents themes in his music that defy societal norms in conjunction with an image that violates mainstream expectations of beauty. While Manson's Antichrist Superstar persona is purely fabricated, the feelings of disgust and horror that he is able to evoke among conservative audiences are very real.

While Manson has undergone numerous persona changes

throughout his career, he has maintained a consistently androgynous image. In his work, Robert Wright writes that Manson's androgynous aesthetics created a "homophobic panic bubble," however, Judith Peraino suggests that there is more to Manson's androgyny than shock factor. In her piece *Listening to the Sirens: Musical Technologies of Queer Identity from Home to Hedwig*, Peraino theorizes about Manson's androgyny stating, "Manson's music provides the phallic penetration that his body, so thoroughly and artistically broken down, cannot" (Peraino 457). Peraino suggests that because Manson is perceived as aesthetically impotent, he does not release aggression or energy through passionate, sexual experiences. He instead expels aggression through his music, creating art that is destructive and abrasive. Peraino explains:

We see Manson or his band members urinate, vomit, defecate, spit at and be spit at by the audience, blow their nose and wipe it on the wall, cut themselves onstage, and drench themselves with blood and sweat. The missing liquid in this flood is semen: there is plenty of masturbation here, but the scenes of masturbation are all cheap and unsensual (but sensationalistic) sight gags, like a brief shot in which Manson rubs the Bible between his legs. (Peraino 455)

Peraino suggests that Manson offers no genuine sexual pleasure through his music or live performances despite his perverse lyrics. In the song "User Friendly" featured on Manson's 1998 album, *Mechanical Animals*, he repeatedly sings "I'm not in love but I'm going to fuck you until somebody better comes along." While these lyrics are sexually explicit, they aren't sensual or passionate. Manson's use of the word "fuck" is abrasive and expresses a deluge of frustration and aggression on a sexual partner who is expendable and inferior. Manson's music relies on sadomasochistic vehicles of expression rather than sensual, pleasure-filled experiences. Manson ultimately creates a product that transcends gender boundaries using the universal theme of aggression that is presented in his music and live performances.

Manson's prophetic role as a musician and performer has created a rare, unifying dynamic between his fans that is absent in traditional metal and hard rock communities. Manson's Antichrist Superstar persona serves as a Messianic symbol with satanic influences, as he performs from a pulpit and burns bibles during live performances. Manson

consequently serves as a prophet to his followers, reigning dominant and passing his ideals on to his subservient fans. In Rosemary Lucy Hill's, "Reconceptualizing Hard Rock And Metal Fans As A Group: Imaginary Community" she analyzes fan relations existing within metal and hard rock communities. Hill writes about the imaginary communities created by fans:

The concept of the imaginary community therefore helps to achieve two things: (one) it highlights the way in which the community is only thought of as harmonious, and the way that its 'equality' harbours biases and gendered and raced values, thus opening up the space to consider power structure, hidden ideas and discriminatory practices... (13)

Hill suggests that despite the perceived equality within an artists' fan base, there are usually underlying hierarchical levels and discrimination that plague these communities. While Manson's androgyny promotes gender equality within his fan base, his role as a prophet destroys possible hierarchical levels that may exist. Manson does this through the creation of a unique "youth culture" that is discussed in Ronald Burke and Robert Grinder's study, *Personality-Oriented Themes and Listening Patterns in Teen-Age Music and Their Relation to Certain Academic and Peer Variables*. Burke and Grinder explain, "[t]he venerable psychoanalytic outlook has provided a basis for the widely adopted belief that participation in the youth culture serves primarily as an outlet for adolescent rebelliousness" (209). It can be argued that Manson creates an enticing "youth culture" through his music and image that contrast the seemingly antiquated ideals and morals of parental figures. Manson creates a united teen community through the advocacy of standards that are novel and differ from the messages that have been consistently reiterated by authority figures. Manson's fans are willing to sacrifice their individuality in an attempt to further the rebellious agenda that they choose to identify with. Teens ironically find solace in Manson's destructive music and imagery, using him as an outlet to display rebellion and participate in "youth culture." Parents recognize that Manson, a mainstream artist, creates a united community that Hill suggests is not offered by other metal and hard rock artists. Conservative audiences recognize that Manson's prophetic role is dangerous because his rebellious message and

charisma thrives among “youth culture.”

Marilyn Manson has proven himself as the great provocateur of the last two decades. Manson manipulates sensitive themes in American culture, and presents these themes in a manner that threatens the upheaval of widely accepted ideals and morals. Manson evokes reactions of horror and panic among conservative audiences who are unable to conceptualize his aesthetic inclinations and the message that he conveys in his music. Because of this, Manson’s music and message thrives among teens who seek an outlet to express rebellion and dispute societal norms. Manson’s artistic choices are calculated and thorough, and display an unparalleled ability to induce chaos in American popular culture. Manson ultimately transcends his “shock rocker” label by refusing to rely strictly on theatrics and instead creating a product with artistic substance that engenders authentic emotional reactions among his audience.

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Bridging the Gap between Disorder and Illness in Treatments for Cerebral Palsy

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Abstract: When evaluating and treating cerebral palsy, healthcare service providers heavily rely on the biomedical model as a primary means to conceptualize a patient's sickness, focusing almost exclusively on physiological areas and malfunctioning; however, this framework ignores sociocultural aspects, setting aside the meaningful personal and social experiences associated with his or her disability. Despite claims of the practicality and efficiency of the biomedical model, there are glaring, yet subtle consequences of this limited framework, such as discrimination and underestimation. The biomedical model fails to fully help patients adapt to their sociocultural challenges and regards them as medical anomalies that solely need medical interventions. This paper will explore ways in which the fusion of the biomedical model and sociocultural context structures a holistic approach in healthcare, tailoring treatments to the patients' personal interests, desires, and needs. In this way, patients with cerebral palsy are not reduced to or judged by their disabilities. Instead, each individual is considered in his or her entirety and recognized by his or her unique character, and can be seen as having the potential to adapt to and cope with personal adversities.

INTRODUCTION

The evaluation and treatment for children and adolescents with cerebral palsy (CP) depends, to an extent, on the paradigm or model being used to conceptualize disorders and disabilities. Traditional healthcare practices mainly revolve around the “disorder” or the biomedical model. The dilemma is that this model does not include social factors of the condition, nor does it consider the individual's perspective of his or her own condition. It ignores socially and personally meaningful perspectives of “illness” in treatments and tends to stigmatize disorders. I will investigate how programs and therapeutic treatments for children and adolescents with CP should not only concentrate on the biomedical aspect, but also on the patients' independence, quality of life, and social participation in the interest of supporting people in adapting to and coping with the effects of disorder and illness. Healthcare service providers should infuse the biomedical model of disorder with the sociocultural context

of illness, because doing so would assist children and adolescents with CP and other disabilities to self-reliantly adapt and cope to adversity.

I will analyze the arguments of Sabatello, Wely, Grandi, and Westling as they relate to the biomedical model and sociocultural context of healthcare. My first section looks at the inconsistency between current healthcare delivery approaches and the sociocultural rights and predicaments of children and adolescents with CP. Thus, this section will lay the foundation for my arguments about the importance of closing the gap between disorder and illness and identifying discrimination and underestimation of children and adolescents with CP. Illness and disorder, along with their roles in treatments/programs for CP and other disabilities, are evaluated to contemplate the importance of self-reliantly adapting and coping.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Cerebral palsy (CP) is defined as “an umbrella term covering a group of non-progressive, but often changing, motor impairment syndromes [due to] anomalies of the brain arising in the early stages of development” (Rosenbaum 970).

Discrimination and Stigma, in regards to illness, refer to “an attribute that is deeply discrediting” (“Mental Health: Stigma and Illness”). They set the victim apart from the rest of society, bringing with it feelings of shame and isolation.

Disorder refers to the biomedical model and/or physiological evaluation of the individual from a “clinical” or healthcare service provider’s perspective.

Illness is the personally and socially meaningful perspective of sickness, correlating to the psychological and sociocultural context (social participation, community, interaction, social norms etc.) that affect development and should be considered along with disorder.

HISTORY OF FRAMEWORKS USED FOR APPROACHES TOWARD CEREBRAL PALSY

The frameworks used to shape treatments have changed throughout the years, with glimpses of how the biomedical model and sociocultural context of health have affected the enactments. The World Health Organization (WHO) published the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps (ICIDH) in 1980, which was

a categorization of the “consequences of disease,” including a model in which “diseases” and “disorders” were linked to impacts at several levels, labeled as “impairments,” “disabilities,” and “handicaps” (Rosenbaum, et al. 5). Essentially, classification coded the consequences of diseases; however, this biomedical model gave a negative portrayal of disorders and was narrow and limiting as it merely focused on impairment-based treatments. Thus, in the early 1990s, the WHO published the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), which focused on the “components of health,” such as body function, activity, and participation, rather than “consequences” (Rosenbaum, et al. 6). The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health for Children and Youth (ICF-CY) was created in 2007 to expand ICF and “encompass the body functions and structures, activities, participation and environments specific to infants, toddlers, children and adolescents” (ICF-CY XI). It has been about 20 years since ICF was implemented; however, healthcare services still incline to be inconsistent with these end goals included in ICF and ICF-CY.

PINPOINTING THE GAP BETWEEN DISORDER AND ILLNESS: SABATELLO AND SOCIOCULTURAL RIGHTS

Healthcare service providers must realize that despite the external disorders and impairments of CP, many of the barriers and adversity experienced by those with a developmental disorder are not physical. Barriers such as stigma and labeling have both internal and social effects. According to Maya Sabatello, studies have shown that “discrimination against children with disabilities is rampant in all societal settings, that children with disabilities are consistently excluded from participation in social, cultural and other events” (Sabatello 464). Exclusion disregards illness in terms of social partaking and interaction with others. In order to eradicate these barriers, implementations, such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), mandate that physically challenged children (under age 18) have rights

“to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity” (Preamble, Section 1). The disregarding of these rights is an ignorance of illness, preventing one from adapting and coping to “social health”,

and personally meaningful challenges brought about by a disorder such as CP. (Huber 236)

Healthcare providers and caregivers must view CP both as a disorder and an illness, involving not only the children or adolescent's impairment, but also the social and cultural barriers that obstruct them from fully coping and self-reliantly integrating into society.

Moreover, healthcare providers may treat the child or adolescent's physiological malfunctioning, but they may also potentially discriminate against their patients, and stigmatize disorders, if the sociocultural context is not tailored into therapies and rehabilitative programs. One of the most glaring, yet still unaddressed ways discrimination and segregation have been implemented into society and healthcare is through separate education for children with disabilities, which is currently not considered discrimination (Sabatello 470). This separation of individuals with CP in both the clinical and public setting may have a negative sociocultural impact on the child or adolescent. Special schools may be beneficial from a biomedical perspective, treating the severity of their impairments, yet may be damaging from a sociocultural standpoint, due to decreased independence and increased exclusion from community and public. For instance, according to Jackie Parkes, the results of trials on physiotherapy show that although physiotherapy is used more often in special disability schools, "organizing [physiotherapy] services around special schools may limit the degree to which children with CP and other disabilities are successfully integrated into [mainstream] education" (Parkes 151). By pinpointing discreet yet dominant hints of segregation or exclusion in rehabilitative programs, healthcare service providers avoid preventing individuals with CP from achieving independence. The sociocultural effects of integration or exclusion of children and adolescents with CP and other disabilities should be considered in order to enhance their self-reliance to the fullest.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy to investigate the impact of illness and its sociocultural context on the child or adolescent with CP in order to determine if there are possible alternative treatments that promote independence more effectively and decrease pressure on the patient. Sabatello explains how the CRPD takes "a social, inter-relational approach to disability, calling attention to the interaction between one's impairment, society, and context, rather than focusing... merely on the medical deficit one may have" (Sabatello 470). Focusing on sociocultural factors

rather than exclusively on factors provided by the biomedical model creates a passageway for other alternatives that treat CP. Emily Hayles argues that a child with CP who has trouble walking does not solely need to change his or her impairment through medical procedures or muscle strengthening (246). Instead, participation can be enhanced by provision of inclusive activities such as use of a walking aid or changes to the environment by organizing access (Hayles, et al. 246). Thus, a combination of evaluating both illness and disorder allows different aspects of the child or adolescent's predicament to be investigated both clinically and from a sociocultural standpoint. With this approach, healthcare services for disabilities such as CP that center around a child's well-being, resiliency, and self-management do not aim to cure through biomedical interventions, but strive to help children and adolescents "to adapt and to self-manage" through treatments that translate to personally meaningful improvements (Huber 235).

WIDENING THE GAP BETWEEN DISORDER AND ILLNESS

Nevertheless, critics of this fusion of illness and sociocultural context argue that the use of only the biomedical model is more beneficial and sensible than the incorporation of the sociocultural context. This standpoint focuses on a linear relationship between impairment and disorder, excluding social factors. For instance, Leontien Wely's physical stimulation program mainly dealt with the children's "mobility-related" issues through physiotherapy, not socially meaningful aspects such as socialization or play. Because it did not improve aspects of well-being (participation, self-perception, or quality of life), Wely and his colleagues concluded that this intervention may indicate that "expanding activities in and around the home is a more practical and feasible alternative for children with cerebral palsy than expanding activities in the community such as sports," (Wely 981). Wely implies that practicality and feasibility are the chief motives as to why the sociocultural context should be excluded from treatments. Supporters of the biomedical model aim to measure the presence and severity of the disorder or disease, setting aside the measurement of the meaningful role and perspective of the individual, family, and society.

It may be true that the biomedical model is a rational framework for approaching CP and shaping treatments or programs, especially in

terms of efficiency and practicality. However, one can still consider the biomedical components without ignoring the sociocultural context. Critics fail to acknowledge the bulk of studies about the subject of inclusion, which suggest that the inclusion of children and adolescents into community activities or public services through community-based rehabilitation (CBR) is acceptable, feasible, and beneficial to both patients and families. After conducting a study with over 200 children, Ram Lakhan concluded that those with multiple disorders who were included in the public schools of Madhya Pradesh, India through CBR “have shown better progress in the area of social, behavior, and communication than the children that could not attend regular school” (94). Instead of being isolated at home, children that were brought out to society and integrated into their community were assisted to adapt to both their biological disorders and sociocultural illnesses (Huber 236). The effects of inclusion and CBR alleviate feelings of “unprepar[ation], vulnerab[ility], and stress” in parents (Hayles, et al. 244). Despite barriers that prevent social inclusion of children and adolescents with CP, the competence of community-based services and the services’ ability to help them adapt and cope to both disorder and illness outweigh the practicalities of the narrowly constructed biomedical model alone.

BRIDGING THE GAP: DO DOCTORS ALWAYS KNOW BEST?

By incorporating the sociocultural context of a child or adolescent with CP into the biomedical model through evaluation of his or her personal perspective, service providers steer clear of treatments that the patient may find costly and/or discriminating. Attilia Grandi argues: “the role of the patient, with his or her unique needs and desires, must be included in any decision regarding his or her health” (Grandi 2). Although service providers may offer high-quality treatment choices or programs for a child or adolescent with CP to improve their function, the prioritization of the patient’s needs, perspectives, and interests paves the way for sub-optimal alternatives that propel compliance, well-being, and independence. Grandi provides an example of a case study of a 17-year old boy with CP who desired to independently ride his motorbike outdoors. He rejected suggestions of surgery and toxin injections, since neither would solve his desire for independence. Ultimately, he was provided with orthosis, a brace for limb disorders, which does not significantly improve

motor function but successfully allowed him to drive his motorbike comfortably and self-reliantly (Grandi 2). In this case, rather than using medicalization to ‘cure’ impairments, self-help therapeutic treatments were used for an adolescent to adapt and cope to his personal adversity. Also, Grandi’s study demonstrates that costly and expensive procedures may not always improve or pinpoint the root of someone’s issue. For instance, it is noteworthy that children who received orthopedic surgery did not differ significantly in their independence from physiotherapy compared with those who had no surgical intervention within the same time interval (Parkes, et al. 154-5). The sociocultural context of illness may potentially unveil ways in which a ‘doctor knows best’ model is not always the most effective one to follow.

An evaluation of illness can also be used to mold treatments or programs according to specificity. The biomedical model may offer a limited range of treatment options, such as surgery or other narrow-structured therapies, yet the sociocultural context enables service providers to shape approaches that comply with patient’s specific interests, needs, and predicaments. According to Kleinman and associates, “comparison of patient model with the doctor’s model enables the clinician to identify major discrepancies that may cause problems for clinical management” (Hark, et al. 217). Without regard for a child or adolescent’s perspective on his or her disorder, the service provider may shape ineffective treatments or therapeutic programs that do not resonate with the individual’s needs. Grandi states that because children and adolescents are complex and continuously growing, therapies and treatment programs can “be tailored to their changing interests and desires” (Grandi 2). For example, a child with CP may possess interests involving play while an adolescent may seek independence (such as riding a motorbike) in order to interact with other adolescents (Grandi 2). It is important to note that children and adolescents with CP may have similar developmental “disorders,” yet their experience of “illness” or sociocultural perspectives may vary within a wide spectrum, which is why it is vital for doctors and service providers to start thinking outside of the limited biomedical framework.

UNDERESTIMATION OF CHILD OR ADOLESCENT
WITH CP: WESTLING & CHALLENGES TO AUTONOMY
On the other hand, opponents against allowing children and adolescents

with CP and other disabilities to achieve independence and self-management dispute that they need to be secluded from the public community for their own protection. According to David Westling, supporters of this mindset, such as Professor Turnbull, (to whom Westling's article is directed) argue, "communities are unsafe, stigmatizing, and demeaning—that universalistic and generic approaches and environments promise too much and deliver too little" (Westling 217). They calculate the challenges of independence and autonomy imposed upon children or adolescents with disabilities, seeking to eradicate inclusion for the sake of security. In the educational setting, studies have shown that students with disabilities are two to three more times likely to be bullied than their nondisabled peers (Pacer). Some service providers and family members who have acknowledged these challenges refuse methods of inclusion in order to shelter their child from societal evils, which is another reason why children with CP are quickly segregated into special education schools. Critics of sociocultural treatments or programs through social participation or play view the integration of people with CP or other disabilities as harmful and discourteous.

It may be true that society is stigmatizing, and the communal barriers imposed upon children and adolescents with CP can be problematic in terms of safety. However, both caregivers and service providers should realize that their perspective on the child or adolescent's situation could vary significantly from that of the child or adolescent him or herself. In order to treat illnesses and tailor sociocultural contexts into therapeutic treatments and programs, one must not undervalue the child or adolescent. In particular, a study by Veronica Schiariti reveals that caregivers of children with CP are inclined to describe their functioning in terms of failed functioning or factors that negatively affect the child's performance. However, the study also shows that a majority of those children (4-16 years of age) embrace their abilities, describing their functioning through positive views, describing their abilities and strengths and the benefits of facilitating factors (i.e. crutches, wheelchairs) in various environments, including school (859). They do not see themselves as significantly different or "special" from their nondisabled peers. Moreover, studies have shown that incidences of bullying on students with disabilities occur in both regular and special education, but students in special education may be at a greater risk (Rose 2). With this in mind, service providers along with caregivers and community

members should not come to quick conclusions about integration until they consider the illness or personal perspective of the child or adolescent. Secluding individuals with disabilities in order to “protect” them underestimates their abilities and may even intensify the stigma placed on their disorders. Underestimation hinders potential sociocultural approaches that assist children and adolescents with CP to reach autonomy and self-reliance.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of several healthcare frameworks, treatments, and programs for a wide range of children and adolescents with CP indicates that service providers should incorporate the sociocultural context of illness into current clinical/biomedical models. This infusion of illness and disorder tailors to the interests and needs of the individual. Because the affiliation between the biomedical model and sociocultural context tend to be very complex and complicated, both kindle questions of practicality and feasibility. Nevertheless, the acknowledgement of both perspectives in healthcare increases awareness of the potential strengths (rather than just focusing on the impairments) of those with CP and other disabilities, evades stigma and discrimination, and enhances quality of life, independence, and social inclusion. This approach would respectably assist children and adolescents to self-reliantly adapt to and cope with adversity, instead of labeling them as disabled anomalies that merely need medical intervention.

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Love, Sex, Drugs... And Neurochemical Therapy?

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Arete Bouhlas

Abstract: Evidence reveals that the use of Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs) as a treatment for depression can have adverse effects on the neurochemistry of love and sex. While SSRIs seek to elevate serotonin levels in the brain to promote feelings of wellbeing and contentment, these medications can simultaneously inhibit the production of the neurotransmitter dopamine. Dopamine reduction not only prevents patients from feeling passion or satisfaction, but can also diminish testosterone and oxytocin production, thereby impacting sexual arousal and pair bonding, respectively. The effects SSRIs have on our neurochemistry can therefore damage relationships as individuals experience reduced libido, emotional blunting, and social detachment. Scientists, however, may be able to artificially stimulate these love related chemicals through the use of neurochemical therapy in order to create feelings of romance and attachment, thus mitigating these negative effects. In order to understand how neurochemical therapy can minimize the impact of SSRIs on romantic relationships, this paper will provide a general overview of the neurochemistry of love and sex and the influence these antidepressants have on patients. This will then lead into the theory and discussion of pharmaceutical intervention as a tool to help patients improve and maintain long-term, successful relationships.

INTRODUCTION

Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs) are a class of antidepressants used to treat a range of psychological conditions (e.g. depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, etc.). They work by increasing the amount of serotonin available in our brain (Sampson 1). Serotonin acts as a neurotransmitter for our brain, which means that it is responsible for sending electrical signals that stimulate specific nerve endings (e.g. neurons) (Fisher and Thomson 245). Because these neurons are responsible for the functioning of our emotions, behaviors, and desires, SSRIs help alleviate symptoms of depression by boosting serotonin levels (Stahl 1). Before beginning treatment, most patients are informed about the various side effects that can occur when taking SSRIs. These side effects include headaches, nausea, and even decreased libido; however, a consequence of these prescriptions that is not widely publicized is the effect

they can have on personal relationships. While these medications are intended to manipulate the brain's neurochemistry in order to reduce feelings of sadness, anger, and anxiety, in doing so, they can also interfere with the natural hormones that construct personal relationships. The consequences of antidepressants on romantic relationships should be examined further considering that the use of these medications has increased nearly 400% since the early 1990's, making them the third most common prescription drug taken by Americans (Wehrwein 1). The most commonly prescribed antidepressants include SSRIs like Prozac, Lexapro, and Zoloft. These antidepressants have the highest rate of effectiveness when compared to other antidepressant classes, making them the primary preference when treating depression (SSRIs: Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors, Zoloft, Paxil, Prozac & Other Antidepressants).

In her book, *Lust, Romance, Attachment: Do the Side Effects of Serotonin-Enhancing Antidepressants Jeopardize Romantic Love, Marriage, and Fertility*, Helen Fisher discusses the influence of SSRIs on romantic relationships. Fisher makes the argument that "serotonin enhancing antidepressants lead to serious psychological, social, and genetic consequences through [their] effects on other neural mechanisms in the brain that determine [...] feelings of romantic love and expressions of attachment to a long-term partner" (Fisher and Thomson 245). Neurochemicals like oxytocin, serotonin, and dopamine are neurotransmitters in the brain that stimulate feelings of lust, attraction, and intimacy (Fisher and Thomson 245-260). However, these desire creating chemicals are greatly affected by the use of SSRIs as a treatment for depression. While the medication is intended to increase the amount of serotonin available to be received by our neurons, studies reveal that SSRIs can simultaneously suppress the firing activity of dopamine cells in the brain (Dremencov, Mansari, and Blier 1). Since dopamine plays a critical role within our reward system and influences the development of other love chemicals like oxytocin and testosterone, many patients who use SSRIs experience lowered ability to participate in sex, build relation-

ships, and experience happiness.

Although taking SSRIs can result in various side effects, advancements in neuroscience offer potential solutions to mitigate the impact of these medications on our relationships. The use of neurochemical therapy, for example, allows scientists to artificially enhance love related chemicals in our brain as a form of therapy for romantic relationships. In the essay, “Neuroenhancement of Love and Marriage: The Chemicals Between Us,” Julian Savulescu and Anders Sandberg argue that the availability of pharmaceuticals and other emerging technologies may soon allow science to induce feelings of desire, attraction, and romance. Because neurochemicals like oxytocin, testosterone, and dopamine have a direct influence on our feelings of love, lust, and attachment, Savulescu and Sandberg propose that the artificial stimulation of these hormones may be able to improve romantic partnerships. Pharmaceutical intervention therefore offers an opportunity to reduce the side effects of SSRIs while also enabling couples to improve and maintain longterm, successful relationships. By analyzing the connections between the chemistry of love and the chemistry of sex, we can begin to understand which hormones develop feelings of attraction, contentment, and attachment, thereby allowing us to determine how these feelings can be re-created. In order to develop this understanding, this paper will include a general overview of the neurochemistry of love and sex and how specific chemicals (i.e. oxytocin, testosterone, and dopamine) play a role in the formation of relationships. This will lay the foundation of this paper’s discussion of how SSRIs can diminish feelings of attraction and love and whether or not neuroenhancement therapy can help minimize these risks.

THE CHEMISTRY OF LOVE & SEX

Neuroimaging has revealed that specific regions of the brain that store the nerve pathways for key love chemicals, like oxytocin, dopamine, and testosterone, become more active when someone is in love (Savulescu, Julian, and Sandberg 36). During the initial phases of a relationship, for example, the reward neurons in our brain release large amounts of dopamine, a

neurotransmitter that plays a key role in creating the emotions typical of early love, including: “intense energy, [...] sexual possessiveness, emotional dependency, and obsessive thinking” (Fisher and Thomson 247). Dopamine is also heavily interconnected with our brain’s reward system, which is “the neural network associated with sensations of pleasure [...] and motivation to pursue rewards” (Fisher and Thomson 250). Dopamine’s ability to create intense, romantic passion, combined with its role in reward and satisfaction, is what propels people to pursue individuals romantically.

During the next stages of the relationship, elevated activity in the dopamine system triggers testosterone levels to rise (Edwards and Booth). Because testosterone greatly influences our sexual functioning, sexual attraction and frequency of sexual intercourse between partners simultaneously increase (Fisher and Thomson 255). This positive correlation between dopamine and sex explains why partners are more sexually involved early on in the relationship. Engaging in sexual activity is also known to stimulate dopamine production, thus causing the brain to associate the addictive reward chemical with sex, causing us to crave our lovers even more. This high, however, can eventually subside just like any dopamine inducing drug (i.e. cocaine, Adderall, etc.), which is why many relationships are not successful after the first few months unless partners have become emotionally attached.

Long-term, monogamous relationships typically come with feelings of strong desire and need for close proximity, causing couples to experience separation anxiety when apart (Fisher and Thomson 247). These emotions are a bi-product of oxytocin being released into the brain, which is neurochemical responsible for bonds and attachments between lovers, and thus a critical component in the final development of long-term relationships. Oxytocin contributes to feelings of romantic love due to its ability to promote trust and commitment between lovers, reduce levels of anxiety and stress, and increase our sense of security and stability (Fisher and Thomson 247). This hormone, nicknamed the “chemical of love,” is released through various kinds of physical stimulation, like hand holding, hugging, and kissing (Kluger 2). Sex, however, is the most influential catalyst in the production of oxytocin, and when mating partners are able to achieve orgasm, the brain is flooded with this attachment-inducing chemical. Following climax, the neurotransmitter is released in the same reward centers of the brain that supply dopamine,

thus enabling males and females to develop a strong preference for that individual (Lim, Wang, et al. 756). But as many one-night stands know, engaging in sexual intercourse does not always result in pair bonding. This is because not every sexual encounter results in an orgasm, thus failing to stimulate oxytocin levels in the brain; if the release of this hormone fails to occur, then the sexual encounter will most likely not result in a romantic bond or attachment (Kluger 2). This link between physical stimulation and pair bonding reveals why sex is a critical component of love and relationships.

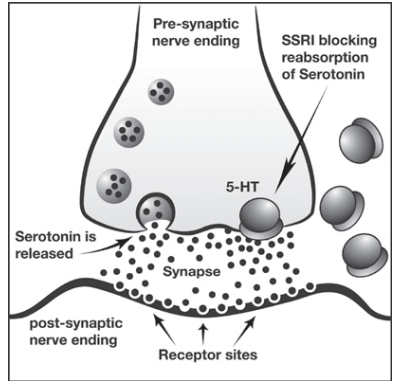
The neurochemistry of love and sex exemplifies the critical roles that dopamine, testosterone, and oxytocin have on our relationships. As dopamine levels rise, the production of testosterone increases, thus resulting in strong sexual arousal between lovers. This, in turn, stimulates the release of oxytocin in our reward systems, creating partner preferences and attachments. However, these neurochemicals are incredibly sensitive to external influences, like modern day medications. Therefore, it is critical that we understand the impact of these love related chemicals on our relationships to determine the social and emotional consequences that these external factors can have on our daily lives.

A WORLD OF DRUGS

SSRIs function by manipulating the presynaptic neurons (signal senders) in the brain that produce serotonin so that the neurons do not re-absorb the neurotransmitter for later use (Stahl 9). This ultimately increases the amount of serotonin available to be absorbed by postsynaptic receptors (signal receivers), which send out the electrical signals in the brain that create feelings of confidence, wellbeing, and happiness (Stahl 9; Price, Cole, and Goodwin 19). Because patients with depression typically have low levels of serotonin, increased availability of the hormone can improve moods, increase motivation, and alleviate other symptoms of depression. While SSRIs have the ability to help patients achieve a higher quality of life, they can also deepen depression and induce suicidal ideation (Price, Cole, and Goodwin 214). Dr. Ann Blake Tracy, an expert on the side effects of SSRI's like Prozac and Zoloft notes in her book *Prozac: Panacea or Pandora?* that “animal studies demonstrate that in the initial administration Prozac actually causes the brain to shut down its own production of serotonin, thereby causing a paradoxical effect or opposite effect on the level of serotonin” (Weller 1). As the brain attempts to

re-calibrate, the patient’s mood bounces erratically from depressed to momentarily content in a short time frame. It is for this reason that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) necessitates “Black box warnings” on all SSRIs. The black box warning is the strictest warning put on prescription drug labels, and SSRIs have this warning because SSRIs double suicide rates from two per 1,000 to four per 1,000 in children and adolescents (Weller 1). In pharmacology, this overall effect is known as the “paradoxical reaction,” which is where a medication intended to treat one symptom ends up producing it in greater magnitude (Weller 1).

In addition to increasing suicidal ideation in patients, SSRI’s can adversely affect other neurotransmitters in the brain, including the neurochemical dopamine. This is because as SSRIs increase serotonin concentrations in the brain, dopamine transporters can be tricked into bonding with serotonin cells rather than dopamine cells. In doing so, the SSRIs essentially “hi-jack” the dopamine signaling and cause it to launch serotonin signals instead, thereby reducing dopamine signaling in the brain (Zhou, Yong, Ramiro, et al. 1). By suppressing dopamine activity, these antidepressants adversely affect feelings of pleasure and love, which explains why patients taking SSRIs are unable to experience the desire and ecstasy that are typical in a romantic relationship. Reduced dopamine levels also negatively affect other love related hormones like testosterone and oxytocin. As a result, individuals who take SSRIs can experience a negative impact from the medication on sexual arousal as well as their personal attachments.



By hindering testosterone production, SSRIs directly interfere with sexual functioning. Men and women taking SSRIs have fewer sexual fantasies, masturbate less regularly, and engage in less frequent intercourse (Edwards and Booth). These side effects are actually very common, for it is estimated that approximately 73% of patients taking these medications experience a reduction in “sexual desire, sexual arousal, genital sensation, [...] erections [and] orgasms” (Fisher and Thomson 245). This loss in libido becomes a major issue within romantic relationships since oxytocin, the neurochemical that determines trust

and commitment, is primarily released by sexual activity. This provides an explanation as to why medications like SSRIs, which reduce sex drive and therefore prevent the release of oxytocin, can cause patients to experience a reduction in romantic emotions. Without the chemical oxytocin available to maintain the interpersonal attachments between lovers, relationships and partner connections are likely to deteriorate.

Patients taking SSRIs also describe a sense of “detachment or disconnection from their environment; from the self; and from other people” (Price, Cole, and Goodwin 2). This again negatively impacts couple dynamics as individuals become disinterested and less engaged in their relationships. This feeling of detachment extends to every aspect of their lives, for SSRI users often feel as if they are simply observing the events around them and not actually experiencing the actions themselves (Price, Cole, and Goodwin 3). As a result, it is possible that individuals can stop caring about their partner’s feelings and their relationship. Patients also report SSRIs causing emotional blunting, which is the reduced ability to cry, worry, or get angry. Although reduced intensity of patient emotions is beneficial in terms of alleviating symptoms of depression, patients are also less able to experience feelings of joy, pleasure, and happiness (Earp 5). By inhibiting the ability for patients to engage emotionally in their romantic relationships, as well as experience feelings of joy and satisfaction, these medications extinguish the fire and passion between lovers. This, compounded with the negative consequences of reduced dopamine, testosterone, and oxytocin, explains why many patients fall out of love when taking SSRIs.

LIFE WITH NEUROCHEMICAL THERAPY

Much of our understanding of the love related hormones comes from analyzing the brain chemistry and mating habits of monogamous prairie voles, which have similar pair bonding systems to humans (Savulescu and Sandberg 35). Like many human relationships, prairie voles form monogamous commitments, called pair-bonds, with their partners, which causes them to mate solely with each other and raise their offspring together. One study revealed that monogamous prairie voles have a higher density of oxytocin receptors than non-monogamous vole species, unlocking the key to why monogamous prairie voles develop an affinity for one particular partner (Young, Lim, Gingrich, et al. 135). Further tests were conducted in order to determine oxytocin’s role in

facilitating pair bonding and social attachment. Young asserts that when monogamous prairie voles, and other monogamous species, engage in sex, “oxytocin activity is triggered in the reward centers of the brain” resulting in pair preferences and attachments. Researchers were therefore able to artificially stimulate pair bonding by injecting a dose of oxytocin near the same reward receptors in the brain. This release of oxytocin caused the prairie voles to become strongly connected to one another despite the fact they had not yet engaged in any previous mating behavior (Insel and Young 2). This discovery is one of the key reasons why Savulescu and Sandberg propose that neurochemistry technology could be used to enhance feelings of love within a relationship: “Adding extra oxytocin would at the very least promote trusting pro-social behaviors that might reduce the negative feedback in some relationships and help strengthen the positive sides” (Savulescu and Sandberg 38). If scientists could develop techniques to manipulate chemicals like oxytocin, testosterone, and dopamine, and thus artificially create feelings of love, a similar practice could also be applied to help maintain the relationships of patients taking SSRIs. Neurochemical therapy, for example, would be used counteract negative side effects like reduced libido, emotional blunting, and social detachment, all of which contribute to the dismantling of patient relationships.

Despite the obvious benefits of neurochemical therapy, there are still great concerns regarding the side effects of this new biotechnology as well as the ethical dilemma behind manipulating our experiences through pharmaceutical intervention. In the journal *Better Brains, Better Selves? The Ethics of Neuroenhancements*, Richard Dees discusses how the use of neuroenhancements undermines key societal lessons, like hard work and discipline, by making key moments of personal development into easily fixed changes. “Overcoming obstacles builds character and makes us all better people. People want to achieve a certain end, but the means by which they do so makes a difference to the complete end that they achieve,” writes Dees (3). These ideas of ethical dilemmas can apply to married couples, where working hard at a relationship is the preferred method of reconciliation. However, neurochemical therapy could help reduce many of the conflicts that couples experience in their relationships, and some would argue make their relationship stronger as a result. It could also help maintain relationships that would suffer high costs should they come to an end. For example, married couples

with children who are considering divorce may have a responsibility to maintain their relationship through neurochemical therapy for the sake of their children (Earp, Sandberg, and Savulescu 1). It is well known that children of divorce suffer from great psychological trauma, especially if it occurs at an early age. However, neurochemical therapy offers an opportunity for couples in a distressed marriage to avoid the psychological ramifications of divorce while also regaining love and affection for their partner.

Another factor to consider regarding the artificial enhancement of desire is to what degree the body would adapt to the changes made and whether or not these treatments would be sustainable in the long run (Savulescu and Sandberg 40). Many patients, for example, can develop immunity to prescriptions over time, causing the medications to lose their efficacy during treatment. A survey conducted by Medscape sought to measure how often relapses occur during SSRI treatment for depression and found that respondents noted a relapse with SSRIs in 11%-25% of cases over one year (Relapse During SSRI Treatment for Depression). Because patients can build a tolerance to SSRIs over time, it is possible that neurochemical therapy will similarly lose effectiveness in the long run, thereby forcing patients to adjust their treatments in order to maintain the desired effects. This causes further complications for psychiatrists when assessing treatment effectiveness in the long-term. However, without further testing, we cannot properly evaluate this risk.

Other complications to consider would be the adverse side effects of pharmaceutical intervention on the individual. If neurochemical therapy targets the same hormones affected by SSRIs, which have vastly different side effects depending on the individual, we can presume that neurochemical therapy can also have vastly different side effects. Stahl explains, "Not everyone has the same chemical starting point: Some forms of depression may be relieved by lowering emotional sensitivity, while other types [worsened] by it. [...] This variability presents a huge problem for the development of love [...] drugs because it means that a love drug for me may be a hate drug for you" (Szalavitz 3). The complexity of neurochemistry therefore makes the implementation of neurochemical therapy very difficult. Patients would have to undergo intense evaluations in order for doctors to determine which chemicals need to be targeted for that specific therapy. Evaluations could include a variety of brain chemistry testing, including biochemical/nutritional tests, urine

samples, blood tests, and even neuroimaging of the brain. Without extensive study and testing, however, it is difficult to know how these drugs will negatively affect patients.

The other potential consequence of neurochemical therapy could be psychological or behavioral inconsistencies in the person or couple being enhanced (Earp, Sandberg, and Savulescu). This has been observed in the implementation of other neurochemical treatments, like SSRIs, which can greatly affect the moods and behaviors of the patient. However, all medications have a range of side effects that vary from individual to individual, so this would not be the first time drug-based intervention was implemented with knowledge of risks. While it is important to recognize that not everyone may benefit from neurochemical treatment due to adverse side effects, neurochemical therapy still offers the potential to help many patients taking SSRIs. As long as the benefits of neurochemical treatment continue to outweigh the potential side effects, this treatment remains a practical solution.

CONCLUSION

While most patients do not consider the impacts of taking antidepressants on their romantic relationships, evidence reveals that the neurochemistry of love and sex is interconnected with the same chemicals that control feelings of wellbeing, happiness, and anxiety in complicated ways. As a result, taking these medications can heavily redefine the emotions experienced when in a relationship and even result in patients “falling out of love” with their partners or spouse. Neurochemical therapy, however, may allow doctors to minimize the negative effects of antidepressants on relationships as well as build a higher quality of life for those with psychiatric disorders. This is because biotechnology may be able to help stimulate the hormones necessary to experience arousal, intimacy, and trust, all of which are key factors in a relationship.

While it is still unclear how the use of neurochemical technology to influence our relationships will be received by society, the potential implementation of this technology is not limited only to antidepressants, for these techniques could also be extended and applied to reduce the effects of other modern day medications. As societal acceptance of neurochemical therapy grows, the opportunity to employ these methods to help couples improve and maintain longterm, successful relationships will increase and potentially result in a reduction of the widespread

frequency of divorce. However, further analysis and the establishment of guidelines will be required in order to avoid maintaining incompatible or even abusive relationships.

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Should We Broaden the Grounds for Civil Commitment?

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The United States has a long history regarding civil commitment, a practice that involves denying a person's right to refuse treatment for his or her mental health condition and forcing him or her to receive treatment. Civil commitment cases often involve people with severe mental illness, including people with major depressive disorder, schizophrenia, and schizoaffective disorder. When people with severe mental illness are said to need civil commitment, it is up to the courts to decide whether or not the person in question fits the standards that particular state looks for in order to commit him or her. There are two different types of civil commitment: inpatient commitment, which happens in a mental hospital, and outpatient commitment or assisted outpatient treatment (AOT), which is provided in the outside world. Since involuntarily committing someone is a serious process that takes away a person's right to refuse treatment, there are guidelines set by each state on how this decision must be made, with both inpatient and outpatient commitment usually imposed based upon the same standard. Different states have different ways of handling civil commitment, with most having actual dangerousness as a standard, and a few having less restrictive criteria, like "need for treatment." However, the reliance on the dangerousness criterion, along with a process called deinstitutionalization, is blamed for the large number of mentally ill people either homeless or in jail. In the face of these issues facing the mentally ill, to what extent should states make their civil commitment criteria, specifically the criteria for AOT, more inclusive?

This is a polarizing issue among organizations that share the aim of improving the quality of life for mentally ill people. Organizations such as National Alliance for the Mentally Ill argue that the current criteria for most states, requiring actual dangerousness, renders states unable to intervene in cases before someone deteriorates to the level of committing violent acts. They also argue that it is the standard of ac-

tual dangerousness combined with deinstitutionalization, that has led to many mentally ill people to end up on the street or in jail, and that more people should receive outpatient treatment. However, other organizations, such as The Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, contend that expanding guidelines would be an unreasonable infringement on the rights of people with mental illnesses, that violent incidents are not necessarily caused by mentally ill people who refused treatment, and that those arguing for broadening of standards have not properly taken into consideration the fact that many mentally ill people are asking for treatment and being turned away (Segal 1450). Also, such critics also accuse AOT of promoting the idea that mentally ill people are dangerous (Erickson 47), meaning that AOT promotes the already extremely prevalent, but damaging, and inaccurate, stigma that the majority of mentally ill people are both unpredictable and violent.

This paper will analyze the arguments made by both sides in this debate, as well as use two cases to highlight different aspects of it. One of these cases involves K.E.W., a man from Texas who was threatened with civil commitment for his delusions. The other is the case of Andrew Goldstein, whose case led to the creation of AOT. The first section of this paper, "Defining Dangerousness," looks at the dangerousness standard in more detail and one of the arguments against it, laying the foundation for my argument in the section, "Predicting Who Needs Treatment is Harder Than It Looks," which discusses schizophrenia and why deciding when someone requires treatment is more complicated than people might think. My third section, "The History of Deinstitutionalization and Assisted Outpatient Treatment", looks at the argument concerning homelessness and criminality, as well as the push for AOT. I will also discuss why mentally ill people possibly not knowing they need treatment is not the reason that deinstitutionalization actually "failed." The section, "How Negative Mental Health Stigma Affects Treatment Approach", will discuss the possibility that the desire to have more wide-ranging AOT standards might be fueled by a negative stigma towards the mentally ill. I intend to show that broadening civil commitment guidelines, specifically AOT guidelines, would be an unnecessary and extreme solution to the problem and one that distracts us from the actual problems with our health system, especially our policy choices involving the mentally ill.

DEFINING DANGEROUSNESS

When it comes to deciding who needs to be committed, “[t]here is almost universal statutory agreement that at least one behavioral criterion precipitating an [inpatient or outpatient commitment] is ‘danger to self or others’” (Segal 1449-1450). This recognized criterion is known as “dangerousness,” and it is nowadays a widely accepted criterion in most of the United States. In fact, currently 85% of the jurisdictions in the United States have this criterion (Werth). The idea of this criterion is to avoid committing people just for having a mental disease. In fact, a Supreme Court case, *O’Connor v. Donaldson*, set up this approach. In 1975, Kenneth Donaldson, a man with paranoid schizophrenia:

had been held in a psychiatric hospital against his will for 15 years. After his release was repeatedly denied by the psychiatrist in charge of his care, despite the fact that [Donaldson] had not shown any evidence of [dangerousness], Mr. Donaldson argued to the court for restoration of his freedom. The case was eventually heard by the Supreme Court, who determined that Mr. Donaldson should be released. (Testa et al.) The justices ruling on the case determined that for people to be held against their will, they need to present a threat to themselves or others, or the involuntary treatment is considered unjust. Since it was a Supreme Court decision, it became the standard that courts from most states started to follow.

However, some mental health organizations believe that requiring actual dangerousness has had unintended consequences, including that “the medical system will not intervene against a person’s wishes until he or she becomes suicidal, physically violent, or grossly unable to perform activities of daily [life]” (Testa et al.). This statement implies that, while the standard for civil commitment defining dangerousness as a criteria was implemented for good reasons, it also has negative consequences, one of them being that some people with serious mental illness will refuse treatment until their mental state deteriorates to the point that they do something dangerous. For this reason, some organizations want the “[u]niversal adoption of need-for-treatment standards to provide a legally viable means of intervening in psychiatric deterioration prior to the onset of dangerousness or grave disability,” which

means that they want states to have the opportunity to intervene and help sick people before they are too far gone (Stettin et al. 4). There might be statistical evidence to support this point. A study comparing homicide rates in different states found that “the average 2004 homicide rate in the 43 jurisdictions with [inpatient and outpatient commitment criteria] statutes was 4.51 ± 2.27 per 100,000” (Segal 1452), and that broader commitment criteria were associated with 1.42 fewer homicides per 100,000, with a $p \leq 0.01$ (Segal 1449). While this does support the idea that broader standards would be more protective, or at least shows a strong correlation between lower homicide rates and broader criteria, the difference did not seem to decrease the rate of homicide all that much, only reducing homicide by less than one percent. On top of that, one of the states that is said to have the lowest rates of homicide is New Hampshire, which has dangerousness as the criterion. However, there are other ways of exhibiting dangerousness that do not involve murder.

Violence can be exhibited in many ways, and must not necessarily need involve the risk of death. A case that someone supporting broader criteria might point to would be one that took place in Texas. At the Gulf Coast Mental Health and Mental Retardation Center on April 17, 2008, a patient known as K.E.W.

presented for a scheduled appointment with Dr. Pugh (a Center psychiatrist). K.E.W., who had been diagnosed with schizophrenia, related that he had been ‘assigned to impregnate multiple women’... He then alarmed the Center staff by making multiple requests to see a particular female Center employee.” (Streckmann 283)

The doctor he was talking to called the police and K.E.W. was brought to a psychiatric hospital where he went into more depth about his delusions. Along with his verbal statements, which two doctors, including his own, testified to later on, he had written plans to carry out his agenda, including the list of women that he intended to impregnate. His doctor, along with the center, went to court to get him civilly committed, since they were concerned that he might rape someone. The case was appealed to the Texas Supreme Court where the judges overturned the appellate court’s decision to commit him on the grounds that there was not enough evidence and that the evidence did not necessarily prove he was dangerous. In a state that has broader guidelines, like a “need for

treatment,” this man would probably have been civilly committed for his delusions. However, would that have been enough reason to commit him?

PREDICTING WHO NEEDS TREATMENT IS HARDER THAN IT LOOKS

What makes this case interesting is that if the nature of schizophrenia is considered, it might be understandable why some would think that there are persons who need to be incarcerated simply on the basis of a “need for treatment.” Schizophrenia is a mental illness that involves a combination of positive symptoms, like hallucinations, and negative symptoms, like flat affect, both of which may affect a person’s ability to function. Unlike other mental illnesses, which may be more apparent at a younger age, “[s]chizophrenia is typically diagnosed in late adolescence or early adulthood; it is often associated with lifelong disability, especially when services aren’t provided” (Wykes et al. 2). It is for this reason that people with schizophrenia should seek out treatment as soon as possible. However, there are cases in which people with schizophrenia will refuse treatment. This could be for several reasons, including that they do not want to be put on medication, or they do not believe they are actually sick. People who support looser guidelines might point out that K.E.W. was clearly planning to do something and that his refusing civil commitment and eventually winning provides evidence for the position that he should have been judged by the criterion “need for treatment”, so that he could have received the care he needed. K.E.W., however, never contested the fact that he was sick. In fact, he was receiving treatment for his condition from the people who attempted to commit him (Streckmann 284). So, despite his delusions, he did see himself as “needing treatment,” and actually sought it out. Not only that, his having delusions was not necessarily a predictor of dangerousness, and the reason the bar is set so high to commit someone is that predicting whether or not they will actually decline to the point of becoming a danger to themselves and others in the long run is hard to do.

Evidently, understanding whether or not someone will benefit from hospital care is distinct from whether or not they will turn violent. Dr. Alan A. Stone notes that “[p]sychiatrists can help judges decide whether the patient will benefit from hospitalization, but they cannot

help judges with the long-term prediction of dangerousness” (Webster 22). Stone is addressing psychiatrists’ ability to make courtroom predictions about dangerousness in their patients and how they can only predict that hospitalization will help the patient in some way, regardless of whether or not dangerous behavior is or will be present. While this specific professor made these statements in 1985, the same debate over the ability to predict risk is still going on, with a study from the *Marquette Law Review* noting that scholars continue to debate the reliability of expert testimony on mental illness, and that, even though such testing is often accepted, issues with social science as a whole cause inherent flaws in the predictions (Browne 1121-1123). This study was published in 2008, 23 years after the previous source, yet psychiatrists are still having problems predicting whether or not people will be dangerous to themselves or others. Courts may very well decide to hear such testimony for lack of an alternative, but that does not mean such testimony is worth much. While being able to commit people before they deteriorate to the point of violence would be ideal, it seems that knowing who is going to deteriorate is far from certain, and making the guidelines broader would give states more power to possibly commit otherwise innocent people out of fear that they might eventually commit a crime.

THE HISTORY OF DEINSTITUTIONALIZATION AND AOT

The guidelines for AOT have come under greater scrutiny because of a process called deinstitutionalization. Supporters of broadening the criteria also point to the high number of homeless people with mental illness (i.e., 25% of the homeless population being mentally ill), as well as a high number of people in prison having mental illness, most of them nonviolent offenders convicted of survival crimes like stealing (Testa et al.). What such advocates say is that committing these people would keep them off the street and out of jail and in a place where they will be treated for their illness. The reasoning for this becomes clear when deinstitutionalization is mentioned. Deinstitutionalization was the process of closing down the majority of mental health institutions in favor of community services. It happened in response to several factors, including the abuse of patients in mental health facilities, and the amount of federal money being used to keep such institutions open (Erickson 27-29). One of the points of deinstitutionalization was to have community-based

practices used to treat patients instead of having people committed involuntarily. However, that shift failed to happen, or at least failed to keep enough mentally ill people off the street and out of jail. Deinstitutionalization also led to durations of inpatient commitment (meaning involuntary hospital stays) being too short for effective treatment. In fact, “persons who have been civilly committed in the past have a higher likelihood of arrest than persons with histories of voluntary psychiatric hospital stays” (Testa et al.). One of the possibilities that this indicates is that the quality and duration of inpatient civil commitment is not only known to be unhelpful, it is also known to actually be harmful in the long run. However, even if that was not the case, that statistic leads a lot of police officers to opt to put mentally ill people in jail, instead of somewhere they could be receiving treatment.

These problems culminated in an incident in 1999 in New York City where Andrew Goldstein, a man with a long history of schizophrenia, pushed a young woman named Kendra Webdale in front of a subway train. He apparently had a considerable record of violent behavior. He had been hospitalized many times, and had often been released after brief periods of care, despite the high risk of him repeating his violent actions (Erickson 23-24). This incident is a clear example of how deinstitutionalization led to shorter inpatient hospital stays that kept people from receiving long-term treatment for serious conditions. This significant case eventually led to New York implementing a law allowing for AOT, which, in turn, led to AOT becoming adopted in most states (Testa et al.). AOT is a civil commitment procedure where the state is still forcing treatment upon the patients, but the patients receiving treatment are not isolated from the community in an institution. AOT has been praised by many for several reasons, including that “AOT improves treatment engagement and reduces hospitalization rates when sustained for at least six months and coupled with intensive treatment services” (Muntez 352). AOT allows the state to watch over at risk people with mental illnesses and provide thorough treatment while still keeping them in the community, so inpatient bed space is not an issue. People who have been under AOT talk about its effectiveness in great detail, and many patients prefer it to inpatient treatment, since there is slightly more freedom to it. It serves as the compromise between what people who support deinstitutionalization wanted and what is desired

by people who thought deinstitutionalization was a failure. However, as I mentioned earlier, the criteria for inpatient treatment and outpatient treatment is the same in most states, so unless people are considered dangerous, they will usually not be able to receive AOT (Segal 1453).

Supporters of broader standards argue that the lack of people receiving treatment is due to some mentally ill people not knowing they are sick, or at least not knowing the extent of their illness. They also argue that mentally ill people cannot be relied upon to seek out treatment when they are not supervised. However, the reality seems to be that many mentally ill people are aware of their sickness, and would like help. Andrew Goldstein himself sought out help from multiple sources. On top of that, Andrew Goldstein was sometimes taken to hospitals by the police, “[m]ore often, however, he walked into the psychiatric emergency room on his own, seeking help.” This, in fact, occurred six weeks prior to the day he murdered Kendra Webdale, and he was also only hospitalized for two weeks before being released with a medication prescription (Erickson 24). Clearly, if he kept voluntarily hospitalizing himself, he knew he was sick, but the hospital did not have the means to keep him for a reasonable amount of time, especially because of lack of beds. It is possible that if he received care from a well-funded voluntary program, it could have treated him for a longer period of time, and Kendra Webdale might still be alive. However, despite the desire of many patients for treatment, deinstitutionalization failed because community programs were underfunded by the state, leading to programs of poorer quality, despite the demand for them. A study on whether or not seriously mentally ill inmates received treatment post release found that “[a]lthough 73% of the participants in their study received some form of post release mental health services,... (70%) were rearrested ” (Ashford et al. 292). However, “it was also found that few offenders received clinically meaningful levels of service during their first year after release” (Ashford et al. 292). Despite the preconception that many mentally ill people are not aware that they are ill, many inmates, some of them violent, recognize they have a problem and seek out treatment. But these people still end up arrested again because they did not receive treatment that was effective in helping them, which underscores the idea that the real problem here is a lack of funding.

Under budgeting is due to the fact that many services depend on

Medicaid for their funding, and offenders who are incarcerated for more than 30 days lose their Medicaid privileges. When offenders are released from jail, it can take several months for them to become eligible for Medicaid coverage (Ashford et al. 292). This procedural red tape keeps money from reaching traditional outpatient programs, and therefore keeps offenders from receiving quality treatment from these programs. However, it can be argued that increasing the funding would not do much since, in terms of homicide as a measure at least, mental health systems that were considered poorer based on Global state mental health service grades had an increase of only 0.26 homicides per 100,000 with a $p \leq 0.04$ (Segal 1449, 1453), which, despite a strong correlation, does not represent that big a change. This is especially obvious when compared to the size of the change and strength of the correlation between homicide rate and broader guidelines. This opens the possibility that funding better mental health care might not do much to help the severely mentally ill. A lack of proper funding, however, does not only limit the effectiveness of treatment but also it limits how many people are offered it.

Traditional outpatient treatment programs are not only plagued with quality issues, but with a general lack of availability even for the most at risk people. If there is funding for mental health services, unless people are displaying some sort of psychosis, that help will often not be offered. Even if you do have a serious mental illness, that does not guarantee service, especially for offenders. There are programs that help manage community services for people who are mentally ill so that the best treatment can be received. These types of programs are called case management. However, these services are often not offered to offenders (Ashford et al. 292-293). For this reason, while case management, or even other voluntary programs, is a good idea, our society failed to make a real investment in such programs. This sort of neglect only increases the danger that individuals will deteriorate before they are able to receive treatment, leading them to possibly harm themselves or others, and end up in jail or unable to lead a normal, stable life. There are a few reasons why offenders are not given treatment as often, one of which is the shift to what is referred to as “managed care.” In the 90’s, health care costs were rising, and community services were having a hard time keeping up. As a result, many services started to “move toward a managed care method of service delivery... A fundamental tenet of managed care is to

limit costs by reducing either the total number of people using services or the cost of each service unit to the provider... Concerns with the managed care treatment model for [serious mental illness] are limitations of care and poor coordination of services” (Accordino et al. 17). Basically, to cope with the cost of helping people, community services started, among other actions, limiting the number of people they treat. This is cause for concern because it means that services are knowingly closing themselves off to helping more people due to costs. More money should not only be put towards improving the quality of programs for the mentally ill, but also for outreach as well, so that more mentally ill people can have access to these helpful programs.

HOW NEGATIVE MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA AFFECTS TREATMENT APPROACH

Mental illness itself has a negative stigma attached to it, that being the prejudice that most people with mental illness are violent. While there is a link between mental illness and violence, the stigma itself makes the link seem more prevalent than it really is, distracting from other major problems facing the mentally ill. When legislators turn to dealing with issues involving mental illness, the connection to violence is prone to bias lawmaking, usually at the expense of the mentally ill. Even when laws are supposedly made “for the benefit” of the people they target, little details can give away what is actually going on. For instance, the Goldstein case led to the creation of the AOT laws in New York, apparently so that people like Goldstein could receive better treatment sooner, as well as supervision for that treatment. However, the name of the law itself, or rather, its nickname, is Kendra’s Law, which is derived from the name of the woman whom Goldstein killed (Erickson 46). This seems to indicate that the purpose of the law was not to help people like Goldstein receive proper treatment, but to protect the public from incidents like this one. It is, of course, predictable that voters in general would act on the basis of self-protection rather than in response to an altruistic focus upon the problems of the ill. In any case, this brings to the forefront the idea that the notion of a mentally ill person being dangerous affects the way people approach helping the mentally ill, whether they are aware of it or not. There is evidence that this sort of thinking can lead to measures involving more intrusion into personal liberty. There was a study done

involving Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), which has received some criticism for some of its staff utilizing more controlling tactics towards its clients (Stull et al. 1074). The study investigated what types of explicit bias (i.e., conscious prejudice against the mentally ill) and implicit bias (i.e., subconscious prejudice against the mentally ill) people who work for ACT hold, and whether or not these biases affect the way they pursue treating people. It was found that “implicit, but not explicit, bias significantly predicted the endorsement of restrictive or controlling clinical interventions when considered together, and non-autonomous interventions when considered separately” (Stull et al. 1081). What Stull et al. is basically saying is that both biases, in different combinations, can affect the way mental health workers approach treatment for their clients, specifically with negative bias being associated with more controlling treatment. While this is specifically talking about people who are employed in community programs to help the mentally ill, the fact that these biases affect the way people think mentally ill people should be treated obviously has a much broader impact on the way we run our society. If mental health professionals are controlled by bias, the rest of us are probably influenced to an even greater degree.

AOT itself has been the subject of debate over whether or not it promotes the idea that most mentally ill people are violent. Indeed, the manner in which AOT’s successes are evaluated may very well betray that sort of bias. “Draine (1997) points to the fact that most studies only measure recidivism, violence, and noncompliance. This seems to confirm critics’ assessments that outpatient commitment laws are more concerned with public fear and safety than with treatment effectiveness” (Erickson 47-48). As of 1997, a lot of studies evaluating AOT and its effectiveness used measures that evaluated how much violence is going down instead of how well patients are being treated by AOT. Instead of relying upon attempts to quantify recidivism and violence, we could look to positive measures of mental health, such as days spent without needing assistance for daily self-care. This continues to be true for studies done during this millennium, since the study on homicide rates used homicide rate data from 2004 and was published in 2011. The means employed to evaluate AOT’s effectiveness reveal that many are more concerned with how laws involving the mentally ill protect the public instead of how well the laws actually help mentally ill people.

While supporters of AOT argue that since AOT is reserved for dangerous criminals, this is acceptable, broadening standards would affect more than just criminals. In fact, this embedded stigma not only affects how AOT is evaluated, but how it is implemented on a country-wide level. In 2013, Congressman Tim Murphy authored the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, which aims to broaden standards for civil commitment across the United States, including for AOT. This bill has generated a lot of controversy. However, what is of interest here is the biggest reason for this bill coming into existence: the mass shootings that have been happening around the country. In fact, as of May 30, 2014, “Murphy says his goal is to get his bill passed before there is another shooting” (Sullivan). This is an aspect of this bill that cannot be ignored. The fact that a bill in Congress, which has enough power to change the way mental health care is handled in the entire country, is motivated by fear and stigma, is extremely unnerving. No matter what other benefits this bill may provide, merely supporting the passing of this bill supports the desire to take away a person’s right to reject treatment solely because of stigma. Therefore, before more states, or even the country, take the leap in deciding whether or not to broaden AOT criterion, lawmakers need to evaluate whether or not healing or fear is their biggest motivator.

CONCLUSION

When comparing inpatient and outpatient treatment, AOT, in itself, is less intrusive and therefore a preferable alternative to inpatient treatment. Also, civil commitment continues to have its place in the mental health care system. However, that place does not need to be expanded. Despite broader criteria giving certain states the option to intervene earlier before people act out, which has some statistical support, the reason that the dangerousness standard exists and that it is so strict is because we do not know who is going to deteriorate. There is no need to further erode individual rights. The correct answer is to expand the availability of quality treatment by improving funding and outreach. Improving the voluntary aspects of our mental health system would actually be of great benefit to mentally ill people in the long run. Of course, how to fix the problems with our mental health system (how to maximize the impact of funding, which programs would be best to invest in, how to gain support for such measures, etc.) is an extremely complex topic that could

take up its own research paper. However, what I aimed to show is that broadening outpatient commitment standards is a drastic solution to a problem that can be fixed without sacrificing the rights of mentally ill people. In fact, it is a distraction from the actual issues with our mental health system in general. On top of that, it is a distraction that is very likely to be fueled by fear and stigma, which could lead to more innocent people being stigmatized and victimized due to their mental illness.

Since deinstitutionalization led to the rise in mentally ill people homeless or in jail, our first instinct is to go back to before deinstitutionalization came about, and to keep more control over the lives of the mentally ill. Since funding for hospitals is so costly, the jump to outpatient commitment seems like an obvious one. On top of that, since letting mentally ill people out of hospitals and letting most of them decide whether or not they want treatment does not seem to work, making it easier to forcibly commit mentally ill people, again, seems like the best solution. However, that thinking is blinded by stigma, and ignores how anemic the voluntary mental health system really is. We need to keep in mind when making such decisions that there are lives on the line other than our own, and that our decisions will affect those lives, for better or for worse.

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To Fit In or To Stand Out: The Female Athlete's Conundrum of Looking Feminine or Athletic

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Abstract: Due to the overwhelming number of females athletes who report body dissatisfaction, and struggle with fitting the cultural notion of females looking slim whilst still attempting to be athletic, this paper analyzes how society's ideals of femininity, in regards to ideal body images, impact female athletes. While a high drive for muscularity has been noted in some female athletes, the paper argues that the majority of these athletes have a high drive for thinness due to society enforcing femininity, and this desire to be thin affects athletic performance. Female athletes' anxiety to be perceived as thin by others surpasses the positive mentality that exercising promotes and leads to mental health issues. Furthermore, low energy diets are noted in female athletes and are stated to directly correlate to negatively impacting their physical health. The paper concludes that the perceived ideal female body leads to detriments in the athlete's physical health, mental health, and athletic performance, and should be addressed as a serious issue.

INTRODUCTION

The preconceived perception of the ideal female being slim with a 'perfect body' is one that has transformed over time. Bonafini and Pozzilli (2010) state that "the ideal of female beauty has shifted from a symbol of fertility to one of mathematically calculated proportions" (p.62). Female beauty and ideas of femininity used to glorify curves, body fat, and shape. However, in recent decades, the perception of female beauty has changed, along with the image of what the aspirational female body should be: slim, small waist, and flat stomach. Orbach (1993) brings up an important point about mainstream Western culture on femininity, which "expects women's bodies not to 'take up space'" (as cited by Grogan et al., 2004, p. 51). According to the current cultural construct of being feminine, women's bodies are not supposed to be large or dominant looking, having to do much with the cultural and historical differences between a man and a woman and their place in society. Neighbors

and Sobal (2007) report that “over 90 % of U.S. collegiate women...report body and weight dissatisfaction” (as cited by Pritchard & Cramblitt, 2014, p. 208). This statistic shows the shocking percentage of individuals who suffer from body dissatisfaction, and more importantly, shows why it is so imperative that the issue be addressed as it affects such a high percentage of the female population.

Numerous studies have been performed analyzing the societal pressure on women due to social beliefs of femininity, however, it is important to emphasize that a specific population of women struggle with an even harder internal conflict driven by this feminine ideal. Female athletes participate at highly competitive levels that stress the importance of muscular tone, strong sculpted physique, and diets that allow for maximum performance levels. Female athletes’ body shapes contradict the thin, slim build idealized by femininity. Rosdahl (2014) claims that “women with muscular bodies have long been objects of public scrutiny and social contempt,” as the public questions, “...how femininity fits on a female body that is strong” (p. 36). If female athletes must maintain a feminine shape and maximize sports performance the question arises of how society’s ideals of femininity, specifically in regards to ideal body images, impact female athletes?

Traditional ideas of what it means to be feminine have had a strong negative impact on females athletes who need a strong muscular build to be successful in their respective sports. Various researchers, including Balsamo (1994), Bolin (1992), Daniels (1992), Guthrie and Castelnovo (1998), Heywood (1998), Klein (1990) and Schulze (1997), agree that “building of muscle by women generates a number of controversial discussions about the ‘nature’ of femininity and its complex relationship to muscularity and masculinity” (as cited in Rosdahl, 2014, p. 36). The nature of femininity opposes muscularity and categorizes muscles as a characteristic of masculinity. Because of this delicate balance between femininity and muscularity, female athletes consistently struggle internally between “trying to attain a body that [is] muscular but not too muscular, and that maintain[s] some aspects of traditional ‘feminine’ appearance” (Grogan et al., 2004, p.49). The constant emphasis from society and the media of feminine ideals have led women, athletic or not, to attempt to obtain the “perfect” hourglass figure at any means necessary. These means include anything from fad diets and exer-

cise techniques that focus more on obtaining certain body images, rather than promoting health and wellness. As stated by Orbach (2001), the media is vector that enhances commercial pressures, exchanging diversity in bodies for sameness, and having a body that fits global culture (p. 394). Women, namely female athletes, are concerned with sameness and having a body that 'fits into' a certain set of culturally constructed ideals to a fault. Building an athletic physique and strong muscular tone opposes the lean, slim body females aspire towards. Female athletes' body shapes in high performance sports contradict the culturally constructed feminine body ideals, yet these women are willing to sacrifice strong, athletic physiques in order to fit these feminine ideals. Because of this, female athletes compromise their health, both mental and physical, and potential to succeed in their sports in order to fit society's representation of the ideal feminine bodies.

In order to emphasize how female athletes compromise their physical and mental health, as well as limit their sports performance, it is necessary to highlight and analyze all the factors that influence female athletes' viewpoints. Using the overall frame of what it means to 'be feminine' as well as the vectors that spread the idea of femininity, particularly the media, my research paper explains the extent of this sociological issue. The ample cases identified in the research make clear the severity of the issues that the struggle to attain a feminine body has on female athletes and proves that external intervention needs to be taken in order to limit further damage done to these females and future female athletes.

DRIVE FOR MUSCULARITY VS. DRIVE FOR THINNESS

Although some scholars disagree, much research shows that in order to attain the ideal feminine figure, female athletes have a high drive for thinness and a low drive for muscularity, leading them to not maximize their full athletic potential. The drive for muscularity and the drive for thinness are two very opposing theories, and skew towards specific genders. As explained by Neighbors and Sobal (2007), drive for muscularity and drive for thinness are defined simply as being more likely to report wanting to gain muscle mass and being more likely to report wanting to lose weight. Historically, muscularity has focused largely on men's experiences (McCreary and Sasse, 2000, as cited in Steinfeldt et al. 2011,

p.544). Morrison et al. (2003) argued that “Men want to be muscular... [for] reasons such as social benefits (e.g., attracting women, increasing overall attractiveness, status, increased athletic performance), health benefits, sociocultural pressures, and because muscularity represents masculinity” (as cited in Steinfeldt et al., 2011, p. 544). Due to this idea that drive for muscularity and high muscular content is related to attracting women and being masculine and also increases athletic performance, female athletes are forced to choose between societal acceptance and athletic performance, and choose being feminine over excelling in sports.

Those who minimize society’s influence on female athletes in the drive for muscularity believe that although females, in general, choose the drive for thinness over the drive for muscularity, female athletes, specifically, choose and have a high drive for muscularity. They believe that female athletes, who are situated in our society with feminist movements and numerous powerful, self-sufficient women, have gained self-confidence in their ‘non-ideal’ body types. Certain researchers even go further to hypothesize that the drive for muscularity in Western women is actually increasing due to modern society’s emphasis on exercise and living healthy lifestyles (Pritchard & Cramblitt, 2014, p. 208). Women may indeed have more of a drive for muscularity now, as the movement for physical activity and fitness has increased, meaning female athletes can comfortably strive for muscularity without feeling pressure to be thin. Steinfeldt et al. (2011) strengthen this hypothesis with a study that concluded that female athletes’ beliefs about muscularity have changed: “Overall, of the reasons female student-athletes gave for wanting to be muscular, 45% cited Functionality, 42% cited Health, 21% cited External Gratification, and 18% cited Internal Gratification. Only 16% of female student-athlete responses indicated that they did not want to be muscular” (Steinfeldt et al., 2011, p. 550). Most of the female athletes reported wanting to be muscular for reasons varying from functionality (enhanced athletic performance), health benefits, self-esteem, to sex-appeal and conformity, with only a small percentage indicating that they did not want to be muscular. For these reasons, opponents of the argument that striving to meet ideals of femininity negatively impacts female athletes would conclude that issues of body dissatisfaction in female athletes are not correlated to a low drive for muscularity, as

more female athletes instead strive for muscularity.

It may be true that some female athletes have a stronger drive for muscularity than their drive for thinness, due to the passion they have for being successful in their sport, health and personal gratification. However, a small subset of athletes in one specific location cannot be used to generalize the majority of female athletes. A more recent study conducted by Pritchard & Cramblitt (2014) shows how potent the effect of internalizing media is on the drive for muscularity and the drive for thinness in female athletes. Internalization of media is the strongest factor in influencing the drive for muscularity and the drive for thinness in an individual, with magazines found to be the most internalized form of media (Pritchard & Cramblitt, 2014, p. 209). Whereas most of the athletic magazines are targeted towards men, the magazines targeted towards women promote thinness. Women, on average, read 2.6 magazines per month, and as noted in an issue of *Sex Roles* (Ambwani and Chmielewski, 2013), “magazines for women focus on slimness” (as cited in Pritchard & Cramblitt, 2014, p. 208). Information in women’s magazines are internalized, leading to body dissatisfaction, and have been correlated with a high drive for thinness and a low drive for muscularity. As stated by Orbach (2011), the media is all around us and is ingrained into people’s minds, including the mind of a female athlete. Female athletes are females who also happen to play sports, meaning they are equally as susceptible to internalizing the messages in women’s magazines and aspiring to be thin. Unfortunately for these athletes, muscularity is essential for their athletic performance. Even though they are passionate about being successful in their sport, the strong influence that increases their drive for thinness also decreases their drive for muscularity and therein, decreases their athletic performance.

DAMAGING PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS AND HIGH SPA

Those who believe female athletes have completely superseded the psychological impacts correlated to the athletic-feminine controversy do not take into account the crucial role minimizing social physique anxiety (SPA) plays in female athletes’ mental health. When athletes compete, there are spectators watching the sport. For this reason, not only are female athletes an aspect of sports entertainment, but they are also

a form of visual entertainment for the crowd: “Women may perceive that others are evaluating their physique [as well as] skill level. This compels self-presentational concerns” (Krane et al., 2000, p. 248). Self-presentational concerns, in this context, deals with judging one’s self based on what is believed to be the preconceived notion of a perfect figure. Leary (1992) claims that contrary to their male counterparts, most women initially engage in exercise to attain an ideal, feminine body, so when they begin performing at high levels, the underlying mindset of not having the perfect body remains (as cited in Krane et al., 2000, p. 248). As these athletes compete in sports, they dwell on their self-presentation and skepticism of how their body may or may not look in lieu of focusing all their abilities on the sport itself. Without focusing all their efforts on their athletic ability, the female athletes alter their focus to self-presentation concern. This idea of self-presentation concern leads to what is known as social physique anxiety (SPA). Hart, Leary, and Rejeski (1989) describe SPA as “the concern that others are negatively evaluating one’s body or physical appearance...[and] how one’s body is being judged by others” (as cited by Krane et al., 2000, p.249). The thoughts by females that their bodies are being judged have been related to body dissatisfaction. A female athlete with high levels of SPA is concerned with potentially negative body evaluations by others as she compares her body to the feminine ideal. This influence that femininity has on SPA has a detrimental effect on the athlete’s mental health.

High levels of SPA inevitably lead to detrimental consequences on the female athlete’s mental health, however, some researchers challenge the notion of SPA in female athletes and instead assert that sports participation in females is more mentally beneficial than destructive. Sports participation leads to increased strength and fitness, improved mental health, and lowers the risk for chronic degenerative diseases (Barrack and Van Loan, 2011, p. 124). Researchers such as Colton and Gore (1991) support the claim that “sports participation enhances self-esteem and self-efficacy and reduces feelings of depression” (as cited in Barrack and Van Loan, 2011, p.124). Females participating in sports are reported to have high self-esteem and decreased mental health issues. This is due to the fact that companionship and participation enhances their self-worth and gives them a sense of belonging (Colton and Gore, 1991, p. 290). Group identity and belonging are innate human

desires (Colton and Gore, 1991, p. 290). Although these female athletes may not feel a sense of belonging in the broad group of females, the close subgroup of female athletes and the companionship of their fellow athletes supersede the lack of belonging in the societal context of femininity. In this sense, female athletes actually have low or negligible levels of SPA, and sports participation is essential for positive mental health outcomes.

While there may be some sociological evidence to support that participating in sports will enhance self-esteem and reduce feelings of depression in females, it is important to note that the influence of SPA and global culture cannot be ignored or superseded. Societal pressures and influences affect female athletes at all levels, regardless of the high levels of support they may receive in the female athlete subgroup. Professional tennis player Andrea Petkovic suffers from high SPA. She reports focusing on her large bicep muscles when she sees pictures of herself and describes them as “unfeminine” and states she is “self-conscious about what people might say” (as cited in Rothenberg, 2015, p. 2). Timea Bacsinszky, another highly successful tennis player, discusses how it was necessary for her to do work with a psychologist in order to become comfortable with her body and come to terms with the importance of her playing career (Rothenberg, 2015, p. 3). Both Petkovic and Bacsinszky participate in sports at high levels with countless supporters and a strong group identity, which according to Colton and Gore’s perspective, will enhance self-esteem and reduce feelings of depression. However, both women are uncomfortable with themselves in regards to their body image due to the influence of the larger group identity, which emphasizes hourglass figures. Using these females as examples reiterates how SPA can impact the mental health of the athlete and indirectly affect her ability to do what she loves.

In extreme circumstances, high levels of SPA leads to eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa. Anorexia nervosa is a condition that is linked to body dissatisfaction, among other things. It causes individuals to extremely limit their dietary intake by skipping meals and avoiding eating in general in order to continuously reduce their body weight and size (Barrack & Van Loan, 2011, p. 126). While the average female has to deal with societal pressures to be skinny, female athletes have to deal with this pressure along with the pressure to be excellent in their sport.

Thompson's (2007) study on 300 female collegiate cross-country runners concluded that "19.4% of the athletes self-reporting either currently or previously having an eating disorder", contrary to the "0.5% to 2% occurrence of anorexia or bulimia nervosa in the population of young, healthy, adult female non competitive runners (Academy of Eating Disorders 2011)" (as cited in Barrack & Van Loan, 2011, p. 125). Though 19.4% may not seem like a significant number of athletes reporting eating disorders, the percentage is significantly higher than the 0.5%-2% of noncompetitive females that reported having an eating disorder. Because female athletes have self-presentation concerns, wish to perform at high levels, and still wish to fit the narrow confines of the ideal female body, they become desperate in their ways and compromise their mental health. Those who struggle with eating disorders face decreased athletic performance and battle mental health issues, while still wanting to succeed as an athlete and as a female. This can eventually lead to physical health issues that are sometimes irreversible.

PHYSICAL HEALTH, PREVENTABLE INJURIES, AND THE FEMALE ATHLETE'S DIET

Contrary to the fact that there are ample amounts of available research on the optimally nutritious diet for female athletes, there is no question that many female athletes do not obtain the necessary daily nutritional requirements, leading to preventable injuries, amenorrhea and even osteoporosis. Female athletes base their diets on nutritional guidelines made for the general population, which are not beneficial to their physical health. Though the macronutrient requirement of daily energy intake for the general population in the United States is 45-65% carbohydrates, 10-35% protein, and 20-35% fat, research has shown that athletes' requirements differ from these norms and should be based upon grams per kilogram of body mass (g/kg) instead of percentages (Shriver et al., 2011, p. 10). A female athlete's diet should differ from that of the average female, due to the high demand their sports put on their bodies, and the high levels of energy needed to perform. However, a study conducted by Shriver et al. on Division 1 female athletes showed "nearly all athletes...failed to meet their estimated energy needs, [and] half of the athletes...reported intakes of less than 2,000 kcal/day, which represents the amount of energy that is required for a young woman who is at a low

to moderate activity level” (p. 14). More importantly, though 91% of the athletes were reported as having healthy body weights, 33% of them still expressed a desire to lose weight, and intended to do so through dieting (p. 13). An overwhelming portion of the athletes did not achieve the necessary daily energy. Although almost all the females were categorized as healthy, a significant number of them still suffered from body dissatisfaction and wanting to be thin, causing them to alter their diets and decrease their energy intake. This yearning to fit into society’s definition of being feminine and wanting to attain the ‘perfect body’ affects their diets and their energy intake. The low energy diets not only affect their performance, but also their health as well.

Society’s glorification of what the ideal feminine body consists of causes female athletes to adjust their diets and inadvertently impact their health. Low bone mass in female athletes, for example, is caused by growth hormone production being directly inhibited by energy deficiency (Barrack and Van Loan, 2011, p. 127). As concluded by Shriver et al., the proportion of female athletes who suffer from energy deficient diets is large, due to the emphasis on their bodies and aspiration to be thin. This suggests that a large percentage of female athletes will also suffer from low bone mass due to poor nutrition. Low bone mass increases the susceptibility to bone fractures and other injuries, and if not addressed will lead to early onset osteoporosis, a disease where all bones become extremely fragile and weak.

Another negative health impact come from amenorrhea, or menstrual irregularity, which occurs when energy is not available to promote hormone function required for menstruation. Countless studies have been done to show the relationship between energy deficiency and disruption of menstruation, which is an essential part of females’ health. Williams et al. (2001) emphasize that it is inadequate nutrition and not the high levels of exercise that causes amenorrhea in female athletes because when “fed adequate calories to adjust for the increased energy expended on their endurance exercise regime, normal menstrual function gradually resumed” (as cited in Barrack and Van Loan, 2011, p. 125). The menstrual irregularity is not caused by the amount of vigorous exercise a female athlete engages in; however, if her energy intake is not adjusted to account for the energy expended, there is little energy left to maintain her physical health. By working out hard and eating less,

female athletes are physically damaging their bodies and destroying their health: all to achieve a mythical, unrealistic body.

Conclusion

Female athletes are increasing in numbers in our society, however social norms of defining what is considered the ideal body for a female has remained stagnant. Female athletes are constantly struggling between being feminine and reaching their full athletic potential. It has been proven throughout the course of this argument that female athletes will choose femininity over athleticism, whether it be consciously or subconsciously. The effects of the ideal feminine body being portrayed through the media, through male's views on what is feminine or attractive, as well as high levels of social physique anxiety, have left female athletes to make the wrong choice: the choice that includes high risk of injuries, poor nutrition, susceptibility to mental health disorders, and decreased athletic performance. It is manifest in the research that female athletes are not deliberately self-inflicting harm, however it is ingrained in their minds over and over that there is only one way to be feminine, causing them to not realize the damaging effect it has on other aspects of their being. Unfortunately, it is difficult to suggest and highly improbable to believe that society will immediately shift its views on femininity, but it is necessary for some sort of intervention to take place. A potential solution would be mandatory education for female athletes, including recurring and frequent classes that emphasize the negative impacts of succumbing to the influence of the cultural views of femininity. Because many female athletes are not intentionally causing themselves harm, they are therefore not fully aware of how much they are influenced by such an ideal. If more female athletes can be comfortable with themselves and shape their own 'ideal body', they will not feel the need to choose between the sport they love and their gender; they will be able to fit in while standing out.

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Great Eggspectations

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*Abstract: The infertility industry is a growing multi-billion dollar enterprise, operating with little government oversight. This minimal supervision allows for profit-motivated assisted reproduction agencies to exploit young women who donate for monetary compensation or altruistic reasons. In fact, egg “donation” is actually a misnomer because these eggs are being harvested and sold to agencies for a large compensation. The documentary *Eggsploitation* highlights the impersonal nature of the egg donation industry through the compelling and tragic stories of past egg donors. “Great Eggspectations” focuses on the secrets of the infertility industry, including its recruiting approach and emotional manipulation through various advertisements, the unspoken risks that are not fully addressed to potential donors, and the ethics behind harvesting eggs even when it compromises the health of the donors.*

INTRODUCTION

The infertility industry is a growing multi-billion dollar enterprise, operating with little government oversight. This minimal supervision allows for profit-motivated assisted reproduction agencies to exploit young women who donate for monetary compensation or altruistic reasons. In fact, egg “donation” is actually a misnomer because these eggs are being harvested and sold to agencies for a large compensation. The 2010 documentary “*Eggsploitation*” highlights the impersonal nature of the egg donation industry through the compelling and tragic stories of past egg donors. Through the interviews of past donors, these women describe their horrific experiences and unveil the unspoken risks of egg retrieval. There are many secrets of the infertility industry, including their recruiting approach and emotional manipulation through various advertisements, the unsaid risks that are not fully addressed to potential donors, and the ethics behind harvesting eggs even when it compromises the health of the donors. There is not enough emphasis placed on creating more policies for the procedure and improving informed consent because the women are not provided adequate information from the clinics, which leaves them unaware of the health risks involved.

EGG DONATION: A BRIEF HISTORY

Egg donation has a history dating back to the early 1980's when it began as a research project at the University of California, Los Angeles. Mark V. Sauer describes egg donation's history by stating that "It began as a research project, approved by an institutional review board at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Donors, as 'human subjects,' were compensated \$50 a day for their time and expenses, for a total of \$250 per cycle of participation. Advertising was not permitted and was considered unethical. UCLA's School of Law reviewed and approved consent forms prior to their use by patients" (Sauer 1). During that time period, monetary compensation and recruitment were not the primary focuses of the procedure. As years passed by and technology was more refined, exploitation of donors began to manifest, as there was an increasing interest in donors accompanied by the use of egg donation to treat age-related infertility. Now, due to the gradual "commercialization" of egg donation, the advertisements and money offered are more alluring, which draws many unaware women to donate every year (Sauer 1).

THE ROLE OF ADVERTISEMENTS IN EGG DONOR RECRUITMENT

The language used in egg donation advertisements plays a large role in the recruitment process. It is crucial to analyze how egg donation agencies and infertility clinics recruit potential donors; this luring approach can be referred to as donor marketing. Egg donation ads can be found all over college campuses, newspapers, and even social networking sites. Pamela Hobbs agrees that the language plays a large role in the recruitment of potential donors, but she further extends this idea by looking at the generic features of these ads. Hobbs states, "these ads share certain generic features with personal ads and other forms of classified advertising, among them the inclusion of a heading or bold-faced introductory sequence which serves as an attention-focusing device" (Hobbs 31). When one takes into consideration its many commitments, to promote egg donation as if it were a classified is to vastly understate how much the process actually demands of the donor at their own expense. She further states:

Use of the word "needed" is not peculiar to egg donor ads, but is in fact a common component of ordinary "help wanted" ads...It can

thus be seen that the concept of ‘need’ encompasses both material needs (e.g. I need five roofers to finish this job) and emotional needs (e.g. A child needs its mother’s love); accordingly the headings alone tell us little about the manner in which these ads approach the goal of engaging the response of potential donors. (Hobbs 31)

Some advertisements take the “help wanted” approach to attract women who want to donate for monetary reasons. These ads are very specific in what the recipient is looking for and how much money will be offered for the donation; therefore, they let the reader know that the donation is a “commercial transaction.” Nevertheless, not all ads have a direct recruiting approach; some ads are very personal and speak to the emotions of the interested donors, not directly to their pockets. Hobbs describes the purpose of personal ads by explaining that “rather than ‘recruiting’ ‘applicants,’ these ads explicitly seek the desired other” (Hobbs 32). These ads usually appeal to the emotions of interested donors especially through the use of “metaphorical imagery.” Through the use of images of families in need or babies, this imagery attempts to make the reader aware how much of an impact the donation will have on the recipient family. If that alone cannot evoke an altruistic response in the viewer of the ad, the large and bold price tag for exchanging genetic information for monetary compensation surely will. Author Rene Almeling gives a look into the medical market for genetic material through the marketing strategy of one fertility agency. She stated that, “Creative Beginning’s director explains the impetus behind her marketing strategy: ‘We appeal to the idea that there’s an emotional reward, that they’re going to feel good about what they’ve done, that it’s a win-win situation, that they’re going to help someone with something that person needs, and they’re going to get something they need in return” (Almeling 326). There is an appeal to the emotions of potential donors because the clinics have constructed the idea of egg donation as “reciprocal gift-giving.” Lindsay Gezinski explored the emotional appeal used in egg donation websites by stating:

The egg donation web sites attempted to appeal to egg donors through a description of the recipients. Recipients were described as parents who were reproductively challenged to conceive, seeing egg donation as their last resort. Further, the egg donation websites

consistently emphasized the notion that egg donors play a huge part in the reproductive process. The terms generous and generosity were used to paint the egg donor as an altruistic human being. (Gezinski 400)

By stressing the devastation of the recipient and how much the donor is needed, these advertisements charm the donor into wanting to give a donation. The language alone attracts individuals who are benevolent and just want to make a difference in someone's family. Gezinski further describes the language of ads by explaining that "three themes emerged from the language used on websites. They included (1) making dreams come true for reproductively challenged women, (2) giving the gift of life, and (3) life changing journey for the egg donor" (Gezinski 397). These themes further depict the donor marketing needed to motivate potential donors by pity and how the emotional manipulation of agencies is used to attract the unaware donors and offset any potential guilt they may be having in the possibility that they might be doing this only for personal monetary compensation. The donors then become altruistic and feel that they have a commitment to the recipient family.

The language and criteria used in advertisements show a disappointing reflection of our society's values. Egg donation gives couples a chance to experience childbearing; however, agencies still operate with a profit-based mindset. This mindset even plays a large role in which potential donors are selected for the procedure. Some of the common types of donors targeted are healthy, well-educated, attractive, repeat-donors, and those able to prove their fertility. In his research on how donors who were well educated received large compensation, Aaron Levine stated, "Nearly half of the advertisements offered compensation exceeding recommended levels. In addition, analysis indicated that average SAT scores at the college or university where an advertisement was published were a strong predictor of the compensation offered" (Levine 27). An example of this was seen is an ad in "The Stanford Daily" from alumnus, the recipient stated, "The egg donor must be high-achieving, with high standardized test scores, several awards from high school and college and an A grade-point average. The alumnus set forth such exacting standards hoping that his child will eventually attend Stanford or another top university" (Watkins et al. par. 1). This marketing strategy gives a false sense of authority to the recipients because they are allowed to

screen donors based on specific characteristics and determine who is allowed to donate. Agencies take advantage of this and offer inappropriate compensation for high GPA's, which targets young college students who are looking for fast cash. Another concern that this type of behavior creates is focusing on the idea that genetics heavily influences intellect, which is a common misconception. Donors are increasingly being targeted for what their credentials are instead of their motivations to donate, which excludes women who want to donate for altruistic reasons. Attractiveness is also a key component of the criteria set for potential donors. According to *The New York Post*, "Egg 'agents' are aggressively recruiting city models and actresses, whose looks are coveted by couples turning to in-vitro fertilization" (Saiidi par.1). By targeting "good looking" models, egg recipients believe that their children will also be "good looking." Therefore, the agencies make being attractive a commodity and appeal to the women's vanity in the egg recruitment campaigns. This eliminates the women who want to donate for altruistic reasons.

THE MANIPULATION, MOTIVATION, AND EXPERIENCES OF EGG DONORS

Physicians encounter a conflict of interests when determining which participant in the procedure receives the most priority. However, many physicians in the egg donation industry become so detached during the procedure because their goal is to cultivate as much ova as possible. Mulley stresses how crucial it is for physicians to adopt an unbiased mindset by stating that "to diagnose preference accurately doctors have to eliminate bias, which requires resisting several natural instincts" (Mulley 2). This level of detachment allows for a conflict of interest to arise. Daar in her research, described this conflict by declaring that, "The physician must simultaneously maximize the opportunity for pregnancy by retrieving as many eggs as possible, while minimizing the risk of harm to the donor by limiting the number of eggs that are produced. Since it is the infertile couple who generally pays the physician's fees, it seems likely this conflict would more often be resolved in favor of the sponsoring couple" (Daar 1). Although the donor plays an important role in the procedure, it is the recipients who are investing in (or to use Daar's language, "sponsoring") the procedure and therefore have the primary focus. The unfortunate outcome of the physician's conflict of inter-

est is summed by a statement in the documentary that said that “the egg donor is unique in that she is not infertile, she is not sick yet she assumes all the risks in order to help someone else” (Eggsp1). Mulley would be disappointed with the approach of physicians because the risks, benefits, and preferences of the patients are no longer factored into the plans of care, something he emphasized.

The physician uses this opportunity to exploit women only because the donors would not question a medical professional. An example of this exploitation can be viewed in Lee’s research when he described a patient who developed ovarian stimulation syndrome as a result of the physician’s malpractice. He stated that “She began receiving daily injections of hormones to induce the development of multiple follicles” (Lee 1) and then further went on to say that “although her estrogen level was higher than normal and a very large number of ova were developing, Dr. Brown did not want to abort the ovulation cycle” (Lee 1). This further extends the idea of the conflict of interest between the physician and donor because the physician was only concerned with extracting as many eggs as possible without worrying about putting their donor at risk. In this case, “the physician’s own interests were aligned with those of the recipient, since the satisfaction of the infertile parents, rather than of the donors, determined the success of the practice” (Lee 3). The failure to acknowledge the donor as a human, and not as an object used to make the physicians and agencies money, reveals the commercial nature of the infertility industry.

The concern over the risks of the procedure is offset because a physician performs the procedure. Patients think very highly of their physicians because of the lengthy and rigorous training that they experienced. Lee emphasizes that the risks of ova donation should be taken seriously and how physicians forget their primary goal by stating:

I believe it is incompatible with the role of a physician to subject someone to a dangerous procedure that does not provide medical benefit (whether amelioration of illness or enhancement of normal function). The public, collectively and as individuals, do not expect that physicians will ask people to engage in unhealthy activities for a fee. Thus because a physician is offering the procedure, potential donors may underestimate the risks of this activity, in spite of counseling. Many laypeople cannot conceive that a physician would

propose to do a risky procedure that has no medical benefit and they might therefore interpret the description of risk offered by a counselor as mere legal boilerplate. (Lee 2)

Although donors may receive some counseling about some of the possible risks, they are not necessarily guaranteed fair and objective treatment due to the money-driven nature of the industry.

The role of the doctor is to provide patients with the best quality of care, making sure that their best interests are in mind. However, the physicians are aware of the health risks that accompany this procedure but still continue to proceed. Ova donation changes the relationship between the physician and patient and the role of the physician because monetary compensation is involved. Doctors who are only attracted to the compensation offered begin to neglect the general principles and ethics of medical practice. Sindy, an exploited donor, described her experience by stating that “everything that was happening to me were a chain of events where risks weren’t taken into account and they (the physicians) didn’t look at the data objectively. They just kept pushing me on” (Eggspl). It is very disappointing to know that Sindy was no longer viewed as a patient. Her trust was abused when the physician knew that continuing with the procedure was more harmful to her. However, her well-being was not the main priority of the doctor at the clinic, causing her to almost bleed to death. Sindy was not the only one who experienced exploitation from the physicians of infertility agencies. She is one of the many women who were manipulated and used by the infertility agencies. Egg donation is over the last 10 years is becoming less about the women being altruistic, and more about her being emotionally and financially manipulated for her eggs.

The emotional investment of women in egg donation allows for them to be manipulated and abused by the infertility industry. *Egg-exploitation* shines light on this concept by showing how the altruistic motives of donors allowed for them to be taken advantage of. With egg donation, “Each woman’s story of egg donation is unique, but it almost always starts with an ad appealing to their sense of altruism in order to help others have babies or to advance scientific research” (Eggspl). Donors feel so emotionally obligated to the recipient couple that they do not mind the “few” risks that accompany the procedure. The story of the exploited donor Kylee paints a picture of how financially motivated

agencies are. When asked to describe her experience, she stated:

And there was a girl that I worked with that was trying to have a baby, so she went through all the hormone shots, she went through the whole process. Unfortunately, it was not successful, but I just saw how much she wanted to have a baby. I, of course, would see ads for it online. Hey, you know, I can help somebody and also get paid for it too. It was a blur. I started getting more uncomfortable each day and a little bit more bloated. I remember just being miserable. The first person I contacted was the agency, so she was the first person I reached out to, to say 'Look, I'm not feeling very well. I'm uncomfortable and bloated. I'm cramping really bad. It's getting worse. And she reassured me that I was okay. She said it's very normal, this is typical. I had my meeting with the doctors and they said 'it's normal, it's normal.' After the procedure you'll be good. Just a little bit more.' It's kind of a bad dream now. I had asked him and he had told me between about 20 to 23 eggs. After researching on the whole medical side of what ended up happening, he ending taking about 45. (Eggspl)

Kylee joins Sindy and many other women who invest so much trust in the agencies mainly because medical professionals conduct the procedure. These women did not have any idea that they would be paying for this one charitable act for the rest of their lives. They all have to live with many complications that accompany the procedure and still there are no laws that draw attention to this. In Andrea Kalfoglou's qualitative study of the experiences of egg donors, she provides information about why these women feel used. Of the donors she interviewed, "many felt that their best interest was not a primary concern of the medical staff. At least three women mentioned that they thought they were kept on the hormones longer than necessary just to produce more eggs... other participants described being treated with disrespect by the clinical staff, and attributed this to the fact that they were not the paying customers" (Kalfoglou 802). The exploitation of donors occurs when they're no longer treated as a selfless human being but a "test subject" instead. Since the women are not paying the medical professionals, they are not treated with the most respect. Because they voluntarily agreed to undergo the procedure rather than paying for the doctors' services, a certain level of dignity is denied to them as patients. When researching, it was

rather difficult to find a wide range of egg donor success stories because few women describe having an excellent experience that was “pain-free” and had no complications. However, one success story found on a fertility clinic’s website appeared. There are still women who report having a positive experience with the procedure.

In the “Why Egg Donors Donate” section of Shady Grove’s fertility clinic’s website, there is success story titled “Sophia: A Nanny With a Huge Heart.” Sophia is a college student who was motivated by altruism because she always knew that she wanted to donate her eggs to make a family’s dream of having a child come true. Her story goes on to say that she donated five times and she was very impressed with the process. When asked about her experience she stated:

There was also a donor orientation day that was really detailed. We even practiced doing injections to prepare for the medications we would have to give ourselves during our cycles...I felt really comfortable and safe with the nurses at Shady Grove Fertility. And the doctor who did my egg retrieval was really nice and checked on me several times. When he came in and told me how many eggs were retrieved, I was really happy that the whole cycle had been such a success. (Eggspl)

Sophia was fortunate enough to have the support of the physicians and nurses at the clinic. It is interesting to observe that if a donor is treated with care, then she would not mind donating again. In another aspect of her study, Kalfoglou stated, “Participants who thought that they were treated with respect and appreciation typically reported a positive donation experience...Donors feel good when they were treated like collaborators rather than employees or adversaries” (Kalfoglou 803). Granted, some donors may have a good experience where they felt that they were provided a lot of support from the fertility clinics, like Sophia experienced. Employees at the clinics usually tell the women that their screening process is actually beneficial because the women are able to receive free Sexual Transmitted Diseases testing and also a genetic evaluation, which is very helpful when they want to have children. It is inaccurate to say that every fertility clinic exploits women; however, there are many that do, and there is an urgent need for regulation in the industry to ensure that all women can be guaranteed treatment that is responsibly

managed and regulated for quality of the kind Sophia received.

LOOKING AHEAD AND THE INCREASED NEED FOR REGULATION IN THE INFERTILITY INDUSTRY

The risks of egg donation are not adequately researched because the donors are not tracked or documented. There is a desperate need for regulation in the clinics' guidelines for informed consent to guarantee that the donors are aware of all possible risks and benefits of the procedure. Mulley emphasizes the importance of being aware of all options of treatment and its effect on the patient's decision by stating, "Patients chose different treatments after they become better informed" (Mulley 3). However, when compensation is involved, informed consent loses some of its relevance. Daar's research shows how the "attractive financial incentives" of the egg donation procedure can allow the donors to underestimate the risks especially when they are not fully informed of all the possible risks. The author states,

"particularly in the managed care setting, full disclosure and an open discussion are less likely to occur" (Furrow et al. 1995). At the same time, patient comprehension is low and decision making about medical choices is often based on factors other than accurate information, such as fear, emotion and religious beliefs (Furrow et al. 1993; Brock and Wartman 1990; Katz 1993). To posit that egg donors receive less risk information and therefore have less opportunity for informed consent. (Daar 19)

When donors are not health literate, they will not completely understand how serious the risks of the procedure are. Many donors will take the suggestions from the clinic's medical professionals without researching on their own.

However, those that do research will find limited information about the risks because most bad experiences of donors are undocumented. Alexandra, an interviewed donor, explained this lack of information available by explaining "at the time that I was considering egg donation, I was at a major research university so I had access to online databases of research literature. And what I found was that there was nothing stating that there were risks to egg donors" (Eggspl). Sindy also reported having a similar experience by stating that "looking up studies

and trying to see if there was anything that I should be wary of, what side effects a procedure might have and after doing that research and not coming up with much in terms of risks or dangers” (Eggsp1). There is very little information provided about failed egg retrieval procedures and no documented information of deadly side effects because the clinics do not want to scare potential donors away. Also, because there are no strict regulations and guidelines from federal organizations, agencies have more freedom to exploit innocent donors:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention admits freely in its latest report on fertility-clinic success rates that it ‘does not collect information on egg donors beyond what is presented in this report: success rates for cycles using donor eggs or using embryos derived from donor eggs.’ In fact, the CDC doesn’t even know how many donors there are—only how many times eggs are retrieved. (Truitt 2)

The Fertility Success Rate Act (1992) requires all clinics who performed the assisted reproduction procedure to report their success rates to the CDC. However, there are no laws in place to report the complications with the procedure, which is just as important, if not more. Dr. Suzanne Parisian, Former Director of the FDA, further explains the lack of information provided on behalf of the clinics by stating, “The girls who donate eggs after they’re done with her, there’s no numbers. There’s nobody saying how many of those girls go on to have complications or problems? I mean, she’s like nameless. She doesn’t appear anywhere” (Eggsp1). These exploited women provide a lot of information that can prevent potential donors from experiencing such complications. However, any information that can hinder the financial gain of doctors and clinics will go unreported.

It is very difficult to see a change in the industry if legislation is not established to prevent the donors from being exploited. Mark Sauer states:

General practice guidelines have been suggested. Yet, it remains unclear whether physicians heed such tenets, because policing is non-existent and sanctions have never been levied against violators.. it is the short-term nature of the latter problems combined with the

underlying good health of the donor, that most likely keeps these problems out of the headlines and courtrooms. (Sauer 2)

The emphasis placed on the traumatizing experiences of these women is insufficient because they know that there are no policies or laws that can allow them to develop a lawsuit against the clinics. Author Eliza Truitt emphasizes that the industry needs oversight by explaining, “Science has outstripped society, and there are no specific laws [regulating this field],” says Dr. Arthur Wisot, executive director of Reproductive Partners Medical Group, a fertility clinic in Redondo Beach, California. He explains, “That means [that there are] no laws requiring full disclosure of cancer risks, or the risk that donors’ future fertility could be compromised” (Truitt 2). There have been many attempts at establishing regulation for the industry, but unfortunately they have failed. Cynthia Cohen described an attempt at changing the guidelines at the ARSM by stating:

A detailed set of guidelines developed by the National Advisory Board on Ethics in Reproduction, if followed, could provide oocyte donors with a well-informed, safe, and rewarding experience in which their wishes about future contact with resulting children were respected (NABER 1996). Many of these recommendations, unfortunately, have been overlooked by the American Society of Reproductive Medicine (Kalfoglou 2000). (Cohen 2)

There are also many red flags that are raised in the industry when the medications involved raise questions. According to a former FDA director, Lupron, a drug used for the procedure is “not indicated for fertility use. It’s a drug that’s being used unapproved” (Eggspl).

California was also the only state considering a legislation to require the clinics to disclose information about the long-term effects of the drugs used but it has not been effective.

In California, lawmakers became aware of the potential vulnerability of egg donors and drafted legislation to address some of those concerns. In February 2000 State Senator Tom Hayden introduced Senate Bill 1630 into the California Senate. Initially, the ambitious bill contained a wide array of provisions, including language man-

dating insurance coverage for infertility treatment, a limitation on the number of times a woman could donate eggs during her lifetime (four), the establishment of a registry for all egg donors in the state, and an assortment of disclosure requirements directed at ART patients and oocyte donors...Regrettably, Governor Davis vetoed the bill, citing an ongoing effort by the state Department of Health Services to develop guidelines for informing ART patients of the potential risks of treatment. (Daar 20)

It is a disappointment to see that there is not enough of an emphasis placed on establishing legislation. These women are selfless, donating for the greater good. However, they are treated like human test objects, where their needs and concerns are no longer a priority. Sauer believes that this concern and call for justice is not being taken seriously and affirms, "Unless state or federal legislation limits the practice of egg donation, measures that I generally oppose, current trends are unlikely to change" (Sauer 2). There are only laws established to report success rates to government and guidelines recommended by the American Society of Reproductive Medicine. If the ASRM believes that a clinic is not following their recommendations for advertising, they can have their membership revoked. Having their membership revoked can still allow these clinics to continue exploiting women because it fails to require basic licensing of agencies.

Still, there is no legislation that forces these clinics to report all the complications that women receive so that there can be further research done to see how the risks can be prevented. If no information is easily accessible to these women, they are misled and deceived, and their expectations of what they think the procedure will be will prevent them from making an informed decision, which will allow agencies to continue exploiting innocent donors.

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The Constraints of Reality in Dreams and Simulations

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*Abstract: This paper is concerned with the purpose of questioning the reality of the universe by examining the implications of illusory worlds, particularly simulations and dreams, on perceived reality. The concept of perceived reality is established by merging the philosophical ideas of René Descartes and Plato. This concept is utilized to study the behavior of illusion by comparing the dreams in *Inception* and the simulations in *The Matrix*. The analysis reveals the necessity of perceived reality and its influence on illusion as illusion is derived from reality. I argue that a paradigm of reality is required in constructing dreams and simulations. This has major consequences for our understanding of the nature of dreams and simulations as they relate to the senses, death, and similarity to reality.*

INTRODUCTION

Generations of philosophers have questioned the credibility of observation in describing a person's current and perceived reality. The very involvement of perception in inspecting reality is biased and therefore does not hold considerable weight. If evidence and experimental data are based on subjective observations, the information obtained becomes unreliable and meaningless to study. Philosophers have proposed that the universe humans currently live in may instead be an advanced simulation developed by an unknown sentient or artificial being and therefore everything that surrounds us may be nothing more than an illusion. The impact of such a revelation on our perceived reality would be nothing short of mind-blowing and worthy of investigation. The implications of potentially living in a simulation or dream on our perceived realities can be studied by using the developed theories in *Meditations on First Philosophy* by René Descartes and those in *The Republic* by Plato. The insights and methods provided by these philosophers are incorporated into my analysis of simulations and dreams in the fictional cases of Lilly and Lana Wachowski's *The Matrix* and Christopher Nolan's *Inception*. Though the movies differ in the type of illusion employed, both offer a common outlook and establish an important relationship on the dependent nature of illusions on reality. This connection can be further applied to the nonfictional case of congenital blindness. By highlighting

the relationship between illusions and reality, it becomes clear that a model of our perceived reality is necessary in constructing dreams and simulations. Such a model would offer many intriguing consequences for our understanding of the nature of reality and illusion; particularly, on the inability to conceptualize death and the impact on metaphysical and ontological topics such as consciousness.

DEFINING THE REAL AND OUR PERCEIVED REALITY

Before analyzing the connection between Descartes and Plato in determining reality, one must define the parameters of *reality* and *illusion* and find the balance using philosophical and literary descriptions. Reality is what a person believes to be the truth; it is a place from which an individual has derived himself or herself, usually representing the primary world in fantasy and science fiction literature. Illusion, however, is conceived or crafted; it is a place that has no legitimate basis and represents other worlds. The illusions that this paper will primarily focus on will be dreams and simulations. The approach taken to investigate them involves utilizing philosophical framework and literary cases. Le Doeuff defines these by indicating that “philosophical discourse [is] the rational, the concept, the argued, the logical, the abstract” whilst literary discourse is “myth, fable, the poetic, the domain of the image” (Doeuff 1). Essentially, philosophy represents theory and the real whilst literature represents particular cases and illusion due to superfluous imagery detracting from the truth. Even though literary cases may add imagery that eclipses philosophical truth, they sometimes “assist in the way that philosophical theories and models are conveyed to others. Aiding those who cannot translate complex ideas into an accessible form” (Constable 235). This method of using both philosophy and literature (imagery) to maximize transparency can be applied to the concept of our perceived reality. For example, it is hard to imagine that the current world people reside in could actually be an illusion. However, if one were exposed to the imagery of *The Matrix* one would be able to conceptualize it very well as Neo’s current reality is a simulation developed by intelligent machines to harvest his body’s energy. Even though imagery and specific cases are useful in expressing philosophical ideas, it is important not to overuse them because imagery soon becomes subjective.

The process of defining the real with subjective observations and

terminology is fruitless because they leave the process open to interpretation. Perceived reality is transmutable as it varies from person to person and is usually determined by the primary world with which one associates oneself. How then do we create a standardized reference point of reality, a tautology that cannot be refuted? To derive pure reason for the use of a definition, one must abandon all traces of experience that could potentially create bias. This was accomplished by the philosopher René Descartes who used his expertise in mathematics to create a system of ontological proofs to verify his conclusions. By doubting and rejecting the knowledge he had developed based on his perceived reality, Descartes was able to bring himself to a state independent of experience and therefore unblemished by superfluous language and other people's interpretations of it. Through his doubting method, René Descartes recognized that "there are no definitive signs by which to distinguish being awake from being asleep" (Brandhorst 36). Both states consist of how the signals in our brain are constructed and interpreted to allow interaction with the world. This interaction between the brain and the world, however, cannot be referred to as the real because it can easily be manipulated or replicated to construct an illusion. Interestingly, when discussing the nature of reality with Neo for the first time, Morpheus¹, nearly quoting Descartes, asks, "Have you ever had a dream, Neo, that you were so sure was real? What if you were unable to wake from that dream? How would you know the difference between the dream world and the real world?" And, equally as important, if you can't wake from the dream or distinguish it from reality, then almost everything you know about the world and human existence, or thought you knew, could turn out to be false (*The Matrix*). How does one truly know what reality is if it is not even possible to tell whether or not one is dreaming due to one's unreliable senses? A person only realizes that he or she was dreaming after he or she is jolted awake and given a chance to compare both states. This realistic attribute to dreams is witnessed throughout the movie *Inception* as Cobb states that "Dreams feel real while we're in them. It's only when we wake up that we realize something was actually strange" (*Inception*). This peculiarity is specifically tested in the movie when characters check their totems, which are personal objects with a unique characteristic that only the owner of the object knows about. These totems can be used to distinguish between a fabricated dream and reality almost immediately after the characters believe they have escaped from a dream. From the

above information we still cannot explicitly define reality, but we can see that there is a preference as to which state people refer to as reality. Even though one cannot differentiate between being awake and being asleep without comparing the two simultaneously, choosing the world that one is “awake” in seems to be the convention and reference point people prefer. This transmutable reference point is defined or referred to as a person’s perceived reality.

APPROPRIATION, CONDITIONING, AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

The preference of the “awake” stage is a direct consequence of how much more time is spent being awake rather than dreaming. Because of the nature of perceived reality, people spend a significant amount of time interacting with the world using sensory information and throughout that process they develop personal experiences. This process, by which people integrate information from the real world to project into their fantasies, is referred to by Tolkien as appropriation. Tolkien notes that “of all faces those of our familiars [are] the ones both most difficult to play fantastic tricks with, and most difficult really to see with fresh attention ... This triteness is really the penalty of ‘appropriation’: the things that are trite, or familiar, are the things that we have appropriated” (Tolkien 19). Appropriation is analogous to classical conditioning in the field of psychology because the people we have associated with manifest themselves in our dreams to help form an illusory world. However, as explained in the previous paragraph, the process of conditioning and developing personal experiences is detrimental because it inadvertently obfuscates the truth based on differing perceived realities rather than incorporating knowledge available to everyone and even the knowledge unavailable to everyone. Put simply, most Europeans had no knowledge of the Western world during the early 1400s, but that unavailable knowledge does not necessarily deny the existence of such a world.

This logical argument is analogous to Plato’s allegory of the cave, which involves prisoners whose perceived reality is based on their life in the cave. The allegory involves prisoners in a cave who have been shackled since childhood and restrained in such a way that they cannot move their bodies and are thus forced to gaze upon a particular wall of the

1 The god of dreams in Greek mythology

cave. In *The Republic*, Plato requests readers to “imagine a light from a fire some distance behind them” and “between the prisoners and the fire is a raised path along whose edge there is a low wall” where men carry objects back and forth. “The objects include human and animal images” that cast shadows onto the wall in an effect similar to that of the modern day projector (Plato 209). Finally, the carriers of the shapes would speak and make noises that echoed inside the cave. The naïve prisoners were only able to use limited sensory information from the shadows they saw with their eyes and the echoes they heard with their ears in creating a false perceived reality; the prisoners assumed that the shadows must be producing the sounds. In his analysis, Mark Conrad writes that:

Because the prisoners have only ever had experience of the shadows on the cave wall- they can see nothing else - they believe that those shadows constitute the whole of reality. We're like the prisoners in the cave when we believe that the physical, material world of particulars is the whole reality, and that there's nothing else beyond. The journey out of the cave for us, what may be called enlightenment, consists in leaving the body and senses behind and making the intellectual ascent to the Forms. (213)

Conrad is essentially describing the relationship between the allegory of the cave and our perceived reality. The current reality in which people live is the only thing they know to be true just as the prisoners know that the shadows and echoes constitute their reality. In a sense the only way to be enlightened or free from the chains of our past experiences and perceived reality is to journey outside of the cave. This feeling of enlightenment can be related back to being jolted awake from a dream, as one changes his or her reference state.

SENSATION AND REALITY

Studying the philosophies of Descartes and Plato and applying them to specific cases in *The Matrix* and *Inception* helped to establish the role of past experiences in manipulating simulations and dreams. By further examining both movies in their entirety and using inductive reasoning, one can infer that perceived reality plays a major part in constructing dreams and simulations. As explained above, Descartes indicated that one cannot differentiate between a dream and reality while Plato posited that one's perceived reality is dictated by one's past experiences and

available knowledge. Combining the two perspectives provides insight as to why the parameters of sensation and our perceived reality are necessary in forming illusions such as dreams and simulations.

Examining the illusions in the two movies and how they were created leads to the assertion that dreams and simulations are based on reality. This drawing upon reality is seen in “The terrain that *Inception* lays out [which] is no longer that of the classical unconscious...*Inception*’s arcades and hotel corridors are on the contrary those of a globalized capital...There’s nothing alien” (Fisher 45). At first glance, it may seem that the dreams involved a sort of unfamiliar or foreign atmosphere, but if one were to inspect the composition of the dreams again, one would notice that the foundation of the environment is derived from reality. It can be argued that flying in a dream, like a superhero, is impossible in real life and therefore not derived from reality. How then, is it possible to dream about flying? The supernatural feats in our dreams can be reconciled to reality by performing a double take or once again inspecting the composition of the dream; the technique can be applied not only to the structure of illusions, but also to ideas in them. Even though the dreams in *Inception* allowed for supernatural activities, most of them were developed from concepts and information available in reality. This is seen firsthand when Cobb warns Ariadne to “avoid building a dream from your memory” as it “is the easiest way to lose grasp of what’s real and what is a dream” (*Inception*). Creating a dream without a basis of the real world and its concepts is just as impossible a task as writing a story without using words that are already known. It is important to note that this does not imply that dreams and illusions have no novel concepts. Dreams may have unique and creative aspects, to them; however, they are not required like the parameters of perceived reality. Similarly, in *The Matrix*, this simple yet illuminating observation is highlighted when Neo questions the reality of the matrix. To this, Morpheus retorts, “what is real? How do you define real? If you’re talking about what you can feel, what you can smell, what you can taste and see, then real is simply electrical signals interpreted by your brain” (*The Matrix*). The reality of the matrix consisted of the basis of Neo’s human body and the world around them. Clearly, Neo is still reacting to stimuli and other sensory information in the same manner, regardless of whether or not he is inside or outside of the matrix. In observing these relationships, it becomes evident that illusory dreams and simulations are based on

reality and that our senses may play a big role in analyzing that reality.

The function of sensation and the brain in exploring our perceived reality can be studied by constructing a logical argument that highlights the effect of reality constraints on illusions. We can construct the argument through a series of questions:

- ▶ If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound?
- ▶ If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it create waves and vibrations that propagate in the air or any other medium?
- ▶ If a tree falls in the forest and no one is around to hear it, does it induce auditory senses?

Upon inspection, it is clear that the first question was either geared toward tackling the issues of vagueness or observation and reality. The answer to the first question is general, vague, and subjective, because it depends on our definition of “sound”. To one person the sound may refer to vibrations, but to someone else, sound may only become sound once it has reached their ears. By making the question more explicit it is possible to develop a fruitful argument about sensation and reality. The presence of sensory information indicates that a particular event has taken place; it is a tool used to detect these events. One must note that the senses do not discriminate between reality, simulations, and dreams, as discussed previously. Therefore, sensory information from our perceived reality is essential in constructing illusions.

CONSEQUENCES & IMPLICATIONS

One particular sense that is valuable in investigating is our ability to see. The prisoners in Plato’s allegory of the cave relied on their eyesight to see the projections of the shadows on the wall. These projections signified the presence of an event occurring in the same way that an auditory sensation produced from a tree falling did. As signified events occur, a person’s perceived reality develops, which is then later used to serve as a foundation for creating dreams and simulations. A corollary to this is that it is not possible to simulate or dream about events that we do not understand or have some sort of model to follow.

If we do not know about an event and cannot sense it, how can

we reproduce it in our dreams or simulations? The answer is that we simply cannot. This development is witnessed in humans who are congenitally blind. A recent observational study was performed where subjects who were divided into three groups: congenitally blind, those who developed blindness later on, and a control group with vision. Meaidi, et al. describe the experiment: “Every morning participants filled in a questionnaire related to the sensory construction of the dream... Also assessed [was the] participants’ ability of visual imagery during waking cognition, sleep quality, and depression and anxiety levels” (587). The results demonstrated that a participant’s likelihood of experiencing a visual dream decreased as the participant’s duration of blindness increased. Also, congenitally blind participants had significantly more auditory and tactile dreams compared to those with vision. It follows that humans who were born blind could not see in their respective dreams because there was no way for them to spontaneously develop a paradigm of sight. One may argue that this is because their nerves or retina were damaged and thus cannot produce the electrical impulses necessary to fire the neurons, even during the sleeping reference state. This would mean that it is not due to the lack of a model, but due to the nature of the brain that those suffering from congenital blindness cannot see in their dreams. This argument, however, can quickly be dismissed, as people who developed blindness in the later years of their lives were still able to produce dreams that granted them vision. It then follows that even with a damaged nervous system or retina, subjects who had a late onset of blindness could still experience dreams that were significantly more visual than the subjects whose onset of blindness was at birth. The only shortcoming of this study was that it was merely an observational study rather than an experiment; therefore, the correlation presented does not necessarily imply causation. “Activation of the Primary Visual Cortex by Braille reading in blind subjects” is an example of previous studies and experiments that have explored the absence and retention of vision in dreams by analyzing dream reports during REM sleep and the rewiring of the visual cortex due to neuronal plasticity in blind participants (Sadato, Pascual-Leone, and Grafmani). Clearly, exploring the effects of congenital blindness on subject’s abilities to dream helps in providing insight to support the theory that a model developed from one’s perceived reality satisfies the requirement in forming an illusion.

Acknowledging the constraints of reality on simulations and

dreams opens up metaphysical debates and raises interesting questions on the nature of epistemology and ontology. Many of the theories developed on the enigma of death and the afterlife have been established by religions with conflicting paradigms. Additionally, there is much less evidence supporting the theories of the afterlife than there is supporting established theories, such as evolution. For these reasons, it can be assumed that people cannot conceptualize the afterlife and therefore cannot dream or simulate it. This may explain why many people report waking up from a dream after death in that respective dream. Waking up may be a result of the brain failing to feign death, as the brain has no way of simulating the sensations of death due to the lack of experience. It can be argued that this particular phenomena does not satisfy the restrictions of perceived reality in a dream and therefore causes the dream to end due to a lack of a model. Thus, the implication is that similar restrictions are present when creating dreams or designing simulations.

Further analysis would suggest that simulations created in the future would also have to adhere to the constraints of reality. As a result, predictions about the nature of such simulation could be made. Theorizing that unknown beings would somehow be able to produce a simulation that mimicked the sensations of our perceived reality increases the probability that our universe may actually be a simulation. If we are indeed part of a simulation, we can predict that the unknown beings in the real world are similar or at least were once similar to us because the simulation was modeled on reality. This implies that the unknown beings are post-human, or at least human-like, and have experienced a reality that is related to those being simulated. Nick Bostrom, a philosopher from Oxford University, studied the likelihood of such an outcome in his simulation argument and has suggested that:

A technologically mature posthuman civilization would have enormous computing power. Based on this empirical fact, the simulation argument shows that *at least one* of the following propositions is true: (1) The fraction of civilizations that reach a posthuman stage is very close to zero; (2) The fraction of posthuman civilizations that are interested in running ancestor-simulations is very close to zero; (3) The fraction of all people with our kind of experiences that are living in a simulation is very close to one (Bostrom).

The first two cases assume that humans would either die before

transcending to a posthuman state or that they would simply not care about using resources to run simulations. In contrast, the final statement reveals that those who have experienced similar perceived realities are likely to be grouped into simulations. This indicates that, “unless we are now living in a simulation, our descendants will almost certainly never run an ancestor-simulation” (Bostrom). This ancestral simulation refers to running a simulation using past experiences or historical data to confirm the model of how post-humans came about. Because there is still no way to verify which proposition is most probable, we assume that they are all equally likely. Even though a particular statement cannot be validated, the implications of the assumptions can still be studied.

Interestingly, it becomes possible to learn about the nature of the outside world from inside an illusory world such as simulation or a dream. In essence, studying the properties of an exact replica provides insight to the properties of the real. Therefore the implications of living in a simulation or dream would not be as revolutionary as one would think because the simulated world would represent reality. In fact, the resemblance to reality would be so uncanny that the possibility of being able to construct another simulation is not out of question. If a simulation is based on post-humans who already have the capacity to create such illusions, it can be assumed that a simulated society will also be able to create simulations due to having a similar capacity. This conclusion proposes that multiple layers of simulations and dreams may exist, and suggests that the perceived realities of these layers are more identical than one may imagine.

CONCLUSION

Using the concept of perceived reality allows for the analysis of illusions when questioning the reality of the universe. Comparing the dreams and simulations of *Inception* and *The Matrix* yields the interesting insight that illusions are derived from perceived reality. This result has major implications as studying what components constitute perceived reality become important not only when studying illusion, but also when questioning the reality of the universe. One particular component is the sensory information our brain processes when integrating visual stimuli. The absence of visual dreams implied that a model of our perceived reality was necessary in constructing an illusion. From this result, an inference about the nature of the afterlife in dreams can be established:

because people are unable to conceptualize death and the afterlife they are unable to dream or simulate it. Furthermore, one can conclude that if the universe were actually a dream or simulation, it would have to reflect the true reality of the universe. Therefore, our perceived or observed reality would not be that different from the true reality. If we do live in a real universe, what we perceive is real. And even if our universe is an illusion, we can still perceive it to be similar to the real because of the constraints that reality plays on dreams and simulations. This suggests that questioning reality may not be as important as one would originally think. It also opens up further topics of exploration in metaphysics such as the implications of not being able to conceptualize death on consciousness. Future research should investigate the role of near death experiences on conceptualization of death and the afterlife. It may also explore whether or not this consciousness or conceptualization is independent of the body.

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Real Life Horror: Exploring Parents' Resilience after Their Child Has Been Murdered

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Abstract: In 1980, the United States had the third highest rate of homicide in the world. Although homicide was such a prevalent cause of death in 1980, in the thirty-five years that have passed, there has been limited research conducted on the topic of murder, with an apparent neglect of parents of murdered children. The purpose of this paper is to focus on these neglected victims and understand how they could survive and recover after such a traumatic experience. Both psychological and sociological frameworks were applied to this paper. The psychological framework was used to examine the emotions and state of mind of parents upon discovering their child has been murdered and during their grieving process. Most parents are resilient after their child's death. They exhibit profound changes in their ideologies and beliefs. However, some parents are unable to move past their denial and anger, and therefore remain fixated on their child's murder. It is not yet known what causes some parents to survive and others to struggle to find peace.

INTRODUCTION

After a loved one passes away, family members endure what is often referred to as a grief process, though it is erroneous to believe that after such a traumatic event, all react in a similar pattern of behavior. The pattern of behavior, or grief process, which follows the death of a loved one varies depending upon the circumstance of death. Parents mourning their murdered child grieve differently than adults mourning a loved one's natural death. The research in this paper examines child murder and the subsequent parental grieving process. Specific characteristics of murder, such as unexpectedness and brutality, are atypical to many deaths and therefore cause greater trauma to surviving parents. In his 2008 study, George Bonnano revealed that "chronic grief reactions tend to be more prevalent after more extreme losses, such as...when a child dies" (370). How do parents survive with the knowledge of the extremity of their child's death and the trauma it entailed? After such a traumatic event, how do parents recover and which method of recovery is most beneficial?

The main constituents involved in this paper are parents of murdered children, who are also known as homicide survivors because they “face the homicides of their children and come to terms with the fact that the rest of their lives [will] include this horrible fact” (Adkins 30). Other stakeholders include family members, friends, criminals guilty of murder, members of the criminal justice system, members of the media, and medical professionals working either on the case or offering the family counseling. These additional stakeholders are significant because they have a colossal role in the parents’ mourning process. The established frameworks of this analysis are psychological, which will allow us to examine the emotions and state of mind of homicide survivors, and sociological, which will allow us to examine the impact of the parents’ environment on their bereavement. Current research in this field analyzes parents’ reactions to their child’s murder, but does not go beyond these reactions to learn about what steps the parents take to recover. The research that does explain how parents recover is very limited and differs among researchers. In 1980, homicide was “a major cause of death in the United States, where the rate [was] the third highest in the world” (Rinear 48). Although homicide was such a prevalent cause of death in 1980, in the thirty-four years that have passed since then, little research has been done on the parents of murdered children. The main focus of the limited research that does exist is on the murderer and on trying to understand the mind of a killer. Thus, parents are often neglected. Research on this area of parental grievance, therefore, is significant and seeks to add to the limited understanding of homicide survivors and how they manage to go on and live their lives after such a real life horror. This research will explore the hypothesis that parents will mainly utilize social resources from their community and resist assistance from authoritative figures—including God—whom they seek to blame for their child’s murder.

IMPACT OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

The first entity that parents often encounter after their child’s murder is the criminal justice system. In this research, the criminal justice system is any of the officers involved with the homicide case involving the murdered child, the investigators, the judge, and any other authoritative figures tasked with seeking justice in the child’s case. The criminal justice

system can be damaging because it places families in traumatizing situations of immediate investigations and trials. In many cases, family members are the first to be questioned about the child because they are prime suspects. Although necessary to promptly investigate murder cases, this immediate interrogation denies families the proper time needed to react to the realization of the loss. A prime source of resentment towards the criminal justice system is also rulings of trials that may fail “to meet parents’ needs for retribution,” meaning the parents do not feel justice has been served for their child (Riches 155). Parents may be angered that the murderer gets a short sentence in jail, with optional parole, for the permanent damage that he or she has inflicted upon the family. One of the greatest examples of failed retribution is the case of *the People of the State of California vs. Orenthal James Simpson*. Many people believe that O.J. Simpson murdered his wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and his wife’s friend, Ron Goldman, even though Simpson was declared not guilty in the criminal trial due to insufficient evidence. Fred Goldman, the father of Ron Goldman, suffered much agony from this verdict, which he believed went against “mountains of DNA evidence” (Wills). The verdict devastated the parents of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman, as well as the national public, and created resentment towards the criminal justice system. Nicole’s sister stated, “The justice system has failed a lot of people... we’re not the first people it has failed,” clearly demonstrating the opinion that the criminal justice system fails to serve justice (“Brown Family Reaction”). When the criminal justice system fails to deliver a guilty verdict against a defendant who parents believe is guilty, parents are unable to recover because they are denied the comfort of their child’s justice to help them along the way.

Parents want justice for their child because it is the last thing that they can do for their child. An additional source of their resentment is what appears to be the criminal justice system’s frequent incompetence in preserving evidence that directly impacts the verdict of the criminal case. In the case of *the People vs. O.J Simpson*, the officers who arrived at the scene of the murder failed to preserve the scene and thus were the sole cause of the insufficient evidence. Police also displayed negligence with evidence handling in the case of Adam Walsh, a seven-year-old boy who was murdered in 1981. Ottis Toole confessed to the murder of Adam Walsh, but then recanted his confession and the police did not

have evidence to convict him with certainty. John Walsh, Adam's father and subsequently the weekly host and creator of the popular television show *America's Most Wanted*, was devastated by the inability to locate his child's murderer and stated that "the criminal justice system is sometimes the criminal injustice system" ("John Walsh Holds Press Conference"). Dealing with the injustice is unbearable because parents need answers in order to recover. The burden of the uncertainty for John Walsh was "almost as bad as the murder" (Ibid). After 27 years, a detective hired by Adam's parents finally solved the case. When asked how he solved the case, the detective, Joe Matthews, spoke of the evidence that he used. Matthews stated that Toole's "vehicle was lost, the carpeting was lost" and other pieces of evidence were missing (Walsh). He later discovered 98 photos that the police department had never developed. In these photos, he found a bloodstain of Adam's face on the carpet of Toole's vehicle—clear evidence that had simply been overlooked by law enforcement. In this case, there was great distrust and resentment towards the criminal justice system for its failure to solve a case that it had the answer to for over 27 years. However, there was also an appreciation for the detective, a former member of the criminal justice system, who had solved the case.

IMPACT OF THE MEDIA

The criminal justice system is just one of two essential components of a homicide survivor's environment; the other is the media. Together they "compound already complicated grief reactions" (Riches 143). The media can be as equally damaging as the criminal justice system. Before the family has discovered all of the details of their child's murder or has accepted the murder, the media has often already informed the rest of the world about the murder. Newspapers, televised news, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and all forms of mass publication and social networking, usually involving technology, are what comprise the media. The media complicates grief reactions because it is intrusive and forces the constant re-traumatizing and "re-experiencing [of] the sense of utter helplessness that first came with the knowledge of the murder" (Wickie 103). Parents involved in cases of notoriety become a part of social media stories and television news programs reporting on investigations, autopsies and court trials. This publicity has the tendency to prolong parental

grief because parents are continually exposed to sometimes gruesome visuals and the repeated depiction of their child as a murder victim. No matter how hard they try to go on with daily life, their child's murder is news, so the story is everywhere. The media projects the child as a victim, which further sears the idea of the murdered child in the parents' minds. Families are deprived of their personal, private recovery and are essentially thrown into the heart of public opinion. This exposure to the outside world can be damaging because parents often become the subject of hostile criticism, which often scrutinizes how parents react to the murder of their child or even blame the parents for the murder. Hostile criticism is especially prevalent on the Internet, where "we witness rude languages, harsh criticisms, anger, hatred, [and] even threats" (Suler 321) due to the protection provided by the anonymity of being online. People find themselves doing and saying negative, hateful things that they would not do or say in person. Therefore, the criticism is worse online and can be especially damaging at such a critical period in the lives of the parents.

Although intense publicity complicates and prolongs grief, the same is true for no publicity at all. On February 26, 2012, George Zimmerman, a Hispanic man who was on neighborhood watch duty, killed an African-American 17-year-old, Trayvon Martin. The shooting was considered an act of racism and injustice and was soon all over the media. People followed George Zimmerman's case religiously. Throughout *the State of Florida v. George Zimmerman* trial, "over 50 people's lives came to an end in shootings in Chicago alone—many of them black and many of them teenagers, just like Trayvon" (Erbentraut). The victims of these murders were arguably neglected because, as the Reverend Jesse Jackson affirmed, "when blacks kill whites, which is rare, it's swift justice... When whites kill blacks, it's rebellion. When it's black on black, there's a shrug of the shoulders, there's a kind of permissiveness" (Thompson). The media selects which murders are worthy enough to become news and which murders will not receive attention. The murders that involved "black on black" crime did not receive public attention because the media did not see them as newsworthy. This lack of an encounter with the media leaves the parents of these murdered children to feel as if their child's life is not valued and that their grief is not worthy of attention.

Parents must also often deal with false depictions of their child, which frequently seek to place the blame on the murder victim rather than the true culprit. An example of the media slandering the victim is the case of Claudia Kirschhoch, a 29-year-old writer who disappeared at a Sandals resort in Negril. Claudia went missing in 2000 and was never found, though her clothes, money, credit cards, and suitcases were found still in her room. To protect the reputation of the resort, “Sandals spokesman Leo Lambert stated at a June 27 Kingston press conference that he was told Kirschhoch had been smoking marijuana on the beach and skinny-dipping” (Lambert). Claudia was falsely described as a loose woman who partied heavily, in efforts to re-direct the blame away from Sandals’ poor security and to Claudia’s reckless behavior. In fact, Claudia was a young professional working on an assigned press junket and found herself at the Sandals resort because her junket in Cuba had been cancelled. Claudia’s true character was distorted and she was portrayed nationally as a woman opposite to her true identity. This misconstruction of her identity troubled her parents greatly and complicated their grief. However, here exists the double-edged sword of the media. The media had a negative influence on Claudia’s parents’ bereavement, but Claudia’s own parents still encourage parents in similar situations to “try to keep media attention on them” (Dakss). Parents are therefore in a quandary; the media may portray their child in a sensational story that is a distortion of the truth, but public attention that is largely media-driven may be the best hope that many bereaved parents have of obtaining justice for their child. The media exerts pressure on authorities to keep up with the investigation.

One of the most famous uses of media for justice is the case of Emmett Till, a 14-year-old African-American boy who was brutally mutilated for supposedly whistling at a white woman. This murder occurred in 1955, right at the beginning of the civil rights movement, and Emmett Till’s mother, Mamie Till Mobley, utilized the media to demonstrate the ravages of racism. Mamie was both horrified and determined by the mutilation of her son’s body. To assure that the same atrocious act of injustice would never happen again, “Mamie made a stunning decision—Emmett would have an open casket funeral” (“People & Events”). Mamie’s friends and family attempted to dissuade Mamie from transporting Emmett’s casket, but she insisted that Emmett have an open

casket funeral (“Till Murder Stirs”). Emmett’s mutilated body was on display for the whole world to see; thousands were in attendance at the funeral and the funeral was also photographed. The sight of this horror raised awareness and helped move the nation further towards racial equality. What would normally be a private occasion became one of the most highly publicized events of the time. This publicity of course served as a great pain to Mamie who would have the gruesome image of her mutilated son burned into her mind. However, Mamie did not want the injustice that her son suffered to be followed by a quick burial. A quick burial would mean that Emmett would have been just another victim of racism. Although the open casket funeral pained Mamie, it became perhaps “the first large-scale media event of the civil rights movement” (Ibid). Although this national media attention did not have the ability to guarantee a conviction of the men who mutilated and murdered Emmett, the attention did result in an increased support for equality and ensured that Emmett Till would never be forgotten. Therefore, the media was able to offer Mamie a little bit of peace and justice for her son.

THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY

Social groups, such as family, friends, and professional support groups are, in many cases, the positive aspects of homicide survivors’ environments. These resources allow people to talk about their child and their emotions, things that, if kept inside, will cause negative harbored feelings. One of the most important resources for bereaved survivors is an outlet to discuss the tragedy. Although “it is difficult for family and friends to watch a loved one grieve and suffer extreme emotional pain... there is little they can do to relieve survivors’ pain other than being available to listen” (Adkins 32). Some people refrain from discussing the murder with the parents or even mentioning the child’s name. However, these discussions are what allow parents to move past the grief and discuss the child prior to the murder, allowing the parents to focus on better times. Even if the homicide survivor is initially reluctant, he or she will find that discussing the matter is therapeutic.

Spirituality is a resource available to all bereaved parents, which enables them to begin their recovery. Beyond individual praying and homicide survivors’ relationships with God, spirituality includes homicide survivors’ church community. The relationships that some bereaved

parents have with members of their church communities are usually a positive influence on their recovery. In many cases, parents will find that their church communities serve as great sources of support because of memorial masses or similar gatherings held for their child and the loving and supporting nature of the community. Additionally, being surrounded by members of the church reminds the parents of the belief that their child is in a better place and that they will one day be reunited with their child. These comforting thoughts can offer parents peace and a way to recover from the tragedy.

One negative dimension of the community is reflected in its frequent desire to move on from tragedy that has brought unwanted scrutiny to its neighborhood. This desire is itself a reaction to the media's overplaying of the tragic murder, which the media sees as an economic opportunity. In 1999, in what is known as the Columbine High School massacre, two students entered their high school and murdered twelve fellow students, along with one teacher, before committing suicide. Homicide survivor Misty Bernall talks about her experience with the insensitivity of some community members who were eager to "get over all the fuss' and move on" (Fast 490). Like the media, the community has a dual nature because it can have both positive and negative influences on parents' bereavement. The Columbine High School shooting was a highly publicized event that the community of Columbine High School would hear about long after the massacre occurred. Those who did not directly lose a loved one through the event grew tired of the story because it prevented them from moving on with daily life, such as going to school or going to work. For students, the media stood as a constant reminder that their high school was the scene of a massacre. People wanted to stop hearing about the negativity surrounding the massacre. This is an example of the way that bereaved parents are pressured to mourn quickly on top of dealing with the awful circumstances of their child's death, such as the brutality, the torture, and the unexpectedness. The injustice and unnatural dimension of the murder is difficult enough. This dimension, however, is followed by additional circumstances, such as pressure from dealing with press and media and going through investigations and trials from the criminal justice system. After further suffering through the press, media, and criminal justice system, parents face the final indignity of the pressure to "just get over it." This pressure causes parents to feel

shame and greater pain and causes them to bottle up their grief.

DEALING WITH THE REALITY OF MURDER

A homicide survivor's mental state is mainly affected by the survivor's sense of loss of control and the shattering of the assumptions by which they lived their lives. This helplessness is derived from the inability to control the events before and after the child's murder. Many parents, especially fathers, feel this sense of loss of control, along with shame and guilt, for what they believe was a failure to protect their child. Instantly after the murder, "autopsy is not optional and the medical examiners' office has custody of the body" (Kashka 30). This immediate loss of control—of not being able to decide what happens to the child's body—creates a feeling of disconnection between the child and the parents and deepens the parents' grief. The parents lose what little control they have left over their child. Several of the assumptions shattered by the murder are "that parents die before children; that people who follow the rules are not punished; and that most important events happen for a reason" (Adkins 30). Clearly, the first assumption is proven wrong when a child is murdered, but the other two assumptions still hold to be true for many and are just denied temporarily until the parents recover. The immediate rejection of the assumptions puts the parents in a state of confusion and anger because everything they believe appears wrong and they are forced to re-evaluate their lives.

Parents most commonly rely on the coping method of channeling their anger by challenging their belief system, which can be a belief in the criminal justice system or belief in their religion. These belief systems have authoritative figures that serve as targets for the parents' anger. Just as any person might find relief in blaming others, parents can find it therapeutic to displace feelings of anger and blame for their child's murder on authoritative figures, such as lead investigators or God. Challenging their belief systems serves as a coping method because it allows parents to release their anger and emotions and prevents them from bottling up their pain. This method also places parents in a position of control, which is crucial for parents who feel they have lost all control after their child's murder. Although this release of anger may seem negative, it actually is a positive coping method, because it prevents the parents from harboring their anger. After releasing this anger, parents

can come to accept the terms of their reality. The realistic understanding of the world is that anybody could become a victim to a murderer's warped desires. However, people are so absorbed in the pretense of a safety net provided by a Higher Being that they often cannot believe the reality of human depravity. John Walsh unfortunately had an encounter with human depravity when his son was murdered and decapitated. He was left wondering "how anyone could do this to a 6-year-old child...It's beyond the realm of reality" ("Legends & Legacies"). Questions such as the one that John Walsh asked are the reason that parents challenge their belief system. They have questions that they could never find the answers to, and thus they look for answers from their religion or the state; they question and challenge their belief system because they are angry and want answers that only a higher power could have.

Religious people especially tend to believe that they are safe from the harms of the world because they have a loving God protecting them. When their child is murdered, they lose this sense of protection. After they lose this sense of protection, religious parents challenge their God and sometimes abandon God altogether. However, the role of spirituality, even when it is not traditional, is still a big part in coping. A 2002 study observing parents' ability to thrive after experiencing their child's murder revealed that spirituality "was a very powerful resource, which helped all of the participants transform their trauma and experience growth" (Parappully 50). Therefore bereaved parents may return to God with a fresh faith, claiming that they feel a stronger connection to God. Other parents rely on God as well, though they never blame him for their child's murder. Mamie Till Mobley claimed, "God is the source of my strength" ("Mamie Till Talks"). She did not express anger or hatred towards God or the world, but instead looked for God's support in dealing with her son's brutal murder. Mamie believed that "hate released will eventually destroy me" and so she chose to remain positive and loving (Ibid). Therefore, some parents may choose to use God as a target for their anger and then return to God with a stronger faith, while others embrace God's love immediately after their child's death. Either method serves as a coping method for parents.

PATH TO RECOVERY

The aftermath of these coping methods is astonishing. Parents can dis-

play transformations in thinking, feeling, and behavior after they have accepted their child's murder. These transformations include "profound changes in ideologies, beliefs, attitudes, and values" (Parappully 37). The child's murder emphasizes the ephemeral nature of life and how at any moment, life can be taken away. This realization forces people to accept that life goes on and they cannot fixate themselves on the death of their child; it grants them the opportunity to move on and recover. In Jose Parappully's 2002 study, the mother of a murdered child asked, "Am I going to let the murderer take me down too?" (Parappully 47). This statement illustrates the mother's understanding and acceptance of her situation. She had two of the most important things taken away from her—the life of her daughter and grandson. The mother realized that if she remained in a state of agony, the murderer would be taking away her life too. Two terms very important to the process of recovery are resilience and spirituality. After experiencing this terrible type of trauma, homicide survivors define resilience. Rather than fixate themselves on the death of their children, these parents choose to rise from the ashes of tragic experience, as a powerful phoenix would (Parappully 34). They transform their thinking, feeling, and behavior to become better, stronger versions of themselves. After the murder of his son, John Walsh created and hosted the program *America's Most Wanted*, which aimed to capture criminals and therefore deliver justice. He was also a leading proponent of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act, an act that seeks to protect children from violent crime (Standiford 3). John accepted his son's murder and moved on to help parents of missing children. He did not let the murder destroy him, but instead was able to create great programs from the tragedy.

INABILITY TO FIND RELIEF

Although there seems to be a consensus with the research above, some research does contradict these findings. The studies used in the preceding analyses all demonstrate the positive impacts of community resources, such as friends, family, and social support groups, on bereaved parents. All of the studies display a common finding that these resources enabled the parents' acceptance of their child's murder and their progression on their recovery. However, in a 2002 study of 261 bereaved parents in the United States focusing on the parents' use of community

resources, it was found that “none of the resources seemed to improve parents’ outcomes” (Murphy 80). Therefore, resources found within parents’ communities do not always help parents recover. In some cases, parents still experience deep grief and are unable to recover. Some of these cases involve the parents’ fixation on the child’s murder. This fixation is an additional aspect that the research neglects. Most of the articles analyzed in this research discussed grief as a process that occurs in steps and requires allotted amounts of time per stage. There are five traditional steps of the grieving process: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance (Axelrod). However, a study conducted on the dynamics of grief demonstrated that parents are not always able to follow this pattern of coping and are not always resilient after their child’s homicide. The suddenness and brutality of the child’s death may cause parents to never see past their denial and anger (Ibid). Many parents are so unable to recover that when offered help to disengage their fixation, they misinterpret the letting go as “threats to abandon the deceased” (Rynearson 242). They are unable to hold onto solely the good memories of their child and instead focus on their last moments with the child, believing that forgetting these moments would be forgetting the child. Fred Goldman, the father of Ron Goldman, illustrates the destructive tendency of fixating on the murder. In doing everyday, simple tasks, Fred is always haunted by the absence of his son, even twenty years after the murder. Fred explains, “Whether it’s two days, two months or now twenty years later, nothing has changed. It’s the same loss, the same feeling that there is a missing piece in our family and it’s just as intense as the day he died” (Shipp). Therefore, although parents exhibit resilience after the homicide of their child, this resilience is not applicable to all parents and some never do achieve closure or recovery.

Another method parents rely on that displays their inability to recover is the tendency to “rewrite” the murder (Adkins). The parents replay other outcomes to avoid feeling powerless because they could not stop the murder. In replaying other outcomes, they also picture a happier ending where their child lives. Adam Walsh’s mother, Reve Walsh, had left her son near the game section of a Sears store and told him she would be right back. Reve “would relive the moment a hundred—perhaps a million—times. Had she just said no to him...had any of one thousand things happened differently in the slightest...perhaps what occurred might not have occurred at all” (Standiford 2). In this

case, the parent initially feels responsible for the murder of their child, which proves to be a lifelong heavy burden. Reve pictures the scenario differently a million times, because she cannot accept the reality of what has happened. The process of reliving the decisions made prior to the murder is a very self-destructive and self-torturous process that prolongs parents' grief. Reliving the decisions made prior to the murder is something done out of guilt and pain and is not therapeutic. The parents take responsibility for something that was not their fault and that they could not have possibly predicted. Rewriting the murder is just as detrimental to parents' recovery because the parents fixate themselves on imaginary outcomes, because the events of the past are too hard for them to bear. Parents cannot change the event that has occurred, but they cannot accept the murder either. Therefore, they find themselves stuck in a cycle of reliving and rewriting and cannot successfully recover from their child's death.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that nearly all resources offered to homicide survivors have a dual nature. The media can harm parents by depicting their child in a negative way, but can also help the parents by exerting pressure on authority and bringing about justice for their child. Although the criminal justice system can have a negative impact if it fails to convict murderers and preserve evidence, in the event that it does offer justice to a family, it is a positive influence on parents' grieving. The community too, can be both positive and negative in that it is initially caring and supportive of the homicide survivors, but may then become hostile and encourage parents to "get over" the murder. Therefore, the only resources that seem to consistently assist parents in their recovery are social support groups close to the parents, such as friends and family, and other professionals who have experience dealing with parents of murdered children. Social support groups have a positive impact on parents' recovery because they provide parents with an outlet to discuss their tragedy and prevent parents from harboring negative feelings. All other resources available to bereaved parents, outside of social support groups, carry the potential for further emotional harm. The varying effects of the resources raise the mystery of who recovers after such a traumatic occurrence as the murder of a child.

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What Makes a Leader? Consequentialism, Character, and The Ethical Leader in A Song of Ice and Fire

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Abstract: Fantasy writing nearly always exists within fictional universes that are often criticized as having little of relevance to teach us about our own world, yet they can provide us with the possibility of analyzing issues that are difficult to dissect in reality, such as what it means to be a good leader and how this can be achieved. This essay examines George R. R. Martin's A Song of Ice and Fire in order to uncover what the series says about leadership and ethics, which the moralist school of thought argues are necessarily intertwined. In particular, it anatomizes two main characters (Jon Snow and Daenerys Targaryen) as juxtaposition between action-based and character-based ethical philosophy, using contemporary virtue theory in combination with modern utilitarianism as theoretical frameworks for analysis. The essay finds that the two angles of normative ethical theory, when applied to political leadership, produce various failures and successes, which offer a statement about leadership in regard to these theories. This essay ultimately determines that virtue of character is necessary to create an effective leader, and elaborates upon how this conclusion can be applied to modern practices of leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Government unfailingly struggles balancing political issues and institutions with a practical, ethical code, unintended consequences often arising from seemingly sound policy, leaders finding themselves ill-equipped to deal with the heavy weight of sovereignty. The dialogue regarding ethics in leadership becomes only more imperative as politics evolve in scope and complexity. The notion of a universal moral code comes into question due to pervading cultural relativism, and with the increased globalization and polarization of a country's foreign policy, social rights, and national security. A defective ethical code, then, certainly has implications for a leader's own self-interest, but equally for all those whom he governs. Because of the complexity and subjectivity of these political and ethical issues, however, it can be difficult to pinpoint the problems with a leader's moral code in a real-world context. Fiction-

al frameworks provide the opportunity for analyses of these and many other issues: in this instance, with ethical code and virtue of character more readily discernable than in reality, and the analysis of triumphs and failures in leadership somewhat less subjective than those of modern political leaders. The “secondary world” element unique to fantasy or science fiction takes the analytical possibility of fiction a step further. In a universe so fundamentally different from our own, complete with its own set of rules and logic, the author can experiment with high-stakes themes of humanity and politics paralleling situations in our own world, and imagining their implications on an impossibly grand scale. Fantasy removes us from the primary world, enabling us to reflect on complex, relevant topics like that of ethical theory in leadership from an outsider’s perspective, with no limits to utopia or apocalypse.

George R. R. Martin’s *A Song of Ice and Fire*—more widely known to the mainstream as HBO’s *Game of Thrones*—relocates us from our own ethically entangled world to the fantastical, yet eerily familiar Seven Kingdoms of Westeros, whose main conflict revolves largely around the inability to agree upon an heir to the “Iron Throne,” and by extension, the relative successes and struggles of the claimants that present themselves for the position. This contention for the throne naturally gives way to a web of polarized supporters, broken alliances, and war. Most notably, the myriad of kings and queens vying for the same position—each ruling a subsidiary of the Seven Kingdoms—provide the author with a unique opportunity to experiment with the notion of what or whom can make a successful leader. What *A Song of Ice and Fire* is arguably most acknowledged for is the scale of depth within the secondary world Martin creates, more significantly, the complexity of dozens of intricate, dynamic characters, made especially possible by the frequently shifting perspectives from which Martin tells his story: the lack of one reliable protagonist. A guest essay on Suvudu entitled “The Gray Zone: Moral Ambiguity in Fantasy,” comments on these complex characters: “Few of [Martin’s] characters are unimpeachably good or irredeemably evil. Instead, they’re...compromised by any one of a thousand...real-world problems...In making the world a mess, Martin has also made it that much more real—for certainly history has taught us that things rarely break down into clear-cut good and evil, especially where politics are concerned” (Sutter). In other words, Martin’s characters are far truer

to the complexity of the human condition than typical fictional archetypes—whether one-dimensional or multifaceted—in the sense that their ideas and actions are complex and unpredictable, fueled by deeply rooted ethical codes, character traits, and emotional influences. Unlike fantasy paradigms such as *The Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter*, in *A Song of Ice and Fire*, the “best” leader is not always obvious as the character whose actions are universally good (i.e. Aragorn or Dumbledore). The intricate, psychologically realistic players of the “*Game of Thrones*” offer a window into an analysis of leadership in our own society that, due to the depth and moral ambiguity Martin writes in his characters, is unique in the development.

Philosophical debates regarding the treatment of ethics in analyses of political leadership struggle fundamentally between three main approaches to normative—that is to say action-based—ethics: deontology, consequentialism, and virtue. Deontological branches of ethics are founded on an adherence to duty and call for the accounting of systems of rules in decision-making, whereas consequentialism judges moral rightness of a decision by its outcome (Alexander & Moore). Despite their differences, however, these philosophical schools of thought are similar in both dealing strictly with actions: how a person can employ ethical rules to act as an effective leader. Alternatively, virtue ethicists are interested in what motivates decisions rather than those decisions themselves, that is in the idea of a consistent moral character within the individual—one that transcends ethical theories that are fluid depending on a given state of affairs (Hursthouse). Consequentialists and deontologists might inquire: “what is the morally correct thing to do in this situation?” Virtue ethicists ask: “what kind of character should I aim to possess?” Contemporary politicians are typically evaluated in tune with the former—with action-based ethical theory—through consideration of their policies, actions, and those actions’ consequences. The fundamental difference between action-oriented theory and the agent-oriented virtue—that duty and consequence are always secondary to inner character traits in the latter—perhaps suggests separate criteria for assessing leaders. My line of research then becomes what effects virtue has on leadership in comparison to its opposite philosophy, and ultimately, whether the implementation creates a more moral leader.

Martin focuses most heavily throughout *A Song of Ice and Fire*

on two main characters with parallel coming-of-age journeys and emergencies into leadership: Daenerys Targaryen and Jon Snow. Daenerys, the last known living heir to the Targaryen dynasty, roots her host of freedmen and Unsullied warriors in the slaver city of Meereen to rule as Queen for a time, while Jon Snow, who is presented as the illegitimate son of Eddard Stark but widely believed by fans of the series to be the heir to Prince Rhaegar Targaryen, is elected Lord Commander of the Night's Watch, a brotherhood which guards Westeros from what lies beyond the 700-foot wall of ice that it defends (Pallotta). While both control only a small fraction of the Seven Kingdoms by the close of the most recent volume, *A Dance with Dragons*, the implications of their relative successes and failures in leadership may potentially grow larger and more significant due to their possible claims on the Iron Throne and prevalence as the two most significant characters in the series, making Martin's presentation of Jon and Daenerys—and more importantly the dichotomy between the two—vital to the series' message about leadership. *A Song of Ice and Fire* offers criticism of consequential and deontological ethical theory, revealing that acting in accord with rules, duty, and anticipated consequence is inferior in producing a successful leader to the application of virtue theory, which suggests that moral character creates an inherently ethical leader. Martin's depictions of action-oriented ethics speak to the dangers of focusing on policy and action in the evaluation of a leader rather than virtuous character; a warning which ultimately sheds light on the nature of democratic institutions and the necessary practice of virtue ethics in various leadership positions.

DAENERYS TARGARYEN AND THE DOWNFALLS OF UTILITARIANISM

Daenerys Targaryen believes, quite fervently, that as the daughter of “The Mad King” Aerys II, who held the Iron Throne before it was usurped by another of the noble houses just after her birth, that the throne is hers by rights, frequently iterating the mantra: “I will take what is mine with fire and blood.” Westeros, however, lies across the narrow sea from Daenerys, who lives in exile in the free cities of Essos, so before Dany can take what is hers she must amass an army, supporters, ships, and gold. She does this, but not without becoming distracted by the injustices taking place in Slaver's Bay, the easternmost part of the exotic

country of Essos. Dany consents herself to free each of the three great slaver cities of Astapor, Yunkai, and Meereen from their chains, settling down in the last of them to rule as queen, asking “how can I rule seven kingdoms if I cannot rule a single city?” (Martin, *A Storm of Swords* 995). Because of Daenerys’ prideful, revenge-driven desire to be queen, she purposely sets out on the attempt to learn what it means to act like a good leader, just as a deontologist or consequentialist might. Essentially, her actions as a leader are determined by the rules and duties that she learns to adhere to.

Daenerys’ ethical judgments more specifically align with utilitarianism, the most popular branch of consequentialism, which seeks to maximize the greater good. Roger Crisp defines the greater good with regard to utilitarianism in “Taking Stock of Utilitarianism” as happiness, saying: “The right action is that which promotes happiness maximally, any action which fails to do that is wrong, and among wrong actions any action is morally worse to the extent that it fails to maximize happiness” (232). So happiness, or maximum utility, proportional to evil in the outcome of a decision defines a moral action in the view of a utilitarian. And Daenerys does concern herself quite heavily with the notion of good over evil, with her main goal throughout

A Dance with Dragons being the sustainment of a system which ensures the freedom of former slaves (which make up the majority of Meereen’s population) and punishes former slave masters. Several of Dany’s decisions do seem to produce a desirable outcome which maximizes the greater good: Daenerys ends the slave trade in Slaver’s Bay, freeing the fettered in Astapor, Yunkai, and Meereen, closes Meereen’s famed fighting pits, thereby sparing the lives of those slaves who would otherwise have been forced to fight to the death for sport, and marries Meereenese nobleman Hizdahr zo Loraq despite her lack of romantic feeling for him in order to secure peace for her people and approval for herself as their queen. And yet, despite Dany’s good intentions, her rule in Meereen is characterized by disease, uprisings, serial killings, and the looming threat of war as her enemies grow larger in number, suggesting that utilitarianism, in practice, may have fundamental defects, which produce unintended consequences.

A major flaw in utilitarian ethics is that it results in highly immoral acts being considered moral under its logic. Utilitarianism is typically char-

acterized by and criticized for the phrase “the ends justify the means.” James E. MacDonald and Caryn L. Beck-Dudley argue in “Are Deontology and Teleology Mutually Exclusive?” that this phrase poses a problem for morality: “there are means that cannot be justified by any end... there are ways of acting that are morally prohibited no matter how much good might be yielded by allowing exceptions in hard cases” (619). So utilitarianism assumes that any act committed for the sake of a cause, which maximizes greater good is moral, yet how can acts that jeopardize the lives or safety of others—acts such as murder, theft, or rape—be ethical? On Daenerys’ march to Meereen in *A Storm of Swords*, she is outraged upon learning that the Great Masters have nailed the bodies of 163 slave children to posts along the path to the city, arms pointing towards Meereen to guide her way, so when Dany conquers the city, she orders that 163 of the Great Masters suffer the same fate: “the anger was fierce and hot inside her when she gave the command; it made her feel like an avenging dragon. But later, when she passed the men dying on the posts, when she heard their moans and smelled their bowels and blood...*It was just. It was. I did it for the children*” (Martin, *A Storm of Swords* 980). Daenerys commits mass murder in a brutal way, justifying the act in her mind as vengeance for the murdered slave children and assurance that her freedmen will remain as such, relieved of the Great Masters. Daenerys’ reign in Meereen seems to be founded on this belief that the ends justify the means; she finds herself burning the Good Masters of Astapor alive in order to ensure the freedom of the Astapori, locking away her two innocent dragons which she considers her children to become emaciated and neglected in order to prevent the third from feeding on humans, making hostages of the Great Masters’ children in an attempt to save her followers from being assassinated in the night, and commanding her advisors to use rape and murder as tools to force information from prisoners.

Despite these atrocities, readers of *A Song of Ice and Fire* still tend to view Daenerys as a moral character and an empathetic leader—one whom Westeros might stand behind. This is a phenomenon that we see taking place throughout our own history: when utilitarians believe that the ends justify the means, the consequences of actions frequently overshadow the avenues taken to achieve them, so much so that the immorality of those means can go completely unnoticed. In “The Demo-

cratic Peace Myth: From Hiroshima to Baghdad,” Andrew Fiala discusses this phenomenon in respect to the preemptive use of nuclear weapons in World War II: “Japan has become democratic and remains a close ally of the United States. But what is often overlooked is that the democratization of Japan was the result of a series of atrocities that resulted in the deaths of millions of innocent Japanese” (78). Fiala goes on to state that straightforward utilitarian calculations were the driving force in the decision to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and ultimately argues that Japan gained peace—at the expense of the United States’ morality (78-79). So utilitarian ethics applied to political leadership risks the inevitable execution of highly immoral, highly damaging acts, and these leaders, as well as those who evaluate their merit are often blind to their immorality.

Because it is impossible to consistently, accurately predict the consequences of decisions, another problem with utilitarianism is that the greater good is subjective and cannot be measured. MacDonald and Beck-Dudley summarize this lapse in logic: “Social welfare (or total pleasure, or ‘the greatest happiness of the greatest number’) would seem to have to be measured if it is to be the test of actions, policies, and laws. Yet a moment’s reflection reveals that pleasures are incommensurable, that they cannot...each be translated into so many ‘utiles’ and simply added up” (618). The article later states: “Of course, because what pleases and displeases varies so much from person to person, time to time, and place to place, utilitarian identifications of right and wrong sorts of actions are highly fluid” (MacDonald and Beck-Dudley 621). The authors suggest the aforementioned fundamental issue in utilitarian logic: that it often promotes immoral or otherwise brutal and insensitive acts as means to achieving maximum pleasure or good, but that greater good is a personal determination, so often, even the consequences of immoral actions or decisions do not always outweigh the means. Daenerys learns this to her dismay, assuming that the liberation of slaves across Essos—no matter how it is achieved—will ultimately be in the greatest interest of her people, yet discovering that many slaves take issue with their forced liberation, finding themselves homeless and starving, while former slave owners see their families murdered and property stolen during the slave uprisings.

Daenerys’ assumptions of what maximum pleasure means and how it

can be achieved, combined with the highly immoral acts she commits to attain it cause unrest among her people and earn her a poor reputation across the East. A nobleman from the free city of Volantis describes Daenerys, saying the following: “They say that she is bloodthirsty, that those who speak against her are impaled on spikes to die lingering deaths. They say she is a sorceress who feeds her dragons on the flesh of newborn babes, an *oathbreaker* who mocks the gods, breaks truces, threatens envoys, and turns on those who have served her loyally” (Martin, *A Dance with Dragons* 288). His description, though exaggerated, is a result of the downfalls of consequentialism, which cause Daenerys to fail as a leader. Ultimately, the philosophy mistakenly assumes the universal success of fluid, subjective outcomes, which it cannot control, committing heinous acts—falsely classified as moral—in the process. Martin’s depiction of Daenerys suggests that action-based schools of ethics such as utilitarianism perhaps offer less to a model for leadership than those that focus on the agent of ethical inquiry.

JON SNOW AND THE INFLUENCE OF VIRTUE

Whereas Daenerys Targaryen is motivated by her claim to the Iron Throne and her drive for vengeance upon those who rebelled against the Targaryen dynasty, Jon Snow believes himself to be the illegitimate son of the Lord of Winterfell, meaning that all ancestral lands and titles go to his trueborn brothers after his father’s death in *A Game of Thrones*. Jon swears to a life of abstinence and renounces any rights to crowns or titles when he joins the Night’s Watch, a brotherhood founded upon strict, permanent vows of undistracted servitude. Jon is reserved and dutiful, so he only reluctantly accepts the position of Lord Commander of the Night’s Watch when his brothers elect him in *A Storm of Swords*. Additionally, Jon has of yet no reason to doubt that Eddard Stark is his biological father, so he is unaware of any possible claim he might have to the Iron Throne if he truly is of Targaryen descent. Jon, therefore, is forced into a position of leadership; he does not turn to rules of deontology or belief systems of utilitarianism to learn how to rule justly; he simply must be a leader. While consequentialism determines the rightness of an action based upon its effect and deontological approaches to ethics urge a leader to make decisions in accordance with duty to ethical rules, virtue ethics focuses on the moral character of an individual; it

assumes that people possess (or lack) virtues inherent to their individual makeup, and it is these virtues which influence, totally, the choices of an honorable leader. Within the scope of *A Song of Ice and Fire*, what sets Jon Snow apart from other rulers is his insistence that the Night's Watch "takes no part" in the War of the Five Kings and his acknowledgment of the true threat to Westeros: winter. Beyond the Wall lies the Land of Always Winter, where White Walkers, humanoid creatures with unclear but undoubtedly sinister motives referred to as "Others" are increasingly making their way south, slaughtering Night's Watch ranging parties and leaving an undead army of wights in their wake. In Westeros, seasons can last up to a decade, and Jon alone seems to possess the wisdom that with the imminent arrival of winter comes the Others and their impending declaration of war. This is Jon's central motivator as a leader, and wisdom one of his defining virtues—the fact that he is alone in its possession signifies Martin's isolation of Jon as a leader who is driven by virtue rather than by a desire to succeed, ethically or otherwise.

Virtue theory is somewhat abstract in that unlike deontology or utilitarianism, it doesn't offer rules to follow in order to achieve morality in decision-making. When virtues are instilled in a leader and made habitual, however, they inadvertently direct that leader to make a morally righteous decision in any given situation. Daenerys is the last of a dying ancestry, exiled and forced to teach herself what it means to rule, but Jon is raised by several mentors whose unyielding virtuous character shape decisions in their own leadership positions and ultimately cement Jon's own virtue. Jon, therefore, begins to develop a virtuous character from early in his life. Dave Durand notes the power of habit in "Leadership Virtue," saying: "Great leaders become great when things are difficult. They exercise the cardinal virtues during good times so that they are in shape for the challenges" (14). Jon's father figure, Ned Stark's, most reverberating lesson to his children is that "the man who passes the sentence should swing the sword"—a lesson reflecting the virtue of honor Ned is archetypically characterized by (Martin, *A Game of Thrones* 16). Jon displays this honor most prevalently when it is tested. Upon learning of his father's death and his brother Robb's declaration of war against those responsible for it in *A Game of Thrones*, Jon struggles with the decision to abandon the Night's Watch in an act of vengeance to aid Robb's war effort, but the honor instilled in him by Eddard ultimately drives him to

stay loyal to his post at Castle Black, headquarters of the Night's Watch (Martin, *A Game of Thrones* 784). Because of the habitual practice of virtue in his personal life, Jon is able to make similarly ethical choices when he becomes Lord Commander. When Janos Slynt, a Night's Watch recruit who formerly commanded the City Watch of King's Landing, thrice refuses Jon's order to dispatch to the abandoned castle of Greyguard to command a subsidiary force, Jon orders the man to be hanged, before remembering Eddard's lesson: "*This is wrong*, Jon thought. 'Stop...I will not hang him,' said Jon... The smile that Lord Janos Slynt smiled then had all the sweetness of rancid butter. Until Jon said, 'Edd, fetch me a block,' and unsheathed Longclaw" (Martin, *A Dance with Dragons* 111). And like Ned traditionally did, Jon offers Slynt a chance to voice his last words before his death. Unlike situational instances of ethical reasoning similar to what we might see in Daenerys, Jon displays his virtue in all of his decisions as an outward reflection of his inner moral code. The habitual practice of virtue eradicates any need for an ethical reference point for each predicament.

Virtue ethics distinguishes itself from consequentialism and deontology most significantly by the fact that it focuses on *being*, not *doing*. Its emphasis on character traits promotes the development of a leader who is not only capable of making ethical decisions based on guidelines, but who makes these same decisions out of a desire to see his own virtues reflected outwardly. In his article entitled "The Crisis of Leadership in Nigeria and the Imperative of a Virtue Ethics," Bolatito Lanre-Abass argues: "Leaders must personally cultivate the virtues of both a good person and a good leader through constant practice... One has to be a good person before being a good leader" (137). While utilitarianism and deontology attempt to provide a leader with an answer to specific moral quandaries, virtue ethics ensures that a leader will always make the ethical decision by first ensuring that that leader is an innately moral person. Jon's desire to protect Westeros from winter is indicative of both his wisdom and his compassion, but it ultimately reflects something much larger than that: Martin's depiction of Jon as a wholly good person—a singularity in *A Song of Ice and Fire*. Jon enters the Night's Watch proud of his upbringing in a noble family, and he displays this pride in the practice yard as he humiliates younger and far less skillful recruits at swordplay. Almost immediately, however, Donal Noye, the

one-armed armorer at Castle Black, impresses upon Jon his arrogance in purposely humiliating the other boys: “None of these others have ever had a master-at-arms until Ser Alliser... They may have clacked a few sticks together before they came here, but I promise you, not one in twenty was ever rich enough to own a real sword... So how do you like the taste of your victories now, Lord Snow?” (Martin, *A Game of Thrones* 182-83). Here, Jon learns compassion for those less privileged than he. He furthers this virtue when he befriends and defends Samwell Tarly, an awkward, unfit, craven young recruit whom Jon’s brothers bully, and it reaches its peak when he makes the controversial and unpopular decision to protect the Wildlings, a race of free people living in villages north of the Wall from whom the Night’s Watch has traditionally fought and defended itself from raids. Jon’s wisdom is what drives his realization that the Night’s Watch needs the Wildlings’ manpower to replenish its dwindling defensive ranks, but it is ultimately Jon’s transformation into a wholly good individual that inspires him to feed, house, and provide the Wildlings with safety. Jon is moved by the plea of Mance Rayder, the Wildling King, to let his people pass through the gates of the Wall: “my people have bled enough... [the Others] grow stronger as the days grow shorter and the nights colder... The giants have not been able to stand against them, nor the Thenns, nor the ice river clans, the Hornfoots... Nor me... I’ve come with my tail between my legs to hide behind your Wall” (Martin, *A Storm of Swords* 1019). Jon’s decisions, though unpopular amongst senior members of the Night’s Watch, save an entire race of people and have the potential to save the entirety of the Seven Kingdoms come winter. It is a successful decision that he reaches first through becoming a good person, translating itself into efficacious political leadership.

A popular criticism of virtue ethics is that while morally sound, it offers little practical value as few people conform to the paradigm of virtue that it seems to suggest (Louden). Miguel Alzola responds to the criticism of this paradigm in “The Possibility of Virtue,” arguing:

virtue ethicists... can account for the experimental evidence, without abandoning the centrality of character notions in normative ethics and business ethics... Virtues may not express themselves under all circumstances. We may act out of character... [Yet n]one of this impairs our capacity to become morally better persons and attain the excellences of character that virtue ethicists call the virtues (396).

Jon Snow is not impervious to temptation; he temporarily abandons the virtue of temperance that he otherwise consistently displays throughout the series when he develops a romantic relationship with a Wildling named Ygritte, despite his vows of celibacy. Emotional and other external influences can often test character—and even a firmly virtuous leader may fall victim—but ultimately, it is the notion of character in virtue rather than its idealist exemplification that renders the theory so significant. And in the end, Jon's honor overrides his feelings for Ygritte: he abandons her to return to his post at the Wall. So virtue can admittedly be compromised by situational factors, yet it is the philosophy's unique approach to ethics—its focus on the agent of ethical action rather than the action itself—and the implications of that approach that bears greater significance than the conventions of the theory. A theory of political leadership that revolves around moral character offers several modern applications, one of which being an analysis of political institutions. Virtue ethics calls into question forms of government, which inherently do not account for it, creating a conversation regarding the merits of elected leaders versus those that are pre-determined. Democratic systems would seem to be supported by virtue theory, since they allow for the public to choose a leader who exhibits strong moral character, yet virtue ethics perhaps offer a criticism of the system, as well. If American politics tends to focus on policies and previous track records of candidates for office, virtue ethics might suggest, instead, that voters consider a candidate's character.

Jon Snow stumbles into leadership unwillingly, exercising the virtues instilled in him by his mentors as an extension of himself rather than as a tactic to achieve success. This notion of character, of possessing virtuous traits rather than emulating them, ultimately leads Jon to success, far more so than Daenerys. Virtue theory creates a good person before creating a good leader, and the influence of virtue in ethical decision-making produces actions that are consistently moral. Martin builds Jon's character as an exemplification of this phenomenon, arguing through his universally ethical choices and their ultimate success that character creates a moral leader and that its recognition in an evaluation of political leadership is vital.

CONCLUSION

Martin devises a smokescreen in the War of the Five Kings that erupts following King Robert Baratheon's death: with each subdivision of the Seven Kingdoms warring over which challenger has the better claim to the Iron Throne, he leaves little room for a dialogue regarding which of his characters makes the best leader. Under this veil, he juxtaposes Jon Snow and Daenerys Targaryen as leaders, with the former being an account of character and the latter being a representation of action-oriented ethical theory. In the end, Daenerys is foiled by the flaws in her adopted code, while Jon's virtuous character sets him apart as an honorable and efficient leader, and offers to the Night's Watch the success that it, in the end, he rejects. *A Song of Ice and Fire* provides the lens needed to analyze character, ethics, and leadership, and that analysis suggests an accounting of virtue ethics over its opposition.

For all that it has to offer in the way of the development of a good leader, virtue ethics does not serve as a textbook model for the leader who aspires to be steadfast in his commitment to morality. It does, nevertheless, suggest an approach to leadership and perhaps more pertinently, its evaluation, that has widely been ignored. Virtue ethics' accounting for character creates a leader who is perhaps not unwaveringly good in all things, but who preaches devotion to virtue for its own sake, rather than in accordance with rules or the assurance of personal gain. Ultimately, an accounting of character in leadership supersedes highly flawed deontological and utilitarian ethical theories, ensuring first that a leader is a good person, a necessity, which proliferates throughout all other aspects of political rule. An evaluation of leadership, then, should account for character above all else.

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Dying with Dignity: Physician-Assisted Suicide Through a Kantian Lens

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Abstract: The Death with Dignity Act legalizes a terminally ill patient's right to pursue a hastened death through the self-ingestion of lethal medication, otherwise known as physician-assisted suicide (PAS). To date, only five states have passed the Death with Dignity Act. Cases advocating the national legalization of PAS have reached the Supreme Court on two separate occasions, but neither attempt was successful. The Supreme Court Justices argued that the existence of alternative end-of-life care options negate the need for the widespread legalization of PAS. While PAS is often perceived as a taboo practice that contradicts a doctor's obligations to the Hippocratic Oath, Kantian Ethics provides a line of reasoning that affirms the ethicality and necessity of the practice. PAS should be made available to all American citizens through a national Death with Dignity Act; the United States government should facilitate, rather than hinder, a terminally ill patient's right to choose from all alternatives pertaining to death and dying.

INTRODUCTION

Anglo-American perceptions of death and dying have long disapproved of any actions interfering with the natural progression of life in favor of an expedited death. Controversy over an individual's right to die dates back to England's rule over the original thirteen American colonies, as English practice classified an "abettor" -- someone present during a suicidal attempt-- as a harsher felony than the act of suicide itself (Reynolds 348). While self-inflicted and assisted means of intentionally terminating life have constituted social taboos for centuries, the advent of advanced medical technology has caused the role of the physician in end-of-life care to become an increasingly prevalent subject of debate in recent decades. As the discussion of assisted suicide extends into the medical field, questions regarding the ethicality of medical intervention in facilitating a patient's hastened death through physician-assisted suicide (PAS) has engendered political controversy on both state and national levels. Deciding how to approach death is a profoundly per-

sonal choice as it concerns individuals' distinct notions of what constitutes a valuable and worthwhile existence. Physician-assisted suicide is a necessary end-of-life care option that should be made available to all American citizens regardless of the state in which they reside. Medical and legal institutions -- as protectorates of the human rights -- should recognize an individual's personal definition of an autonomous and dignified death as a basic human right through the national legalization of physician-assisted suicide.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this paper, I will employ the tenets of Kantian ethics to analyze the ethicality of physician-assisted suicide and evaluate the roles of the patient, physician, and the legal system in decisions pertaining to end-of-life care. By exploring why assisted suicide is often viewed as taboo and discussing the role of bioethics in the debate surrounding a medically-expedited death, the ethical necessity of providing patients with the option of pursuing an autonomous death through assisted suicide will be underscored while opposing viewpoints that claim PAS is morally and socially problematic will be refuted.

Kantian ethics refers to the work of eighteenth century German philosopher Immanuel Kant whose theories regarding moral law espoused autonomy, which is defined as the capacity of a rational individual to make an informed, uncoerced decision. Kant's theory, a product of Enlightenment rationalism, centers around what he describes as the categorical imperative -- a universal moral law requiring that for an action to be permissible, it must be applicable in all situations without any contradictions occurring. While Kant explicitly denounces suicide and assisted suicide in his works, he bases his opposition on cases in which suicide was sought as a means of obtaining benefits or escaping harm. Kant's theories can actually serve as a lens for the justification of physician-assisted suicide; his defense against the early termination of human life "leaves open the possibility of suicide being justified for other reasons, namely when it is committed out of concern and respect for... [human] dignity" (Sjöstrand et. al 229). Kantian Ethical Theory, which defines human dignity as a critical component of personhood and a valuable existence, supports the notion that terminally ill patients may be justified in ending their lives in order to achieve a dignified death,

which supports the argument that physician-assisted suicide provides terminally patients with a necessary means of protecting their personal autonomy and human dignity.

POLITICAL CONTROVERSY AND BACKGROUND

Proposals advocating the legalization of a law facilitating a terminally ill patient's access to medically prescribed lethal medication have achieved mixed success in the United States. Two cases concerning physician-assisted suicide reached the Supreme Court, both of which occurred in 1997. In both *Vacco v. Quill* and *Washington v. Glucksberg*, the Supreme Court ruled that physician-assisted suicide is not a protected liberty under the Constitution; however, the rulings allowed states to independently engage in thoughtful examinations of proposed state legislations pertaining to end-of-life care, allowing for the potential legalization of physician-assisted suicide on a state-by-state basis.

In 1997, Oregon became the first state to legalize the right of a terminally ill patient to self-administer lethal medication through the Death with Dignity Act -- an act legislating multiple requirements prior to a patient receiving the prescribed pills. The act states that the request for medication to end one's life be made by a capable adult 18 years of age or older who has been diagnosed by an attending and consulting physician with a terminal illness that will lead to death within six months. The patient must make two oral requests to his or her physician, separated by at least fifteen days, submit a written request in front of two witnesses, and be screened by a psychologist to ensure that he or she is not suffering from any psychological disorder. Prior to prescribing the medication, the physician is required to inform the patient of all available end-of-life alternatives.

Since 1997, numerous states have legalized physician-assisted suicide. Modeling the legal precedent set by Oregon, Washington and Vermont passed similar Death with Dignity Acts in 2008 and 2013, respectively. In 2009, the Montana Supreme Court found that physician-assisted suicide did not violate the state's public policy, and thus legalized the practice. California is the most recent state to follow suit, passing a bill in its Supreme Court on October 5, 2015. However, physician-assisted suicide has not been met with universal acceptance among the U.S. states; proposed legislation was rejected in the states of Mas-

sachusetts, Michigan, and Maine, among others. Whereas proponents of physician-assisted suicide champion a terminally ill patient's right to choose an expedited means of death, opponents argue that the law has moral ramifications for patients, physicians, and humanity that outweigh the benefits of legalization.

PAS AND HUMAN NATURE

Controversy surrounding the ethicality of physician-assisted suicide is the product of societal perceptions regarding death and dying. While humans possess an innate instinct to favor survival over extinction --and therefore view the decision to preemptively end one's life as transgressive--, humans are defined by more than animal instincts and thus have a responsibility to contradict these innate tendencies if they do not coincide with personal obligations to oneself or others. Societal constructs in the United States -- resulting from centuries of legal, philosophical, and religious traditions from which society developed its moral compass-- prohibit the act of taking human life (Reynolds 346). Self-defense, capital punishment, and war are seen as the only permissible exceptions to this ingrained social norm (347). Such constructs are a result of basic human instincts favoring the Darwinian ideology of 'survival of the fittest' in which survival is preferable to extinction and human life is viewed as something that should be protected and preserved, not extinguished. In *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant acknowledges this primitive instinct, writing that "[t]he first, though not principal, duty of a human being to himself as an animal being is to preserve himself in his animal nature. The contrary of this is willful physical death or killing oneself" (176). Despite Kant's opposition to suicide, he explicitly states that survival is not the 'principal duty' we have to ourselves: as humans we have a more important duty than the physical act of living. As Cooly explains, "Developing and preserving human dignity have to be far more important than merely staying alive physically. When human beings reject their dignity by choosing actions that degrade...[their] moral status..., they might be alive physically, but they are dead as human persons because they have lost that which makes them human" (368). For those who define their sense of dignity through their physical well being and autonomy, death is preferable to bodily deterioration from a terminal illness, but also constitutes a reflection of moral beliefs that extend

beyond the physical act of terminating one's life. While controversial, assisted-suicide allows patients to maintain control over their existences and preserve their individualized notions of human dignity as death approaches. The United States government has an ethical responsibility to allow all American citizens to evaluate the morality of death and dying end-of-life options unhindered by government constraints; deciding when one's quality of life is no longer worth living should be regarded as a private, rather than public, matter and should result from the patient's personally held set of beliefs.

EXISTING ALTERNATIVES

Legal Rulings on Existing Alternatives:

In the aforementioned Supreme Court Cases, *Vacco v. Quill* and *Washington v. Glucksberg* (1997), the justices cited existing end-of-life care options as adequate alternatives to assisted suicide and concluded that the U.S. Constitution protects a patient's right to refuse treatment, but not a physician's right to help a patient die. While there are numerous options for the terminally ill, assisted suicide is a necessary and ethically sound alternative that appeals to a distinct demographic of patients whose concerns are primarily driven by their desire to maintain their dignity in their final days. In *Washington v. Glucksberg*, the Supreme Court refused to rule on the acceptability of assisted suicide, citing that existing alternatives negated the need for a national Death with Dignity Act. Justice O'Connor reasoned that "a patient who is suffering from a terminal illness and who is experiencing great pain has no legal barriers to obtaining medication from qualified physicians to alleviate that suffering, even to the point of causing unconsciousness and hastening death," thus characterizing the mitigation of suffering as the primary concern of all terminally ill patients (Raus, et al. 33). In doing so, O'Connor oversimplifies the plight of the terminally ill and neglects to recognize that different patients have varying ideals of what constitutes a dignified, acceptable means of death (Raus, et. al 33). Existing last resort options for the terminally ill that are legalized in the U.S. include aggressive pain management, forgoing life-sustaining therapies, voluntarily stopping eating and drinking, and sedation to the point of unconsciousness (Quill 20). While these alternatives serve as vital and valuable end-of-life care options, to claim that the availability of the former negates

the need for assisted-suicide demonstrates “a lack of appreciation for the different types of patients, their value... and what constitutes a ‘good death’” (Raus, et. al 36). Although impending death is unavoidable for the terminally ill, the manner in which one approaches his or her final days is a private choice concerning the patient’s perception of what constitutes a valuable existence and a worthwhile death. Legal systems should respect a patient’s right to such a choice and legalize assisted-suicide as a viable alternative. The role of the judiciary system is not to impose ethicality, but rather provide patients with the information they need to navigate their options within the healthcare system.

PAS vs. Continuous Sedation

Whereas assisted suicide appeals to terminally ill patients who value control and feel that their disease threatens their dignity, other patients who desire to mitigate their physical suffering may seek continuous sedation - a practice in which a physician uses sedatives to reduce a patient’s consciousness until death follows - as an alternative end-of-life care option. Opponents of physician-assisted suicide maintain that continued sedation is an ethically preferable alternative to assisted suicide, citing the moral distinction between a physician allowing a patient to die versus killing the patient as the defining ethical factor (Huddle 259). While continuous sedation may appeal to those who wish to avoid pain and suffering as they approach death, Kantian ethics affirms that continued sedation is not necessarily ethically superior to assisted suicide. The way in which continued sedation and physician-assisted suicide ‘treat’ symptoms of terminal illness is the same, as they both serve to take away a patient’s consciousness (Raus et. al 38). Continuous sedation enables the patient to remain physically alive longer, but also results in such a reduced quality of life that the patient is mentally absent and psychologically impaired, solely existing as a bodily entity. While assisted-suicide requires the intervention of a medical professional in order to expedite the death process, Kant’s theories characterize a human’s moral worth as a separate entity from that individual’s physical worth, thus supporting the ethicality of PAS (Kant 180). In selecting assisted suicide as a means of approaching one’s death, the patient is making a personal bodily decision dictated by that individual’s valuation of personal moral worth: “As many people age, they become a moral subject, which is an

entity that has moral worth...[In] cases of impending permanent loss of personhood...a rational person would want to preserve his human dignity which would cause him to take his physical life while he still has his human dignity...[If he were to] prolong his body's life, in effect, he buys with his human dignity a bit more time for his physical body rather than dying with his dignity intact" (Cooley 371). Physician-assisted suicide provides patients who value the preservation of autonomy and dignity above an extended life with control over the manner in which they die -- control that patients are required to relinquish through continued sedation. Yet neither alternative is necessarily superior; PAS and continuous sedation serve different demographics of patients with diverse perspectives regarding death and dying. These patients would benefit from the legalization and availability of both alternatives, not just the latter.

PAS vs. Forgoing Life Sustaining Therapies:

The distinction between one's moral and physical worth extends into the debate surrounding the supposed ethical superiority of an additional existing alternative: forgoing life-sustaining therapies to expedite the death process. In "Physician-Assisted Death in the United States: Are the Existing 'Last Resorts' Enough?", author Timothy Quill provides a hypothetical situation to underscore the ethical dilemmas associated with end-of-life decisions: "An elderly man fractures his spine falling off a ladder. He initially accepts intubation and surgery in hope that he will recover neurological function, but four weeks later, he has not. He cannot imagine living this way, and after extensive discussions with his medical team and his family, he is mildly sedated and removed from the ventilator. He dies within twenty-four hours" (Quill19). While the man in this hypothetical scenario is not suffering from a terminal illness, the ethical dilemmas regarding actively hastening death parallel those associated with physician-assisted suicide and suggest that extending a patient's physical life may not always be the preferable course of action for patients and their families. When comparing PAS with the decision to forgo life-sustaining measures, it is similarly important to recognize how these alternatives are similar and thus ethically comparable. In choosing to forgo life-sustaining measures, the patient and the patient's family are determining that the patient's quality of life has been reduced to a point where life is no longer worth living and expediting the death

process in a manner similar to assisted suicide. While forgoing life-sustaining therapies is not physician-assisted, it is physician-supported and requires the intervention of a medical professional in the intentional termination of a patient's life (20). In both end-of-life alternatives, the patient's determination of human dignity is the most critical factor in determining the best, most ethical manner for the patient to approach death. Kantian ethics supports the notion that they are both morally permissible. The theory dictates that an individual's perception of his or her personal moral worth is much more ethically significant than the distinction between actively prescribing lethal medication and passively granting a patient the freedom to forgo a life-sustaining measure (Cool-ey 372). While the active prescription and ingestion of lethal medication is a more direct means of championing human dignity over a more gradual approach to death, and thus often perceived as more transgressive and taboo, the passive refusal of life-sustaining treatment demonstrates a similar concern for autonomy, thus demonstrating that both options are ethically permissible and applicable to different types of patients. Those who prefer an expedited death deserve the right to determine the means by which they approach death -- whether that be by choosing to forgo life-sustaining therapies, continuous sedation, assisted suicide, or opting for another alternative.

THE ROLE OF THE PHYSICIAN

Just as physician-assisted suicide has engendered controversy regarding a patient's right to self-autonomy, PAS has also called into question the role of the physician in advancing an expedited death. While Kant's categorical imperative provides a narrow portrayal of physicians and their role within modern medicine, a modern interpretation of the Hippocratic Oath supports a patient's right to self-determination. In *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant describes medical professionals as civil servants who "carry out another's commission," stating that they "behave purely passively...[as] part of the machine" (184). Characterizing medical professionals as "purely passive" undermines the complexity of the physician-patient relationship and fails to acknowledge the ethical implications that arise when patients' requests are perceived as transgressive in comparison to historic medicinal traditions. Rather than viewing physicians as cogs in a machine defined by their participation in

a medical institution, their roles pertaining to assisted-suicide are better understood as doctors serving as moral agents who are a part of a larger collective enterprise (Williams and Chadwick 160). The classical version of the Hippocratic Oath enjoined physicians to “protect the life and interests of the patient ... and also never to ‘give a deadly drug to anybody if asked for it, nor [to] make a suggestion to this effect;” however, the modern version of this oath no longer has such a stipulation (Dengnin 106). The central theme of the modern Hippocratic Oath urges the physician to act for the benefit of the sick and promotes ethical behavior through humanitarian concerns -- alluding to a sort of “medical humanism inherent in the task of medicine” (Dengnin 107). The power of the Hippocratic Oath lies not so much in the specifications themselves, but rather in the principles from which the oath was developed -- namely the respect for human life. As terminally ill patients approach the end of their lives, their personal decisions regarding what sort of pain or state of existence qualifies as unbearable should be given the utmost respect (101). Physicians, as participants in a collective enterprise for the purpose of meeting the needs of their patients, have an obligation to respect a patient’s self-determination and desire for autonomy -- should the patient possess such desires. While opponents of PAS have argued that a physician prescribing lethal medication contradicts his or her role as healer, assisted suicide concerns patients who are already terminally ill and for whom ‘healing’ is no longer possible (Raus et. all 38). The enduring presence of the Hippocratic Oath serves to remind medical professionals of the obligation to serve their patients, and in demonstrating compassion towards patients’ desire for autonomous death through the allowance of assisted-suicide, physicians are serving their patients’ needs while respecting the history of scientific medicine (Callahan 385).

PAS AND SOCIETAL IMPLICATIONS

The debate surrounding assisted suicide raises questions that extend beyond issues pertaining to individual rights, autonomy, and human dignity. While it is important to consider the potential effects of legalizing PAS, claims that physician-assisted suicide would destroy the moral fabric of society are overly extreme. Opponents of assisted suicide argue that the legalization of preemptively terminating a patient’s life promotes the normalization of suicide and could in turn alter social attitudes and

influence moral norms: “Behaviors like suicide, whether assisted or non-assisted, influence the behaviors of not only one’s friend but also of one’s friends’ friends’ friends. No man is an island” (Kheriaty 606). While the potential for ideological manipulation exists, as PAS allows suicide to be legally and socially permissible in certain circumstances; legalizing assisted suicide does not mean that the national government condones or promotes the normalization of suicide, but rather reflects a legal duty to demonstrate respect for individuals’ intrinsic worth. Kant’s criteria for moral permissibility state that “the person’s moral life has to be worth saving, the only way that the life can be saved is through the loss of the physical life, and the agent can treat... [his or herself] and all others affected by [his or her actions] with the respect that they deserve” (Cooley 373). These criteria set such a high standard for evaluating the ethicality of scenarios pertaining to suicide and assisted-suicide that social conventions and attitudes regarding suicide become inconsequential. Rather than solely evaluating PAS according to predictions of how it could possibly affect social norms, existing data from areas in which assisted suicide is already legal constitutes a more accurate and concrete predictor of its viability.

Oregon’s demonstrated success with its Death with Dignity Act affirms its potential for widespread implementation. Since it passed in 1997, 1,050 patients have received physician-written prescriptions for deadly medication, but only 673 of those patients have chosen to die by means of ingesting the lethal pills (Reynolds 351). Contrary to the belief that the legalization of physician-assisted death would prompt large portions of the population to make use of this practice, data suggests that “the availability of such an escape may be much more important to many patients than its actual use” (Quill 20). The availability of the lethal pills provides terminally ill patients with critical psychological reassurance that they have freedom of choice, indicating that there is comfort in knowing that a patient’s desire for a hastened death is an actionable reality. The extensive criterion mandated in the Death with Dignity Act severely limit the degree to which the law can be circumvented for purposes of coercion or exploitation of vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, disabled, uneducated, and the poor. The process of obtaining the medication is intentionally lengthy for both the patient and physician in order to implement additional safeguards protecting against manipula-

tion for personal benefit -- an act of deadly selfishness from which Kant's theories prohibiting assisted suicide developed. Oregon has demonstrated that the Death with Dignity Act successfully serves patients who have a strong desire to control their fate by putting more choice directly in their hands and attests to the notion that PAS can be implemented in a responsible manner on a wide scale with minimal likelihood of abuse (21).

CONCLUSION

Patients facing an impending loss of autonomy and dignity due to a terminal illness are justified in seeking a hastened death through physician-assisted suicide. While philosopher Immanuel Kant denounced the act of suicide itself, his theories regarding death and dying provide a line of reasoning that serves as justification for the moral permissibility of assisted suicide and affirm that this practice coincides with the medical humanism inherent in the practice of medicine. Although recent debates surrounding assisted suicide have focused on the legal implications and social correctness of an expedited death, questions pertaining to empathy and concern for the preservation of human autonomy demonstrate the necessity and ethicality of the practice:

“...There is a duty to oneself, at times, to take one's own life, and this duty makes sense given a deep, abiding respect for our individual intrinsic worth and that of others...To respect an individual's intrinsic value is to...understand and appreciate that that person is a person...with needs and desires...who is embedded by relationships in his or her environment” (Cooley 371).

Decisions pertaining to death should be made by the patient and his or her family, not the government or any other institution. Should the patient deem it necessary to end his or her physical life in order to preserve a moral existence, the legal system should protect a patient's right to do so and make the practice of assisted suicide an accessible one. As it currently exists, the Death with Dignity Act is too limited in scope. Its state-by-state implementation restricts patient access to a necessary end-of-life alternative - an alternative that is clearly desired by some patients - that the existing legalized alternatives, such as continuous sedation and choosing to forgo life-sustaining therapies, do not provide for. Oregon,

as the first state to pass a Death with Dignity Act, is the best predictor of the potential viability of a national act legalizing physician-assisted suicide and affirms that it is possible to enact such legislation in a socially responsible manner.

Access to such a vital practice for the terminally ill should not differ depending on the state in which one resides, but should rather exist as an accessible option for all terminally ill American citizens. Terminally ill patients deserve the right to apply for and obtain lethal medication, just as they deserve the right to choose whether or not to ingest the medication upon receiving the pills. While death is inevitable for those with a terminal diagnosis, the manner in which the patient approaches death is not as concrete. It is of the utmost importance for many patients to achieve their individualized perception of what constitutes a 'good' death and these patients deserve access to the end-of-life care alternative that will allow them to do so. Physician-assisted death gives patients a critical degree of freedom as they make the very personal decision of how to confront death, and the U.S. government should support, rather than hinder, this process by passing a national Death with Dignity Act.

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Surpassing the Text

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Abstract: This paper is an analysis of the film A Streetcar Named Desire. It examines the moral constraints the Production Code Administration imposed during the film's development, the avenues director Elia Kazan and playwright Tennessee Williams pursued to circumvent these obstacles, and the cinematic elements that contributed to Streetcar's success. Adapting a written work to film is a difficult task. However, Kazan's Streetcar demonstrates that such a feat is possible. The moral strictures imposed during Streetcar's production, primarily the censors' demands to omit Streetcar's rape scene, did not deter Kazan. Streetcar's producers sought the assistance of Lilian Hellman to help finalize the film. Marlon Brando's and Vivien Leigh's dissimilar acting styles elevate the film and capture the antagonism between their respective characters. Opposition exists to this, as some critics contend that the actors' performances distorted Williams' original thematic purpose. Ultimately, due to Kazan's directorial prowess, lighting, and sequential addendums, he was able to retain pertinent themes as well as the rape scene from Williams' play.

INTRODUCTION

A successful film adaptation is a complex work, recognized for its fidelity and highly esteemed by its target audience. The director has a dual purpose: to craft a work that fulfills the expectations of its audience and to display the filmmaker's tact and innovative direction. Although this cinematic pursuit is difficult to achieve, it is not unattainable. Elia Kazan's 1951 rendition of Tennessee William's play, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, succeeds as a film adaptation by conforming to the concepts elucidated by Joy Boyum and Linda Seager in their respective books, "The Filmmaker as Reader: the Question of Fidelity" and "Why Literature Resists Film." The Production Code Administration's moral constraints forced Kazan to make concessions and omit certain aspects of the film during the final edit, compelling him to seek the assistance of playwright Lillian Hellman. Through Kazan's use of lighting, sequential addendums, fidelity, musical score, actor's performances and the film's thematic mutability, *Streetcar* largely resisted pressures executive interlopers imposed during the film's production. Kazan's *Streetcar* proves that creating a successful

adaptation is a feasible endeavor when entrusted to a competent director.

PRESSURES ON THE FILM

Primary inhibitors that threatened the completion of Kazan's *Streetcar* were the moral strictures imposed by the Production Code Administration and the Catholic motion picture watch group, the Legion of Decency. Both organizations tacitly placed numerous restraints on films and enjoined filmmakers to omit scenes that conflicted with the moral beliefs of the mid 20th century. In Linda Costanzo Cahir's essay, "The Artful Rerouting of a *Streetcar Named Desire*", she describes how "alterations [were] demanded (even before the first script was drafted) by those guardians of decency, the Breen office [PCA]. Central to William's play are issues that the Breen office found de facto censorious: noisy, pleasurable lovemaking; unsanctioned promiscuity; homosexuality; and rape" (Cahir 244). The PCA, along with the Legion of Decency, vehemently objected to any morally questionable content that they perceived would have deleterious effects on the morals of the United States citizenry. Jackie Shead delineates in her article "Evasions and Ambiguities in a *Streetcar Named Desire*," that the words "effeminate" and "not like a man," was replaced with "uncertainty"... Stella's description of Blanche's marriage in Scene 7 was deleted, along with the word "degenerate" (Shead 28).

Hollywood's moral guardians demanded Kazan bowdlerize morally problematic elements from the film. They were particularly vociferous opponents of the film's rape scene and pressured Kazan to remove it from *Streetcar*'s screenplay. R. Braton Palmer writes, in his essay "Tennessee Williams and 1950s Hollywood: The View from Here and Abroad" that Charles K. Feldman, the film's producer, agreed with Hollywood's moralists, "argu[ing] that this violent culmination of the sexually charged rivalry between Blanche and Stanley was unnecessary once Stanley 'destroys' her by telling Mitch what he learned about her steamy personal life" (Palmer 112). Feldman believed the film's rape scene was incongruous with traditional values and urged both playwright and filmmaker to remove it outright. However, Kazan and Williams adamantly opposed Feldman's superficial reading of *Streetcar* and asserted that the rape scene had thematic pertinence.

ADAPTING TO THE SCREEN

Streetcar's Broadway producer, Irene Selznick, sought the assistance of playwright Lillian Hellman to construct an alternate conclusion tailored to the moral statutes of the time. Nancy M. Tischler states in her article "Tiger—Tiger, Blanche's Rape on Screen" that Selznick was aware of the censors' demands and their desire to expurgate the rape scene from *Streetcar*'s film adaptation. She believed Lillian Hellman, an established and well-received writer, would craft a resolution that would appease the PCA's stringent moral code while retaining the thematic integrity of Williams' written narrative. Hellman, Tischler notes, developed three alternative resolutions, but "was uncomfortable with all the solutions, realizing that 'in so good a play the elements are so well blended...that the choice must be delicate and careful.' She believes that Blanche has been headed for a mental collapse for years and that it could come at any time" (Tischler 60). Hellman believed *Streetcar*'s success was derived via its lurid portrayal of sexuality, concluding that any substitute ending would have been a pale imitation of Williams' original sequence.

However, Kazan and the PCA eventually reached a compromise, as Steffen Blaschke writes in his essay, "A *Streetcar Named Desire* Play in Comparison with Movie," stating that "Breen...agreed that the rape could remain in the movie, if only Stanley would be punished for his actions... The screenplay had to have another scene added; Stella is seen in front of the tenement building, holding her baby in her arms," and states that she will, "leave Stanley for sure" (Blaschke 10). Breen allowed Kazan to retain *Streetcar*'s rape scene as long as he attached a morally appropriate scene to the film's conclusion. This morally rectifying denouncement, although a considerable concession, resolved the enmity between *Streetcar*'s director and Hollywood's moral overseers, granting Kazan the autonomy needed to finalize his film.

In addition to the morally-driven scene, Kazan's use of lighting, visual images and camera angles helped him circumvent the constraints imposed by the PCA as well as impart pertinent thematic elements and scenes to the audience. Cahir states that Kazan harmonized many of *Streetcar*'s contested themes and scenes, such as Blanche's rape, into his film through, "A quick cut-away [which] denotes the violence of the rape in the image of the beer bottle smashing a mirror. This obliqueness

works. It connects the virgin/whore image of Blanche that Kazan creates throughout the film” (Chair 247). Blanche’s rape is alluded to via the directorial decisions of Kazan. His adroit filmmaking and ingenuity allowed him to efficaciously integrate *Streetcar’s* morally problematic properties and, as Christopher Holland explicates in his essay, “Stanley Kowalski: From Page to Performance,” provide nuanced characterization of *Streetcar’s* characters. He writes that Stanley, in the film, “is heard—though not seen—beating up Stella, he eats meat with his bare hands... [and] heaving up a bloodstained package to Stella...all provide the audience with a condensed impression of Stanley’s character” (Holland 10). Stanley’s essence is captured through his mannerisms and behaviors, reflecting the character’s internal disposition. This characterization is accomplished through Brando’s performance on screen. Williams’ stage directions as well as character descriptions are aptly translated into cinematic form. Blaschke expounds upon Kazan’s directorial methods. He observes that Kazan “tried to keep the camera moving and shot the actors from various angles in order not to retain the static atmosphere of a stage setting. He used the close-up on the actor’s faces to show their feelings bluntly and with all their dramatic power,” and notes Blanche’s face is exposed when Mitch, “tears the paper lantern off the light bulb... The camera reveals all signs of age, every wrinkle” (Blaschke 7). Kazan’s directorial dexterity, coupled with the wide array of technological appliances at his disposal, allowed Kazan to evade the morally noxious demands of the PCA and convey the play’s thematic elements and scenes.

Moreover, Kazan developed original sequences and expanded upon scenes from Williams’ narrative for coherence and clarity. Linda Seager opines that stories, such as novels, communicate information gradually while films depict multiple facets of the story simultaneously. She states that “book[s] may take fifty or one hundred pages to give you the information that you get in three minutes of film” because a scene from a film, she elucidates, advances “the action, reveals the character, explores the theme, and builds an image” (Seager 16). Films and written narratives depend on disparate mediums to facilitate the plot’s progression. In order to preserve the story’s cohesion, directors must alter, rearrange, or provide additional context to a setting or scene. Blaschke writes that Kazan guides “the audience to places which are only briefly referred to in the play, e.g. the bowling alley, or places not mentioned at

all, like the pier of a dance casino, where Blanche tells Mitch about her husband's death (he killed himself at a dance casino too, so this scene serves as a perfect upholder for the suicide of Alan Grey)" (Blaschke 7). Kazan's innocuous scene insertions add greater depth and ancillary context to the film; they do not damage the continuity or chronology of Williams' story since they do not correspond to vital aspects of the play. Through including original sequences and providing more context to scenes in the film, Kazan ensures that his rendition of the text prevails as a successful adaptation.

However, these changes and addendums to the text of the play did not undermine Kazan's earnest pursuit of fidelity. Streetcar's director believed that a successful screen rendering would necessitate a translation of the play verbatim. Joy Boyum describes it as the "attempt to reproduce their sources literally as possible," which John Dryden elaborates in his treatise of three categories of translation: "First that of the metaphrase, or turning an author word by word and line by line, from one language to another" (Boyum 69). Kazan was eager and willing to convert Williams' play into film through a direct translation. In Ellen Dowling's article, "The Derailment of a Streetcar Named Desire" she writes, quoting Elia Kazan, that "I re-read it a week later and I thought it was awful—it had lost the best qualities of Williams' work...And I suddenly made a very radical decision...So I photographed my production of his masterpiece—And I do think it's a masterpiece—almost precisely as he had written it for stage" (Dowling 234). Kazan opposed any measures to make any substantial alterations in his depiction of Streetcar. Blaschke states that much of the play's plot and dialogue are almost entirely transposed to its film counterpart and writes, quoting Kazan, "because there was nothing to change...Streetcar is a perfect play. I did consider opening out the play for the screen initially, but ultimately decided to go back to the original play script. It was a polished script that had played in the theater for a year and a half" (Blaschke 6). Although Kazan was forced to make slight alterations, for the sake of coherence, the overall content of his work exhibits a tremendous degree of fidelity. Kazan chose to make a literal translation of Streetcar because any augmentations, he asserted, would fail to achieve the same artistic impact that Williams' play achieved.

THE ADDITION OF A SCORE

An integral factor that contributed to *Streetcar's* success was its musical score. The film's musical cues facilitate characterization, supply thematic context to scenes, and help distinguish *Streetcar* from many of its contemporaries. In Annette Davison's monograph, Alex North's *A Streetcar Named Desire: A Film Score Guide*, she states that Alex North was *Streetcar's* principal composer and produced the film's musical score. Davison writes, "North believed that 'each picture calls for its own solution,' and succeeded in achieving this individuality in characterization...in terms of a particular style, it is better in the first instance to understand his approach as guided by intention, purpose, and interpretation" (Davison 23). North, Davison argues, developed musical cues that he felt would best convey the play's themes and would appropriately suit *Streetcar's* characters. Alex North, as a result of his interpretation, composed distinct ambient background music that accompanies different characters and scenes. James Lochner, in his article "The Music in *A Streetcar Named Desire*," writes that

A descending half-step in the trumpets and trombones at the beginning of the main titles serves as the principal motif connected with Stanley...The violins follow with the second main theme, representing Blanche (Vivien Leigh) and Stella's (Kim Hunter) 'lost' childhood home, Belle Reve, punctuated by harsh trumpets, wailing clarinets, wah-wah-muted trombones, and a crawling rhythm in the low register of the piano. (Lochner 10)

These musical motifs assist in the characterization of the film's characters as well as impart pertinent thematic elements.

THE ACTORS' PERFORMANCES

Marlon Brando's and Vivian Leigh's dissimilar acting styles accentuate the struggle between both their respective characters, which contributes to the film's success. Cahir writes that there was a "clash of acting techniques [which] seemed to pit Leigh against the others from the start. Marlon Brando...[was] trained in The Method of Stanislavsky. Leigh in contrast, came from an antithetical tradition: Stylized/Classic Acting, which at the time, method actors had rejected as formulated, as rigid" (Cahir 242). Brando's style of acting was more lifelike while Leigh's style

was considered stiff and was reinforced via traditional theater practices, which bolstered Kazan's and Williams' opposition to casting Leigh as Blanche Dubois. Her acting style, Williams and Kazan contended, was incompatible with the rest of the cast and her inclusion would have lowered the quality of the film. In addition, Leigh's rendering of Blanche was starkly different from Jessica Tandy's, whom she replaced in order to appeal to wider segments of the population because, as Nicola Onyett delineates in her article, "A Good Belle Gone Bad: A *Streetcar Named Desire* from Stage to Screen," Jessica Tandy, she opines, "was not a big enough box-office star to headline an edgy production that dealt with rape, promiscuity and homosexuality" (Onyett 30). Leigh replaced Tandy because of her celebrity status. Regardless, both Leigh and Brando's distinct acting expresses the struggle between their characters and elevates the film.

However, Leigh's performance and interpretation of Blanche DuBois captures the character's shifting facades as well as heightens the tension between the characters Stanley and Blanche. The contrasting acting styles reflects Blanche's diminished grip on reality, deteriorating mental health, and poignantly illustrates the simmering antagonism between Stanley and Blanche. Although Kazan disliked Leigh's acting style, condemning it as incongruous with the performances of the other actors, her portrayal of Blanche effectively captures and adds greater dimension to the character. Blaschke notes that Leigh's "interpretation of Blanche made a strong impression on critics and it won her the Oscar for best female in a leading role. Brando was the perfect counterpart and he transferred his explosive performance from the stage to the screen" (Blaschke 5). Both Brando and Leigh offer a unique dynamic that facilitates the characterization of their respective characters. Leigh's style of acting reflects Blanche's hubris and slow mental collapse.

Despite the actors' diligent and praiseworthy performances on screen, some film critics and scholars contend that the actors in Kazan's adaptation distorted Williams' original thematic design. Christopher Holland posits that the characters' thematic representation in the play was not fully transposed to Kazan's film, and cites Brando's attractiveness as an example. Holland states that "there is too great a gap between page and performance" arguing that "In the text, Stanley is described as being highly sexed," and infers that, "Williams may actually be mocking

Stanley's limitations...[as] a 'gaudy seed-bearer' (Holland 10). However, Holland states that this layer of criticism is absent from the film due to "Brando's good looks," asserting "that the film fails to distinguish between being highly-sexed and being sexually attractive...In its treatment of the rape...the film seems very unwilling to convict Stanley" (Holland 10). Stanley, Holland insists, is misrepresented in the film and fails to capture Williams' thematic critique of the character. Holland further states that Brando's film rendering of Stanley undermines Williams' depiction of the character in the play. Thus, Holland argues that the film's version of Stanley garnered sympathy rather than outrage.

John S. Bak echoes this argument, of Stanley garnering sympathy rather than outrage, in his article, "A Criticism on A Streetcar Named Desire." He writes, "Kazan's direction heavily favored making Stanley the victim of Blanche's onslaughts against his name, his heritage, his masculinity, and ultimately his family. (Some audiences, it was reported, actually cheered during the rape scene of Kazan's production)" (Bak 6). Brando's sympathetic portrayal of the character subtly alters the viewers' expectations of justice. Instead of decrying Stanley's brutal rape, they applaud and condone the rape scene as morally justifiable. Although it is true that the characters' representations in the film are different from how they were presented in the play, this variance in portrayal was the result, as Annette Davison determines, "of an interpretive continuum" (Davison 78). She writes that "Tandy's characterization was noted for its fragility, Leigh's was more full-bodied and overtly sensual. Similarly, Brando's performance changed over the two years of the play's Broadway run: as the run continued he focused more on the character's humor, and on making him more likeable" (Davison 78). Brando's portrayal of the character evolved through the duration of his acting tenure. He didn't favor a particular character or depiction of a character but viewed each portrayal as a valid interpretation of Williams' play. *Streetcar's* interpretive mutability, while regarded by some critics as an inhibitory factor, does not diminish the quality of the film adaptation, but enhances it because it allows the viewer to develop their own interpretation of the character.

DIFFERING INTERPRETATIONS

While *Streetcar's* interpretive mutability allows spectators of both the

play and film adaptation to forge their own analyses, the emergence of these competing theories has divided the film's scholarly community. It is a contentious issue among film critics and scholars since many have presented their own interpretation of both the film and play. John S. Bak notes that although many "critics believe *Streetcar* to be essentially a social drama, few have found themselves in concert in defining what kind of social drama" (Bak 4). He elaborates that some critics argue, "Blanche and Stanley represent archetypes of cultures or species...of [either] Nietzschean Apollonian/Dionysian dichotomy, or of Darwinian natural selection" (Bak 4). The former, Bak elucidates, is an opposition of personality types, a conflict between Blanche and Stanley with Blanche embodying a "romantic sensitivity crushed by realistic brutality [Stanley]" (Bak 7). This theme, as described by Bak, is presented throughout the film and culminates in Blanche's rape.

However, proponents of the Darwinian reading of *Streetcar*, Davison writes, interpret both the play and film "as Williams' pessimistic commentary on...Darwinian natural selection...Stanley and Blanche [are] viewed as ciphers of specific views or types: the physical and the spiritual; the Old South and modern industrial society" (Davison 74). Blanche and Stanley represent two competing lifestyles, one that will inexorably dominate the other. Onyett aptly describes it as a "conflict between fading Southern belle Blanche DuBois and her brother-in-law Stanley Kowalski, a second-generation Polish immigrant determined to capture his own American Dream...The brutal culture clash between the blue-collar worker and the aristocratic intellectual is located in their struggle over Stella" (Onyett 30). The characters denote disparate cultures vying for supremacy, which is reflected in their attempts to acquire Stella's trust and companionship. Regardless of the divergence of opinion between critics and scholars, the film's interpretive mutability enhances the option of different interpretations and adds great depth to Kazan's adaptation.

CONCLUSION

The challenges filmmakers encounter when converting a written narrative into a film are manifold. These encumbrances have a wide array of origins ranging from an insufficient budget to actors' lackluster performances on screen, or alterations of the plot and themes made under

duress by movie producers. It is a daunting and sometimes inconceivable task which requires the filmmaker to have a deep comprehension of both the text and the audience's preferences. Although this cinematic pursuit is fraught with difficulty, Elia Kazan demonstrates through his successful rendition of *A Streetcar Named Desire* that such a feat is possible. His adaptation illustrates a tremendous degree of fidelity to Williams' original manuscript and exhibits Kazan's directorial prowess. While both the film and play received universal acclaim and are staples in American entertainment, Kazan's adaptation is a superior product. The wide range of technological appliances at Kazan's disposal, along with the actors' laudable performances, and Alex North's musical score, vivify William's play on the big screen. Kazan proves that with tact and innovation, a filmmaker can yield a work that not only matches its source material, but also surpasses it.

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Paradoxes in New Opportunities: The True Impacts of Globalization on Women in South Asia

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Abstract: Globalization has introduced many political, economic, and social reforms into South Asia, many of which have directly influenced women's rights, roles, and lifestyles. Critics, especially those from the West, claim these foreign "modern" influences have improved the situation for women in this region. However, the extent of this improvement remains ambiguous given the persistent violence against women that became especially clear in the highly publicized 2012 Delhi gang rape of Jyoti Singh. Thorough research reveals that legal and economic forms of discrimination against women have in fact significantly declined because of global influences on politics and the economy. At the same time, however, South Asian communities have most often responded negatively to global cultural influences, creating paradoxes in the opportunities technically available to women. Thus, cultural and social patriarchy continues to prevail in South Asia and manifests itself in the form of son preference, double standards, and limitations on women's mobility, autonomy, and individuality.

INTRODUCTION

Women's rights have long been a controversial matter throughout history and across cultures. This issue is of particular significance in South Asia, where cultural views clash with and often directly contrast the new "modern" ideas introduced into this region through the recent globalization of culture, politics, and economy. The two views—traditional and "modern"—propose conflicting ideologies about the way women should behave and lead their lives, thus producing many challenges for young women in particular. In South Asia, what is considered "modern" is defined as those ideas and lifestyles that align with Western culture and globalized norms. Many women wish to follow these norms but too often encounter opposition because of the standards their societies set for them. The globalization of South Asia's economy, laws, and culture has indeed catalyzed reforms that have changed the lives of many women. However, it is uncertain to what extent these reforms have actually improved women's lives, given that there is still rampant violence against

women and tension between genders, as seen in the 2012 Delhi rape case and the riots that ensued (Udwin).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper will explore and analyze the true impacts of British imperialism and the continued globalization post-independence, as well as the effects of the struggle between modern and traditional ideologies on South Asian women's economic, legal, and social statuses. Using the theoretical framework of Coralynn Davis's discussion of globalization's effects on women in Janakpur, Nepal and her subsequent conclusions on life for young women in South Asia, I will explore the history of globalization in this region and its influences in the context of women's rights, socioeconomic roles, images and significance—that is, how women are and have been portrayed and what it means to be a woman in South Asia—as well as the debates and negotiations that have arisen from South Asia's exposure to global media, culture, and politics. Considering the British imperial rule's lasting legal and economic impacts on women and the cases of women in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and India, I propose that the effects of globalization on women's lives are complex. Globalization has significantly changed the lives of many women in South Asia through political reforms and the introduction of new ideas, which have given women more opportunities. However, while the economic and legal forms of patriarchy may have declined, the *de facto* form is—to a large degree—enforced by the rigid traditional and/or religious views still held by the majority of South Asia. This obstinacy and its responses to the new ideas and trends introduced through globalization have created double standards as well as difficulties for women in realizing their new opportunities.

EARLY INFLUENCES AND CHANGES

South Asia's long years of globalization began with British and other European presence in the region then known as India, and the globalization heightened when Britain colonized the nation in the mid-nineteenth century. Flavia Agnes writes in her article "Patriarchy, Sexuality, and Property: The Impact of Colonial State Policies on Gender Relations in India," that the British perceived ruling India as their duty and portrayed their reign as "enlightenment" of India's people; through their

influence, the Hindu society would be able to enter an “era of ‘civilization’” (Agnes 19). They projected a commitment to loosen the conservative Hindu society’s patriarchal hold over women, when in fact their intervention only “served to usher in a new patriarchal legal order that legitimized several traditional anti-women practices and recast them into a new modernity through...collusion between colonial and local indigenous patriarchies” (Agnes 20). The British not only introduced their own patriarchal notions but also their interpretations of ancient Hindu texts, and specific laws became binding and thus allowed no deviation. In “Legal Pluralism Versus a Uniform Civil Code: The Continuing Debates in India”, Manisha Desai similarly states that whereas originally “customs and interpretations were not uniformly anti-woman and...there were spaces for negotiating women’s rights,” with British imperialism a “system that was flexible and diverse was made rigid and uniform” (Desai 68). Even those who had not originally been ruled by Hindu customs, as they belonged to lower castes or to different religions, were now forced to follow the customs under British law (Agnes). Thus, British colonialism homogenized the various peoples of India and made concrete the patriarchal notions of a few.

British imperial law most significantly influenced women’s property rights in colonial India, arguably for the worse regarding women’s positions in the family and in the society. Through their derived ideology of women’s rights over property from the English legal regime—according to which, at the time, married women were denied the right to own property—British colonial reforms consolidated power with individual men and thus increased male control and authority over women (Agnes 35). Furthermore, through the Widow Remarriage Act of 1856, widows were allowed to remarry despite the stigma originally placed upon such a marriage by high Hindu castes (which thus prohibited such remarriages). However, by remarrying, a widow lost the right to her inherited late husband’s property because of British judicial interpretations of a Hindu law which stated that upon marriage a woman became part of her husband’s body, so after he died she was the surviving part of his body. The British interpretation and ruling was that if she remarried she became a part of another man and therefore no longer had the right to hold her first husband’s property. In addition, since property rights were solely granted to men—whereas in the pre-colonial period the system

was based on community and joint ownership—women became their legal dependents. As a result, son preference became both a financial and a cultural phenomenon: in the primarily agrarian society of nineteenth century India, “[s]ons were the key to survival and prosperity...under the British” (Agnes 36), which is also discussed in Navtej Purewal’s *Son Preference* and as will be explored further. Although British imperial law ended traditional “barbaric” practices such as female infanticide and the *sati* practice (in which widows would jump into their deceased husband’s funeral pyre) (Agnes 20), in this case Western influences actually caused women’s positions in society to deteriorate by transforming cultural discrimination into legal and economic forms, thus reinforcing the pre-existing patriarchal mentalities.

NEGOTIATING CONTRASTING PERSPECTIVES

In more recent years, globalization has drastically altered the argument for women’s rights. Srila Roy, in her introduction to *New South Asian Feminisms: Paradoxes and Possibilities*, emphasizes that “feminist activism in South Asia [is] configured by the paradoxes and possibilities inherent in globalization and economic liberalization” (Roy 3). As stated previously, the relationship between globalization and women’s rights is complicated: the introduction of more global, often “Western” ideas has brought new possibilities for women, including new economic freedom, but these new ideas form a paradox and open new debates with the long-standing, obdurately traditional, and more patriarchal ideas that maintain a strong presence throughout South Asia. In addition, as Davis explains, a woman’s “self-identity, in local contexts of modernity, becomes an everyday, reflexive project ‘accomplished amid the puzzling diversity of options and possibilities’ derived from multiple and contested sources of authority” (Davis 245). Women in particular face differing opinions amid the increased opportunities in their lifestyle that have arisen as a result of globalization of South Asia’s politics and economy, and therefore struggle to establish their individual identities—particularly since society often discourages them from being individualistic and thinking for themselves (Davis, Munshi). It should be noted that this region, although comprised of diverse communities, “shares interlocking geographical and historical, as well as cultural, legacies and is part of the daily global traffic of people, goods and ideas” (Roy 5). It is because of

these deeper similarities that, in regards to the identities and significance of women, the region is largely homogenous. Despite these relative similarities in ideologies and traditions, however, different nations and states within this region face slightly diverse struggles in attempting to balance global as well as traditional demands in the context of women's place in society.

The struggle of conforming to global standards of society and laws while retaining traditional standards and values is particularly evident in Pakistan. Recent ratification of the United Nation's Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the strong opposing presence of the Islamist coalition Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) in the Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan makes the nation "but one of many Muslim states that are grappling with balancing the demands of modernity and globalization with the often contradictory demands of their local populace" (Weiss 164). Public mood influences the government in power; a rise in support for Islamist political parties reflects a notion that secular governments deny their people the opportunity to live under Shari'a (Islamic law) and place global capitalism over Muslim values. The 1996 ratification of the CEDAW mandated that states create policies to eliminate discrimination against women, which meant establishing legal protection of women's rights on an equal basis with those of men and granting women the same conditions and access to education, the same legal capacity in civil matters, and equal treatment in matters relating to marriage and family relations, among other guidelines (Weiss 168-9). The MMA, elected within the NWFP in 2002, on the other hand, emphasized gender segregation in schools and other public areas, took stances on women's rights that frequently contradicted federal law, and demonstrated contempt for Westernization by attempting to eliminate its "obscenities" such as music and images of women on billboards, etc. While the MMA sought to provision rights to women based on religious interpretations, the federal government developed priorities regarding women's rights within the global framework of the U.N.'s CEDAW: they wished to improve education and promote the empowerment of women (Weiss 175). Thus, in Pakistan at least, global culture must contest and negotiate with unpredictable public mood and other powers in place; the struggles mentioned between the federal government and the provincial MMA represent

“contestations over power but fought to the detriment of women’s lives” (Weiss 183).

In Bangladesh, the intersection of religious and global ideologies has given rise to a changing political and cultural economy that has in turn produced contradictory effects for women. The 1980s brought a time of greater political and economic freedom for women but instigated violent reactions from their families, on the streets, and in the workplace; such oppositions were supported by religious and traditional customs. The nation’s constitution is contradictory regarding women’s economic rights: it grants gender equality, but qualifies it by reserving for one gender occupations considered unsuitable for the other (Feldman 193). Similarly, in universities of Kerala, India, women “are concentrated in general arts and sciences and in traditionally ‘feminine’ fields such as education and social work... [while] men dominate in fields like engineering and polytechnic disciplines” (Hapke 5). Furthermore, women in Bangladesh are given little to no representation in court proceedings; they receive harsher punishments than men, and a system of moral regulation monitors their behavior. In these cases, legal and economic forms of discrimination against women persist despite globalization—that is, the impacts of globalization have granted women more autonomy to a certain extent, but cultural views determine the deeper nature of these “liberations.” Bangladesh, like Pakistan, is only one of many South Asian communities in which women must battle against rigid patriarchal values—backed by religious and/or cultural views—that are behind certain laws and common practices in order to gain autonomy.

Women’s issues have long been widespread and are especially prominent in South Asia, but “today [women] are caught between new demands on their lives—given rising rates of abandonment, divorce, and poverty, as well as new desires for independence and autonomy—and an increasingly vocal religious elite whose political project is partially realized by their ability to control women’s behavior” (Feldman 208). Globalized politics, culture, and economy has brought new opportunities for women but these changes have in fact elevated the standards of all that women should accomplish. Leslee Udwin’s documentary *India’s Daughter* further verifies this development when it is mentioned that, “in the last fifteen to twenty years the economy has changed... and has created opportunities for young women to come and work [which has]

raised expectations of how they should lead their lives” (Udwin). On the one hand, they are expected to be “modern” by gaining an education and pursuing a professional career, yet at the same time, those in power try even harder to impose contrasting regulations on women’s lives in the form of questions of women’s morality, sexual purity, family’s honor and reputation, and other social expectations; these social mores limit women’s ability to conform to “modernity” as is additionally expected (Davis). Indeed, patriarchy only survives as long as women remain under the control of men, which entails limits on their education and careers, among other areas.

SON PREFERENCE

Navtej Purewal, in the introduction of his book *Son Preference: Sex Selection, Gender and Culture in South Asia*, defines son preference as “the foundation of the cultural, economic, social and ideological arguments that justify the preference for, if not the deification of, sons” (Purewal 1). There are indeed many such factors that contribute to the existence and consistent reinforcement of son preference. As explained previously, the diminution of women’s economic rights and autonomy and their increased economic dependence on men because of British imperial laws may have significantly contributed to son preference—although it should be noted that the phenomenon existed prior to colonial rule in the form of female infanticide and feticide (Agnes). In addition, the status of a new daughter-in-law within her marital family is contingent upon the birth of a son, as this occasion is “considered auspicious and customarily solidifies the place of a wife/daughter-in-law in her conjugal household” (Davis 249). Furthermore, particularly for lower-class families, a son is considered a worthier investment: while a daughter is raised solely to be a suitable wife and daughter-in-law in another home, a son should be educated so that he will be able to provide for his family and care for his parents in their old age (Davis 254). The “centrality of sons in inheritance and descent” also contributes to the persistence of son preference (Kabeer, Huq and Mahmud). The parents of Jyoti Singh, the victim in a 2012 Delhi gang rape and murder, also mentioned in an interview for *India’s Daughter* that when they distributed sweets in celebration of their daughter’s birth, others questioned why they were as happy as is expected upon the birth of a son; in addition, when Singh’s

parents sold family land to acquire the means to provide her with an advanced education, family members criticized them for making these sacrifices for a girl (Udwin).

However, at the same time, a globalizing economy has provided increased opportunities for girls' education and even post-secondary education. With the globalized economy has come an overall rise in South Asian communities' standard of living, creating a larger middle class that can now better afford to provide their daughters with an education as well their sons (Davis). Girls' education has therefore been on a steady rise, eventually closing and even reversing the gap between girls' and boys' education rates in several communities (Kabeer, Huq and Mahmud). In addition, a study on son preference in Bangladesh revealed that this "daughter aversion" seemed to be weakening in certain areas of Bangladesh and credited "[m]aternal education, household wealth, and women's economic contributions" (Kabeer, Huq and Mahmud 145) as significant factors contributing to this decline. Evidently, globalization has, to an extent, improved women's position and social standing through wider educational opportunities and a decline in son preference. Yet even with increased opportunities in education, women face persistent opposition because of costs to their family, a possible "loss of marriageability due to questions of family honor and the advanced age of daughters by the time they have finished schooling, [and] loss of their expected deference to familial elders... [as an] outcome of exposure to new ideas, people and career options" (Davis 255). Society wishes for patriarchal notions and practices to stay in place, and so pushes for girls to stay where they can be controlled through scrutiny, illiteracy, and ignorance. However, with global media the entire community is inevitably exposed to foreign ideas and cultures.

REDEFINING FEMININITY THROUGH THE MEDIA

Globalization has brought a major rise in mass consumption and influences on culture, for the "spread of electricity combined with satellite technology and the political ascendancy of global media corporations has ensured that global media is now consumed virtually everywhere" and "[p]articipation in mass mediated culture is part of what it means to be modern" (Davis 255). Mass media in South Asia has transformed the standards of beauty and lifestyles women should achieve so that

they now align with the norms of the Western world. Globalized media, conscious of women's changing roles, portrays the modern woman as one who combines "both family and career, familial relationships and independence, selflessness and...selfishness" (Munshi 81). South Asia's exposure to global media and culture has also changed the definition of femininity to include an increasing emphasis on glamor, sexuality, and appearance. In addition, the ideals for beauty have evolved because of global influences: as Shoma Munshi describes in "Marvelous Me: The Beauty Industry and the Construction of the 'Modern' Indian Woman", "what is considered 'beautiful' and 'modern'...is now far more aligned to westernized representations of what is considered beautiful. The voluptuous film actresses with long hair of the 1970s have yielded to short haired *Baywatch* style bodies on...Bollywood heroines and models" (83). Western influences on beauty standards are especially clear in the advertising of creams and powders with skin whitening and smoothing elements; because of global media influences, the idea that fair skin is the standard of beauty has reached into South Asia and implicitly pressured women to achieve this standard. At the same time, as evident from the increasing numbers of Indian models and international beauty contestants, Indian culture continues to be somewhat valued; as the mother of 1999's Miss World said in an interview for *The Times of India* and as is often reinforced in various other media portrayals, "[t]he Indian woman of today represents a healthy blend of the modern and the traditional" (Munshi 89).

Despite the evolution of women's images in South Asia's globalizing media, cultural patriarchal notions have given rise to double standards and paradoxes regarding women's rights and roles in society. For example, "Sariswati", a high-caste, highly educated young Hindu Nepali woman, became subject to societal stigma when she decided to spend her earnings from her position as a teacher on herself—specifically, on makeup. Unmarried women who decide to "adorn" themselves are perceived as indecent and from a "bad" family, having not been raised right, because traditionally women only begin "adorning" themselves after marriage as a symbol of their sexuality (Davis). Thus, while global media has redefined beauty standards and the "modern" woman as more independent and individualistic (Munshi 81), obstinate cultural standards continue to mandate what is appropriate for a woman to do

and the way she should live. Sariswati faced other struggles as well: as a highly educated young woman in South Asia, where women are generally married early or else are considered too old and thus unwanted as a bride, she was uncertain if she would be able to fulfill her own desire for a professional career as a chemist given the limited options she knew were available to women for education and careers, and the great importance placed on marriage. As an initially unmarried young woman, Sariswati and others like her are pressured to comply with the *parda* system, through which girls must observe modesty in their appearance as well as their behavior and self-image, for they carry the honor and social status of their families upon their shoulders—their brothers, on the other hand, may roam care-free, for their indiscretions reflect solely upon them and not on their families (Davis).

This type of thinking led to Jyoti Singh, the victim of a brutal gang rape and murder in Delhi (which is informally known as the “rape capital of India”), being somewhat blamed for the incident: it was said that she should not have been roaming around at night, especially not with a male friend, for “decent” women do not leave their home at night without an “appropriate” companion (Udwin). Furthermore, the cultural changes brought by globalizing media (Munshi) continue to be criticized by those who retain conservative views; the defense lawyer for the gang involved in Singh’s attack claimed that girls like Singh are “under the imagination of the film culture, in which they can do anything” (Udwin). Through the examples of Singh and of Sariswati, it is evident that the glamorous and “modern” lifestyles propagated by global media are largely unrealistic and susceptible to heavy criticism. Furthermore, there is clearly a dichotomy between the “modern” and the “traditional”, the “Western” or global and the cultural, for the previously mentioned defense lawyer and others repeatedly stressed that women in South Asian culture should behave in certain defined ways (Udwin), yet this ideal is contrary to the images from the West and to global standards, such as those outlined in the U.N.’s CEDAW. There is also a general rejection of and stigma associated with global culture—as seen when the MMA sought to eliminate its “obscenities” (Weiss)—as well as a veneration of South Asian culture, as seen when several interviewees in India’s Daughter repeatedly emphasized that “good” women conformed to the patriarchy prevalent throughout this region (Udwin).

In Sariswati's Maithili community as well as in India and throughout South Asia, there exists a glaring double standard when it comes to what is right for men versus what is right for women. Given the socioeconomic son preference in which "sons represent strength in a masculine sense while daughters...represent femininity and thus weakness...and [are] thus seen as a futile investment" (Purewal 1), children grow up believing that girls are less important, and so a girl's education does not matter as much. In addition, the aforementioned double standards are a way of further controlling women's actual rights within society, their behavior, and their lives as a whole, which in turn propagates the idea that women belong under men's control. This mindset was expressed in the gang rape of Singh: the men claimed to have been teaching her a lesson—that she did not belong out in public, in this "man's territory," and that she should not fight back but rather submit to men's control. These negative perceptions and prevalent patriarchal mentalities allow men not only to believe they can, but also to actually do whatever they want with a woman, since she does not matter and is often seen as less than a human being (Udwin).

CONCLUSION

As has been proven, the legal and economic forms of patriarchy that originated through British imperial law have diminished through efforts by federal governments to conform to more recent global standards and through foreign influences on South Asia's laws and economies. This decline has opened new opportunities for women to gain an education and perhaps even a post-secondary education, to establish careers, and to lead the lifestyle they wish to have. Yet there are paradoxes in the possibilities of women actually realizing these new opportunities, for the *de facto* form of patriarchy still exists in double standards in terms of expectations for men's versus women's behavior and achievements, in persisting son preference, and in the belief that women belong under the control and authority of men and so should not be individualistic or independent. Thus, globalization has improved the lives of women in South Asia to the extent that they are *provided* with wider opportunities, but even the strongest foreign influences on culture, economy, and politics have nonetheless failed to considerably sway obdurate opinions on the way women should look, behave, marry, reproduce, and lead their lives.

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Buying Life: Implications of Gene Therapy on Health Care Costs

YEON HOO SEONG

Abstract: Gene therapy should be considered a life changing preventative treatment both because it is morally right to advocate for methods that will improve the overall health of the general population and because it will reduce healthcare expenditures. This new form of treatment has the potential to eliminate a focus on relieving symptoms and instead tackle the root of numerous health issues and eradicate disease. Because maintenance drugs and treatments for incurable diseases are used for a prolonged period of time, the cost of treating patients' symptoms make up a considerable portion of the United States healthcare costs. Thus, gene therapy can reduce healthcare costs. However, gene therapy can potentially increase healthcare costs as well by indirectly causing shortages in resources and creating a need for more nurses. The unknown consequences of implementing gene therapy as a treatment create an implication of morality where gene therapy can be used to help millions of lives while possibly leading to the rise of other issues.

INTRODUCTION

Advocating for the approval of gene therapy, a treatment where incorrect sequences in the genome are replaced with correct ones, as a new preventative measure for all sorts of diseases, particularly genetically disorders, is based on the potential of this technique to reduce healthcare costs in the US. Peter Singer, an Australian moral philosopher who is also a bioethics professor at Princeton University, offers the perspective that it is morally right to help those in need if there is an opportunity to do so without having to give up an equal or greater ethical value. Based on Singer's suggestions, it is morally right to treat humans using gene therapy to prevent any genetic diseases from surfacing. However, gene therapy would be a fairly expensive treatment and the rich would have an advantage over the other social classes in having access to it. This raises the issue that unequal access to treatment might be a great harm, which could be an ethical impediment under Singer's theory.

Genetic modification would be the advent of a whole new era in which we could expect a considerable decrease in the occurrence of

health problems, which would in turn decrease healthcare expenditures earmarked for treatment of fatal diseases. However, as a result of the elimination of some fatal diseases, there could be an increase in the population size, which itself raises an ethical concern because of scarce resources on the planet. Since overpopulation is a problem that the current world is facing today, it is not surprising that there are ethical issues that arise from advocating gene therapy if it could contribute to the problem of overpopulation. Nevertheless, the incorporation of gene therapy should still be considered a life changing preventative treatment because not only will it reduce healthcare expenditures but also it is morally right to advocate for methods that will improve the overall health of the general population.

In this paper, I will analyze the arguments of Maxwell J. Mehlman, Luc Bonneux, and W. Hiddemann as they relate to the problem of human morality on the issue of weighing human life against cost of healthcare suggested by Singer. My first section looks at the possible utilities of gene therapy as a medical technique for use in treatment of various types of diseases, which is summarized by Theodore Friedmann. This first section exists in order to lay the foundation for my argument about its potentiality to be a catalyst in the United States healthcare system. The second section of my argument discusses how gene therapy can be used to bring down healthcare costs. The third section of my paper offers a rebuttal to my second argument and explores the complexity of the issue.

History of Genetic Modification and Gene Therapy

Just like many other innovations and discoveries, gene therapy started out as nothing but a concept, a curiosity that had no support and no possible utilities. This concept was first introduced between the 1960s and early 1970s. It was influenced by the “development of genetically marked cells lines and the clarification of mechanisms of cell transformation by the papovaviruses polyoma and SV40” (Friedmann 93). What allowed for the idea of treating patients with direct modification of their genes was the advent of recombinant DNA techniques. By using cloned genes, researchers were able to “demonstrate that foreign genes could indeed correct genetic defects and disease phenotypes in mammalian cells in vitro” (Friedmann 93). Phenotypes are the appearance of an organism resulting from the interaction of the genotype and

the environment. This means that if there was any genetic defect in a patient causing him or her to show certain pathological symptoms, that alteration in the gene can be replaced with a normal, healthy gene by using gene therapy. As more techniques involving recombinant DNA developed further, the possible utilization of gene therapy in real clinical settings became more realistic. Further evidence from *in vitro* and *in vivo* experiments demonstrating efficient treatment of phenotypic errors from correcting faulty genotypes makes gene therapy “a broadly accepted approach to therapy and [justified] clinically applied studies with human patients” (Friedmann 93). Just like many of the new drugs that are released into the market today, gene therapy needs to be researched and perfected and tested in an *in vitro* setting, then tested in animal studies, and then be approved to be tested clinically on humans. Although gene therapy is not a drug but a treatment, it will likely be approved for use in a similar way, even if it takes a few years.

THE USES OF GENE THERAPY

When gene therapy is approved as a form of treatment, it potentially holds the key to a utopian-like world in which all humans are born without disease, especially those that arise from genetic disorders. Some humans are predisposed to certain diseases from birth because of certain genes that make up their genome. Gene therapy has the potential to remove this predisposition in humans before birth, thus producing ideal humans who are not prone to the many genetic diseases that are presently known. Gene therapy is thus a hallmark for a new era where the diseases that were once only managed by treating symptoms become categorized as preventable diseases. The capacity that this proposed new treatment holds is immeasurable. Cardiovascular disease, which causes some of the major deaths in the United States, and mental disorders like dementia might be further prevented.

Many scholars argue that gene therapy should be used for prevention of disease and enhancement purposes because this revolutionary technique can be used to improve the quality of life as long as the indicated use does not raise ethical concerns. Dena S. Davis, a professor of bioethics and a legal consultant to the Committee on Bioethics of the American Academy of Pediatrics, provides some of the opinions that parents have on using genetic modification to determine the future of

their children and investigates the possible uses of gene therapy other than for treating genetic disorders. She writes that “Respect for procreative choices can be seen, for example, in the value-neutral ethic of genetic counselors and in the unregulated state of reproductive technology in the United States... procreative liberty is ‘an important moral right’ based on the ‘centrality of reproduction to personal identity, meaning, and dignity’” (Davis 24). Since gene therapy is to be used before birth, the ultimate choice of its use is completely up to the biological parents. It is up to the parents whether or not they want their child to be a product of gene therapy and what kind of treatment they want for the unborn child. According to Davis, some parents are all for gene therapy because they can actually give them the desired phenotypic traits. She also says that this is completely moral because “procreative liberty” is completely up to the parents. However, this procreative liberty still raises ethical issues. Future generations won’t be able to decide what they want to do when they grow up because this decision is entirely up to the parents. The children won’t have the same freedom as the children do today in working towards a goal because they would be born with certain traits, particularly with those that their parents wanted them to possess. The distinction between possessing natural traits from possessing selected traits is the fact the parents will already know what the child will be good at and have the aptitude for because the parents themselves chose the traits for their children. Whereas children born naturally would simply discover their talents and traits as they grow up, genetically modified children would already be born with their skills predetermined. Because humans are imperfect and fallible, it is possible that the parents will make a mistake in deciding the traits of their children. This seems like a heavy issue because of the word “mistake” but in actuality it’s not as serious as one might think. The children are still being given “healthy” and favorable traits but simply not the best ones specifically for the individual. These favorable traits might include perfect sight, extraordinary mental capacity, height, athleticism, etc. Thus, the children are not being harmed as the word “mistake” might suggest. Even Singer would agree because he argued that anything good should be done as long as there’s no harm involved.

USING GENE THERAPY TO REDUCE HEALTH CARE COSTS

Not only can gene therapy diminish genetic diseases, but it can also reduce healthcare spending within the US. For example, mental disorders can be a major target for gene therapy according to a case provided by Luc Bonneux, a medical epidemiologist, Jan J. Barendregt, a mathematical economist, Wilma J. Nusselder, a demographer, and Paul J. Van der Maas, a professor of public health. Based on a study in the Netherlands observing the demographics and public health between the late 1980s and early 1990s “mental disorders, including psychiatric diseases, mental handicaps, and dementias, are together responsible for only 0.6% of all deaths but account for 26% of the allocated healthcare budget” (Bonneux, et al. 27). Although this study focuses on the population in the Netherlands, it can serve as a model for the pattern seen in the United States. Most of the mental disorders are a result of a genetic predisposition. Considering this fact, there could be a potential drastic drop in the healthcare spending in the United States if gene therapy could be used to address mental disorders. In fact, based on recent data provided by James F. Fries, C. Everett Koop, Carson E. Beadle, Paul P. Cooper, Mary Jane England, Roger F. Greaves, Jacques J. Sokolov, and Daniel Wright, “preventable [illnesses] makes up approximately 70 percent of the burden of illness and the associated costs” (322). Not all preventable illnesses can be staved off with gene therapy, but the process is so powerful that it could prevent the majority of these illnesses. According to Dan Munro on Forbes, the overall cost of healthcare in the United States in 2014 was \$3.8 trillion. Looking at the math, this means that the total costs that go into treating diseases that can be prevented is \$2.66 trillion dollars. If gene therapy is incorporated into the US healthcare system and prevents most of these diseases that would otherwise might be unpreventable, and the use of these medical services, then gene therapy can potentially save \$2.66 trillion national dollars.

Still, the statistics above would only hold true if gene therapy was obtainable by all groups. The matter of fact is that gene therapy would be an expensive treatment since it is very complex. It will undoubtedly be more obtainable for the rich than the poor. This is unfair since all people have the right to good health. Financial barriers are not an adequate reason for not utilizing gene therapy and Singer would agree. There

are options available such as charity or loans. Particularly with loans, it should be thought of as an investment because what the parents would spend for gene therapy on their child could be paid back with the potential money that would have been spent on treatments that would otherwise not have existed with gene therapy. Singer would agree that it is morally right for the parents to provide this for their child if the option is available.

RESOURCE SHORTAGES LEAD TO AN INCREASE IN HEALTHCARE EXPENDITURES: 1970S OVERFISHING BY THE PERUVIAN FISHING INDUSTRY

In contrast, long-term effects of gene therapy on the general population could actually result in the completely opposite consequence of the expected outcome. This means that there would be an overall increase in total healthcare spending in the United States. Gene therapy would help reduce the risk of fatality and improve quality of life, especially for those who were genetically predisposed for impeding disease states. This means there will be an overall increase in the population size. When there is a growth in population, more resources are used in order to keep society going. In order to meet the demands of these resources, industries have to increase production which, according to John Grahame, a professor at Leeds University, would pose a greater risk for increasing pollution (24). Therefore, gene therapy could indirectly cause an increase in pollution. Not only would this lead to more costs in trying to remove these pollutants, but also healthcare costs due to health implications that would arise from the increase in pollutants.

Additionally, the shortage in food supply would force food industries to hasten production, which could cause a decrease in the quality and a further decrease in the quantity of the food. For example, in the Peruvian fishing industry in the 1970s, there was a shortage of fish as a consequence due to the overfishing by the fisherman. Although this was not caused by the increase in human population, there would be a similar effect since a large human population would lead to overfishing as well. This is crucial because “food supplies not only energy, but also the precursors for worn out protein parts and the vitamins and minerals which keep [the human body running]” (Grahame 25). Although the lower quality food may be able to provide the basic nutrients, like carbo-

hydrates, for immediate energy, there is greater possibility that they will lack the vitamins and proteins that the human body needs to acquire through food. This means that humans can have health conditions that arise from the malnutrition. Ultimately, health conditions would mean additional healthcare costs.

Additionally, gene therapy could increase total healthcare spending by exacerbating the shortage in nurses and causing a greater need for international recruiting of nurse professionals. Currently, the United States is facing a shortage of nurses. Due to the aging population, there is a large demand for nurses and the supply of domestic nurses is insufficient. Thus, according to Helen D. Arnold, the United States is “[continuing] to rely on foreign nurses,” and will continue to do so under the “Affordable Care Act [which increases] both international recruitment of nursing professionals and nurse migration to the United States” (1374). As previously mentioned, an increase in the population size is one of the guaranteed outcomes of gene therapy; thus, there will be an increase in the elder population size as well since people will live longer. Most of the time, elders end up in long term care facilities, run primarily by nurses (27). Thus, this increase in population of the elderly could create a shortage of nurses in the field. Recruiting more nurses for these facilities increases the health care costs because more national dollars have to be spent in order to have the facilities running efficiently and adequately. It is not the lengthened life itself that directly increases the costs of healthcare, but rather it is the problems that occur from living a longer life that could cause the increases. It’s important to note that this pattern is true for the general population as a whole but not individuals.

DENYING TREATMENT EQUATES TO KILLING: THE 1980S NETHERLANDS MODEL

The elimination of different kinds of diseases can have different outcomes in terms of healthcare costs. For example, it was found in the 1980s Netherlands demographic study that cancer and cardiovascular disease were the cause of 70% of deaths and responsible for 17% of healthcare costs (Bonneux 18). Also, age related diseases like cognitive decline and musculoskeletal disease were the cause of 2% of deaths and responsible for 35% of all costs (Bonneux 28). With the advent of gene therapy, these diseases could be categorized as preventable diseases.

Not only will gene therapy decrease the mortality but it will cover the overall cost sensitive issue by decreasing roughly over half of the health-care costs. Cost sensitive is the concept that every penny going into the health care spending is some kind of beneficial effect in treating the patient (Hiddemann 649). Still, it's important to emphasize the moral goal of new treatments, especially powerful ones like gene therapy. The goal of preventative treatment like gene therapy is to save people from suffering and dying from preventable diseases, not to save money. Singer would agree that although it is beneficial to save money, it should not be the main focus. If money can be saved without giving up an equal moral value such as saving someone's life, then one ought to do it.

It is still morally wrong if the use of gene therapy as a treatment is not approved. W. Hiddemann, who contributed to the development and discussion in "Evaluating a Patient's Request for Life-prolonging Treatment: An Ethical Framework," provides insight into when a treatment is and is not deemed appropriate. Obviously, if there is no beneficial gain from the treatment, "the physician should not offer the intervention" (648). One of the questions that should be answered before deciding to administer a treatment to a patient is: "Is there a chance that medical intervention will be effective in achieving the patient's treatment goal?" (Hiddemann 648). Clearly, a treatment that won't help patients improve or relieve their conditions should not be given arbitrarily. Once this is realized, the next step would be to find an alternative realistic treatment. However, when looking at gene therapy as the potential treatment method for a patient with genetic disorders, it is theoretically appropriate to offer it as the treatment option. This holds true assuming that gene therapy is the "end-all" cure for such diseases and the technique is perfected. Gene therapy could be the alternate treatment and possibly become the primary treatment for various diseases. Assuming these statements are true, Singer would agree that it is morally wrong to not treat the patient when it is guaranteed that the patient's life will be saved. The cost of healthcare should not matter because life is priceless. Once you lose that life, there's no turning back. Meanwhile, increased expenses in healthcare can always be reversed. New healthcare policies and changes in the healthcare system can be implemented to reduce healthcare costs, but the same life cannot be reproduced.

CONCLUSION

It is morally right to advocate the approval of gene therapy as the new preventative measure for all sorts of diseases and to incorporate this treatment method into the United States healthcare system. Gene therapy can either decrease or increase healthcare costs in various ways. It can decrease health care costs by eliminating some diseases through prevention. At the same time, however, health care costs can increase from the increasing population, particularly the elderly, and the effects of this demographic change. As one would expect, a powerful and new treatment like gene therapy can turn out to be fairly expensive at least initially. However, it is still moral to utilize gene therapy, and Singer would agree that one is giving up an important moral value if gene therapy is not considered.

It is important to note that the approval process for gene therapy will, not surprisingly, be very difficult. If and when gene therapy is approved for use as a medical treatment, there will be a lot of arguments against its utilization. Even if the technique is perfected with virtually no chance of error, there will be a lot of doubt within the public just as many of the radical discoveries and innovations have been doubted in the past. There will be environmental and religious protesters against gene therapy like there are today against stem cell research. Still, gene therapy has great potential to bring about an unimaginable change. It will be the gateway to the closest thing humans have come to achieving a utopian world in which there are no diseases or suffering.

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Psychological and Social Aspects of the Anti-Vaccine Movement

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Abstract: The development of the anti-vaccine movement in the liberal, educated, and affluent population has presented a significant challenge to the maintenance of public health. This movement has largely coincided with the transition away from a physician-centered healthcare system, towards a doctor-patient relationship in which the patients are given more authority over their medical decisions. With the increasing prevalence of anti-vaccine websites, parents are more likely to question the safety or necessity of vaccines and refuse vaccination for their children. As the frequency of vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks increases, it is imperative to examine how the anti-vaccine movement has continued its influence, in what areas the communication between scientific and non-scientific fields has failed, and how healthcare workers can bridge this gap in communication with vaccine hesitant parents.

INTRODUCTION

The invention of the vaccine marked a significant change in the medical field. No other form of healthcare has been able to entirely eliminate the incidence of viral diseases as effectively as vaccines. Through vaccine inoculation, horrible diseases that were often fatal just a century ago no longer exist, and the nightmare of the pre-vaccine era morbidity rate has receded to the background of human history and consciousness. However, the recent resurgence of vaccine preventable diseases in the United States demonstrates the dangers of forgetting the importance of inoculation against preventable diseases. Despite the overwhelming success of vaccine immunity and evidence of its safety, the anti-vaccine movement shows no sign of disappearing. Instead, it continues to pick up momentum, gaining support most rapidly in the affluent and educated population. Although the anti-vaccine movement manifests in both liberal and conservative factions, this paper will predominantly examine the development of this phenomenon in left-leaning groups, because the strongest opposition to vaccination tends to be centered in liberal communities (Millman 2). “Who’s Afraid of a Little Vaccine,” written by Jef-

frey Kluger, explains the vaccine skepticism seen in privileged communities as a result of the “master-of-the-universe phenomenon,” in which parents who have achieved a high social status come to believe that they control the risk factors that lead to misfortune (Kluger 42). In an age where patients are given more power in their healthcare decisions, these parents are part of a generation that believes they know better than their doctors. As a result, parents continually seek medical information through the Internet and other popular media, the very nature of which allows them to confirm their own bias against the efficacy and safety of vaccine inoculation. This, coupled with inadequate communication between scientific and non-scientific cultures, has caused and perpetuated an endemic mistrust in science in America’s affluent and educated left-leaning population that has prolonged the anti-vaccine movement. In order to combat the psychological and social aspects of the anti-vaccine movement, physicians must seek to engage parents in effective communication that appeals to their emotions, rather than their logic.

BACKGROUND

The introduction of the polio vaccine in the 1950s was met with such resounding enthusiasm that many scientists question how public opinion could have changed so much in the span of fifty years. A major factor in this change is the public’s decreased interactions with victims of preventable diseases. In the pre-vaccine period, the evidence of the horrors caused by vaccine preventable diseases was prevalent and tangible. Therefore, the public embraced vaccination easily in order to dispel the threat of these diseases. However, as the use of vaccines continues to increase and the number of vaccine-preventable diseases decreases, the memory of the threat begins to fade and the “vaccine becomes a victim of its own success and the vaccination coverage reaches a plateau” (Olpinski 382). Without the immediate, tangible threat of contracting a horrific disease, the number of people vaccinating their children stagnated and even began to decrease.

As people forgot about the aftermath of vaccine preventable diseases, their focus shifted to the safety and efficacy of the vaccine itself. Rather than feeling threatened by the diseases, people began to fear vaccination. Because the time of an infant’s first set of inoculation occurs around the same time as events or behaviors that may signal a severe

developmental disorder, parents mistook correlation for causation and blamed the vaccine. Although it did not mark the beginning of the anti-vaccination movement, “perhaps the most influential milestone in the development of the anti-vaccination movement and the most damaging for public health was an article by Dr. A. Wakefield...which suggested a link between the MMR vaccine and autism” (Olpinski 383). Although multiple scientific review boards have revealed no evidence of a causal relationship between the MMR vaccine and autism, parents have used Wakefield’s study to confirm their doubts about the safety of vaccines because it came from a “reputable” source. While it may seem that the existence of a small minority of anti-vaccine communities is insignificant to the overall health of the population, the consequences are often fatal. The theory behind an immunization program is the establishment of herd immunity, which means “vaccination rates must remain very high—up to 95% in some cases,” in order to protect the group of people in a population that cannot be vaccinated due to medical conditions (Kluger 41). The anti-vaccination movement therefore poses a very real threat to public health.

PATIENT EMPOWERMENT AND WEB 2.0

The ongoing trend of patient empowerment in the clinical setting has led to a generation of parents that feel they know better than their physician. Now more than ever, parents are beginning to question the authority of their doctors when it comes to vaccine immunizations. This trend can be explained through the master-of-the-universe phenomenon, which states, “the wealthier you are and the higher your education level, the more you lose sight of the randomness of misfortune and come to believe you can control variables and eliminate risk” (Kluger 42). As parents achieve a certain social status, they begin to feel they have all the resources necessary to provide for the health of their children. This creates an environment where people feel the need to obtain their own medical information before they hear the opinion of their physician. The emergence of Web 2.0 has facilitated this environment by giving parents access to online medical information.

The Internet is a platform where anyone is free to publish any kind of information on websites that are neither monitored nor verified for accuracy. As a result, these parents “feel uniquely qualified to

advocate for or against a recommended treatment or vaccine and may believe... [they are] better informed than... [their] physicians” (Bean 1878). The abundance of anti-vaccination websites enables people who oppose vaccines to spread their message quickly and effectively. More importantly, these websites provide vaccine skeptics an online community of people with beliefs that coincide with their own. The Internet’s ability to appeal to confirmation bias is particularly important to the proliferation of anti-vaccine skepticism. Through mass media, people “tend to select (confirmation bias) and interpret (assimilation bias) information in ways that confirm their existing beliefs” (Mikulak 208). Confirmation bias is the tendency for people to filter out information that contrasts their preexisting ideas, while assimilation bias is the tendency to construe information in such a way that it exclusively strengthens preexisting ideas. Therefore, even those that are just slightly skeptical of the efficacy of vaccination are able to reinforce these doubts as beliefs. With this evidence in hand, parents feel they know more than their physician and are better equipped to make medical decisions for their children. However, now that patients have more resources to form opinions about their medical treatment, the extent of individual responsibility must also be taken into consideration.

The transition from a physician-centered decision-making model to one in which the patient directs the course of treatment must necessarily be accompanied by an increase in patient responsibility. Outside of the clinical setting, patients must study the information relevant to their condition in order to understand their own preferences and exercise their clinical empowerment. In an ideal patient-physician relationship, “the more the patient learns, deliberates, reflects, and reacts, the less likely a preference misdiagnosis becomes” (Mulley 2). In a shared-decision making environment, as proposed by Mulley, it becomes the patient’s responsibility to engage in their own health decisions by researching treatment options and understanding their own preferences. As previously discussed, parents from left-leaning communities are indeed taking their health and their children’s health into their own hands. However, what these people fail to take into account is the responsibility that they have to the maintenance of public health. As patient empowerment increases, “the modern view of public health cannot be separated from the development of individual responsibility principle for health pro-

tection” (Tafuri 4862). Because the health choices of a single person can affect everyone around them, an individual responsibility principle is necessary to hold individuals accountable for the maintenance of public health. When parents choose not to have their children vaccinated, they risk exposing the disease to those who are unable to receive the vaccine and are only protected through the maintenance of herd immunity. Although these parents are exercising their right to refuse vaccination based on philosophical differences, in doing so they are putting the rest of the population at risk. Therefore, a responsibility to maintain public health, specifically through herd immunity, should be emphasized in the shift towards patient empowerment in the clinical setting.

SCIENCE MISTRUST AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The cultural gap between scientific and non-scientific cultures has generated a lack of effective communication between the two groups. Attempts at science communication are usually based on the deficit model, which assumes that the general population does not possess sufficient information to understand science concepts. While this may be true, “many science communication scholars agree that the deficit model is too simplistic because it fails to account for people’s attitudes, values, and experiences, or for their cognitive biases” (Mikulak 205). As discussed previously, parents tend to rely on online medical information because they are able to find a community of people that share their same values and beliefs. Therefore, they are able to confirm their doubts about the efficacy of vaccines. Using scientific rationale to establish communication between scientific and non-scientific cultures is not only fundamentally ineffective, it also perpetuates a public mistrust of science. This mistrust manifests in the form of vaccine conspiracy theories. Anti-vaccine activists accuse the government of using vaccines as “profit centers for greedy doctors and Big Pharma, and... keeping the dangers quiet” (Kluger 42). Parents fear that the people promoting vaccines are doing so without the best interests of their children in mind. For this reason, this endemic mistrust in science can only be resolved through the establishment of an open dialogue between scientific and non-scientific cultures. The most effective way of diminishing the cultural gap between these two groups is through public engagement. Therefore, “effective public engagement must take into account the personal characteristics that are relevant to

people including their ‘values, interests, and worldviews’” (Mikulak 212). In the case of vaccines, parents are emotionally invested in the health of their children, and therefore must be persuaded that vaccine inoculation is the best option for their child’s health. Therefore, adherence to the deficit model is an ineffective method of conducting science communication and persuading parents because it fails to engage them in the vaccine conversation.

Rather than relying on the deficit model to promote public understanding of science, people must be presented information in a format that appeals to them. While pro-vaccine activists tend to use science-based resources in order to persuade parents, vaccine opponents frequently appeal to emotion, specifically fear, in order to reinforce pre-existing skepticisms. However, an “increasingly heightened role of expert testimony on anti-vaccine websites, especially from alleged physicians,” suggests that parents are indeed persuaded by the presence of expert advice (Bean 1878). Therefore, in order to create a dialogue between parents and scientific culture, the solution of public engagement must be applied to the healthcare setting. While it is true that patient empowerment may have the negative effect of allowing parents to think that they know better than their doctor, engaging patients also creates a trusting environment during patient-physician interactions. Patient engagement is necessary because various studies have shown the “relationship between parents and HCWs [healthcare workers] as the most important feature to determine the favour to their children’s vaccination” (Tafari 4862). Effective communication between physicians and parents allows healthcare workers to understand the reservation that parents may have about vaccines. Physicians often underestimate the power of anecdotal information and overestimate the power of science-based resources. In this way, a lot can be learned from examining the methods used by anti-vaccine web content and why they have been so effective, despite the lack of evidence based claims. The use of personal stories is such a powerful tool of persuasion because they are impervious to fact checking and they appeal to the emotions of parents. However, the use of anecdotal information is not limited to anti-vaccine activists. Physicians can effectively engage parents by “utilizing anecdote and storytelling, along with reliable, fact-based vaccine information, to reach parents in the exam room and beyond” (Shelby 1799). Healthcare workers should talk

about cases of vaccine-preventable disease because it reassures parents that they are doing what is in the best interest of their child. Additionally, doctors have the opportunity to suggest trusted online sources that parents can use as supplementary support tools. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the healthcare worker to understand the bias parents may have towards vaccines, and decrease the influence of anti-vaccination media by sharing personal stories and providing appropriate sources of information. Through these methods, medical professionals can engage vaccine-hesitant parents in a vaccine conversation.

PARENTAL REFUSALS AND PATIENT DISMISSAL

In cases where physicians are presented with strong parental refusal of vaccines, some doctors prefer to end the patient-physician relationship and dismiss the family from his or her care rather than continuing to engage the parents. Physicians have justified this course of action for several reasons. One of the most compelling reasons for doctors and adherents of the immunization program is that physicians have a “responsibility to protect other patients in the practice from the risk of unvaccinated children seated in a waiting room” (Buttenheim 1819). Therefore, by dismissing the patient from his or her care, the children of parents that follow the vaccination program will not be exposed to the unvaccinated child. This decision also allows the parents to seek health care professionals that are more sympathetic to their concerns, and to perhaps establish a more accommodating patient-physician relationship. The option of patient dismissal stems from the complexity of the doctor’s position when confronted with a parent who is reluctant to immunize. In an article by Dr. Douglas Opel, doctors respond to a hypothetical situation in which the parents of a 6-month-old child continue to refuse vaccination, despite the physician’s attempts to encourage immunization. While the responses were varied from both sides of the spectrum, one doctor succinctly replied that “this case illustrates the classic ethical tension in public health: weighing the competing values of individual choice and common good” (Opel 527). In dismissing parents who refuse vaccination from their care, doctors are acting out of concern for their responsibility to maintain public health. While this reasoning for the termination of the patient-physician relationship may be based on valid concerns, it can also have detrimental effects on public health that doc-

tors may not have considered. Although many physicians advocate for a zero-tolerance policy because it limits the exposure of vaccine adherents to unvaccinated children, the practice of dismissing vaccine-hesitant parents negatively affects the health of the community. If more doctors were to become intolerant of parental refusal of vaccines “hesitant children become increasingly clustered in a small number of practices and... the hesitant parents are unable to find a practice that will accept their children” (Buttenheim 1821). By grouping a large amount of the intentionally unvaccinated children into a single practice, the risk of exposure to disease is greatly increased both inside and outside of the practice. Moreover, parents may be unable to find a practice that is willing to provide pediatric care to their child at all. In this scenario, not only is the health of the child put at risk, but healthcare professionals also lose the ability to account for, and monitor, the population of unvaccinated children. Therefore, although the intentions behind a zero-tolerance policy towards vaccination are to maintain the health of the community, dismissing families who choose not to vaccinate their children actually increases the chance of vaccine preventable diseases spreading.

This raises the question of how healthcare professionals should proceed to provide care for children when their parents refuse vaccination. In an ideal world, all parents would agree to vaccinate their children and they would work in harmony with physicians to decide the course of medical care for their child. However, because parents must first be consulted for permission before children receive any form of healthcare, “physicians may need to tolerate decisions they disagree with if those decisions are not likely to be harmful to the child” (Diekema). As previously discussed, entirely dismissing patients from a physician’s care is counterproductive in maintaining overall public health. Furthermore, by dismissing vaccine refusal patients, physicians forego any opportunities to persuade the parents of the safety and efficacy of vaccines. Additionally, and even more alarming, is the fact that “if the family seeks care from a physician more sympathetic to their position, there is a lower likelihood of an ongoing conversation regarding vaccine promotion to occur” (Opel 528). Rather than patient dismissal, it would be more efficacious for the patient’s health and pro-vaccine activists to continue to engage the patient in the healthcare setting.

Although parents may have reservations about vaccinations,

by allowing the family to stay in their care, physicians set a precedent by letting the parents know that they respect their feelings about their children's health care. Once parents are reassured that their physicians understand where they are coming from, there is room for a trusting patient-doctor relationship to form where parents can feel free to ask questions and their doctor is able to lead an open discussion about the vaccination debate. Physicians should approach the topic of vaccination from the perspective of a concerned parent in order to better understand reservations towards child vaccination. As shown in the previous section, this communication can be established through the use of anecdotes that describe situations in which unvaccinated children suffered unnecessarily. Many doctors share a personal experience that forces parents to reevaluate their opinions about vaccines. This approach has been utilized successfully by Dr. Wendy Sue Swanson and Dr. Lara Zibners, both of whom are able to "speak to parents as a parent who just happens to be a pediatrician, reminding vaccine-hesitant parents that... they have the same concerns" (Shelby 1799). Approaching parents in this manner may force them to reconsider their anti-vaccine views if a fellow parent is willing to vaccinate. Although the doctor cannot force the parents to accept vaccination, he or she can continue to promote immunization at every appointment to prevent the parents from thinking that the doctor's accommodation means that vaccines are actually not necessary. By choosing to continue as a healthcare provider for unvaccinated children, vaccine-refusal parents are placed in the presence of parents that are pro-vaccination. Sometimes parents are more open to listening to information when it comes from other parents, who, like themselves, understand their concerns when it comes to making healthcare decisions for children. By using pro-vaccine parents as vaccine ambassadors, "powerful peer-to-peer communication can take place under the auspices of a healthcare setting" (Shelby 1799). Dismissing parents who refuse vaccination clumps them together into practices that may not advocate for the benefits and necessity of vaccination. Being clustered into an environment of like-minded people also propagates the opportunity for confirmation bias, further perpetuating the existence of the anti-vaccine movement. In order to prevent the spread of anti-vaccination views among parents, it is preferential for doctors to continue to engage vaccine hesitant and vaccine refusal parents in a healthcare setting where

they can be exposed to pro-vaccination attitudes.

CONCLUSION

In order to understand how the anti-vaccination movement has persisted for so long in the educated and affluent population despite the abundance of contradictory evidence, it is necessary to examine its psychological and social influences. The new trend of patient empowerment in a healthcare setting, along with the emergence of Web 2.0, has facilitated an environment where parents feel they are qualified to question the authority of their physician. The accessibility and narrative-based evidence of anti-vaccination websites allows parents to use confirmation bias to solidify their preexisting beliefs. However, this increase in patient empowerment must be tempered by an increased responsibility for the maintenance of public health, especially in the case of vaccines, which rely on the preservation of herd immunity in order to successfully combat disease. Although it may seem logical for physicians to dismiss vaccine refusal parents on the grounds that they put the health of other children in the practice and the general public at risk, ceasing to provide care for intentionally unvaccinated children will actually negatively affect overall public health. In either case, the opportunity for the spread and exposure of vaccine preventable diseases is greatly increased. Therefore, physicians should continue with a model of patient engagement by appealing to the parents' sentiments and traversing the cultural gap that exists between scientific and non-scientific cultures. Rather than simply providing parents with evidence-based information that perpetuates a public mistrust of science, doctors must also utilize anecdotes and storytelling to build a trusting relationship and reassure the parents that their child's best interest is the top priority. In this way, effective communication can be established that persuades parents to immunize their children, while also addressing the psychological and social sources of the anti-vaccine movement.

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Top Predators: The Cheetah: *Acinonyx Jubatus*

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Abstract: Acinonyx jubatus is easily recognizable with tawny, black spotted fur and distinct tear-drop shaped eye markings. Even though cheetahs are such effective hunters, due to human competition reducing their prey base and human misconceptions, the elegant feline has become increasingly endangered. Because nature has made cheetahs such picky eaters, their numbers are dwindling as humans sell and eat the prey, known as bushmeat, which is primarily hunted by the cheetah. People misunderstand carnivore intentions, so their willingness to save the big cats decreases. This can be remedied through conservation education focused primarily towards children. If people consider cheetahs an asset that will bring them revenue, then conservation efforts can be more easily mobilized.

“If there are: 100,000,000 different species on Earth and the extinction rate is just 0.01%/year, at least 10,000 species go extinct every year.”

-wwf.org

INTRODUCTION

Over the last one hundred years globally, cheetah populations have declined from 100,000 individuals in 1900 to less than 12,000 today (defender.org). The order Carnivora boasts many carnivorous species, but the Felidae family carnivores, or the cats, are some of the best adapted to a carnivorous lifestyle. Even among this family, cheetahs are unique, resembling small cats and canines more than the other big cats of Africa. Easily recognizable with tawny, black spotted fur and distinct teardrop shaped eye markings, cheetahs have physical and behavioral adaptations that make them exceptional hunters. Considered one of the major three African cats, along with leopards and lions, the *Acinonyx jubatus* shows exaggerated anatomical modifications for speed. Unfortunately, human-cheetah conflicts threaten the survival rate of one of the most distinctive predators in the world.

Cheetahs are found in countries throughout Africa and parts of Asia. In approximately 30 countries, cheetahs are considered either vulnerable or endangered as defined by the World Conservation Union

and the Center for International Trade in Endangered Species. Thirteen countries have declared this animal extinct in the last 40 years (cheetah.org). Many remaining cheetah populations exist in eastern Africa, but their numbers are declining due to habitat loss and competition for resources. This is alarming because predators are major parts of the food web that regulate the ecosystem by a process called a “trophic cascade” (predatordefense.org). When cheetahs prey on select ungulates, or hooved mammals, they help maintain plant populations, allowing many more species to exploit the habitat. The presence of top predators, considered umbrella species, indicates a healthy ecosystem that can provide numerous ecosystem services for humans (predatordefense.org). Cheetahs also promote ecotourism, which is helpful to the economies in the African countries.

Adaptations for rapidity are prevalent throughout the cheetah skeleton, emphasizing the idea that form matches function. The question this paper seeks to answer is: “What is the correlation between the anatomy of the cheetah and its status as an endangered species?” A cheetah’s speed is an essential part of this cat’s hunting strategy and every aspect of the cheetah’s anatomy plays a part in the prey decision. Although Africa has many species to offer as food, only a few animals make the cut for the cheetahs. Even though cheetahs are such effective hunters, due to human competition reducing their prey base and human misconceptions, the elegant feline has become increasingly endangered.

THEORETICAL FRAME

Being a carnivore, meat is harder to obtain than grass, so felids¹ need the right adaptations to find their prey without being spotted. Prey are usually “highly mobile, armed with teeth, horns, antlers... to defend” themselves and are often bigger than their hunters (Hunter, 2009). In general, any cat’s physical characteristics can enhance its ability to subdue its meal efficiently. In comparison to other carnivores, cats have shorter faces: the cheetah has a “foreshortened face and jaw to reduce weight... [And] [is] proportionately [the] smallest canine of all large cats” (Hunter, 2009). Consequently, cheetahs tend to stalk medium sized prey with slim necks and have the smallest prey selection of the three large cats of Africa.

Since all cats are opportunists, they kill even when they are not

hungry, and many felines participate in surplus killing in artificial circumstances (like livestock herding). Unfortunately, large carnivores “are commonly met with hostility, fear, and, ultimately, persecution (Berg, 2001; Sillero-Zubiri&Laurenson, 2001; Woodroffe, 2000)” (Marker and Dickman, 2004). This leads to human-cheetah tensions. Cheetahs hunt in the bushveld, a sub-tropical woodland ecoregion of Southern Africa, where prey species are abundant due to excellent grazing conditions. Unluckily, farmers use this environment for their livestock and, in the process, “isolate cheetah’s native prey, water, shelter and play trees with farmland” (Hughes, 2013). Based on this, conservation needs to be a multifaceted human approach. Conservation, for any animal, “depends on the ability of governments to integrate the needs of biodiversity conservation with the needs of people” (Winterbach et al., 2012). Research and studies focusing on the cheetah itself have been completed and now is the time to “address the human dimension of this complex situation” (Marker and Dickman, 2004).

To explore the correlation between the cheetah’s’ anatomy and its endangered species status, this paper examines the main hunting strategy of *Acinonyx jubatus* and the level of success this technique provides. Next, physical adaptations that contribute to the speed of the cheetah in relation to the best target prey are discussed. This section is followed by a discussion of the prey preferences of this cat in relation to conservation. Finally, the analysis shifts to focus on the reasons cheetahs are endangered, and then to a possible solution to the human/cheetah conflicts, namely, education.

HUNTING BEHAVIOR AND SUCCESS

A cheetah’s speed and acceleration are essential parts of this cat’s hunting strategy, making them unique from all other African top predators. By employing this technique of speed, cheetahs have built up a prey base that is most vulnerable to their rapid attacks. In general, cheetahs have evolved two main strategies to subdue their prey: prolonged endurance combined with the ability to stalk an individual animal and “rapid acceleration combined with strength and maneuverability” (Bailey, Myatt, and Wilson, 2013). As a result of its physical adaptations, *Acinonyx jubatus* can launch high-speed attacks to catch their prey. Similar to dogs, cheetahs rely on pursuit rather than ambush to successfully ob-

tain a meal (Russell and Bryant, 2001). Even though a cheetah's hunting technique is different, it still relies on some basic cat-like habits before the running. For example, this cat tends to stalk its prey to reduce the distance (to about 30m) before launching into a chase because they are only slightly faster than their food (Hunter, 2009). This behavior can increase the likelihood that the hunt will be fruitful.

Another factor that increases success of a hunt is cooperation, which "depend[s] partly on the species' locomotor abilities and habitat" (Bailey et al., 2013). A cheetah has the capabilities to carry out an attack on its own because its high-speed hunting strategy is well evolved for individual success. Also, "their ability to reach high top speeds means they can launch a successful ...attack from further away... [Which] may reduce the benefits of cooperating for the purpose of intercepting fleeing prey" (Bailey et al., 2013). In general, cheetahs do not cooperate to the same degree as African cats, like lions. Even though their hunting strategy works well, it's not enough. Once a cheetah catches its prey, other animals are likely to steal it. If cheetahs hunted in groups, they would be more intimidating in the eyes of such scavengers and they wouldn't have to spend so much energy looking for food. Having plenty of food while expending less energy could strengthen the cheetah population.

In addition, habitat can decrease the amount of failed hunts. Cheetahs live in habitats ranging from desert, to grassland, to savanna (Eaton, 1970). More densely vegetated habitats support a greater number of grazing ungulates, the preferred prey of cheetahs, providing more opportunities to the cat. In one study, "...20% of runs occurring in the open grasslands were identified as successful hunts, compared with 31% of runs in dense cover" (Wilson et al., 2013). The results were not significant and meant that cheetahs could hunt successfully in many kinds of habitats. Also, cheetahs gain more camouflage where there is more vegetation, greatly decreasing the possibility of detection (Bailey et al., 2013). Even dense plant growth does not significantly slow down a cheetah's chase speed. The number of possible targets, combined with less risk of discovery, increases the chance that a cheetah will catch a meal. Furthermore, "cheetahs have a higher hunting success on herds of less than 30 individuals" (Eaton, 1974). Larger herds are more likely to recognize a predator in their midst from farther away. So as herd size increases, the

1. Felidae is the family of cats. A member of this family is called a felid.

hunting success of the cat decreases.

Despite the fact that almost 50 percent of cheetah pursuits end in a kill, cheetahs cannot always enjoy the fruits of their labor (Hilborn et al. 2012). Competition is rampant in a cheetah's life. After such energy expenditure, it may become hard for a cheetah to defend its newly captured prey. Unfortunately, cheetahs "lose up to 12% of kills to kleptoparasites², particularly lion[s]...and spotted hyena[s]" (Bailey et al., 2013). Due to this, the fast cat is a nervous feeder that devours its food before competition arrives. Cheetahs tend to hunt during the hottest part of the day so other predators cannot chase them from their food, but also because they have many preferred prey species in common with other predators. Being a diurnal hunter ensures that other large predators will remain inactive and pose less of a threat to the weaker cheetah who cannot defend itself due to a relatively small body mass and light skeletal framework. If a cheetah can barely defend itself against other big cats, there is little chance of it surviving human persecution. In this case, the hunter becomes the hunted as humans begin to encroach upon cheetah territory and deplete its main food supply.

PHYSICAL ADAPTATIONS

Every aspect of the cheetah's anatomy plays a part in deciding which animals make the best, most efficient meal. Every predator has a target prey base because over time, through evolution and natural selection, only certain species were vulnerable enough to be targeted. The predators ended up retaining only the best features that would most often get them the meal. The next few pages describe the most glaring adaptations that allow *Acinonyx jubatus* to successfully bring down medium sized prey, like gazelles and impalas.

SKULL

Compared to other major carnivore groups, such as canids, felids are heavier in weight to accommodate more muscle power. As a result, most cats have a harder time accelerating to a run. The cheetah is an outlier with lighter body weight and is therefore capable of reaching incredible speeds (Russell and Bryant, 2001). *Acinonyx jubatus*' small skull (indicative of smaller cats) contributes to its light skeleton. This light skeleton is essential to the ability of the cheetah to reach high speeds. The jaw

area is especially reduced in the cheetah, and the canine teeth are not very large, so the force of the killing bite is less powerful due to “much lower BFQs³ [at the canine tips] than other species...” that eat medium sized prey “in accord with its domed, rather gracile skull and weak muscle attachment sites” (Christiansen and Wroe, 2007). This means that cheetahs have a very specific range of prey that they can take down. For example, while a crowd of lions may be able to take down an elephant with thick skin, cheetah canines and bite force are too small. They are limited to animals with long, slender necks.

LIMBS, MUSCLES, AND CLAWS

Felines commonly have light and long legs that make them faster by covering more distance with longer strides during a run. In addition to being digitigrades⁴, cats have lengthened foot bones that contribute to the elongation of the limbs. The limbs themselves are powerfully built with muscles to catapult the cheetah forward while it is chasing prey at 60-70 mph. In addition to body mass being low, the hindlimb muscles of a cheetah are highly developed to give it the power to reach top speeds. As a result, speed and maneuverability are enhanced (Hudson et al., 2011). The cheetah needs the ability to maneuver while running because its prey has developed efficient techniques to evade capture through jumping and quick turns. The cheetah’s muscle adaptations counteract each other to maximize acceleration, while reducing the risk of injury, during a hunt. Related to maneuverability and stability during a chase is the degree of retraction of the claws. A cheetah’s “claws and retractile mechanism ... differ from those of other felids.. [And] the claws on digits 2-5 are straighter, thicker and more elongated” (Russell and Bryant, 2001). In other words, cheetahs do not have hyper-retractable claws. In addition, the digital pads on a cheetah’s paws “are harder, more pointed and more ridged than those of other felids” (Bryant and Russell, 2001). These features are necessary to maintain traction when running so the cat does not lose balance as it’s coursing after the prey. Additionally, claws are useful in bringing down prey: a cheetah uses its dew claw (the “thumb” claw located higher than the other four claws) to hook the prey, thereby knocking it off balance, and finally administers the killing bite.

2. An animal that steals the food of others; does not catch the prey itself

PREY PREFERENCES

Although many prey species are available in vast hunting territories of the cheetah, only a select few have the privilege of becoming targets for this fast cat. One study recorded 3,909 kills in which “Impala were killed by cheetah in 26 out of 27 studies where they were present, while blesbok (6 out of 6 studies), kudu (18/19), steenbok (7/8), common duiker, Thomson’s gazelle and springbok (8/9 for each) and hartebeest (17/19) were also commonly taken” (Hayward et al., 2006). Every single one of these ungulates has thin necks, perfect for cheetahs to prey on. Overall, *Acinonyx jubatus* does not have the strength to subdue beasts greater than 56 kg (Hayward et al., 2006). Another reason these animals might be favored is because they are so abundant. It would be inefficient for a cheetah to go out of its way and hunt anything else. Of course the energy expenditure of the actual chase is taxing, but evolution has ensured that the hunting technique of the cheetah will be successful more often than not. Evidence for this is in the numbers: 40-50% of all hunts end in kills (Bailey et al., 2013).

Because nature has made cheetahs such picky eaters, it’s no surprise that their numbers are dwindling as humans sell and eat the prey that is primarily hunted by cheetahs. Uniqueness is often considered a good trait, but in the human dominated world, this specialization is hurting the cheetah. When access to energetically favorable prey species decreases, so do cheetah populations. Not only is this harmful to the cat’s existence, but it is dangerous to human populations. Carnivores maintain a balance within an ecosystem by keeping herd populations in check so they do not overgraze and cause habitat degradation. The loss of carnivores could eventually end poorly for the African farming communities in the cheetah’s natural range: no sustainable land to farm means no food to eat. No food means people will turn evermore toward bushmeat. Bushmeat refers to “all wildlife species, including threatened and endangered, used for meat” (Bushmeat.org). Unfortunately, bushmeat hunting is a serious threat to conservation in African countries where the cheetah resides. Much of the land was settled by subsistence farmers who have relied on bushmeat as an important source of protein,

3. Bite Force Quotient- regression of the quotient of an animal’s bite force divided by body mass

4. Digitigrades are animals that walk on their toes. In contrast, plantigrades walk flat on their feet (e.g. humans).

even though this form of hunting is illegal. When there is political instability, there is also economic instability and poverty-stricken communities have nowhere else to turn (Lindsey et al., 2009). Conveniently, bushmeat is abundant and is a source of extra income for these farmers. In addition, hunting bushmeat is cheaper than attempting to raise livestock. However, many people are unaware of the damage caused on wildlife. The activity has become so widespread that in a span of nine years in the “Savé Valley Conservancy 10,520 illegal hunting incidents were recorded, 84,396 wire snares removed, 4,148 hunters caught, 2,126 hunting dogs eliminated and at least 6,454 wild animals killed” (Lindsey et al., 2009). Snares are especially dangerous because unsuspecting, unintended animals fall victim and are left to die. This ends up being a wasteful and “inefficient use of wildlife resource” (Lindsey et al., 2009). Eventually, the uncontrolled hunting of wild ungulates for basic sustenance will lead to the decline of these populations, and humans will once again face hunger. But this time, no resources will remain to resolve the problem. In short, people might be creating a vicious cycle that could lead to their own demise.

CONSERVATION: COMPETITION WITH HUMANS

If cheetahs are such efficient hunters, then why are they so endangered? Their plight, unsurprisingly, is in part due to competition with humans. Dr. Laurie Marker, founder and executive director of the Cheetah Conservation Fund, conducted a study on Namibian farmlands and found that cheetah populations have diminished “...due to habitat fragmentation from human development, depletion of natural prey base thanks to agricultural growth, and conflict with humans for livestock and farmed game” (Marker and Dickman, 2004). The growth of farming communities means that people are downsizing the spaces in which cheetah can hunt by increasing their crop area. At the same time, they augment human-wildlife conflict through bushmeat hunting. Wildlife populations have decreased significantly on the settled properties; for example, “recorded losses corresponded to the removal of 24.6 kg mammalian biomass per km² during 2007” (Lindsey et al., 2009). This amount, multiplied by 10,021,667 km² (1/3 of the African continent’s area), means 246,533,008 kg of mammalian biomass might have been destroyed in 2007 alone.

When people hunt, they do not target a specific species. Instead, they search until they find an animal worth killing. The rarer the species, the more profitable it is, and the probability of a hunter shooting it is increased. Although cheetahs are not killed directly for meat, its prey base is targeted: “Duikers ... are [one of] the most commonly hunted groups of animals in the forest...numerically and in terms of biomass” (bushmeat.org). Also, another study recorded “impala populations declined by 0.2 and 38.2% during 2007–2008 in the north and south” of the Savé Valley Conservancy of Zimbabwe (Lindsey et al., 2006). Both of these animal populations are declining rapidly meaning cheetahs are less likely to catch their preferred prey.

The rural African communities rely on bushmeat because they have nowhere else to turn. The cheetah population loss is the unintended effect of a survival strategy employed by people who lack the education and resources to lead healthy lives. Perhaps one way to decrease amounts of bushmeat hunting is to teach these communities sustainable farming practices. If people are no longer dying from hunger, they will not need the extra protein supplied by the bushmeat. Full people are healthier and happier, and therefore might be less likely to blame cheetahs for their financial hardships. In times of difficulty, it is human nature to seek out a scapegoat, and this burden has fallen upon the cheetahs.

STOPPING PERSECUTION THROUGH EDUCATION

Most rural people do not understand the cheetah as a predator and like so many “large carnivores occurring on private land, [they] are commonly met with hostility, fear, and, ultimately, persecution” (Marker and Dickman, 2004). Since people misunderstand carnivore intentions, the willingness to save the big cats decreases. Worse, “the loss of large carnivores in an ecosystem can result in mesopredator release of smaller carnivore species... [that can] exacerbate or alter the scope of local human–carnivore conflict” (Winterbach et al., 2012). People are creating a cycle of economic hardships by continuing to persecute the *Acinonyx jubatus*. When the population of a large predator, like the cheetah, declines, there is an increase in smaller predators, which results in increased competition for the same prey with humans as well. Therefore, people will have difficulty finding inexpensive food.

The most important tool for cheetah preservation is “...educa-

tion—locally, nationally, and internationally” (Marker, 2003). Some communities are unaware of the cheetah’s plight and do not realize the global importance of this species’ protection. More imperative, they don’t know what they can do to help the situation. It is necessary to start the process from an early age. By educating young children, key issues in the perception of cheetahs can be pinpointed. In one study, perceptions of school children of Namibia were explored. There were two focus groups: one of indigenous Namibians whose community was dominated by goat, sheep, cattle farming, and farming, and another from north-western Namibia comprised of 12-13 year olds who farmed mostly for personal consumption. The latter had a large population of big predators and many families were considered rural poor. These young people were observed during the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) education program in which children got up close and personal with cheetahs. Their stories (written, drawn, and oral) were then divided into three groups: perceptions of cheetahs based on their aesthetic qualities, as a tourist attraction, and on their role as a predator (Hughes, 2013).

On the whole, the education program was effective in delivering positive views of cheetahs. Many kids applied the words “...‘beautiful’ or ‘pretty,’” and “vibrant colors were used and heavily laid into the paper” (Hughes, 2013). Additionally, drawings showed the cheetah smiling. This is a good sign that getting close to cheetahs can develop better attitudes towards them. If cheetahs look less threatening to children, they might be more inclined to saving them. The main issue with the study is that these were immediate perceptions that were not monitored long term. It is possible that children might, over time, develop animosity towards the cat as they begin to engage in farming practices with their families. Also, “perceptions of cheetahs as a tourist attraction emerged [and]...some stories demonstrated awareness that income can be generated from tourism activities” (Hughes, 2013). In addition, centers have been set up throughout Africa to help perform research and education tasks, while at the same time generating revenue. The Cheetah Conservation Fund actually generates “a total economic impact of US \$4.13 million per year” (Edwards and Thompson, 2010). In addition to revenue, the center provides nearly 200 jobs in areas that are considered rural poor (Edwards et al., 2010). This new source of income may encourage communities to stay away from bushmeat, as it would no longer

be the only supply of wealth. If more research centers are set up, more people can be educated about the dangers facing *Acinonyx jubatus*.

Finally, children talked about the physical characteristics of cheetahs by using the words “‘speed,’ ‘fast,’ and ‘prey’” (Hughes, 2013). Their images were brightly colored and they understood the role of the cheetah as a predator. For example, many of the kids knew that the cat could eat their livestock, but they did not “indicate fear of or hostility towards cheetahs” (Hughes, 2013). These views were characteristic of Group B, which has much more interaction with large predators than Group A. This is a positive sign because these are the main communities that CCF is trying to target, since they come in most contact with cheetahs. If children understand the role of a predator in the ecosystem, then they might not lash out against them. One very interesting sign that cheetahs are held in high regard is that a lot of the children viewed leopards more negatively than cheetahs (Hughes, 2013). This sounds excellent for cheetah conservation because the myth that cheetahs are responsible for livestock depredation is being erased. Unfortunately, in politically unstable countries, it might be easier to take out frustration on a cat because the help from the government is so out of reach. It is easy to kill a cat, especially when it is a lightweight, already endangered one. The cheetah’s physical adaptations for hunting success results in a vulnerability to human persecution. This has caused a continuous decline in the cheetah population.

CONCLUSION

Partly due to the physical limitations of the cheetah, prey options are limited. There is an evolutionary trade-off between gaining the ability to run fast and the size of prey the animal is able to capture. Since the cheetah skull is small in size, a contribution to overall skeletal lightness, the canines are also reduced. This results in the slender African cat preferring to kill prey with slim necks because it requires less of a bite force. Their mouths can fit around the neck to make the killing bite. Since options are limited based on efficiency, cheetahs have a difficult time adjusting to the reduced populations of preferred ungulates because anything else will be too difficult to subdue.

As previously mentioned, a food web is complicated and every tiny detail plays a part in the wellbeing of the ecosystem. Human hunt-

ing of the preferred prey of *Acinonyx jubatus* creates a chain reaction that affects every animal on the savannah. More bushmeat for people means less prey strongholds for cheetah. Also, humans tend to hunt the abundant ungulates that cheetah prefer to eat, so not only is there competition, but also a general decline in ungulate populations. There is simply not enough to go around. In addition, poor animal husbandry practices create competition for vegetation that directly affects ungulate herd populations. Even if ungulates are not actively pursued, the contest for resources is just as harmful.

Humans, who are omnivores, are versatile and should seek other equally satisfying forms of nutrition. Cheetahs are specialist hunters who have adaptations meant only for medium sized, slim-necked prey. To send the cheetah off in search of a new prey base is sending the cat off to extinction. Evolution is not fast enough to engineer *Acinonyx jubatus* into a newly specialized hunter based on present conditions. Alas, the once successful cheetah is on the imminent path to extinction.

Fortunately, there is a glimmer of hope: the future of cheetahs depends on the education of African children today. These children will grow up to run the family farms and they are the ones who need to understand the importance of the cat from economic and conservation standpoints. The Hughes study suggests a positive image of the cat predominates in the minds of African children (Hughes, 2013). There is awe at the predator status of the cheetah and knowledge that this cat can be economically beneficial. By learning that *Acinonyx jubatus* is essential to the ecosystem, as well as a possible source of income, communities may rally to save the endangered cat.

Even though saving the cheetah is an important goal, due to increasing human populations in these African regions, the more crucial goal should be finding an effective living arrangement between predator and human. If people consider cheetahs an asset that will bring them revenue, then conservation efforts can be more easily mobilized. As with any project, the want to preserve a creature is the most important part of the process of mobilization.

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Development and Rehabilitation of the Modern Day Feral Child

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Abstract: This research looks at the psychological development of feral children and the possibility that they may be reintegrated into society. To analyze the effects of isolation, the first five stages of Erik H. Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development were applied to the case studies of Genie and Danielle Lierow. The cases show that after the children were placed in a safe environment, progress was steady but eventually came to a standstill. Complete reintegration into society appears unlikely; however, the ability to learn to use nonverbal communication within adoptive families is a reality. After studying the children psychologically, there is opportunity for further research to look at how isolation affects the neural pathways of the brain.

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In popular culture, feral children are depicted in films such as *Tarzan* and *The Jungle Book*. Both main characters, Tarzan and Mowgli, are reared in separation from civilization with the aid of talking animals. While this depiction is unrealistic, it is also problematic due to the romanticizing of the nature of the isolated child. When feral children are romanticized, they become fantastic mythological creatures that seem unreal. The grim reality is that children around the world are reportedly raised in similar conditions; however, these children are significantly underdeveloped in comparison to Tarzan and Mowgli. According to the *Salem Press Encyclopedia*, "A feral child is a child who from an early age has lived for an extended period in isolation from human contact. As a result of this isolation, feral children are typically impaired or completely lacking in cognitive ability, communication skill and socialization" (Lasky 2015). While these Disney films do show the feral child's lack of understanding of the social world, the films neglect to show the severity of the child's plight.

Within the context of this paper, feral circumstances are divided into two categories. The feral child is either abandoned in the wild during early childhood or suffers severe abuse and neglect. This paper

will primarily focus on cases of abuse and neglect. The term *feral* is not an official medical diagnosis, but is used to describe children who are developmentally stunted and exhibit strange, almost primitive behaviors. The idea of the feral child is as old as the Ancient Romans, as in the foundation myth of Romulus and Remus (Lasky 2015). Actual documented cases are sporadic and few across history, yet there are compelling reports from the 19th and 20th centuries, including the cases of Genie, Danielle Lierow, Kaspar Hauser, Casper, and Victor of Aveyron, all of which will be discussed later in this paper. However, there is some controversy surrounding documented cases due to claims that people have created hoaxes, that there is little experimental data, and that the children may be suffering from preexisting mental conditions. These areas of concern will be addressed in section three.

The main question and methods of research will be to analyze the effects of isolation on childhood and adolescent development by drawing upon developmental, social, and cognitive psychology. The first five stages of Erik H. Erikson's Eight Stages of Psychosocial Development will serve as a theoretical framework to analyze the cases of Dani Lierow and Genie whose back stories will be discussed in the next section. The American Psychological Association's definition of the psychosocial stages is "the successive developmental stages that focus on an individual's orientation toward the self and others; these stages incorporate both the sexual and social aspects of a person's development and the social conflicts that arise from the interaction between the individual and the social environment" (Gerrig and Zimbardo 2002). The significance of this exploration will be to add a new understanding to abnormal psychology and to Erik Erikson's stages when they are experienced later than the assigned biological ages. Shortcomings or successes present at each stage will be examined in conjunction with any distinctive coping mechanisms developed to help the feral child survive. The paper will examine how the feral child moves from one stage to the next. These factors will help determine rehabilitation methodology and assess the probability that the feral child may be reintegrated into society.

SECTION II: MEET THE GIRLS

The cases of Genie and Danielle Lierow are the most recently documented within the past 45 years and will be analyzed through the psychoso-

cial stages. The girls were both victims of extreme social isolation and there are many similarities between them. Genie's case will be presented first, followed by the case of Danielle Lierow.

Genie's home was on Golden West Avenue in Temple City, California. She was discovered in 1970 by accident. Traveling with her virtually blind mother to an office that helps the blind, the two of them mistakenly walked into the office next door: a social services office. An employee was mesmerized and alarmed at the sight of Genie because of her condition. Author and freelance journalist, Russ Rymer, reports that at thirteen years old, Genie weighed only fifty-nine pounds. She could not fully extend her limbs and had a strange "bunny walk" (Rymer 9-10).

Genie's domineering father, Clark, had control over both Genie and her mother. At birth, Clark had a delusion that Genie was, in his words, "retarded," and that he needed to protect her from the world. As a result, Clark forbid anyone from talking to Genie and deprived her of almost any intellectual and social stimulation, and, in fact, she was beaten for making noise. Years and years of being strapped to a potty chair that prevented her from being able to move led to the discovery of "a ring of hard callus around her buttocks" when she was found (Rymer 10). If her parents remembered to untie her at night, she was transitioned to a sleeping bag that doubled as a straitjacket, and left in a crib covered by wire mesh. This was all Genie knew for the first thirteen years of her life (Rymer 17).

Upon media coverage of the discovery of Genie, Clark shot and killed himself in the living room on the day he was to appear in court (Rymer 20). Genie could finally try to put the past behind her, but was now faced with starting life over. Emotionally disturbed and tremendously impaired, Genie was suddenly the subject of scientists all over the world. Research grants were provided to a select group of researchers known as the Genie Team, including then graduate student Susan Curtiss, who gave the young girl the pseudonym "Genie" to protect her identity (Rymer 17). Curtiss is now a neurolinguist at the University of California Los Angeles.

Thirty-five years later, the case of Danielle Lierow came to light. Danielle, known as Dani, was discovered by chance in 2005 in Plant City, Florida when she was seven years old. A neighbor saw a little girl's face in the window of a house, but had never seen a little girl entering or

exiting; Dani was a prisoner in her home. Diane Lierow, Dani's adoptive mother, afterward revealed "that she kept the child inside because she was afraid that she—the mother—would get in trouble because the child was not ready for school" (Lierow 62). Everyone involved knew the situation was going to be bad, but no one was prepared for the conditions Dani was living in:

She had been confined day and night like an animal in a tiny, filthy, dark room, alone and naked except for her diaper, uncovered on a cockroach infested, solid bare mattress. She was intermittently fed solid food from a can and was infrequently bathed, but she was never held, never kissed, never talked, read, or sung to, and never played with. She was never taken outside to feel the sunlight on her face. At nearly seven years old, she had never been taken to a doctor, had never been immunized, had never seen a dentist, and had never been to school. She was covered with thousands of bug bites, her arms looked like sticks, her ribs were clearly visible under pale skin, and her scalp crawled with lice under her matted and dirty hair. (Lierow 3)

Much like Genie, Dani was also emotionally disturbed and tremendously impaired. However, Dani did not become a case study or undergo the exhaustive testing that Genie had experienced. Instead, Diane and Bernie Lierow noticed Dani at a Heart Gallery event, an event designed to find forever families for children in foster care. After the Lierows fell in love with Dani and chose to adopt her, it seemed like her life was on an upward spiral. Dani was discovered at nearly half the age Genie was, so the hope was that she would have a better chance at adjusting to the world around her. As this paper continues, it becomes clear she was still not found early enough.

SECTION III: AREAS OF CONCERN

Now that it is clear what and who feral children are, the paper will address questions about the validity of the topic as a subject for research. As stated in the introduction, some question its validity as a topic because of suspicion of hoaxes, lack of experimental data, and the possibility that feral children had preexisting mental conditions. To confront the issue of hoaxes, it is true there is much controversy over some reported

cases of feral children because people created hoaxes with the hope of reaching a desired outcome. An example of this is the claim made by Reverend J.A.L. Singh about the wolf girls, Amala and Kamala, of Bengal, India (Radford 2013). However, this issue does not affect this paper because the cases discussed are recent, and as a result, have solid documentation and evidence. Genie and Dani have been seen by a variety of credible medical doctors and psychologists, and their living conditions prior to being found have been photographed. As authorities and social services were involved in each case, it is highly improbable that the cases of Genie and Dani are hoaxes.

The next area of concern regards experimental data. It is difficult to study cases of feral children because direct causes of behavior cannot be determined. Controlled experimentation in which variables are manipulated is the most promising method to discovering direct causes because conclusions found through other means, such as observational studies, can be attributed to correlation or to chance. However, due to ethical reasons, it would be inhumane to subject a child to an experiment in which he or she may suffer lifelong negative consequences. Nevertheless, psychologists still use case studies, especially longitudinal case studies, as ways of speculating about causes. While longitudinal case studies may not be the best method of studying subjects, it still has its own advantages and is a valid method in the realm of psychology that can provide insight into the world of Genie and Dani.

Lastly, some have suggested that the feral characteristics and impairments inflicting these children have actually been present from the start and that they are suffering from conditions unrelated to their living conditions. For example, Bruno Bettelheim writes, "For years, on the basis of much experience with severely autistic children, I have been convinced that most of the so-called feral children were actually children suffering from the severest form of infantile autism" (Bettelheim 455). A similar stance can be seen when David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder write of feral children that "The category...brought together myth and empiricism by associating a child who was perhaps deaf, mute, autistic, or some combination with a condition that represented both a form of subhumanity and a radical humanitarian purpose" (Mitchell and Snyder 628). The second quotation is particularly problematic as it suggests that society has a need to separate itself from these horrors. The shortcom-

ings of the feral children seem to represent something “subhuman” and as a result, create a different species. This suggests that there is no need for a fantastical classification because a diagnosis of infantile autism is the diagnosis that seems the closest match to the symptoms of feral children. However, these researchers are failing to see the vibrant minds of these children who thrive when given the opportunity and who are eager to grow. For example, the issues of retardation and autism have been brought up in the cases of Genie and Dani, and yet in both cases, medical doctors and experts have argued that those conditions are not the cause. Russ Rymer cites Susan Curtiss as saying, “I found that for every year that Genie had been out of isolation she had advanced a year in mental age. Given a chance to interact with her environment, she was growing. This is the strongest evidence that she was not mentally retarded. You never see a case of a mentally retarded child in which the mental age increases a year with every year” (Rymer 126-7). The dilemma is not Genie’s inability to solve problems or her inability process things that are complex. The dilemma is that Genie is lacking the tools to express her ability to do those things. For example, Rymer cites Curtiss saying that “On spatial tests, Genie achieved a perfect adult score” (Rymer 125). When the tests are nonverbal, Genie does exceptionally well. Dani’s case is the same. Diane Lierow recalls Dani’s report from Dr. Armstrong: “The child is not autistic...could find no physical basis for this child’s condition...the condition could be the result of severe neglect and deprivation” (Lierow 84). Dani and Genie both have delayed developments, however, the bottom line is they most likely would not be delayed had they not been robbed of the means to grow.

SECTION IV: ERIK ERIKSON’S PSYCHOSOCIAL STAGES

Each stage of Erikson’s model presents a crisis of social nature that the individual must figure out how to resolve. Success or failure to resolve each stage yields different results in development in relation to the self. The stages usually take place within a certain window of time at particular biological ages. However, after feral children are placed in safe environments, it is almost as if they are developing for the first time. For example, Michael Newton cites German scholar, Anselm von Feurbach, who wrote about a feral child named Kaspar Hauser who suffered from confinement in Germany: “The crime committed against him robbed

him of the human development necessary to create the sense of self ... Because he *slept* through his childhood, that childhood could not be *lived* through by him; and, it consequently follows him into his later years..." (Newton 179-80). The quote suggests that since Kaspar was confined for so long, it is as if he slept through his whole childhood. Therefore, Kaspar could only start his childhood upon no longer being confined, but at "physical maturity." It is important to remember that the physical ages for each of Erikson's stages do not necessarily correlate with those of the feral children being examined. In the cases of feral children, the stages are tracking development at a mental age.

For a final note before this section of the paper begins, as discussed in section one, there will not be a focus on only success or only shortcomings. Donald Capps mentions a concern of Erikson's, that "regarding his psychosocial stages, namely, that some writers were turning the model into an achievement scale by focusing on the 'positive' senses—trust, autonomy, initiative, etc.—and blithely omitting the 'negative' senses—mistrust, shame and doubt, guilt, etc." (Capps 273). It is important to not only focus on just one or the other because the interaction between positives and negatives shows how a child works through the stage. One does not enter a stage and immediately become successful without any "failures." Both the positive senses and the negative senses offer different perspectives that open a dialogue when discussed in tandem.

STAGE 1: TRUST VS. MISTRUST

According to Erik H. Erikson, the first stage deals with the conflict of basic trust vs. mistrust. Taking place from birth to one year of age, the strength of the maternal relationship is crucial during this time. Success leads to trust in the new-forming surrounding world while failure leads to doubt and fear. These attitudes reflect future relationships that may be built (Erikson 247-50). The maternal relationship is crucial because the mother is able to make sure the infant's needs are met. The mother is also able to ensure the infant that the influx of stimulation is not harmful and ease any confusion. With respect to stimulation, Erikson explains,

In his gradually increasing waking hours he finds that more and more adventures of the senses arouse a feeling of familiarity, of having coincided with a feeling of inner goodness...Such consistency,

continuity, and sameness of experience provide a rudimentary sense of ego identity which depends, I think, on the recognition that there is an inner population of remembered and anticipated sensations and images which are firmly correlated with the outer population of familiar and predictable things and people. (Erikson 247)

Erikson suggests that as infants are continually introduced to regular stimulation, they begin to make connections with particular feelings to specific objects and persons. The infants become accustomed to and learn to enjoy stimuli. The concept introduced is the matter of trust. The infants are creating rules that dictate what feeling correlates to different experiences. When this pattern is realized, the infant trusts his surroundings. When there is no pattern or rule, the infant does not know how to make sense of the environmental surroundings.

Perhaps this stage is the greatest mystery of feral children. It is the stage with both the least and the most amount of evidence. It has the least evidence because it occurs the furthest back in time from when the children are discovered and their parents seldom publically discuss it. It has the most evidence because it sets the stage for the life the child will have, and behaviors as a result of this stage are present in later years of life. It is obvious that feral children do not have trust of the world. The mothers typically do not care for the needs of the child, aside from feeding them to avoid fatal starvation. Behavior that manifests in the child as a result includes biting, hair pulling, lacking eye contact, spitting, and scratching. However, what is more interesting is the objects and experiences the feral children do place their trust in, and how that trust serves as a coping mechanism later in life.

For example, Genie had a strange attachment to beach pails. Rymer quotes David Rigler, a member of the Genie Team, with an explanation:

I think it was because of the bright colors and the texture ... We learned that during her isolation Genie had had some small plastic toys. She had had a plastic raincoat hanging on the wall across from her potty seat ... You visualize this house, and you picture this kid seated in this room, day after day, with very limited stimulation. She's grasping for some kind of stimulation, and the things she can see play a very large role. There's a plastic raincoat on the opposite wall ... She liked plastic. (Rymer 91-2)

The regular stimulation with the plastic raincoats provided Genie with a familiarity that resonated a feeling of “inner goodness.” Each time she touched the plastic, she experienced the sameness of the texture. Genie was not able to trust the world around her, but she could trust her plastic. Her collection of beach pails acted as a coping mechanism to deal with her mistrust. By collecting the plastic pails, Genie could always keep on hand a ‘security blanket’ of sorts to help guide her through the world she was uncertain of.

STAGE 2: AUTONOMY VS. SHAME AND DOUBT

Erikson describes stage two as occurring during one to three years of age and managing the conflict of autonomy vs. shame and doubt. Parents must give their children freedom to have control in making choices and also give their children the opportunity to discover independence. Failure to do so results in loss of confidence and self esteem. An important event that happens at this stage is toilet training. The child asks himself or herself if the ability is present to achieve things alone or if the help of others will always be needed (Erikson 251-54). Since the feral children are controlled and restricted in the most extreme ways, they lack the ability to make their own choices. They do not have a say in what happens to them. Again, remember that the ages Erikson suggests these stages occur at are more so a mental age than a physical age. Dani and Genie were not toilet trained by the age of three years old, for example, so in some respects they did not become successful in this stage until later in their lives. The area during this stage that will be examined is shame.

Erikson writes, “Shame supposes that one is completely exposed and conscious of being looked at: in one word, self-conscious. One is visible and not ready to be visible; which is why we dream of shame as a situation in which we are stared at in a condition of incomplete dress, in night attire, ‘with one’s pants down’” (Erikson 252). In other words, failure at this stage should result in feelings of embarrassment. This stage relates to the last stage because it is still about trust. Stage one deals with an external trust of the surrounding world whereas stage two deals with an internal trust of the self. When the child fails to gain internal trust and confidence in his or her abilities and independence, it creates a feeling of shame—or so was thought.

In this example, Diane Lierow illustrates an experience she has with changing Dani's diaper: "I picked up Danielle, laid her down on a large changing table, and pulled up the skirt she was wearing. She was oblivious, and that seemed so strange to me. She should have been embarrassed that she was wearing a diaper and that a total stranger was preparing to change her" (Lierow 40). There are two interesting components to this example. First, Dani was not between the ages of one and three. She was actually seven years old. This disconnect shows just how developmentally delayed Dani was. Second, Dani's lack of response shows she had no sense of shame. What is the cause for this? Is it that Dani is unaware of what happens to her?

Since Dani suffered from social isolation, it is unlikely that Dani would be knowledgeable about social norms. She does not understand that she should feel embarrassed or feel shame at this moment because having people change her diaper is her norm. Lack of shame and the learning of social norms are apparent in the lives of other feral children as well. Lucien Malson writes about the experiences of Kaspar Hauser: "It hardly needs saying that their sense of modesty grew as they readapted to society. Kaspar Hauser, for example, would at first allow himself to be undressed and washed without the slightest embarrassment, while later he became extremely shy and modest" (Malson 48). Malson suggests that at first Kasper did not know it was against the norm to be undressed or washed in the presence of other people. However, as Kaspar spent more time living with others, he was able to observe their behaviors and come to a realization of what is socially acceptable. Another example regarding toilet training shows the process of Dani learning:

Nothing would happen until I relented and let her stand up. Then she would pee down her legs and onto the floor. I sensed some conscious, deliberate resistance, and although that would have been maddening in any other child, coming from Danielle it was in a strange way encouraging. At least, it showed me she was capable of thinking something through even if that thought was to show me she would learn this on her own timetable and not mine. You are not the boss of me! (Lierow 138)

Some time has passed between this example and the last, and this passing time shows improvement upon trying to work through

this stage. Like Diane Lierow mentions, the “conscious, deliberate resistance” is a sign that Dani is in fact aware of what is happening to her. Dani’s desire to learn toilet training “on her own timetable” is her attempt to gain her own independence and self-control. She may not be independent in knowing how to use the toilet, but she is independent in the sense that she is making her own decisions, and this notion is what Diane found encouraging.

STAGE 3: INITIATIVE VS. GUILT

In stage three, Erikson discusses the conflict of initiative vs. guilt. This stage occurs between the ages of three to five years old. Children’s interaction with others is crucial during this time because it gives them the ability to initiate activities and enforces their ability to lead. This stage offers the child a sense of purpose. Failure results in feelings of guilt and inhibits social interaction (Erikson 255-58). When Erikson writes about the successes of the stage, he explains, “He appears ‘more himself; more loving, relaxed, and brighter in his judgment, more activated and activating. He is in free possession of a surplus of energy which permits him to forget failures quickly and to approach what seems desirable (even if it also seems uncertain and even dangerous) with undiminished and more accurate direction” (Erikson 255). The confidence gained from the last stage provides the child with confidence that he or she can take the lead in activities.

Genie surprisingly seems very comfortable at this stage. The Genie Team wanted to see how far Genie could go and how much she could do on her own and learn, so as a result they provided her with a safe environment. They encouraged her to take the lead and avoided reprimanding her, but instead praised her when she made achievements. Genie was excellent at letting the Genie Team know when she wanted something. For example, Genie would take the lead when Susan Curtiss would play piano for her. Rymer explains, “Genie was transfixed only if the music was classical and only if it was performed live ... If Curtiss’s repertoire strayed too far into the popular, Genie would pull her hands from the keyboard and replace the sheet music with a piece she recognized as being more highbrow” (Rymer 116). In this scenario, Genie took the lead by letting Curtiss know exactly what she wanted. In other children, this act may come off as ill mannered or impolite. However, in

Genie's case the researchers were excited and encouraged her to do this because the action gave more insight into Genie's world and what she liked. Genie's lack of social norms and the praise she received allowed her to have the confidence to initiate behaviors, especially when she wanted something.

The validation Genie received played a major part in this stage and may have contributed to the initiative she showed in her attempts to use speech. For example, Curtiss describes Genie's verbal progress:

In addition, Genie has begun to use the vocative, and to produce imperative sentences. The vocative (or 'nominative of address') is present very early in normal child language, and it is of interest that it remained absent from Genie's speech for so long. Its appearance is probably more the result of emotional development than of syntactic acquisition. Perhaps the syntactic structures emerge only when the necessary psychological factors are present: in order to request or demand something from specific individuals, the speaker must have enough of a self-concept to feel she has the power and right to so address people and to make direct demands. We now find sentences like those as part of Genie's everyday speech. (Curtiss, et al. 541)

This quote suggests that Genie's ability to make demands demonstrates that she has a self-concept; she is aware of herself and she is also aware of how others react to her. The quote also suggests that Genie has the confidence to try to lead and control others, much like the way Genie has the confidence to lead and control Curtiss in the piano anecdote.

STAGE 4: INDUSTRY VS. INFERIORITY

Erikson describes stage four as dealing with the conflict of industry vs. inferiority. This stage occurs from five to twelve years old. During this stage, children are usually enrolled in school. Validation of achievements results in children feeling that they are hardworking. Failure causes children to feel inferior and insecure about their abilities (Erikson 258-61). Dani was enrolled in school, but since her adoptive mother did not go to school with her, little is written about Dani's experiences in a school setting. However, her home life feels much like a school setting because home is still a place where Dani had to learn how to do most things re-

quired of daily life. When Dani would figure something out on her own, Diane would provide her with praise such as the Genie Team did for Genie. This validation let the child know that she was doing something correctly and increased the chance that she would repeat the action.

Validation as a tool to help Dani learn and feel secure in her abilities is demonstrated in an anecdote regarding Dani's most preferred coping mechanism. Dani's favorite thing to do was swim. The pool or ocean is described as the only place where she seemed to feel truly free. Diane Lierow recalls:

When I told her it was time to come out, I anticipated the usual—she would swim away and I would have to go at least partway in to pull her out. On this day, she willingly came to the end with the steps, walked out on her own, and tried to take her life jacket off by herself. I helped her out of it, then waited to see what she would do next. She grabbed a towel but seemed unsure of how to manage it. I wrapped her up tight, telling her over and over what a good, smart girl she was to do that by herself! (Lierow 139)

The validation Diane provided Dani with let Dani know that coming out of the pool and grabbing a towel to dry off is an appropriate response. This praise, emphasized by Diane's tone of voice, most likely made Dani feel good about herself and that she was working hard to try to do things on her own. Dani eventually learned this behavior as an outcome and in time was able to do it completely free of any help.

In contrast, Alessandra Cavalli, a child and adult analyst who wrote about a feral child she studied and gave the name Casper, describes failure at this stage. Like Curtiss, Cavalli provided the child with a pseudonym to protect his identity. Cavalli arrived at the name Casper after she studied Anselm von Feurbach's account of Kaspar Hauser. The incident soon to be revealed is interesting because Casper was enrolled in school and the atmosphere of his interaction with other children is clear. The incident is also interesting because Casper could communicate verbally, so more insight on how he actually felt is also clear. Cavalli explains, "Alfie the ghost is his only friend, his imaginary companion. Children at school bully him and call him names. It is the first time that Casper tells me what upsets him. The ghost seems to represent the archetypal expectation of a companion, of a guiding parent" (Cavalli 615).

The children provided Casper with the opposite of validation by bullying him and criticizing him. This made Casper feel inferior and insecure about his companion. Yet what is also interesting is that Casper seems to have invented Alfie to become the parent who is supposed to give him validation. Casper then loses the validation Alfie provides him when Casper loses the confidence of Alfie being a source to turn to when he needs validation.

STAGE 5: IDENTITY VS. ROLE CONFUSION

Lastly, Erikson reports stage five as handling the conflict of identity role vs. confusion. This stage occurs from twelve to eighteen years old. Sexual and occupational identities are explored and if success in this stage occurs, there is a feeling of comfortableness with the self. Failure results in confusion of societal role (Erikson 261-63). Feral children most likely experience this stage differently than the rest of society because most people feel comfortable with themselves partly due to social norms and the way others react to them. However, as mentioned earlier, feral children are not familiar with social norms and are not expected to have an occupational societal role due to their disabilities. It is also unclear whether or not feral children know that most people are required to go on to have a career. Therefore, it is unclear whether feral children are comfortable in their ignorance or uncomfortable because they are aware that their shortcomings will prevent them from becoming productive, functional members of society.

On the other hand, Genie does seem to have formed or begun to form a sexual identity. Curtiss writes that:

Genie masturbated excessively, which proved to be the most serious antisocial behavior problem of all. Despite admonishments, she continued to masturbate as often as possible, anywhere and everywhere. We have no knowledge of whether she had been sexually abused by her father or brother, but she preferred the company of men and when in their company usually tried to get them involved. Many of the items she coveted were objects with which to masturbate, and she would attempt to do so, regardless of where she was. She was drawn to chair backs, chair arms, counter edges, doorknobs, door edges, table corners, car handles, car mirrors, and so forth; in essence, indoors and outdoors she was continually

attempting to masturbate. Learning to control these desires has been terribly difficult for Genie, and now, 4 years later, it is still a problem. (Curtiss 21)

It can be argued that Genie is aware of herself in a sexual manner and suggests that she identifies as being heterosexual. However, the quotation also points to the problematic possibility that Genie may have arrived at her overbearing expression of sexuality through sexual abuse within her family. Despite that, Curtiss did note that since the writing of her book, this behavior has “almost entirely disappeared” (Curtiss 21). Genie’s current life is a mystery because her mother, who briefly regained custody in the early 1970s, blocked any of the Genie Team members from contacting Genie. After her mother became unable to care for her, Genie vanished into California’s state institution system. Nonetheless, it is unlikely that Genie ever had a healthy sexual relationship with another person because of her need for constant assistance and her lack of verbal communication. Masturbation, however, does appear in several cases of feral children besides Genie, such as in Alessandra Cavalli’s account of Casper.

SECTION V: FINDINGS AND FINAL THOUGHTS

Upon speculating and piecing together the theoretical framework and case studies, it can be concluded that feral children can never really be fully integrated back into society and will always need assistance throughout their lives. However, these children can be integrated into an adoptive family and learn to communicate nonverbally to live a somewhat meaningful life. Research demonstrates that progress comes fast at first but then becomes stagnant, especially with respect to learning language. Yet the most surprising finding is the change of connotation of the word ‘feral’ throughout the course of this research. It now seems derogatory to use. There are no feral children. They do not exist; society’s idea of them is a fabricated myth far from the truth, a myth created to separate the beastly horrors of the “wild child” from the possibility that we are all part of the same human species. What is left is just a label used to classify a group of children who all happened to have endured severe isolation and who have suffered immensely because of their circumstances.

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The Double-Edge: Public Accommodation and Transgender Identification

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Abstract: Throughout contemporary American society, public institutions struggle with accommodating transgender gender identities. Across medical, academic, and legal fields, public institutions often cultivate cissexist and transphobic sex-based identification policies, which reject transgender identities, and uphold cisgender identification as the sociocultural norm. However, with rising queer and transgender activism across the 20th and 21st century, institutional administrators have begun critiquing and deconstructing transgender-exclusionary institutional policies. Resistance against institutional transphobia has led to public institutions experimenting with transgender accommodations, and cultivating inclusionary gender policies within institutional spheres. Indeed, these contemporary transgender accommodations actively dismantle institutional transphobia and reinforce the inclusionary role that counter-hegemonic policies play in transgender experiences. By removing transphobic institutional policies and creating transgender accommodations that reject the sex-based gender binary, institutional administrators build transgender-inclusionary accommodations within their respective structures. Although creating institutional accommodations is often a slow process, each successful transgender-inclusionary policy deconstructs transphobic power dynamic, and challenges sociocultural transphobia across American institutional structures.

INTRODUCTION

Across the past fifteen years, American academic, medical, and legal institutions have continued to implement transphobic and transmisogynistic institutional policies that fail to accommodate transgender individuals. These forms of institutional bigotry stem from cissexism—the conflation of gender with sex, and the assumption that every individual's gender identity aligns with his or her gender assigned at birth. Transgender individuals defy this hegemonic belief because their gender identity does not align with the sex-based gender they were assigned. Therefore, cissexism essentially fuels transphobia, or the immense discrimination and mistreatment of transgender individuals on both interpersonal and sociocultural levels. These two forms of bigotry are further reinforced

through transmisogyny, in which transphobic discrimination is combined with sociocultural misogyny against feminine identities. Institutional structures are often in dialogue with these transgender-exclusionary hegemonies found within the United States, and encourage the creation of policies that marginalize transgender individuals.

From cissexist health care treatments to denial of access for gender-segregated bathrooms, Western institutions reinforce the cisgender sex-binary through transphobic administrative structures. However, as a powerful form of hegemonic control, institutionalization can challenge sociocultural thought through the implementation of transgender-inclusive gender policies. Essentially, institutional accommodations that accept transgender identities challenge hegemonic transphobia and cultivate counter-hegemonies that support transgender inclusion. Indeed, when academic, medical, and legal institutions accommodate for transgender gender identities, they also act as a form of gendered government, which validates transgender lived experiences. While institutional accommodations often appear static and inherently oppressive, public accommodations also act as hegemonic sociocultural codifiers of transgender gender identities. Therefore, institutional counter-hegemonies grant public accommodations the opportunity to challenge cissexist gender roles when they accept transgender identification.

SEX-BASED ACCOMMODATIONS AS INSTITUTIONAL TRANSPHOBIA

Transphobic sex-based administrative policies have remained a cornerstone within American institutional bureaucratic structures. As a form of cissexism, sex-based institutional accommodations reinforce the belief that cisgender identification is the default gender identity. This denies transgender individuals access to gender-segregated institutional accommodations and dehumanizes them by erasing the existence of their gender identity. Within Heath Fogg Davis's intersectional overview, "Sex-Classification Policies as Transgender Discrimination: An Intersectional Critique," Davis notes that bureaucratic structures that equate "sex" with "gender" exclude transgender individuals by reinforcing institutional cissexism. As Davis explains, "most [cisgender] people experience [sex-based gender segregation] as mere moments of cursory verification of who they are and where they ought to be," affirming the

belief that cisgender identification is the default gender experience (H. Davis 46). Sex-based segregation serves as a “cursory” reinforcement of cissexism, in which sex is utilized as an authority on gender identification within gender-segregated institutional accommodations. This fosters institutional structures that exclusively implement sex-based gender policies, and that fail to acknowledge and accommodate the various gender identities which exist outside of the sex-binary model.

Indeed, the sex-binary model implies that cisgender men and cisgender women are the only viable gender identities in American society. In turn, this significantly damages transgender health care treatment within medical institutions, because practitioners are solely trained to provide for cisgender patients. According to one medical study exploring transgender medical discrimination, entitled “Experiences of Transgender-Related Discrimination and Implications for Health: Results From the Virginia Transgender Health Initiative Study,” 20% of transgender patients with general practitioners “reported they had to educate their PCP about their health care needs,” and that “more than one quarter of the sample reported needing but not being able to obtain access to at least 1 transgender-specific service in the past 12 months” (Bradford et al. 1825). When medical institutions rely on cissexist anatomy as a cursory reinforcement of gender identification, transgender patients are left uncared for, unfairly impacting their physical and mental health across medical services. The sex-binary essentially weakens medical accommodations by erasing transgender health care needs and results in subpar treatment from medical practitioners. Indeed, American institutions negatively impact transgender individuals’ quality of life when institutional policies rely on the sex-based gender binary that exists within their administrative spheres.

Cissexism’s reliance on the sex-based binary denies the validity of transgender identification, and labels transgender individuals as perversions from the cisgender norm. Therefore, public institutions that engage in the sex-based binary are complicit in the mental, physical, and psychological impact that transphobic bigotry causes. Within Em McAvan’s work “Rhetorics of Disgusting and Indeterminacy in Transphobic Acts of Violence,” McAvan notes how mass media pedagogically engages with public institutions in order to codify transgender individuals as Others. The author states that “expressions of affect,” such as cisgender

“disgust... at an indeterminacy of trans bodies,” are subsequently “mobilized in the courts, in the media, to produce those spaces as cissexual” and deny transgender institutional access (McAvan 31). When transphobic policies are perpetuated within legal institutions, these institutional structures reinforce a hegemonic sociocultural narrative where “feelings like horror, disgust and shame are discursively formed” against transgender individuals (30). Institutional cissexism fosters bigoted appraisals of nonconforming gender identities by codifying transphobic rhetoric across American culture. In turn, this institutional transphobia significantly impacts transgender individuals’ psychological and physical well-being. As noted within the dyadic stress study “Gender Minority Stress, Mental Health, and Relationship Quality: A Dyadic Investigation of Transgender Women and Their Cisgender Male Partners,” institutional denial can affect transgender psychological health, as “transgender-related discrimination [is] associated with increased odds of depressive distress among transgender women and their male partners” (Gamarel et al 443). Without sociocultural acceptance within institutional spheres, transgender individuals—as well as their intimate partners—are susceptible to long-term mental illnesses. Institutions which reinforce transphobic and cissexist views of transgender identities foster a culture which rejects transgender individuals’ existence, cultivating depression and other stress-based mental health concerns within the transgender community. Sex-based institutional denial reinforces the belief that cissexism is a valid administrative policy—in the process restricting transgender access to necessary public institutions and significantly damaging transgender mental and physical health.

CULTIVATING CRITICAL DISSENT FOR INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Although public institutions regularly engage in sex-based discrimination against transgender individuals, transgender activists often resist these administrative policies through internal dissent. Throughout public institutions, transgender administrators utilize their institutional spheres so as to disrupt the erasure of transgender identities. For instance, within “There Are Transsexuals In Our Middle Schools!,” transgender writer Loren Krywanczyk argues for the implementation of queer pedagogy as a gateway to self-exploration for young queer

and transgender students within public education. “A queer [teaching] methodology,” Krywanzcyk notes, both “... encourages criticality and considers inquiry about identity as crucial to the act of teaching,” and cultivates, “... an exploration of power dynamics, social issues arising in texts, and character experience” (Krywanzcyk 5—6). Despite the strict confines of the American K-12 education system, Krywanzcyk presents queer theory as a positive educational experience for middle school students. As a public educator and transgender individual, Krywanzcyk argues that queer methodology deconstructs homophobic and transphobic discrimination in an institutional setting, and pushes the boundaries of queer discourses within the American educational system. Likewise, collegiate academic institutions also help provide a strong foundation for transgender inclusion when they directly challenge cissexist administrative policies within gender-segregated spheres. In her *New York Times Magazine* article “Sisterhood is Complicated,” writer Ruth Padawer explores the ways in which transgender masculine identities cultivate student-run communities that resist institutional transphobia. As transgender masculine students began attending the privately-funded women’s college Wellesley College, student organizations began meetings by asking for preferred names and pronouns (Padawer 38). Creating student-enforced name and pronoun policies subverted the cissexist sex-binary that permeated Wellesley College, and built an inclusionary approach cultivated by Wellesley’s transgender masculine identities. In turn, this policy was adopted by Wellesley’s various institutional departments, as professors began courses by “asking students to indicate the names and pronouns they prefer for themselves,” and campus residential life director Kris Niendorf required his entire resident assistant program “to attend a trans-sensitivity workshop” (38—39). After transgender masculine students led their own resistance against Wellesley’s transgender-exclusionary policies, the academic institution responded by altering their academic and housing accommodations and implementing inclusionary workshops and preferred pronoun policies for transgender students attending Wellesley. Students’ institutional solutions to cissexism gradually built inclusive accommodations for transgender students attending the college. By challenging educational institutions and striving for pedagogical change, institutional dissenters began advocating for transgender accommodations—creating the first steps toward transgen-

der inclusion within public educational spheres.

Identifying the long-term personal consequences of institutional oppression also reasserts the need for transgender-inclusive administrative policies. For many transgender individuals, medical institutions play a necessary role in treating gender dysphoria, or the condition in which a person feels significant psychological stress from the discrepancy between their gender identity, sex, and/or assigned gender. Cissexism and transphobia within medical accommodations critically impact transgender patients' ability to access psychological counseling, hormone therapy treatment, genital reassignment surgery, and other health care needs. For instance, within Patricia Gherovici's academic overview *Please Select Your Gender: From the Invention of Hysteria to the Democratizing of Transgenderism*, Gherovici identifies the authoritarian role that medical narratives play in obtaining gender therapy and genital reassignment surgery. "To successfully obtain the medical treatments requested," she notes, "the [autobiographical story] of transsexuality has to match an officially sanctioned etiology," which must "maneuver adroitly the strict guidelines of sex change protocols" (Gherovici 218). Cisgender administrators judge the quality of transgender life stories as transgender individuals are forced to perform the specific "officially sanctioned [medical] etiology" accepted by cisgender health care providers for medical treatment. However, as medical institutions have acknowledged their problematic role as gatekeepers for transgender health care, university educators have turned toward education on transgender anatomy, surgery, and medical terminology as a necessary step for diminishing institutional discrimination. Within the academic medical study, "Improving Transgender Health Education for Future Doctors," the article's researchers note that proper medical terminology education significantly improves public health care treatment for transgender patients. After observing freshmen medical students attend a lecture on transgender health and comparing their knowledge with a control group of senior medical students, the authors note that students with "more than 2 hours of instruction [were] also associated with higher mean summary scores... for overall self-reported knowledge, attitudes, and skills" (Dowshen et al. e5). By engaging cisgender students with transgender anatomy and terminology, students held more skills, knowledge, and confidence on treating transgender patients. The study concludes that students with

rigorous transgender medical education become more efficient institutional administrators, who will provide proper medical treatment for transgender mental, physical, and psychological needs. Institutions that acknowledge transgender discrimination and gradually move towards inclusionary change build accommodations that directly aid marginalized transgender identities.

GENDER PERFORMATIVITY AND TRANSGENDER CRITIQUE

Public accommodations that acknowledge transgender identities and engage in transgender gender performativity promote counter-hegemonies that directly challenge institutional cissexism and transphobia. Essentially, when transgender individuals access gender-segregated institutional spheres, they defy the institutional sex-binary by performing their gender identity. In turn, these individuals help cultivate transgender-inclusive counter-hegemonies which challenge cissexist views on transgender individuals. According to Isaac West's work *Transforming Citizenships: Transgender Articulations of the Law*, reclamation simultaneously rejects institutional conformity and builds institutional acceptance for transgender identities. West notes how "... one's desire to be treated with dignity and respect must not be equated with conformity," but rather, that "... rights claims and demands for recognition... performatively produce subjective opportunities for challenging the pressures of oneness" within institutional accommodations (West 26–27). West argues that demanding transgender accommodations within institutional structures is not a concession to oppressive institutions, but rather an empowering act of transgender performativity. By demanding inclusionary change within public institutions, transgender individuals articulate their gender identity, and challenge institutional implementations of the sex-binary.

Likewise, as a digital institution, transgender individuals utilize gender performativity in order to create their own discourses across the Internet. Within Eve Shapiro's work, *Gender Circuits: Bodies and Identities in a Technological Age*, Shapiro explores the ways in which the Internet grants transgender individuals the opportunity to fully express their gender identity. She notes that the Internet serves as "a new institutional context and set of technologies that support identity work," including the cultivation of virtual communities among transgender identities

(Shapiro 110). Indeed, Shapiro views the Internet as an institution which amplifies transgender lived experiences through analysis and discourse-building. These online communities create accommodations for themselves by entering an institutional sphere—the Internet itself—and claiming their own communal territory, which exists separately from cisgender spaces. Transgender individuals alter hegemonic narratives on transgender identification by engaging in transgender performativity within institutional power structures: deconstructing institutional transphobia, and creating inclusive institutional accommodations throughout Western administrative spheres.

Identifying contemporary accommodations' shortcomings and nuances cultivates a critical overview of institutional structures, which helps foster stronger transgender accommodations. Autobiographical narratives on transgender medical experiences often explore the nuanced ramifications of health care policies on transgender lives. For instance, Anna Anthropy's autobiographical video game *dys4ia* examines transgender relationships with medical institutions by examining a transitioning woman's empowering and disempowering experiences with American health care structures. Serving as her work's narrator, Anthropy guides the player through her positive and negative experiences with institutional hormone therapy treatment, including finding a health clinic that accommodates for estrogen therapy, properly managing her blood pressure for hormone treatment, and navigating invasive questions found within gender dysphoria psychological examinations. Although Anthropy views hormone therapy treatment as an important step in handling her own gender dysphoria, the game does not end with Anthropy coming to terms with her gender identity—instead, in the chapter “It Gets Better?” she concludes that her experiences are only “just the beginning” of discovering her gender identity. Within her work, Anthropy acknowledges that hormone therapy treatment thrusts intrusive gender questions onto the transitioning patient. While Anthropy considers hormone therapy an enormously important first step in her life, she acknowledges that therapy is certainly not the peak nor culmination of her lived experiences as a transgender woman—nor that hormone therapy treatment is a smooth process. Rather, Anthropy stresses that American medical institutions require further sensitivity in handling transgender health care concerns.

Likewise, “Sisterhood is Complicated” by Ruth Padawer also discusses these institutional struggles, noting women’s colleges’ asymmetrical pace towards accepting transgender women. According to Padawer, one Wellesley transgender man argued against acceptance for transgender women, and wrote anonymously, “what if someone who is male-bodied comes [to Wellesley] genuinely identified as female, and then decides after a year or two that they identify as male... How’s that different from admitting a biological male who identifies as a male?” further asserting that “Trans men... were raised female,” and “know what it’s like to be treated as females” (Padawer 50). The blog post’s writer eagerly defends his own public accommodation, while disregarding the plight of pre-transitioning transgender women—further suggesting that Wellesley should deny transgender women, as, according to the writer, transgender women are not “raised female” and do not “know what it’s like to be treated” as women. Indeed, at the time of Padawer’s original article, Wellesley did not accept transgender women—cultivating a transmisogynistic institutional structure by discriminating against transgender women. Essentially, Wellesley implied that transgender masculine identities were valuable collegiate members, while denying the gender identity of the college’s transgender women applicants. This passively cultivated transmisogynistic narratives on campus, as administrators would accept some transgender identities and deny others. Building accommodations within major institutional structures relies on constant progressive critique and change. When institutions stagnate toward including transgender identities, transphobic bigotry takes root within these public spheres.

CULTIVATING SOLUTIONS FROM DISCOURSE

Critiquing legal institutions and reforming institutional policies provides the foundation for transgender inclusion within legislative and judicial accommodations. Across government structures, the judicial sphere struggles with creating a courtroom environment that accepts transgender defendants. As discussed in transgender masculine artist Ludwig Troavto’s essay, “My Sex Is in My Head,” judicial institutions often reinforce the cissexist sex-binary, and reject transgender pronouns and terminology. Trovato explores legal misgendering through an alleged sexual assault allegation he stands on trial for. According to the author,

French institutional administrators create a judicial structure where “Bettina Trovato is prosecuted on the grounds of sexual molestation... Ludwig Trovato had his case dismissed... Then one switches to Bettina alias Ludwig Trovato with the prosecutor’s appeal when sexual molestation is the only charge left,” and concluding that, eventually, “... to simplify matters, only TROVATO is used to refer to me without bothering to mention either pronouns or gender” (Trovato 45). The French judicial system purposefully sidesteps Trovato’s transgender identity throughout the case, forcing the defendant into a cisgender sex binary upheld by the courts. By thrusting Trovato into this system and ignoring his gender identity, the French court utilizes institutional power in order to erase Trovato’s embodied gender identity. However, Isaac West attempts to create an institutional solution to this issue by exploring the power dynamics found between transgender individuals and legal power dynamics. In his academic work, *Transforming Citizenships: Transgender Articulations of the Law*, West juxtaposes institutional and queer politics, noting, “by privileging the law as an everyday practice of managing stranger-relationalities rather than an external set of rules and regulations created by legislatures and courts, we gain a more expansive view of how the law operates in and through cultural flows of meaning-making” (West 163). West reframes institutional denial as a manifestation of “stranger-relationalities,” which are in constant dialogue with sociocultural views on transgender identification. West’s theory examines the power dynamics behind Trovato’s institutional misgendering, and concludes that legal institutions avoid transgender inclusion because deconstructing the sex-based gender binary inherently challenges the judicial relationship between administrators and clients. Indeed, West suggests that sociocultural beliefs are in direct communication with legal institutions and that the subversion of “stranger-relationalities” also disrupts the “cultural flows of meaning-making,” and will therefore lead to implementations of transgender-inclusionary accommodations. Essentially, West encourages activists to create new counter-hegemonies on transgender identification, which encourage a strict interpretation of the legal structure, and which challenge the judicial system’s authoritarian power over clients. Critiquing and understanding these legal institutions creates counter-hegemonic sociocultural narratives, which gradually overcome institutional transphobia, and build the foundation for trans-

gender accommodations.

In order to create transgender accommodations within public institutions, transgender discourses must expand beyond critique and develop institutional solutions that provide direct courses of action within administrative spheres. Within “Transgender Individuals’ Access to College Housing and Bathrooms: Findings from the National Transgender Discrimination Survey,” author Kristie Seelman notes how socio-cultural transphobia and cissexism paint transgender women as “male predators” that do not belong in women’s accommodations—erasing transgender women’s gender identity, and forcing transgender women into the cissexist sex-binary (Seelman 189). While identifying this discriminatory pattern in women’s bathrooms, Seelman combats transphobic and transmisogynistic denial of access through transgender-inclusive guidelines for collegiate social workers. Her institutional solutions cover a wide range of administrative spheres, as she suggests social workers “educate those on campus that it is not okay to refuse bathroom access to individuals simply based upon gender identity and expression,” that universities should “offer gender-blind housing options,” and that college administrators must develop “all-gender or single-housing options, private changing rooms, single-stall restrooms, and restrooms that are open to people of any gender” among other solutions (202). As a researcher and collegiate educator, Seelman addresses academic transphobia by providing both critiques and solutions—she identifies the role that transphobia plays within academic accommodations, and she responds by creating an administrative plan for creating transgender accommodations in educational spheres.

Likewise, public school teacher Loren Krywanzcyk also explores this dichotomy by critiquing queer pedagogy, and highlighting the benefits of queer methodology in the classroom. Within her work “There Are Transsexuals in Our Middle Schools!,” Krywanzcyk argues public educators should break away from rigid curriculum structures and instead cultivate queer critical analysis. She notes that curriculum pedagogy “offers a mere BAND-AID solution to bullying, homophobia, and transphobia,” and acknowledges that a rigid, condescending pedagogical tone rejects “the fact that queer and trans issues are already realities for [Krywanzcyk’s] students—in their neighborhoods, families, social lives, and even in themselves” (Krywanzcyk 5). Krywanzcyk’s

solution directly targets the institutional flaws within public educational curriculum. Methodological overviews of queer lived experiences within the classroom, the author argues, directly connect with queer students' identities and discuss sociocultural discrimination without cultivating a tone-deaf curriculum which treats pedagogy as a mere checklist for reform. Indeed, Krywanzcyk simultaneously critiques institutional pedagogy and presents a nuanced solution that can be applied within a public educational sphere. While engaging in critical discourse, academics and administrators must also cultivate solutions to transphobic problems seen within institutional structures by creating a discourse that can theorize future transgender institutional accommodations.

DIGITAL INSTITUTIONS AS CONTEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

Digital institutions cultivate an autonomous structure that grants transgender individuals the opportunity to explore their gender identity through intuitive public platforms. The Internet's universal availability provides worldwide support spheres for psychological health care needs. Within the 2014 article "Finding Healthcare Support in Online Communities: An Exploration of the Evolution and Efficacy of Virtual Support Groups," authors Donna Davis and Willemien Calitz note how Internet communities provide psychological and medical support for various marginalized identities. Within one study, the researchers note that "more than 152 healthcare support groups in [the massively multiplayer online video game] *Second Life*" treat various health care concerns, including "the Transgender Resource Center that provided support for gender identity issues" among transgender gamers (D. Davis et al. 6). *Second Life's* Resource Center serves as a self-cultivated sphere for transgender users to discuss their medical, psychological, and sociocultural transitioning experiences, and in the process, share their autobiographical narratives, and build camaraderie with their fellow transgender gamers. Indeed, the Internet provides an institutional communal sphere in which discourse merges with psychological support and solidarity. As Eve Shapiro remarks within her work *Gender Circuits: Bodies and Identities in a Technological Age*, transgender users find a form of kinship within online communities, which is often unavailable offline. "Just couldn't resist sharing my *elation* at having found [a transgender sup-

port group community]!” one user remarks, stating, “I’ve been a t-something as long as i can recall, but never had much hope of meeting anyone else” (Shapiro 107). The Internet bridges isolated transgender individuals and connects these users through their shared embodied experiences. In turn, these transgender individuals build online discourses by using life experiences as a foundation for digital solidarity. As a revolutionary form of information sharing, the Internet provides medical and psychological support for transgender individuals, and creates inclusionary social spheres cultivated by transgender users.

Multimedia narratives on transgender identification also directly portray the hegemonic relationships found between institutional structures and transgender individuals. Within Eveline Kilian’s essay, “Claiming Space: Transgender Visibility in the Arts,” Kilian discusses cinema’s ability to juxtapose institutional power with embodied transgender lived experiences. While dissecting the 1999 film *Gendernauts*, Kilian notes that academic scholar Sandy Stone, as a “gender expert” and “a well-known gender theorist,” successfully “points out the restrictions and insufficiencies of the dominant gender discourse” while simultaneously “[depathologizing] and [normalizing] transgenderism” (Kilian 91, 92). *Gendernauts* juxtaposes cinematic portrayals of transgender lived experiences with Stone’s academic theories on transgender identification. Indeed, Stone’s academic credentials reinforce her expert analysis on *Gendernauts*’s subject matter; the film utilizes her academic lens in order to validate the film’s portrayal of transgender individuals, as well as their own lived experiences. Likewise, interactive narratives embody the complex relationship found between transgender individuals and public institutions and expose these institutional dynamics for socio-cultural critique. Within Lucas Pope’s 2013 video game, *Papers, Please*, the developer explores the administrative role that political institutions play in cultivating or denying transgender access to national institutions. Pope casts the player as a Cold War era border administrator, and presents a narrative in which the player’s nation-state, Arstotzka, relies on sex-based gender identification policies for admittance. The Arstotzkan government grants the player a variety of invasive decisions in administering the cissexist sex-binary, including comparing a subject’s gender appearance to their passport sex and taking full-frontal imagery of the subject’s genitals (Pope). Pope’s narrative encourages the player

to question the morality of denying institutional access to gender-non-conforming individuals by portraying the sheer invasiveness of gender interrogation and genital exposure (Pope). As an interactive narrative, *Papers, Please* casts the player into an administrative dichotomy where the player must choose between either accepting transgender individuals or reinforcing Arstotzka's transphobic administrative policies. Pope engages the player with these difficult choices, and cultivates a narrative that examines the complex political, moral, and ethical dilemmas that appear within transphobic institutional structures. Indeed, contemporary multimedia narratives embrace the nuances of transgender lived experiences when content creators analyze public institutional structures' authoritarian role over transgender identities.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the West, administrative policies that impose the sex-based gender binary reinforce transphobic and transmisogynistic hegemonies within institutional structures. From medical colleges to bathroom accommodations, institutions across the United States often utilize sex-based discriminatory policies freely and deny transgender individuals the opportunity to access gender-segregated institutional accommodations. However, institutions are susceptible to change, and institutional administrators who challenge transphobic policies provide the necessary critical foundation for reclamation within American academic, medical, judicial, political, and governmental spheres. Although contemporary American society and culture continues to struggle with accepting transgender identities, reclaiming institutions acts as the first step towards sociocultural reform by cultivating inclusionary institutional structures for activism and discourse among transgender individuals and their allies.

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A Constant Evolution: Redefining Dance in the Broadway Musical

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Abstract: As one of the newest genres of stage entertainment, the American musical theatre is still evolving as it attempts to find its artistic niche. With the integration of dance, starting with Oklahoma! in 1943, views on the art form were radically shifted as the distinction between musical theatre and the dance world continually become harder to define. By using case studies emphasizing liminal moments and narrative on some of the most pivotal dance musicals in Broadway history, including West Side Story, A Chorus Line, and Movin' Out, the argument can be made that by innovating dance on the Broadway stage, a more complex art form has emerged. This allows for greater narrative complexity, as dance continues to redefine how a story can be presented on the stage.

INTRODUCTION

The role of dance in the Broadway Musical has evolved constantly from its inception; however, the Broadway musical has always remained a truly American artistic invention. Derived from the European model of the opera, specifically, the sub-genre known as the light opera, the American musical comedy aims to tell a story through the integration of song, dialogue, and dance. The integrated musical did not start out this integrated. The use of dance slowly became part of the Broadway stage, debuting as part of Florenz Ziegfeld Jr. and his vaudeville-esque Follies to becoming the driving force behind such musicals as 42nd Street and Newsies in which the plot is dependent on the narrative being told through dance. In the early 1900s, dance on Broadway was limited to background spectacle. However, with the introduction of *Oklahoma!* in 1943, dance began to be used as a method to help tell the story within a musical.

This integration was solidified as a major component of the American musical theatre with the Leonard Bernstein musical *West Side Story*, which was choreographed by New York City Ballet Master in Chief, Jerome Robbins. The more complex integration of dance on the Broadway stage following this show gave rise to successful commer-

cial careers of many other classically trained choreographers like Agnes de Mille and Twyla Tharp. This integration of dance into the musical radically shifted critical views of an art form and continues to redefine the American musical theatre scene with shows being categorized as musicals despite the absence of dialogue or musical narrative to advance a story, like Tharp's *Movin' Out* or the revue-style show *Fosse*. Those shows push the boundaries of what defines a musical, much like the integration of song and dance had been doing years before. Because the American musical idiom is a relatively new art form in comparison with more established modes, like opera, it is still rapidly evolving, finding its permanent niche in the performing arts world. What becomes less easily identifiable then is where the line between dance concert and musical theatre is and why dance has become such a vital part of this integrated musical idea, altering the trajectory of an entire art form.

DANCE IN THE GOLDEN AGE OF BROADWAY

The renaissance of dance on Broadway happened between 1943 and 1968 in what is known as the Golden Age of Broadway. To fully understand the impact that dance has had on the American theatre today, it is important to note how dance originally started to carve out the landscape of the integrated musical in the 40s and 50s. In her analysis of the Golden Age and its genre and structure, Kim H. Kowalke describes how advances in the effectiveness of the book (meaning the plot and dialogue of the show) and the score (meaning the music) presented the genre with massive strides toward creating a more plot-focused form of entertainment. The genre of the American musical was stagnant before the Golden Age's start in 1943 with the emergence of the musical play *Oklahoma!*. The show broke the mold of the typical musical comedy of the time, framing itself in a more serious sub-genre titled the "musical play" (Kowalke 150). What made *Oklahoma!* really special, however, was the choreography of Agnes de Mille and her use of a "dream ballet." Mixing a more classical ballet style with western American dance conventions, the choreography explored the emotional life of Laurie, the female lead, and the love triangle she is caught in the middle of. The new ideal American musical had formed and the musical genre was well on its way to becoming the model by which it is now most recognized. In her discussion of revivals of Golden Age musicals, Kowalke underlines

Oklahoma!'s impact on the theatre, stating that, "no pre-Golden Age show—not even *Show Boat* has been successfully revived on Broadway... without undergoing major revisions to bring it into closer conformity with the conventions of the post-*Oklahoma!* musical" (134). The dance musical redefined the model for success on Broadway, because it added another layer, dance, to the compound musical form already consisting of music and book. This idea of the fully integrated piece reinforced the artistic idea of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or "total work of art," a term coined by opera composer Richard Wagner that was used in the 19th century to describe the ideal integrated piece of art: a successful collection of elements working equally toward a singular artistic statement.

Up until the Golden Age, musicals had been seen as a waning art form. Of the pre-Golden Age musicals, Kowalke explains that the disjointedness of the revue-style show that was dominant meant that "audiences expected little more than entertainment; drama and music critics alike treated musical theatre as an inherently inferior genre" (145). However, with the looming permanent integration of dance as a necessary part of the musical comedy, the quality of the book and the score of a show had to be upped as well because the introduction of dance into the musical forced all aspects of a production to become more sophisticated and to integrate toward a completely plot-driven show. Before this introduction of dance, the music, dance, and dialogue of a show were looked at as separate parts. One element could be removed and the show would more or less still make sense. However, once dance became an element inclusive of all the others, the book and score of a show had to become just as inclusive. Writers began to modify their new shows, tailoring songs or scenes to "specific characters living in a specific place at a specific moment in American history" (Kowalke 150). However, as Kowalke explains, "the elevation of dance (from its traditional functions as novelty, spectacle, or mere occasion for displaying the legs of chorus girls) to near-equality with music, lyrics, and book advancing plot and revealing character occurred only gradually" (134). The integration of dance was not instantaneous after *Oklahoma!*, but only became solidified as a driving force of theatre in 1957 with the opening of *West Side Story*.

ADAPTING THE GENRE TO CONFRONT THE LIMINAL
The integration of dance as this third form of audience communication

within a musical brought about many challenges, and the largest of these was how a director and/or choreographer handled “liminal moments” in the show. These liminal moments can be defined as moments of transition when either song, dance, or spoken dialogue end and another begins. They prove to be especially difficult with the introduction of dance in a musical because now the audience has to seamlessly transition into believing that the dancing flows right out of the spoken dialogue or from a stagnant verse in a song. In her examination of transitional moments in musical theatre, Mary Jo Lodge explains that the transitional moment “profoundly changes the moment that came before when the participants were communicating in some way other than dance” (77). This shift is jarring to an audience unless a director creates an atmosphere where dance happens in a realistic context. This is why the Golden Age of Broadway saw a rise in the number of director-choreographers, or persons who took on the responsibilities of both job titles in order to further integrate dance into a show. Choreographers worked to establish in the opening number, often the expositional element of the musical, that the main communicative mode of the play would be movement. Kowalke calls this exposition of the show “the single most decisive moment in a musical: the audience must be immediately engaged by an intriguing and intelligible exposition of what the evening holds in store” (171). This exposition not only establishes the main themes of the piece but does so through dance, using the complex interrelationships in the choreography between the characters on stage as a means of establishing a context within which to put the show that follows.

No other show captured this immediate engagement with an audience more effectively than *West Side Story*. The musical is a loose, modern adaptation of the classic Shakespearean tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*. In writing an exposition for the show, the musically inclined Bernstein opted to utilize a prologue, much like the classic “two houses, both alike in dignity” prologue found at the beginning of *Romeo and Juliet*. It would set the mood for the piece and introduce the narrative themes through dance rather than use an overture that would introduce important musical themes. The overture was the accepted convention of the time, as it was believed that audiences responded better to numbers in a show that they had been aurally introduced to previously. The “Prologue” of *West Side Story*, much like the Shakespearean prologue,

establishes two feuding families within a limited regional area, using percussive choreography to depict two gangs approaching each other on the street, battling one another for control of their territory (*West Side Story*). It is a typical day in the life of two young gangs of the Upper West Side of New York City, setting the scene for the rest of the musical. This prologue, because of its departure from the standards of a musically thematic overture, became one of the most important moments in musical theatre history, cementing the effectiveness of dance in the theatrical canon. Lodge explains that, “shows that begin with a focus on dance (*West Side Story* (1957) is the obvious example here) often struggle less with embracing their later dance moments, since the musical immediately establishes a convention that dance is the primary way in which the people of the musical communicate” (79). By using dance as a main catalyst for narrative, Robbins was able to move through liminal moments with ease because the audience was already in a mindset that dance was the main mode of the piece.

DANCE AND THE NARRATIVE

While the basic narrative plot of *West Side Story* and *Romeo and Juliet* are alike, Ryan J. Merrill, analyzing the similarities between the show and the play, states that the “thematic concepts, rather than plot details, embody the major differences between the work[s]” (104). He further explains that though the prologues of both pieces establish the same narrative information, “in *Romeo*, the chorus informs us that these ‘two households, both alike in dignity’ are on more or less equal standing ... The Jets and Sharks of *WSS* are most definitely not alike.” (104). By separating the two “households” into a gangs of Americans vs. Puerto Ricans, narrative tension is reinforced through a dichotomy in class and ethnicity. This dichotomy of inequality was most effectively expressed through dance because, through movement, the audience can see a visual representation of the tension between these two gangs. While it is a slight departure from the original Shakespearean narrative, the “Prologue” establishes the two feuding groups through highly stylized, balletic movements, atypical of gang members of the day, creating a paradox between these tough, street-wise guys who are dancing choreography normally intended for a more high class environment. The piece not only sets the mood for the show, but also provides an impactful narrative, introducing

the rival gangs and their relationship not only with each other but within the hierarchy of the gangs, as evidenced by the erratic, syncopated score provided by Bernstein. The “Prologue” takes the idea of the dream ballet established by de Mille in *Oklahoma!* and expounds upon it by placing it into real life physical context within the reality of the play.

This profoundly narrative use of dance unleashed a wave of new dance conventions and norms on the Broadway stage as dance slowly gained momentum following Robbins’ work, becoming an expected part of any Broadway show. As the Broadway musical continued to evolve post-Golden Age, musicals began to push the boundaries of the then-defined dance musical further, most notably seen in the Pulitzer Prize-winning 1975 musical, *A Chorus Line*. The concept for the show was groundbreaking. Director-choreographer and creator of the show, Michael Bennett, used a process described by Zachary Dunbar as “psychological therapy” (165) to create a semi-biographical show centering around a group of dancers auditioning for a new Broadway musical. They are put through the psychological wringer while the audience gains insight into the characters as individuals. Bennett broke down the constructs of liminal moments by placing the show in a world of dancers who are aware that they are dancing. Lodge goes to describe this type of performance as one that “eliminates the need for elaborate justifications in the integrated musical since the dance is a performance within a show, the characters recognize that, and the plot calls for it” (86).

The dancing further breaks down now-established constructs of the integrated dance musical by allowing the dance to no longer further the plot, but rather just to enforce a specific moment by placing it into the context of dancers who are purposefully dancing in a realistic scenario. By breaking down these constructs in the finale of the show, through a number titled “One,” Bennett creates a riveting moment when the narrative is completely suspended. Describing the moment, Bennett states that, “you’re going to get to know all these dancers as individuals and care about each one. Then, at the very end of the play [. . .] they’re going to blend. They’re going to do everything you’ve ever seen anyone in a chorus line do. It’s going to be the most horrifying moment you will ever experience in the theatre” (Dunbar 155). The dancers in “One” become just that: one singular chorus of dancers, indistinguishable from the others. The number contains a variety of old-fashioned theatrical

dance conventions including a kickline and a moving circle (“Barishnikov on Broadway”). By utilizing dance in a modern musical in such an old-fashioned way, one could argue that dance had reverted back to its roots and no longer held its own in the integrated musical idiom, but the success of the show (it became the longest running musical of its time) proves otherwise. By bending the definition of the dance musical to contain numbers that are just purely entertainment pieces alongside those that served a narrative purpose, the landscape of the American musical and its affinity to dance continued to shift.

A NEW EMPHASIS ON ‘JUST’ DANCE

This shift, led in part by Bennett’s innovations, paved the way for dance shows that were more experimental theatre than true book musicals. No longer was the narrative aspect of a musical essentially the independent factor for success, but neither was the entertainment aspect. The two could coexist, and shows like *A Chorus Line* forced more and more audiences to rethink the meaning of the musical. Perhaps no other genre of musical has pushed this rethinking of the boundaries of Broadway dance more than the “dansical.” The term was most used around the creation of the Twyla Tharp musical, *Movin’ Out*, in 2004, a show based on and using the music of Billy Joel in which the characters of the story don’t sing, but rather tell the plot of the story through dance. While examining how Tharp established the “dansical” as a dominant diversion on Broadway, Pamyly A. Stiehl defines the term as “1) . . . a dance-dominant production created by a choreographer auteur and intended as a musical theatre work for Broadway; 2) The dansical moves choreography/dance to the forefront where it dominates (and sometimes diminishes) the score and libretto, while the production’s star is the choreographer” (86). In this case, the music used in the “dansical” was not there to help advance a plot, as there was a lack of a book or libretto. Instead, the music simply served to supplement the dancing. In place of a plot, the emotional themes of each number are what keep the audience engaged and propel the piece along.

While a “dansical” lacks a book or plot, the numbers are successful together. This highly modern sub-genre of the musical is a hotly debated form, and many prominent figures in the theatre industry argue that without a book or real plot, the show simply becomes a dance

concert set on a Broadway stage. However, the endurance of “dansicals” as a part of the evolved musical theatre once more proves otherwise, as more and more strictly-dance pieces are presented on the Broadway stage under the genre of musical, merging the concert and commercial dance worlds. Stiehl explains that, “Twyla Tharp provided the prototype, that is, the hybrid domain of ‘serious’ dance and ‘populist’ divergence, while her authoritative and meditative voice proclaimed and positioned the dansical . . . as a potent, provocative, popular, and proven musical form on the American stage” (Stiehl 106). Based on this new form of theatre, popularized by Tharp, shows like *Fosse* garnered much attention on Broadway. While *Movin’ Out* took the narrative elements of dance and presented them in a new way, Fosse presented dance in more of a revue-form.

The producers of *Fosse* billed the show as a musical, and it contained a selection of the legendary Broadway choreographer Bob Fosse’s most successful and popular numbers performed by a company of highly trained dancers. One such number, “Crunchy Granola Suite,” is a brilliant example of the modern “dansical” piece, with a company of dancers dancing with no clear narrative structure while two singers sing in the foreground, which reinforces the idea that the music in a “dansical” only exists to supplement the dancing. This dance-for-the-sake-of-dance concept has been long established in the world of music scholarship with the idea of absolute music, coined by Eduard Hanslick. Unpacking Hanslick’s meaning within the phrase, Sanna Pederson explains that absolute music is “a composition whose means, form, and content are ‘purely’ musical, which therefore requires no extra-musical assistance in order to establish its being and its meaning” (250). The dance contained within the “dansical” form exists to mirror that musical idea.

Numbers like “Crunchy Granola Suite” exist just to be dance, and adding extra layers like a book or plot on top of them diminishes their absoluteness, muddying their “pure” being. According to Sanna, “absolute music was only music and nothing else, and that when it was joined with text it was no longer only music, no longer pure and absolute” (254). If a “dansical” were to add a narrative element to the piece, it would lessen the absolute quality of the dance within it. Because of the success of these absolute-dance pieces, the “dansical” has now taken its place among the great dance-oriented sub-genres of the American

musical, redefining, yet again, what extremes of dance can be truthfully presented under the category of the Broadway musical.

THE MULTIFACETED MUSICAL OF TODAY

No matter if it is clearly placed in the context of a book-musical or an absolute performance piece, theatre is, by definition, a way of expression of a certain narrative or storytelling viewpoint. While more standard musicals emphasize the importance of the narrative, shows like *Fosse* and *Movin' Out* emphasize that narrative storytelling through vignettes within each individual number of the show. Susanne Langer approaches the role of dance in narrative with a critical eye, analyzing it as a virtual art form. In analyzing the works of Langer, Colleen Dunagan breaks down her theory of “virtual gesture” and “virtual power,” saying that the concept of virtual information applies to any information that is inputted without the use of language, encapsulating all visual arts, dance included (Dunagan 30). She then goes on to explain that choreography has a virtual power because, “human movement carries significance in that it is part of how I enact who I am in the world. Movement’s ability to reference larger concepts...becomes a link between physical sensations as they reside in the movement and dynamic concepts as they exist in the world” (30). This explanation of the philosophy of the human intuitive understanding of dance is evident when examining the “Prologue” to *West Side Story*. In the number, the way that the rival gangs, the Sharks and the Jets, use pedestrian movements, such as snaps or chasing each other, connects to the audience’s basic human intuition of what those movements mean, creating a narrative element that was absent from the piece and giving rise to conflict created by the interplay of those identifiable movements. Furthering the explanation of this, Dunagan states, “in order to imbue choreography with power and meaning, dance relies on normative understandings, implicit or explicit, of how we move through the world” (31). This helps cement the idea of the narrative purpose of the “Prologue,” that the show will center around these two rival, feuding gangs and the resulting relationships that form from that rivalry.

When applied to “One” from *A Chorus Line*, this idea is even more applicable. The song is at the same time a summary and a deconstruction of the entire show that preceded this final number. By intro-

ducing the characters one by one, the audience intuitively sees them as individuals as they have for the entire show, but unbeknownst to them, that is the last time they will see them that way. However, when they all begin to move as one, their movements become more polished and the identities of the characters become blurred. This one number is a summation of the plot of the entire show, which helps “One” to subconsciously have a greater impact on the audience member through the “virtual power,” or virtual input of the choreography. This same idea can also be seen in non-narrative pieces, like “Crunchy Granola Suite,” because the way the dancers joyously interact with each other and kinesthetically move through the space gives an implicit understanding to the audience of the emotion of the piece, and that emotion becomes the voice of the dance, rather than a narrative voice. The goal of musical theatre is to convey a message or story. That story is mostly told through dialogue, but once a situation rises to an emotional level where language alone is not sufficient enough to carry all of a character’s meaning, the communicative mode switches to song. Dance scholars argue that there is a need for a higher level of communication, however, because, “human beings have experiences that are conceptual, intelligent, and not readily attached to verbal descriptions” (Dunagan 36). Therefore, once a song can no longer contain the experience that it is trying to communicate, the mode switches to dance, a kinesthetic communicative mode, where the full extent of the human body can be used to narrate a situation to the audience. As the author Victor Hugo once said, “Music expresses that which cannot be put into words and cannot remain silent” (Malloch & Trevarthen 1). This is true, if not more so, when dance is substituted in the place of music. With the rise of more emotionally intelligent pieces that continue to push narrative boundaries on Broadway, the emotionally expressed message of these pieces will rise to such a strong place that they cannot be communicated by any mode but dance, thus leading to even more exciting and innovative dance musical sub-genres that will only continue to redefine and revolutionize the American Broadway Musical.

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