

# *Clio*

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# *Clio*

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# *Clio*

## **Editor-in-Chief**

Vivian Tang

## **Editorial Staff**

Kyle Brislan   James G. Juarez  
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Anjelica Hall   Darian McMillan  
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Department of History, Tahoe Hall 3080  
California State University, Sacramento  
6000 J Street  
Sacramento, CA 95819-6059



# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

I am honored to present the twenty-eighth volume of *Clio*, the student-run, award-winning history journal of California State University, Sacramento (CSUS). This year, we aimed to not only maintain the high standards set by earlier editions but extend our collaborative efforts to produce a publication that reflects our diverse campus community. We received an impressive batch of submissions from undergraduate and graduate students as well as recent alumni, from both our standard and public history programs. Our contributors come from all walks of life, from fresh graduates to seasoned professionals, with many pursuing – or having pursued – interdisciplinary studies, and dedicating their careers to teaching and education. In their works, they express a shared commitment to “unsilencing” the past and foregrounding historically-marginalized voices; these are narratives of struggle and resistance, of individuals and groups fighting for justice and inclusion, of movements towards a more equitable society. Now, more than ever, these stories and perspectives are important.

This volume highlights those themes, tracing their iterations from a transnational to a local scale. Some of the article topics include Russian-American anarchism, the feminist art movement, and indigenous decolonization. Our special feature is a photo essay about Lillie Mae King, an African American community organizer in San Francisco during the 1960s. Overall, these works represent the authors’ own diligent research and writing, as well as their commitment to working with our editorial staff over the course of the semester – both of which merit recognition. Likewise, our dedicated editors worked with the authors to ensure the most polished version of their work for publication and their individual efforts also deserve acknowledgement.

However, this journal would not have been possible without the generous support of the faculty, staff, students, and alumni at Sacramento State University. First, I would like to express my appreciation for Dr. Aaron J. Cohen, our faculty advisor for *Clio*, who has guided us through the process of creating a professional quality academic journal. Additionally, I would like to thank the History Department, which has served an integral role throughout the journal’s various stages, and the College of Arts & Letters, which sponsored “An Evening with *Clio*” at the CSUS Festival of the Arts. Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to the students and alumni who continue to support us. In many ways, *Clio* is the result of cumulative efforts of the Sacramento State community, so we hope that our fellow members will enjoy it.

**Vivian Tang**  
Editor-in-Chief

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# IN MEMORIAM

## **Kenneth N. Owens**

June 6, 1933 - September 10, 2017

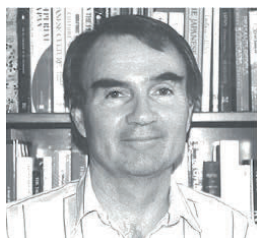


Dr. Kenneth N. Owens passed away on Sunday, September 10, 2017. He was 84 years old. Dr. Owens was born in Tacoma, Washington on June 6, 1933, and attended Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon, and the University of Minnesota where he received his doctorate as a Woodrow Wilson Scholar. Dr. Owens had a distinguished teaching career, including over 30 years in the History faculty at California State University, Sacramento, where he was

instrumental in the creation of a degree in Public History, helped found the California Council for the Promotion of History and institute a joint doctoral program in History with UC Santa Barbara. He authored a number of books on the American West, including his final work *Empire Maker*, a biography of the founder of Russian settlements in colonial Alaska and Northern California. Dr. Owens is survived by his wife of 63 years, Sally Owens, his daughters Victoria Owens and Melissa Owens, as well as a large extended family and many friends.

## **Thomas D. Swift**

February 7, 1934 - September 29, 2016



Dr. Thomas D. Swift passed on Thursday, September 29, 2016. He was 82 years old. He was an integral member of the Sacramento State community, teaching from 1966 to 1998. As a professor, he taught classes on Asian history, including leading many summer student tours to Japan and China from 1973 to 1985. Dr. Swift was known for being a caring teacher and active in the Sacramento State community. He also

taught for many years in the popular senior educational program Renaissance Society, which still meets on Fridays at Sacramento State University. He also took leadership roles in community service organizations: League of Women Voters, Congress of California Seniors, fibromyalgia support and medical advocacy groups, Hmong Women's Heritage Association, and groups promoting world peace and cultural exchange. He was the son of Anice and Duane Swift. He had two siblings—Winston (deceased) and June Swift Ewing. Dr. Swift is survived by family, colleagues, former students, and friends. Dr. Swift impacted multiple generations and will be missed.

# CLIO STAFF

## Vivian Tang

Vivian Tang is currently pursuing an MA in history at California State University, Sacramento. She graduated *cum laude*, with BA's in history and film studies, from the University of California, Davis in 2013. Her research interests include transatlantic and intellectual history, postcolonial and diasporic studies, and the intersections of race, labor and citizenship. She works as a tutor for historical research and writing, and a workshop facilitator for the History Series at the Peer and Academic Resource Center (PARC). After completing her MA, she plans to pursue a career in teaching at the university-level.

## Kyle Brislan

Kyle Brislan is currently pursuing an MA in History with special interests in Russian studies and transnational radicalism at California State University, Sacramento. In 2014, he graduated *magna cum laude* from Hawaii Pacific University with a BS in Diplomacy and Military Studies. He is the recipient of the George and Eleanor Craft Graduate Scholarship in History, Rose-Christenson History Research Travel Scholarship, and Faculty Graduate Writing Prize in History at Sacramento State. His current research focuses on the anarchist experience in Revolutionary Russia and the cultural effects of radical discourse on ideological heterogeneity. After completing his M.A., Kyle plans to continue his education at the doctoral level, where he seeks to expand upon his current understanding of Russian and anarchist history

## James G. Juarez

James G. Juarez graduated from Sacramento State University in Spring 2014 with a double major BA in Social Science and History, and a minor in Anthropology. His MA Thesis scrutinizes the interconnections of twentieth-century eugenicists' actions, ideologies, and relationships. James spent his undergraduate and graduate academic careers honing his craft of teaching and developing his pedagogy, by working alongside several Sacramento State faculty as a teaching assistant and/or course grader. He plans to apply to several local community college campuses for teaching or instructional assistant positions. James hopes to one day create and teach courses on the history of video games and the history of anime.

## **Jonathan Fletcher**

Jonathan Fletcher is a graduate student at California State University, Sacramento with academic interests in the History of Ideas, International Relations, as well as social and cultural histories. In 2015, Jonathan received his BA in History from Sacramento State. As far as current research projects, Jonathan has mainly focused on the bonds between the American people and the federal government to gain a better understanding of the existing relationship. After completing his MA, Jonathan plans to continue his education at the doctoral level.

## **Spencer Gomez**

Spencer Gomez is a graduate student at Sacramento State University with academic interests in World History, Imperialism, and Decolonization. In 2014, Spencer graduated from Chico State University with a BA in History and a minor in Sustainability. While attending Sacramento State University, Spencer has received the George and Eleanor Craft Graduate Scholarship, Faculty Collaboration Grant, and ASI United States Armed Forces Scholarship for his graduate work. Some of his other research interests include, the early Cold War and borderland histories. After completing his MA in History, Spencer plans on pursuing a doctoral degree in the field of Latin America.

## **Anjelica Hall**

Anjelica Hall is an eldritch horror pursuing a BA in History with an expected graduation date in spring of 2018. Her areas of academic interest include Imperial Russia, Native American history, and medieval Western Europe. Upon completion of her BA, she intends to pursue an MA in public history.

## **Darian McMillan**

Darian McMillan is an undergraduate student at Sacramento State pursuing a BA in History. Her graduation date is Fall 2018. Her historical interests are in U.S political history and Soviet Russian history. After graduation, Darian intends to teach high school history.

## **Megan Wilson**

Megan Wilson is an undergraduate student at CSU Sacramento who will not be done with school for a very long time. (Thank you, double major, for taking twice as long.) Being descended from a half-Comanche parent (but never formally made part of the Comanche tribe or introduced to Comanche culture), remembering Indigenous American histories and promoting their civil rights is a cause very dear to Wilson's heart.

# *THE VOICE OF LABOR:* VLADIMIR “BILL” SHATOV AND THE UNION OF RUSSIAN WORKERS OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, 1906-1917

**Kyle Brislan**

**Abstract:** As historians transitioned from social to cultural history, anarchists experienced a subtle, but noticeable, resurgence in historical literature. Although many subsumed its various schools of thought and correlating organizations into a single anarchist entity, the voices of those lost in the fringes of history began to return to its pages. However, for Russian anarchists, little has been examined since the death of historian Paul Avrich. This article seeks to provide a modern interpretation of Russian-American anarchism by placing its historical evolution within a broader sociopolitical context. It explores the transnational forces that engendered a distinct Russian-American anarchism and illustrates the conditions that shaped the decisions of immigrant Russian anarchists during a period of heightened anarchist persecution. The Union of Russian Workers of the United States and Canada was more than an anarchist organization, it was the quintessence of Russian-American anarchism in the early-twentieth century.

*“Only the Anarcho-Syndicalist revolution can lead the proletariat and the whole of mankind on the road to true freedom, equality and brotherhood.”<sup>1</sup>*

Anarchism emerged in the United States beginning in the late-nineteenth century. Class disparity undoubtedly constituted the main impetus behind the development of the anarchist movement. Immigrants, who fled their native lands for better working conditions and higher wages, represented the heart of the American anarchist community, as the polarity of the American capitalist system caused thousands of immigrant laborers to adopt ideologies based upon egalitarian principles. Indeed, American capitalism ultimately created the American immigrant anarchist.<sup>2</sup> However, the Russian-American anarchist movement of the early-twentieth century was not merely a product of American capitalist structures; it was

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<sup>1</sup> Grigorii Maksimov, *Program of Anarcho-Syndicalism* (Chicago: Golos Truzhenika, 1927), 10.

<sup>2</sup> Kenyon Zimmer, *Immigrants Against the State: Yiddish and Italian Anarchism in America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 1-2. Zimmer conclusively demonstrates that most immigrants “were not yet anarchists when they arrived in America” (1). Instead, they adopted the ideology because of American socioeconomic conditions.



an amalgam of transplanted ideas and socioeconomic discontent created by tsarist oppression and the pressures of industrial market capitalism. Russian immigrants to North America—who envisaged an escape into a capitalist system of opportunity and prosperity—encountered a system that was oppressive in its own unique way. A cultural legacy of Russian conventions developed by tsarist tyranny fused with immigrants’ new ideas and experiences assimilated in the United States, producing a distinct Russian-American anarchist ideology. Founded by Vladimir “Bill” Shatov in 1912, this neoteric interpretation of anarchism blended Bakuninism with syndicalism in an unprecedented manner, thus introducing a new variant of the radical ideology to American culture. Shatov embodied this new ideology by establishing the Union of Russian Workers of the United States and Canada (UORW). The story of Shatov is thus the story of the UORW; it is a history of intercontinental migration, governmental oppression, transnational radicalism, and Russian-American anarchism in the early-twentieth century.

The outcome of the 1905 Revolution compelled thousands of Russians to emigrate. The results of Bloody Sunday were emphatically unremarkable; the petition presented by Father Gapon and the Winter Palace demonstrators did not improve industrial conditions and, if anything, highlighted the working class’ inability to generate change in the country. While some Russians fled to other European countries, many decided to relocate to the United States. The United States not only guaranteed political freedoms that were unheard of in the Russian Empire, but also granted new opportunities for employment outside of serfdom and agricultural production. Victor Lynn—one of the thousands of Russians who migrated to the United States after the 1905 Revolution—explains that most Russian émigrés were “young, unmarried, and came to America . . . to earn money and then go back and buy land and some cows.”<sup>3</sup> The United States offered employment opportunities for Russians, ones unprecedented in their industrially-emergent homeland.

Between 1905 and 1906, 9,560 Russians immigrated to the United States.<sup>4</sup> This Russian diaspora included peasants, agricultural laborers, industrial workers, and craftsmen; peasants and workers represented 89 percent of Russian immigrants, while skilled craftsmen only accounted for 3.6 percent.<sup>5</sup> These immigrants established “close-knit ‘ethnic’ neighborhoods with their own shops, theaters, and community organizations” in large industrial centers, such as New York and

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<sup>3</sup> Victor Lynn, interview by Paul Avrich in Paul Avrich, *Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 369.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce and Labor, *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1910, Thirty-Third Number*, by the Bureau of Statistics (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1911), 82.

<sup>5</sup> Dirk Hoeder, ed., *The Immigrant Labor Press in North America, 1840s-1970s: An Annotated Bibliography*, vol. 2 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), 110. Out of the 89 percent, peasants and agricultural laborers represented 54.8 percent of Russian immigrants, while industrial workers represented the remaining 34.2 percent.

Pennsylvania.<sup>6</sup> While immigrant Russians managed to gain employment in their new country of residence, they continued to experience poor working conditions in exchange for low pay. Nevertheless, the United States appealed to thousands of immigrants, who not only dreamed of better working conditions and higher wages, but also desired to experience American political and economic freedom.

Although the United States was indeed a more industrially mature nation, immigrant workers discovered that capitalist freedoms did not necessarily mean better working conditions. While factory owners saw exponential capital gains during the Gilded Age and, later, Progressive Era, the working class dealt with long work hours, perilous working conditions, and a lack of workers' representation. The development of the factory system did not benefit the worker and owner equally. The invention of "labor contracts reconciled freedom and authority in the workplace," thus preventing both the government and workers' unions from interfering with work relations between owner and laborer.<sup>7</sup> Liberty of contract discouraged the United States government from regulating economic commerce and improving work environments, as it challenged the notion of freedom—the laborer's freedom to "choose his employment and working conditions" and the factory owner's freedom "to utilize his property as he saw fit."<sup>8</sup> Replacing workers little concerned factory owners as thousands of immigrants arrived in the United States seeking employment every year.

As immigrants continued to experience economic exploitation throughout the country, the desire for labor reforms spread throughout ethnic communities. Dangerous working conditions and low wages generated a distinct labor movement in the United States. Built upon socialist ideals, labor organizations not only attracted working-class immigrants but also middle-class progressives and radical revolutionaries. Yet, labor organizations, such as the American Federation of Labor, remained exclusive to skilled white-male workers. While their political agendas focused on workplace reform, these organizations neglected the immigrant laborer. Although some organizations, such as the Industrial Workers of the World, accepted immigrant workers, most Russian immigrants "preferred to join 'Russian' groups," thus limiting them to the Russian Social-Democratic Society—the only Russian political organization in the United States at the time.<sup>9</sup> However, over the next decade, the Russian diaspora created by the 1905 Revolution forever changed the Russian-American labor movement.

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<sup>6</sup> Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty: An American History*, 4th ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2014), 689.

<sup>7</sup> Foner, 625.

<sup>8</sup> Foner, 625.

<sup>9</sup> Zimmer, *Immigrants*, 116; Hoeder, 111.

Among the 5,814 Russian émigrés that arrived in the United States in 1906 was Vladimir Sergeyevich Shatov.<sup>10</sup> Born in 1887 into a Jewish family, Shatov not only completed gymnasium, but attended a technical institute before he fled “Russia to avoid imprisonment.”<sup>11</sup> Described by the journalist Walter Duranty as “a big burly fellow,” Shatov was an anarchist and a political refugee who left Russia after the 1905 Revolution—only to return in 1917 after the abdication of Nicholas II.<sup>12</sup> Following his immigration to the United States, Shatov adopted the sobriquet “Bill” as his new American name.<sup>13</sup> Characteristic of radical immigrants, Shatov continued to support anarchism and the overthrow of capitalism and government while abroad. By the end of his sojourn, Shatov had organized the Russian labor movement in the United States in an unprecedented manner. Indeed, Bill Shatov not only united thousands of Russian-American workers but also established a unique connection between the Russian labor and anarchist movements in the United States—a connection that shaped Russian labor organization in the country for over a decade.

Residing in New York City, Shatov developed multiple relationships in the anarchist community of the Northeast. Shortly after immigrating, he became a member of the Anarchist Red Cross in New York, as well as a regular lecturer at the Ferrer Center at 107th East Street.<sup>14</sup> Employed “as a labourer, longshoreman, machinist, and printer” during his time in the United States, Shatov “was familiar with the hardships, insecurity, and humiliation that characterize[d] the existence of the immigrant toiler.”<sup>15</sup> A friend of noted anarchists Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, Shatov was considered “a splendid organizer, an eloquent speaker, and a man of courage” by his fellow radicals.<sup>16</sup> Shatov undoubtedly became a familiar face within the radical circle, the epicenter of which was Greenwich Village.

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<sup>10</sup> Department of Commerce and Labor, *Statistical Abstract, 1910*, 82; M. K. Kozybaev, ed., *Alma-Ata entsiklopediia* (Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, 1983), 574; Emma Goldman, *Living My Life*, vol. 2 (New York: Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1931), 595. Emma Goldman claimed that Shatov arrived in the United States in 1907; yet, the official Soviet encyclopedia states that he emigrated in 1906. Considering Shatov was later employed by the Soviet government, this study will continue to assert that he arrived in the United States in 1906.

<sup>11</sup> Kozybaev, 574; Henry Kittredge Norton, *The Far Eastern Republic of Siberia* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1923), 184-185. While there are multiple sources which reference Shatov's sojourn in the United States and, later, role in the development of the Soviet Union, there is a paucity of information detailing his early years in Russia.

<sup>12</sup> Walter Duranty, *I Write As I Please* (New York: Simon Schuster, Inc., 1935), 170.

<sup>13</sup> Manuel Komroff, “Red Days and Nights,” Manuel Komroff Papers, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York, 2.

<sup>14</sup> Leonard D. Abbott, “The Fourth Anniversary of Ferrer's Death,” *Mother Earth*, October 1913, reprinted in *Mother Earth Bulletin 1913-1914*, vol. 8, no. 1 (New York: Greenwood Reprint Corporation, 1968), 238.

<sup>15</sup> Goldman, 595.

<sup>16</sup> Goldman, 595.

Shatov developed intimate relationships with radical activists such as Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, Leonard Abbott, John Reed, and Margaret Sanger.<sup>17</sup> In 1914, Shatov accepted an invitation by Abbott to give a speech at the Ferrer Center in celebration of the centennial of the birth of Mikhail Bakunin—the father of Russian anarchism.<sup>18</sup> The following year, Shatov, Berkman, Goldman, and thirty-three other anarchists produced and signed the *International Anarchist Manifesto on the War*. This document not only denounced World War I but also the anarchists who supported it. Shatov and his fellow radicals contended that “the cause of wars ... rests solely in the existence of the State.”<sup>19</sup> The group called for the “abolition of the State and its organs of destruction” and establishment of an anarchist community.<sup>20</sup> In 1917, Shatov accompanied Berkman as his personal bodyguard during Berkman’s lecture tour that year.<sup>21</sup> Despite Shatov’s enthusiastic support of the anarchist community, his legacy as an anarchist has dwindled throughout history. In actuality, his most remarkable feat was not related to anarchism but, rather, labor organization.

Shatov was an ardent anarchist, yet his capacity for organization is uncharacteristic of the ideology that he represented. While immigrant anarchists commonly established radical periodicals in their native tongue, only a few formed new associations.<sup>22</sup> Instead, most radicals joined larger preexisting organizations, such as: the Industrial Workers of the World, Socialist Party of America, or International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union. In 1907, Shatov, along with three other radicals—A. Rode, Peterson, and Dieproski—”formed a Russian Anarchist Group” in New York City.<sup>23</sup> Within six months, the group welcomed a dozen members and established its official print organ, *Golos Truda* (*The Voice of Labor*).<sup>24</sup> The organization’s growth primarily depended on the distribution of its monthly

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<sup>17</sup> Komroff, “Red Days,” 2; Kenyon Zimmer, “‘The Whole World Is Our Country’: Immigration and Anarchism in The United States, 1885-1940” (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2010), 118. Shatov worked with John Reed and “Big” Bill Haywood during the Paterson Silk Strike Pageant Show. Shatov also printed 10,000 copies of Margaret Sanger’s birth-control pamphlets in Yiddish to not only assist with the distribution costs, but also spread Sanger’s writings among the Jewish community.

<sup>18</sup> Paul Avrich, *The Modern School Movement: Anarchism and Education in the United States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 131.

<sup>19</sup> *International Anarchist Manifesto on the War* (London: The International Anarchist Movement, 1915), 2, accessed 4 February 2017, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org>.

<sup>20</sup> *Anarchist Manifesto*, 3.

<sup>21</sup> Paul and Karen Avrich, Sasha and Emma: The Anarchist Odyssey of Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), 259.

<sup>22</sup> Italian anarchists did establish their own anarchist organization, the *Gruppo Socialista-Anarchico-Rivoluzionario Italiano*.

<sup>23</sup> Edgar B. Speer, “The Russian Workingmen’s Association, sometimes called the Union of Russian Workers (What It Is and How It Operates). [A Bureau of Investigation Internal Report]” (Pittsburgh: Bureau of Investigation, 8 April 1919), 1.

<sup>24</sup> Speer, 1.

newspaper; Agent Edgar Speer explains in his report to the Bureau of Investigation, “through the influence of *Golos Truda* the Anarchist Group succeeded in getting a considerable number of kindred spirits organized into Anarchist Groups in Philadelphia, Penn.; Chicago, Ill.; Brooklyn, NY; and Elizabethport, NJ.”<sup>25</sup> The Russian community’s reception of anarchist ideals implies either a deep resentment against the socioeconomic conditions of the United States or an ethnographic predisposition to accepting radical ideologies. Regardless, Shatov, Rode, Peterson, and Dieproski established the first Russian-American anarchist organization and newspaper in the United States.

Despite the constitutional rights of free speech and freedom of the press, the United States government continuously sought to prevent the spread of anarchism. In March 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt ordered the United States Post Office to cease the distribution of all anarchist newspapers. He contended that the anti-government rhetoric of anarchism threatened the existence of the state and “every effort should be made to hold [anarchists] accountable for an offense far more infamous than that of ordinary murder.”<sup>26</sup> Six months after its initial publication, the New York City Post Office refused to mail *Golos Truda* “on account of its anarchistic character.”<sup>27</sup>

The suppression of the organization’s print organ ultimately forced the anarchists to convene in New York later that year. Shatov, Rode, and their fellow anarchists decided to establish another organization, the Russian Workingmen’s Association.<sup>28</sup> This new organization focused on the unification of Russian workers and the establishment of an anarcho-communist community, but, more importantly, it disguised its anarchist beliefs through labor organization. *Golos Truda* continued to discuss topics related to anarchism and labor organization but under a different publishing company, the Russian Labor Publishers of New York. The organization elected Shatov editor of *Golos Truda*, and Rode secretary and treasurer.<sup>29</sup> Characteristic of anarchists, the group managed to bypass the legislative restraints aimed at stopping the spread of their ideology.

Small membership numbers and the continuous suppression by the United States Post Office hindered the expansion of the Russian Workingmen’s Association. To counteract this stifling situation, the organization held concerts, performances, and dances to raise funds for printing and distributing *Golos Truda*—its primary vehicle for attracting new members. Beginning in 1911, the Russian Workingmen’s Association hosted multiple “Concert-Balls” for their fellow radicals,

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<sup>25</sup> Speer, 1.

<sup>26</sup> “Rout Out Anarchy, Says the President,” *New York Times*, 23 March 1908, reprinted in *Sasha and Emma*, by Paul and Karen Avrich, 201.

<sup>27</sup> Speer, 1.

<sup>28</sup> Speer, 1.

<sup>29</sup> U.S. War Department, War College Division, *Russian Workmen’s Association*, report by the Office of the Chief of Staff (Pittsburgh, 15 April 1917), microform, 4.

laborers, and their families. These events, often held at the Manhattan Lyceum on 66 East 4th Street or Sokol Hall on 525 East 72nd Street in New York City, included music, dancing, and sweet treats.<sup>30</sup> The organization's members became regular contributors to the radical and labor communities of the United States. Despite the government's continuous endeavor to suppress the dissemination of anarchist ideals, class inequality and unfavorable working conditions compelled thousands of workers to adopt anarchist ideals.

In many ways, industrial market capitalism created a distinct Russian-American anarchist movement. In Russia, revolutionaries merely discussed the mobilization of the masses, as the empire was industrially immature and, thus, deemed unfit for a social revolution. However, the United States theoretically embodied the capitalist stage of Marx's theory of history. For immigrating anarcho-communists, American capitalism had, in theory, produced a working class eager for a proletarian revolution. Yet, once arrived, anarcho-communist immigrants such as Shatov encountered a system considerably different than their expectations. The reality of the American labor movement forced immigrant anarchists to reexamine the practicality of anarcho- communism and reassess its applicability.

In 1912, Shatov and the Russian Workingmen's Association hosted a convention in Philadelphia. Anarchists from around the world gathered in the City of Brotherly Love. Among them was Muchin, a delegate from the anarcho-syndicalist community in Paris. Influenced by Muchin, French syndicalists, and the socioeconomic conditions of the United States, Shatov shifted his political alliance, abandoning his anarcho-communist struggle for anarcho-syndicalism.<sup>31</sup> He contended that the change was necessary, "being that America was not yet ripe for Communism, and that the conditions of the working men could be taken care of by syndicalism better than communism."<sup>32</sup> Although there is a paucity of information regarding the purpose of the convention, the presence of Muchin and the French syndicalists at an anarcho-communist meeting does not appear accidental.

Originally developed by French revolutionaries, syndicalism argued for the abolition of government and establishment of a cooperative commonwealth based upon workers' production. Historian Paul Avrich explained syndicalism as a combination of anarchism, Marxism, and trade unionism.<sup>33</sup> Anarcho-syndicalists asserted that justice for the working class "can only come from the organised efforts of the working class themselves."<sup>34</sup> For syndicalists, the social revolution was not achieved through the unification of the lower classes and violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie but was, instead, accomplished through the general strike. Theoretically, the execution of a national general strike would halt the economy, thus ending the

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<sup>30</sup> *Golos Truda*, 1 September 1911, 8, 1 December 1911, 8.

<sup>31</sup> Speer, 2.

<sup>32</sup> U.S. War Department, *Russian Workmen*, 5.

<sup>33</sup> Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 75.

<sup>34</sup> Komroff, *The Russian Problem and Its Solution* (Shanghai: The China Press, 1918), 15.

bourgeoisie's control of production and distribution. According to the anarchist Manuel Komroff, the ideology "place[d] Industrial Unionism first and politics second," thus naturally attracting the anti-political anarchists.<sup>35</sup> Syndicalism offered anarchists a more immediate result for their collective actions, no longer was it pivotal to wait for the masses to coalesce. Instead, anarchists and laborers could unite to not only generate labor reforms but also social and political change on a national and, later, global level.

Although international ideological interchange occurred, early-twentieth-century syndicalists in the United States interpreted and employed syndicalism differently than their French counterparts. While advocates in both countries believed "the general strike was ... the dramatic instrument for wrecking the capitalist system," French syndicalists did not believe in multiple labor organizations and, instead, pushed for a single national entity—a concept that American syndicalists rejected.<sup>36</sup> In "The Development of Syndicalism in America," Louis Levine asserted in 1913 that French syndicalism adapted anarchist doctrine to suit the French labor movement; whereas, syndicalism in America historically embraced socialism.<sup>37</sup> Syndicalism, as with all ideologies, is subject to interpretation and thus contains multiple variants. Naturally, Russians developed their own distinct modification of the ideology, which blended anarchism with syndicalism in an unprecedented manner.

Syndicalism in Russian culture emerged around 1903. By 1905, its ideological tenets "attracted a considerable number of workers" in large industrial cities such as St. Petersburg and Moscow.<sup>38</sup> Russian anarchists who advocated for syndicalism:

adopted the name 'Anarcho-Syndicalists' rather than the French term 'revolutionary syndicalists' partly to emphasize their distinctly Russian character, partly to indicate that" they "were all *anarchists* (many of the revolutionary syndicalists in France had Marxist, Blanquist, and other radical affiliations), and partly to distinguish themselves from the Anarchist-*Communists*, who were not as exclusively concerned with labor movement as they were."<sup>39</sup>

The trend of distinguishing between anarchists that primarily focused on labor movements and anarchists that advocated for communism prevailed not only throughout Russia and Europe but also in the United States. Ideological differences have historically divided the anarchist community in a manner that has prevented them from uniting and accomplishing their revolutionary endeavors. In the United

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<sup>35</sup> Komroff, *Russian Problem*, 15.

<sup>36</sup> Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 75.

<sup>37</sup> Louis Levine, "The Development of Syndicalism in America," *Political Science Quarterly* 28, no. 3 (Sept. 1913): 452, 475-476, accessed 2 February 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2141947>.

<sup>38</sup> Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 76-78.

<sup>39</sup> Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 77n.

States, the Russian Workingmen's Association naturally fell victim to this ideological divide, as Shatov's proselytization ultimately haunted the Russian-American anarchist movement throughout the twentieth century.

After the Philadelphia convention, Shatov began publishing anarcho-syndicalist rhetoric in *Golos Truda*. However, the unofficial switch to anarcho-syndicalism did not go unnoticed by his fellow Russian-American anarchists. According to a report filed by the U.S. War Department, the outcome of the Philadelphia convention caused a rift in the organization in 1912. While some anarchists joined Shatov in his new anarcho-syndicalist venture, others (particularly in Philadelphia) remained loyal to their anarcho-communist beliefs.<sup>40</sup> The dichotomy between the two groups is thoroughly highlighted in the September publication of *Golos Truda*. In a letter sent to the newspaper's print staff, anarchists from Seattle and Victoria, Canada outlined multiple ways that Russian anarchists could work together to achieve their revolutionary endeavors. Moreover, they reminded the paper's readers that the "main goal of the united organizations is the struggle with capital and power."<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, the organization split. The insurrectionist wing of anarcho-communists retained the title of Russian Workingmen's Association, while Shatov and the anarcho-syndicalists established a new organization—the Union of Russian Workers of the United States and Canada (*Soiuz russkikh rabochikh Soedinennykh Shtatov i Kanady*) or UORW.

By 1913, the bifurcation of the Russian anarchist community in the United States was thoroughly apparent in the pages of *Golos Truda*. In a letter addressed to the newspaper's print staff on 1 January 1913, the Russian Workingmen's Group of Chicago conveyed their support for the establishment of the UORW and requested that the staff publish any new statutes added to the organization's original charter.<sup>42</sup> While the ardent anarchist understood the subtle differences between anarcho-syndicalism and anarcho-communism, the common laborer striving for workers' reforms required elucidation. The editors of *Golos Truda* ultimately responded with the publication of the organization's constitution in 1914. The impact of Shatov's conversion to anarcho-syndicalism not only generated an antagonism within the Russian-American labor community but also brought about a general state of confusion.

Despite ideological discord, the Russian labor and anarchist movements in the United States continued to expand in the early twentieth century. Correspondence addresses listed in *Golos Truda* display the gradual growth of the UORW geographically, especially in the Northeast and, later, Midwest regions of the United States. By March 1914, the UORW had established charters in Pittsburgh, Chicago,

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<sup>40</sup> U.S. War Department, *Russian Workmen*, 5-6.

<sup>41</sup> "Ko vsiem russkim organizatsiiam soed. Shtatov i Kanady," *Golos Truda*, 1 September 1912, 7.

<sup>42</sup> *Golos Truda*, 1 January 1913, 7.



Portland (Oregon), Seattle, Los Angeles, and Vancouver and Victory, Canada.<sup>43</sup> The larger federation of Russian labor organizations experienced a drastic increase in membership within the same timeframe. Russian Progressive Groups were established in St. Lynn and Chelsea (Massachusetts), Port Huron (Michigan), and Chicago. Moreover, Russian laborers in Brooklyn, Rochester, Providence, Detroit, Sheboygan, and Kansas City formed Russian labor groups that also joined the larger federation of Russian labor organizations.<sup>44</sup> While multiple Russian labor associations emerged in the early-twentieth century, the UORW was the only Russian anarchist organization to become an international entity.

By 1914, the UORW experienced drastic expansion, requiring the solidification of the organization's mission and core values. Years of tsarist and capitalist oppression culminated in the development of a constitution that sought the dissolution of all forms of authority. During the first week of July, delegates from Brooklyn, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Providence, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Seattle, Portland, Vancouver, Victoria, Cosmopolis (Washington), and Lynn, Salem, and Brockton (Massachusetts) convened in Detroit to compose the nascent organization's constitution—which remained unchanged until the UORW's demise in 1919.<sup>45</sup> The preamble of the constitution states:

Present society is divided into two opposing classes: the downtrodden Workers and Peasants, on the one side, producing by their work all the riches of the world; the rich people, on the other side, who have grabbed all the riches into their hands.

Many a time the Class of the Oppressed stood up against the rich parasites and their faithful servant and protector—the Government—to conquer its full Liberation from the yoke of Capitalism and Political Power; but every time it suffered defeat, not being fully conscious of its own final goal and means, by which victory can be accomplished, thus remaining only a weapon in the hands of its enemies.

The struggle between these two classes is being fought also at the present time and will end only when the Toiling Masses, organized as a class, will understand their true interests and will make themselves masters of all the riches of the world by means of a violent Social Revolution.

Having accomplished such a change and having annihilated at the same time all the institutions of the Government and State, the class of the disowned must establish the Society of Free Producers, aiming at satisfying

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<sup>43</sup> *Golos Truda*, 1 January 1913, 7, 1 March 1913, 16, 1 March 1914, 15.

<sup>44</sup> *Golos Truda*, 1 March 1914, 15.

<sup>45</sup> Speer, 2. The Detroit convention occurred from 1 to 7 July 1914.

the needs of every individual person who, on its side, is giving to the Society their labor and their knowledge.

For the attainment of these aims, we consider as of primary importance the necessity of building up a wide Revolutionary Organization of Toilers which, by conducting a direct struggle with all the Institutions of Capitalism and Government, must train the Working Class to initiative and independent action in all its acts, thus educating it in the consciousness of the absolute necessity of a General Strike—of the Social Revolution.<sup>46</sup>

While the UORW's plan to create a "Society of Free Producers" reflected the core anarchist objective of establishing a common collective, the organization's departure from anarcho-communism is clear. Their exclusive focus on educating the working class in "the absolute necessity of a General Strike" explicitly echoed anarcho-syndicalist doctrine. Moreover, the preamble's call to overthrow the government and bourgeoisie through the "means of a violent Social Revolution" was antithetical to the doctrine of anarcho-communism (which adhered to the Marxist concept of a non-violent social revolution). To the anarcho-communists, the UORW's claim that direct action will render the working class "masters of all the riches of the world" solidified their belief that a labor vanguard would only replace the bourgeoisie elite and, thus, explains why some members of the Russian Workingmen's Association repudiated Shatov's conversion to anarcho-syndicalism. The UORW's strategy of employing violence to achieve their ideological goals certainly deterred some individuals from joining the group, as other labor organizations strove for similar socioeconomic reforms without resorting to terrorism. The UORW's willingness to use violence was ultimately counterproductive, as it epitomized the unfavorable connotation that Americans had of anarchism during a period of ideological persecution. The organization thus dissuaded both peoples on the margins and the broader American population from supporting the anarcho-syndicalists and their cause. Nevertheless, the UORW's constitution not only gave a sense of concreteness to the organization's mission but also solidified the UORW's place within the anarchist community.

For anarchist organizations, the UORW developed and expanded at an unprecedented rate. After publishing its constitution, the organization seized complete control of *Golos Truda* and established their first headquarters, the Russian People's House, at 133 East 15th Street in New York City.<sup>47</sup> Within their three-story

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<sup>46</sup> Speer, 2-3. Speer highlights the distinct similarities between the UORW and Industrial Workers of the World constitutions, stating that the UORW's constitution "was modeled at least to some extent after the Industrial Workers of the World" (3).

<sup>47</sup> *Golos Truda*, 23 October 1914, 1; New York State Senate, Joint Legislative Committee Investigating Seditious Activities, *Revolutionary Radicalism: Its History, Purpose and Tactics with an Exposition and Discussion of the Steps Being Taken and Required to Curb It* (Albany: J. B. Lyon, 1920), 1: 845-846, 861. In the 23 October 1914 issue of *Golos Truda*, the headline of the paper reflects

building, the UORW not only harbored refugees seeking asylum but also provided them with an education.<sup>48</sup> The UORW focused on “the education and revolutionary development of the vast numbers of Russian workers whom the Greek Catholic Church in America sought to ensnare, as it had done at home.”<sup>49</sup> The organization’s school offered classes in reading and writing in Russian and English, as well as courses on “Marxism and anarchism.”<sup>50</sup> By providing classes three to five nights a week for a small monthly fee, the UORW assisted their comrades in building pivotal skills for surviving in the United States.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, the school offered the organization an opportunity to spread their ideology throughout the community; the education of immigrating Russians was thus essential to both student and educator. By the end of 1914, the UORW had undoubtedly established itself as a vital institution for immigrating Russians.

The publication of a constitution, establishment of a headquarters and school, and continuous influx of Russian refugees enhanced the status and strength of the organization in an unparalleled manner. Fellow Russian-American labor associations recognized the UORW for its organization and dedication. By the end of the year, groups—that were once independent entities—became subsumed under the UORW. Russian-American laborers in Chelsea (Massachusetts), Providence, Brooklyn, and Rochester supplanted their respective institutions in favor of the UORW and its conventions. The organization also formed new chapters in Erie and McKees Rocks (Pennsylvania), Minneapolis, and San Francisco throughout 1914.<sup>52</sup> In less than a decade, Shatov established and expanded the UORW across North America.

While the organization saw success in the form of membership growth, its print organ failed to experience the same fortune. Between the 1880s and 1920s, “54 Russian periodicals ... were published in the United States;” these newspapers advocated for economic, political, and social reforms.<sup>53</sup> However, the propagation of anti-capitalist ideals was ultimately met with government intervention and

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its change in ownership, deeming the newspaper the “Organ of the Federation of the Union of Russian Workers of the Union States and Canada” (1).

<sup>48</sup> *Revolutionary Radicalism*, 2: 1447.

<sup>49</sup> Goldman, 595. Until 1970, the Orthodox Church in America was called the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of North America. Emma Goldman is thus not solely referring to the Greek Catholic Church but is, instead, referencing the entire Orthodox community.

<sup>50</sup> Speer, 3; *Revolutionary Radicalism*, 2: 1447; Zimmer, *Immigrants*, 118. Zimmer points out that the UORW house also offered immigrants training in fundamental math. He also states that the classes were free, but, on page three of Speer’s report, Speer claimed that the classes were a part of the member’s monthly dues.

<sup>51</sup> Speer, 3.

<sup>52</sup> *Golos Truda*, 18 December 1914, 4, 1 August 1914, 8; Zimmer, *Immigrants*, 117. In San Francisco, the membership grew to 384 by 1918.

<sup>53</sup> Hoeder, 113.

distribution suppression. Although the First Amendment ensures freedom of the press, the government of the United States frequently exploited legal technicalities to stop the spread of radical ideas. The Postmaster General barred the Italian anarchist newspaper *La Questione Sociale* (*The Social Question*) because “it did not meet the legal definition of a newspaper as a consequence of irregularities in its publishing schedule.”<sup>54</sup> Other anarchist periodicals, including Emma Goldman’s *Mother Earth*, experienced similar interferences, regardless of constitutional protections.<sup>55</sup> Published monthly until 1914, and then weekly until 1917, *Golos Truda*—which “advocated [for] strikes against the capitalist system, publicized the lives of noted anarchist leaders, and expressed concern for anarchist comrades who were in Russian jails”—encountered the same governmental oppression plaguing its print predecessors.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, the United States Post Office repeatedly refused to distribute the newspaper because of its anarchist rhetoric. Continuous legal repression required the *Golos Truda* staff to relocate the organization’s print shop on multiple occasions. Between 1911 and 1914, the print organ’s mailing address changed three times, eventually domiciliating at the home of the UORW’s secretary and treasurer, A. Rode.<sup>57</sup> Although government intervention did indeed hinder the circulation of *Golos Truda*, it nonetheless remained in print in the United States until 1917.<sup>58</sup>

The continued publication of *Golos Truda* required the support of the outside community, as sales rarely covered the costs of print production and postal suppression for anarchist newspapers. The UORW hosted multiple concerts, balls, plays, and performances to fund the production and circulation of their print organ. The frequency of these events sheds light on the financial burdens associated with publishing an anarchist periodical during this period. Indeed, not only did the organization host annual events (such as New Year’s Eve and Christmas celebrations), but they also organized multiple functions throughout the year.<sup>59</sup> An ad for the organization’s “International Concert and Ball” explicitly identifies

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<sup>54</sup> Zimmer, *Immigrants*, 82.

<sup>55</sup> Paul and Karen Avrich, 201.

<sup>56</sup> *Golos Truda*, 16 October 1914, 1; Speer, 2; Hoeder, 115. While Speer claimed that *Golos Truda* became a weekly periodical in 1912, further examination of the newspaper reveals that it was not until 1914 that the publication was printed on a weekly basis.

<sup>57</sup> *Golos Truda*, 1 January 1912, 1, 1 September 1912, 1, 1 October 1913, 1, 5, 11 December 1914, 1. Rode’s home address at the time was 586 East 140th Street, New York City. In between 60 East 103rd Street and 586 East 140th Street, *Golos Truda* was printed at 220 East 12th Street in New York City.

<sup>58</sup> Speer, 2. Although Speer contends that the newspaper was suppressed by the government in 1917, Zimmer explains in *Immigrants Against the State* that the *Golos Truda* printing staff actually left for Russia during this period “with their printing press in tow” (143).

<sup>59</sup> *Golos Truda*, 29 January 1915, 4, 1 August 1914, 8, 2 December 1915, 4, 14 May 1915, 4. Ads for fundraising events hosted by the *Golos Truda* staff are apparent in the multiple issues cited.

governmental oppression as the main impetus for the event.<sup>60</sup> Held at the Manhattan Lyceum, the UORW stated that the cover charge of twenty-five cents, and any other donations, went solely towards the production of *Golos Truda*. They asserted that the paper was “being suppressed by the Post Office authorities” and, to continue publication, the print staff needed financial assistance from the community.<sup>61</sup> Events not only allowed for the dissemination of the organization’s radical ideas but also generated funds to continue printing anarcho-syndicalist propaganda.

Although the UORW overcame its problems associated with government oppression and publication, in some ways the organization never recovered from the 1914 split. While Shatov and the anarcho-syndicalists modified their beliefs to befit American capitalist oppression, the anarcho-communists retained their original convictions, which were grounded in the legacy of tsarist oppression. In 1916, Russian labor organizations in Chicago, Baltimore, Boston, and Philadelphia requested that the staff of *Golos Truda* organize a convention in Baltimore. A report by the U.S. War Department claims that multiple arguments broke out at the convention, “but [Shatov] would not pay any attention to the delegates” and “continued to follow the policy of” anarcho-syndicalism.<sup>62</sup> Shatov’s resolve to not only continue supporting anarcho-syndicalism but to also ignore the requests of his fellow Russian émigrés reflects a central problem within the anarchist community. Ideological disputes between anarchists were rarely productive; instead, they usually engendered animosity within the community. Indeed, Shatov’s decision to support anarcho-syndicalism ultimately haunted the organization until its dissolution in 1919.

After the Baltimore convention, Dwigomirow, a Russian laborer from San Francisco, “called a convention of the locals in the Pittsburgh district at 2106 Forbes Street.”<sup>63</sup> Dwigomirow and his associates decided “that they would . . . [no] longer give financial support to” *Golos Truda* and, instead, established a new newspaper, *Eastern Dawn*.<sup>64</sup> The decision by the Russian laborers to publish a different periodical highlights the severity of the 1914 split. Characteristic of anarchism, lack of organization and ideological differences interfered with the anarchists’ ability to generate reform. Nevertheless, the UORW continuously outgrew their anarcho-communist counterparts in membership. Indeed, the U.S. intelligence community collectively agreed that the organization grew “fairly rapidly from 1908-1917 despite

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<sup>60</sup> *Mother Earth*, September 1916, reprinted in *Mother Earth Bulletin 1916-1917*, vol. 11, no. 1 (New York: Greenwood Reprint Corporation, 1968), n. p. The International Concert and Ball was held on Saturday, 16 September 1916.

<sup>61</sup> *Mother Earth*, September 1916.

<sup>62</sup> U.S. War Department, *Russian Workmen*, 7.

<sup>63</sup> U.S. War Department, *Russian Workmen*, 7.

<sup>64</sup> U.S. War Department, *Russian Workmen*, 7.

the contention over Anarchist-Communism and Anarcho-Syndicalism.”<sup>65</sup> Regardless of their ideological disagreements, Russian laborers and radicals united the following year to support the revolution developing in Russia.

The phenomena of 1917 reshaped the UORW and Russian anarchist movement in the United States, as the February Revolution instigated the mass return of political exiles to Russia.<sup>66</sup> While the Petrograd Soviet's Order No. 1 gave Russian refugees motive to return home, the Provisional Government began funding the mass remigration of thousands of expatriates.<sup>67</sup> In the United States, Russian Consul George Tchirkow organized a committee to assist returning immigrants.<sup>68</sup> Established on 28 March 1917 at 534 East 5th Street in New York City, the national repatriation committee was a mixture of anarchists, socialists, and communists led by Shatov.<sup>69</sup> Managed by the UORW and Russian Socialist Federation, the committee formed multiple sub-committees in large industrial cities to support the mass repatriation of Russian immigrants.<sup>70</sup> Funded by the Russian Consul via Provisional Government, committees assisted Russian-Americans with completing immigration paperwork and on rare occasions even supplied counterfeit passports.<sup>71</sup> According to the Bureau of Investigation and American Russian Consul, a majority of the returnees were radical anarchists.<sup>72</sup> Shatov was at the forefront of the remigration following the February Revolution and managed to relocate thousands of immigrants back to Russia in collaboration with the UORW, Anarchist Red Cross, and Provisional Government.

Returnees traveled through a complex transportation network. Beginning in their adopted American hometowns, remigrants first travelled to Vancouver. Travelers then embarked on an eleven-day sea voyage to Yokohama, Japan. Once in Yokohama, they boarded another ship that ferried them to Vladivostok. To reach Petrograd, travelers entrained a special locomotive that made its way to the country's

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<sup>65</sup> Speer, 2-4. Despite the rift within the Russian-American labor community, both the U.S. War Department and Bureau of Investigation contend that the UORW's constant dissemination of *Golos Truda* allowed for the continual growth of the organization.

<sup>66</sup> Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 123.

<sup>67</sup> Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution* (New York: Monad Press, 1932), 1:276; Boris Yelensky, *In the Struggle for Equality: The Story of The Anarchist Red Cross* (Chicago: Alexander Berkman Aid Fund, 1958), 34.

<sup>68</sup> U.S. War Department, War College Division, *Russian Workmen's Association, Anarchistic Organization*, report by John R. Dillon (Pittsburgh: Office of the Chief of Staff, 25 May 1917), microform, 1.

<sup>69</sup> *Revolutionary Radicalism*, 1: 628-629; Morris Greenshner, interview by Paul Avrich, Avrich, *Anarchist Voices*, 378-79; Goldman, 595.

<sup>70</sup> The main repatriation committees were established in Pittsburgh, Chicago, and New York City.

<sup>71</sup> Dillon, *Anarchistic Organization*, 1; Komroff, "Red Days," 5. According to Komroff, Shatov personally provided a false passport to a radical Irishman who was fleeing North America to escape arrest.

<sup>72</sup> Dillon, *Anarchistic Organization*, 1.

capital on the Trans-Siberian railroad. According to Komroff, this train was solely reserved for returning political exiles.<sup>73</sup> Last to leave, Shatov, along with his wife Anna, the entire *Golos Truda* printing staff, and two hundred of their radical compatriots (including Leon Trotsky), departed the United States in June and arrived in Petrograd in July 1917.<sup>74</sup> Returning Russians not only increased the number of revolutionaries in the country but ultimately reinvigorated Russia's revolutionary fervor after the failure of the June days.<sup>75</sup>

Although approximately 90 percent of returnees later died under the governance of Lenin and, later, Stalin, returning emigrants were pivotal to the success of the October Revolution.<sup>76</sup> A study conducted by historian John Copp revealed that "one in ten [Russian anarchists] were émigrés who had returned from extended time abroad, mostly in the United States or Western Europe."<sup>77</sup> Repatriated anarchists, socialists, and communists united with their domestic counterparts to overthrow the Provisional Government. They joined the Red Army and workers' militias, where many rose through the ranks and obtained significant positions. Four anarchists participated in the planning of the October coup d'état: the anarcho-syndicalists, Shatov and Khaim "Efim" Yarchuk, the anarcho-communist, Bleikhsman, and one unaffiliated anarchist, G. Bogatskii.<sup>78</sup> In October, the anarchist Dvinsk Regiment supported the Bolsheviks in Moscow, as anarchists Gratchov and Fedotov led the attack on the Kremlin.<sup>79</sup> Shatov and his anarcho-syndicalist supporters participated in the seizure of the Winter Palace and imprisonment of the Provisional Government.<sup>80</sup> The work of Shatov and the repatriation committees undoubtedly shaped the outcome of the Bolshevik Revolution.

Shatov and his associates coordinated the return of thousands of Russian émigrés. While there is a paucity of information regarding the exact number of repatriations that occurred during this period, U.S. government reports show that

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<sup>73</sup> Komroff, "Red Days," 2-8; Manuel Komroff, interview by Paul Avrich, Avrich, *Anarchist Voices*, 202.

<sup>74</sup> Komroff, "Red Days," 102; Komroff interview, *Anarchist Voices*, 202; Norton, 185; Yelensky, 35; Zimmer, *Immigrants*, 143; John Walter Copp, "The Role of the Anarchists in the Russian Revolution and Civil War, 1917-1921: A Case Study in Conspiratorial Behavior During Revolution" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1993), 134, 149.

<sup>75</sup> Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 131-132.

<sup>76</sup> Kenyon Zimmer, "Premature Anti-Communists? American Anarchism, the Russian Revolution, and Left-Wing Libertarian Anticommunism, 1917-1939," *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 6, no. 2 (2009): 53.

<sup>77</sup> Copp, 54.

<sup>78</sup> Zimmer, "Premature," 49; Copp, 181-182.

<sup>79</sup> Harold Joel Goldberg, "The Anarchists View the Bolshevik Regime, 1918-1922" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 1973), 48.

<sup>80</sup> Komroff, "Red Days," 197-207. After the October Revolution, Shatov became the Chief of Police in Petrograd and, later, head supervisor of the construction of the Turkestan-Siberia Railway.

6,393 Russians departed the United States by June 1917.<sup>81</sup> Historian Kenyon Zimmer estimates that “funds provided by the provisional government and the Anarchist Red Cross ... paid for the return of at least four hundred Russian revolutionaries between March and June 1917;” while another estimate claims that the UORW “lost half of its membership” due to the migration following the February Revolution.<sup>82</sup> While Shatov’s work did not exclusively lead to the success of the mass remigration and, later, October Revolution, his assistance with the repatriation undoubtedly shaped history, as returning Russians “had a profound impact on ... the Russian Revolution” and the development of the first communist state.<sup>83</sup>

While war, revolution-inspired migration, and the First Red Scare affected the UORW’s membership, the organization continued to grow throughout the decade. Between 1905 and 1919, 224,592 Russians emigrated to the United States.<sup>84</sup> When the U.S. government raided the UORW headquarters in the spring of 1919, there were approximately 9,000 memberships and seventy charters on record.<sup>85</sup> Historians estimate that the organization’s size ranged from 10,000 to 15,000 members.<sup>86</sup> Shatov thus united approximately 4.1 to 6.7 percent of the Russian population in the United States.<sup>87</sup> He not only established the nation’s first Russian-American anarchist organization and newspaper but also “the largest anarchist federation in American history.”<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1919, Forty-Second Number*, by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1920), 90, 93; U.S. Department of Commerce, *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1920, Forty-Third Number*, by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1921), 96. In the 1919 publication of the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, the total number of Russian departures for 1917 ends on 30 June.

<sup>82</sup> Zimmer, “Premature,” 48; Zimmer, *Immigrants*, 143. In *Immigrants Against the State*, Zimmer does not name who provided the second estimate, only that it was made.

<sup>83</sup> Zimmer, *Immigrants*, 143.

<sup>84</sup> Department of Commerce and Labor, *Statistical Abstract, 1910*, 82; Department of Commerce, *Statistical Abstract, 1919*, 90; Department of Commerce, *Statistical Abstract, 1920*, 93.

<sup>85</sup> *Revolutionary Radicalism*, 1:861. Out of the seventy UORW charters, fifty-three were in the United States, while the remaining seventeen were in Canada.

<sup>86</sup> Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 137; Zimmer, *Immigrants*, 117. While Paul Avrich asserted that the UORW had approximately 10,000 members by 1919, Kenyon Zimmer contends that number was closer to 15,000. Speer estimated that the UORW had anywhere from 10,000 to 15,000 members (3); yet, the U.S. War Department claimed that the organization had approximately 9,000 memberships on file during the Palmer Raids.

<sup>87</sup> The estimation provided only includes UORW members. It does not include the memberships of the larger federation of Russian workers, which encompassed the original Russian Workingmen’s Association and other Russian-American labor organizations.

<sup>88</sup> Kenyon Zimmer, “A Slice of Pittsburgh Anarchist History: The Union of Russian Workers,” *Steel City Revolt!* (2009): 1.



Shatov's story personifies the evolution of Russian-American anarchism in the early-twentieth century. In 1907, the U.S. War Department asserted that "Russian radicals ... had no organization."<sup>89</sup> The socioeconomic conditions generated by cultural xenophobia and American capitalism prompted Russian immigrants to establish their own community built upon libertarian and egalitarian principles. Analogous to their European and Jewish counterparts, Russian radicals introduced their own ideological variant of anarchism to American culture.<sup>90</sup> Influenced by French syndicalists, Russian oppression, and American exploitation, Russian-American radicals blended the tenets of anarchism and syndicalism in an unprecedented manner. Russian-American anarcho-syndicalism was an amalgam of various anarchist, syndicalist, and cultural conventions. Its discourse was both homogenous and divergent from the traditional anarchist rhetoric. Indeed, Russian-American anarchists constructed their own conventions and, in doing so, established their own place in history.

Shatov's conversion to anarcho-syndicalism reveals a fundamental flaw embedded within the anarchist community. Anarchists frequently adapted the ideology to befit their personal philosophies and socioeconomic conditions.<sup>91</sup> The multiplicity of ideological interpretations ultimately hindered the growth and unification of the anarchist community in the twentieth century. The inability to cooperate and consolidate was inimical to both the UORW and larger anarchist movement. While the UORW's membership continuously grew until 1919, the 1914 split forever haunted Shatov, as ideological discrepancies generated a community of dissension and animosity. The organization never incited a general strike nor instituted a new form of social organization. Nevertheless, the UORW united thousands of Russian émigrés during a period of immigrant persecution. The Union of Russian Workers of the United States and Canada was more than an anarchist organization, it was the quintessence of Russian-American anarchism in the early-twentieth century.

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<sup>89</sup> U.S. War Department, *Russian Workmen*, 4.

<sup>90</sup> Undoubtedly, European immigrants were the heart of the American anarchist movement in the early-twentieth century. In *Immigrants Against the State*, Zimmer points out that a significant number of American immigrant anarchists were Jewish, contending that Yiddish anarchism was the "largest section of America's anarchist movement by the eve of the First World War" (16). Both Zimmer's *Immigrants Against the State* and James Green's *Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement, and the Bombing That Divided Gilded Age America* discuss European and Jewish anarchism in the United States during this period. While Green predominately examines the socialist movement during the late-nineteenth century, both authors contend that most American-immigrant anarchists were radicalized after immigration.

<sup>91</sup> This is also apparent in the actions of both Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, who constructed their own interpretations of the ideology to coincide with their personal beliefs and agendas.

# THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE: DEFENDERS OF PEACE AND AGGRESSORS OF FASCISM

Alayna Kelly

**Abstract:** During the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), thousands of men and women from fifty-two countries joined the International Brigades and traveled to Spain to defend the Spanish Republic against a fascist military coup led by General Francisco Franco. The American volunteers, known collectively as the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, joined the war out of a shared conviction that radical intervention proved necessary to stop the spread of international fascism. The Lincolns represented U.S. citizens from diverse economic and professional backgrounds dedicated to promoting an egalitarian society as evidenced by racially integrated military units, participation in World War II at the onset of defeat in Spain, and veteran participation in post war equal rights movements.

In the winter of 1937, Sandor Voros, a member of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, came across a letter addressed to his recently fallen comrade. The first line of the letter stood out to Voros, “The moon is very big tonight.”

For Voros and other volunteer soldiers, the light from a full moon illuminated the realities of war in a foreign country. As the sun set on the fighting, the moon rose to expose the silhouettes of dead bodies left on the battlefield. The creatures of the night echoed the sounds of pain that haunted the soldiers’ sleep. Yet in his own letter, Voros describes the moon as a symbol of optimism rather than defeat. Voros’s friend took his last breath in the light of a very big moon and died a death that was “worthy of his principles and class.” The men and women of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade left their homeland to participate in a bloody struggle against fascism in Spain. They were idealists who believed that radical intervention in Spain was necessary to avert a larger world war. Despite the loss of a friend, Voros continued to fight with determination that the moon would one day shine over a free Spain. This, too, was the hope of other brigade members who believed that their heroic and sacrificial actions overseas would silence voices of rebellion in Europe and cast a light on the dangers of international fascist rule.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sandor Voros to Sweetheart, 17 December 1937 in *Madrid 1937: Letters of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade from the Spanish Civil War*, eds. Cary Nelson and Jefferson Hendricks (Urbana: University of Illinois: 1994), 10.

The Abraham Lincoln Brigade (ALB) was the collective name for the group of 2,800 American volunteers who fought in the 15th International Battalion of the Spanish Republican Army during the Spanish Civil War between 1937 and 1939. In July 1936, General Francisco Franco led the armed forces of Spain in a coup against the popularly elected government of the Spanish Republic.<sup>2</sup> Although this insurrection was isolated to the Spanish mainland, the war quickly gained global attention and implications. Troops and machinery came to the Rebels from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy; relief supplies and equipment came to the Republic from volunteer army units all around the world. The international movement to aid Spain was born out of two opposing goals: the domination of fascism versus its defeat. The Abraham Lincoln Brigade played a significant role in the resistance against Spanish nationalist troops in spite of U.S. non-intervention policies. When the United States entered WWII, the veterans of the ALB, now stigmatized as Communists and premature anti-fascists, again took up arms against totalistic powers overseas without hesitation.<sup>3</sup> The ALB was a melting-pot organization comprised of men and women of varied ethnic backgrounds, brought together by class struggles and economic hardships, and united in sympathy for the Spanish people. The defiant, yet persistent relief efforts of these individuals helped develop an anti-fascist mindset among Americans and inspire international action against the spread of fascism.

The Spanish Civil War was a major international conflict during the interwar period that drew attention to European politics and the growing popularity of fascism. Relief campaigns for the Spanish Republic were instantaneous and represented a collective global concern for Spaniards and democracy's survival. The International Brigades was made up of militia units of individual volunteers from around the world that served in the Spanish Republican Army, in support of the Popular Front government.<sup>4</sup> Among these men and women were blue-collar workers, professionals, activists, students, nurses, journalists, and veterans of World War I.<sup>5</sup> Together, these men and women pledged their lives to liberty and took up arms against General Franco's leftist coalition government. The International Brigades, composed of a total of fifty-four countries, shared a common mission to infiltrate rebel lines and cut off supply roads to Franco's troops by destroying railroads and bridges.<sup>6</sup> Lincolns that did not make the journey to Spain stayed at home and raised money and medical supplies for the soldiers. They also rallied for the morale of the war by spreading anti-fascist propaganda.<sup>7</sup> Brigadier's aid was especially meaningful as the Republic's only other large source of help aside from the Soviet Union. In total, an estimated 40,000 men

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<sup>2</sup> Arthur H. Landis, *The Abraham Lincoln Brigade* (New York: The Citadel Press: 1967), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Carroll, Michael Nash and Melvin Small, *The Good Fight Continues: World War II Letters From the Abraham Lincoln Brigade* (New York: NYU Press, 2006), XI.

<sup>4</sup> Landis, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Hamilton Basso, "Publicity for Spanish Interventionists," *The New Republic*, 26 August 1936, 62.

<sup>6</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 25 August 1986.

<sup>7</sup> Landis, 17.

from around the world volunteered to serve in the International Brigades, though there were never more than 17,000 in Spain at any one time from 1937 and 1939.<sup>8</sup> They received little training and could not match the support that their enemies received from Germany and Italy, but the volunteers of the International Brigades sacrificed their lives in a foreign war they believed could cost the world much more.

The Abraham Lincoln Brigade's participation in the Spanish Civil War illustrated a growing reconsideration to the United States' isolationist disposition during the 1930s. For many of these volunteers, fighting to defend the freedoms of another country constituted the most significant political act of their lives.<sup>9</sup> Their own desires to go to Spain conflicted with noninterventionist policies endorsed by the United States and many other governments of the Western world. The Neutrality Acts, which preceded the Spanish Civil War by one year, stated that the United States would avoid any action that might lead it into foreign war.<sup>10</sup> In the wake of the July 18<sup>th</sup> nationalist rebellion in Spain, President Franklin D. Roosevelt expressed the United States' intention to remain neutral and issued a recommendation that citizens do the same.<sup>11</sup> Despondency with WWI and economic uncertainty following the Great Depression discouraged U.S. action. However, Abraham Lincoln Brigade members regarded the war in Spain as a threat to international peace and thought agency on behalf of the Spanish people, necessary for the preservation of all people's liberties. In a display of both personal and political autonomy, Lincolns challenged federal law by choosing to intervene in Spain. They believed that the real struggle of the Spanish Civil War was not physical but fundamental – an issue of global dictatorial rule versus democratic institutions.<sup>12</sup> While the United States refused lawful aid to the Spanish Republic, the members of the ALB would not. These men and women represented another America that would not ignore the rising power of newly installed fascist governments overseas.

The International Brigade's affiliation with the Communist International (Comintern) fostered a sense of urgency and solidarity with the Spanish Loyalists. The Comintern, an association of national communist parties founded in 1919, organized the paramilitary units that comprised the various battalions of the International Brigades.<sup>13</sup> For Americans, the association with the Comintern served to validate intervention in Spain. The Comintern promoted world revolution in response to the Franco, Hitler, and Mussolini alliance. Steve Nelson, a commander of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and member of the Communist Party USA, believed that the Fascist attempt to destroy the democratic Republic would be successful if Americans remained

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<sup>8</sup> Carroll, Nash Small, XV.

<sup>9</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 26 September 1977.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of State, Neutrality Act of 1935, Publication 1983, Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy, 1931-1941 (Washington, D.C.: U.S., Government Printing Office, 1943).

<sup>11</sup> Basso, 64.

<sup>12</sup> Maxwell Stewart, "Background of War: The Struggle of Spain," *Literary Digest*, March 1945.

<sup>13</sup> Eric Smith, *American Relief Aid and Spanish Civil War* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2013), 27.

content to confine their involvement to mere agitation. Instead, Nelson argued that radical action like that proposed by the Comintern could transform passing resolutions to real solutions.<sup>14</sup> Nelson was not alone in his convictions. In 1936, *The New Republic* released an issue on behalf of Spanish interventionists that called for men and women to boldly make their support for global reaction publicly known. In doing so, international agreement on the side of the Republic could grow strong enough to “curb the reckless forces behind the aggressor.”<sup>15</sup> Two professors from the University of Kansas held a rally in April 1937 to appeal to students to support the Loyalist government. The professors passed posters around campus with the message “Sacrifice for Spain,” and asked students to give the price of one meal to Spain.<sup>16</sup> The Comintern helped create a movement that gave rise to these and other activist efforts. A collective consciousness for the Spanish state began to spread, and the Americans who volunteered for the International Brigades saw increase.

Many American men and women who ventured to Spain on the side of the Republic viewed participation in the Spanish Civil War as an extension of the social causes they promoted in the United States. Volunteers for the Abraham Lincoln Brigade were affiliated with socialist or anarchist organizations including the Communist Party, the Industrial Workers of the World, United Mine Workers, and the Congress of Industrial Organizations.<sup>17</sup> According to Peggy Dennis, the wife of Communist Party USA leader Eugene Dennis, Spanish aid committees “became the medium, through which for the first time in local history, the Progressive, Socialist, and Communist parties officially participated together.”<sup>18</sup> Experiences of injustice and impoverishment as a result of the Great Depression and WWI inspired many Americans to join these leftist organizations and advocate for innovative reforms. These groups espoused an internationalist perspective that allowed Americans to connect their fight against anti-democratic forces in the United States with those also present in Spain.<sup>19</sup> Rebel aggression represented attacks against the democratic spirit and institutions of the newly-formed Spanish Republic. The young idealists who ventured to Spain on the side of the Republic shared hate for extreme nationalism, ruling class power, and racial intolerance that threatened world cooperation and international peace.

Members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade arrived in Spain in the winter of 1937 with little fighting experience, antiquated weaponry, and inept leadership. Soldiers fought for days without food or medical supplies. Many men found the rolling hills of

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<sup>14</sup> Steve Nelson, *Steve Nelson, American Radical* (Pittsburg, PA: 1981), 186.

<sup>15</sup> Basso, 62.

<sup>16</sup> Sacrifice for Spain Poster, 1937, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

<sup>17</sup> Smith, 28.

<sup>18</sup> Peggy Dennis, *The Autobiography of an American Communist: A Personal View of a Political Life 1925-1975* (Berkeley: Creative Arts Book Company, 1997), 110.

<sup>19</sup> Smith, 43.

Spain unsuitable for camp and challenging to navigate.<sup>20</sup> The International Brigades lacked organized authoritarian leadership, so protests against the commandant of a battalion were common.<sup>21</sup> Lincoln veteran Milton Wolff was shocked to receive a uniform and vaccinations before flying aboard a military plane back to Europe for WWII.<sup>22</sup> During the Spanish Civil War, many volunteer soldiers illegally crossed the border from France into Spain over the Pyrenees Mountains or via underground routes wearing civilian clothes to appear as ordinary tourists.<sup>23</sup> The unfavorable conditions in Spain were further exacerbated by the specificities of war in a foreign environment. In letters home, many volunteer soldiers commented on the extreme weather patterns and challenges of living in another country. Jack Freeman reflected that the winter of 1938 was the coldest he had known, while the intensity of the summer heat affected the productivity of the men. He also wrote that the hot weather brought on swarms of “big, heavy, tough, persistent” bugs that distracted men from their posts.<sup>24</sup> Soldiers were confined to tight quarters in the trenches and experienced various health issues as a result of unsanitary fighting conditions. Some Lincolns suspected lead poisoning, but many soldiers suffered from influenza, typhoid, and malaria.<sup>25</sup> Men and women stationed in the cities shared restless nights because bombings and raids were frequent occurrences. Sirens, patrol lights, gunshots, and the humming of plane engines broke up the calmness of the night and kept many men and women awake.<sup>26</sup>

Although the International Brigades were ill-equipped, largely untrained, and often without promised support, the volunteer soldiers stayed and fought in Spain as a testament of their promise to see “Madrid the tomb of fascism.”<sup>27</sup> The International Brigades played an important role in halting the fascist offensive against the city of Madrid. Most units were charged with the mission of infiltrating Franco’s lines and cutting off supply routes to nationalist troops.<sup>28</sup> The Lincolns particularly fought with great heroism and determination. The men of the Lincoln Battalion faced the fascist strongpoint in the battle at Jarma in February 1937. While the ALB suffered great losses, the sacrifices of the American soldiers and officers required insurmountable courage and undoubtedly proved their devotion to justice.<sup>29</sup> In the midst of gunfire and civilian screams, Barrington Ryerson, a soldier from a British battalion, felt the “spirit of victory grow ever stronger” with the arrival of American units. Members of the ALB

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<sup>20</sup> Landis, 87.

<sup>21</sup> Barrington Ryerson, “A Foreign Volunteer in Spain,” *The New Republic*, 21 April 1927, 318.

<sup>22</sup> Milton Wolff to Ann Wolff, June 6, 1942, in Carroll, Nash and Small, 55.

<sup>23</sup> Landis, 89.

<sup>24</sup> Jack Freeman to Herb, 29 June 1938, in *Madrid 1937: Letters of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade from the Spanish Civil War*, eds. Cary Nelson and Jefferson Hendricks (University of Illinois: 1994), 4.

<sup>25</sup> Cecil Cole to Everybody, 22 October 1937, in Nelson and Hendricks, 3.

<sup>26</sup> Mary Rolfe to Leo Hurwitz and Jane Dudley, 25 November 1938 in Nelson and Hendricks, 5.

<sup>27</sup> Alba.org

<sup>28</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 25 April 1986.

<sup>29</sup> Harry Haywood, *Black Bolshevik: Autobiography of an Afro-American Communist* (Chicago: Liberator Press, 1978), 477.

saw themselves as exemplars of politically astute soldiers who came to Spain with strong ideological commitments. A number of American volunteers refused “extended leaves” to return home during the war and held steadfast to their humanitarian convictions.<sup>30</sup> For those who stayed until the end of the war, the fear of fascist rule outweighed the fear of death.

Many Abraham Lincoln Brigade members also found solidarity through a shared concern for Spanish people’s safety. Nationalist assaults throughout the Spanish countryside brought great destruction and left many families homeless and vulnerable to air attacks and tank raids. Rebel forces were merciless in their pursuit of victory. Jack Freeman noted that continual danger plagued the Spanish people. Franco’s troops used trench mortars, machine guns, bombs, and grenades against Brigade enemies and innocent citizens they perceived to be enemies.<sup>31</sup> An anonymous letter submitted to *The Nation* in 1937 tells of an incident in which ALB soldiers pulled “wrecked houses to pieces to find the bodies [of Spaniards], crushed out of shape but still alive” after an aerial bombing. The Lincolns faced great tragedies in Spain but none like that of the Spaniards. Women and children were particularly defenseless and ALB soldiers organized rescue missions in areas of extreme devastation. Toby Jensky, a Brigade nurse, treated a ten-year-old girl brought into the American medic camp by a soldier. The girl was “all shot full of holes” and lost both of her eyes after coming across a hand grenade in the aftermath of a Rebel strike.<sup>32</sup> One ALB squadron leader sorted through debris only to find the lifeless body of a child he had seen playing near their fort earlier in the day.<sup>33</sup> The decision to venture to Spain on the side of the Republic demanded equal parts hatred and compassion: hate towards Franco’s fascist regime sent the Lincolns to Spain, but love for the innocent anchored their feet to Spanish soil.

In addition to concern for Spanish welfare, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade felt responsible for protecting and restoring the civil liberties of the Spanish people. Franco’s domination would bring an end to the Spaniards’ newly-restored rights and freedoms by the installation of the Popular Front government. The election of the Second Republic of Spain represented a growing resentment to aristocratic rule and the economic exploitation of the working class on behalf of the bourgeois and Catholic Church.<sup>34</sup> However, when Americans arrived in Spain, they realized that Spaniards actually had no comparative freedoms of a democratic republic society. The triumph of fascism in Spain would further limit the Spaniards’ autonomy, so a large part of the ALB’s campaign focused on brining attention to the dismal future of the Spanish people. A Brigade nurse railed support for the Republicans by asking her American friends to “Think about what these murderous raids have done to the lives of these

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<sup>30</sup> Haywood, 488.

<sup>31</sup> Jack Freeman to Mom, Pop, and Herbie, 22 October 1937, in Nelson and Hendricks, 2.

<sup>32</sup> Toby Jensky to my Dears, 21 June 1937, in Nelson and Hendricks, 4.

<sup>33</sup> *The Nation*, 29 August 1936.

<sup>34</sup> Landis, 598.

people-to their nervous mechanisms-to their sanity? And what a heritage for the kids!”<sup>35</sup>

In their fight against fascism in Spain, the members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade were also committed to an anti-racist agenda that supported the International Brigade’s belief of equality for all. Among the twenty-eight hundred volunteers, more than eighty were African American, six Native American, two Chinese, and one Japanese.<sup>36</sup> Unlike the racially segregated U.S. armed forces, the International Brigades supported diverse fighting units. The ALB was specifically named the “people’s army” because squadron leaders intentionally created integrated militias.<sup>37</sup> Black Lincolns were subject to the same ranking system as their white comrades and bunks were mixed. Julius Deutsch, an African American squadron leader, shared a room with two black men and three white men. When the living arrangements were going to be altered along color lines, Deutsch and the other soldiers spoke out against the change in favor of racial cooperation for the success of the war.<sup>38</sup> Also, since military assignments were distributed based on skill and not skin color, black brigadiers had more opportunity for combat action in the Spanish Civil War than previous campaigns. Non-oppressive white leadership provided black soldiers with more meaningful roles in various campaigns of the war and the fight against fascism. Oliver Law was the first African American to lead an integrated military force in the history of the United States as captain in command of the battles on the Jarma Front.<sup>39</sup> Edward Carter II rose to the rank of Sergeant while fighting in Spain. He went on to receive the Distinguished Service Cross, the highest honor given to any African American during WWII, as a result of his military expertise gained through fighting in two of the most major battles of the Spanish Civil War.<sup>40</sup>

The racial equality within the International Brigades, coupled with the colorblindness of most European countries also motivated African Americans to fight in Spanish Civil War. In Spain, black Lincolns did not face the same social and political discrimination that harassed, penalized, and oppressed them in America. New Yorker Tom Page described Spain as “the first place I ever felt like a free man.”<sup>41</sup> Crawford Morgan, a southern-born African American, also shared this perspective and reflected, “In Spain, people didn’t look at me with hatred in their eyes because I was black, and I

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<sup>35</sup> Mary Rolfe to Leo Hurwitz and Jane Dudley, 25 November 1938.

<sup>36</sup> Carroll, Nash and Small, 116.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 116.

<sup>38</sup> Julius Deutsch to Jack Bjoze, 18 October 1942, in Carroll, Nash and Small, 130.

<sup>39</sup> Biography of Oliver Law by Chris Brooks, 2008, Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives, Tamiment Library, New York.

<sup>40</sup> Carroll, Nash and Small, 121.

<sup>41</sup> James Yates, “Mississippi to Madrid: Memoir of a Black American in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade,” in *The Good Fight Continues: World War II Letters From the Abraham Lincoln Brigade* (New York: NYU Press, 2006) 118.



wasn't refused this or that because I was black."<sup>42</sup> The Spanish Civil War was a cause that black Americans could support because participation was a free choice; it was a cause they would support because the freedom to choose would disappear if fascism dominated. In the United States, Jim Crow laws and the stigmatization of racial stereotypes limited the full expression of human freedoms. Spain was a place where black Americans could escape such oppression and fight for the freedoms of individuals in a country where American democracy could actually be achieved.<sup>43</sup> In response to why an African American man would fight in another war between whites, Lincoln member Canute Frankson answered, "Because we are no longer an isolated minority group fighting hopelessly against an immense giant. Because we have joined with, and become an active part of, a great progressive force, on whose shoulders rests the responsibility of saving human civilization."<sup>44</sup> The Spanish Civil War was not just a war of resistance against General Franco and nationalist insurgents, but one against the powers that threatened the literal and metaphorical imprisonment of humanity.

African American members of the ALB hoped that cooperation among white and black men in Spain might testify to the success of racial integration in the United States. Many black Americans found in Spain an analogy to their own suppression of freedoms at home and believed that the Spanish were too victims of greed and hate.<sup>45</sup> But Spain, unlike America, was seen as a symbol of racial solidarity because men of all ethnic backgrounds marched together in union across a politically divided landscape. Many Black Lincolns feared that the victory of fascism would mean a great heightening of black oppression in the United States.<sup>46</sup> African Americans joined the ALB to discourage separatism of white versus black political causes by making the Spanish Civil War into an issue that affected Americans and humans alike.<sup>47</sup> The integrated community of ALB soldiers supported a cultural bonding among white and black Americans that did not exist in other U.S.-based organizations.

The radical ideologies of the American Communist Party (CP) likewise supported black Lincolns in their pursuit of self-determination in the American South and Spain. African Americans who joined the Communist Party in the 1920s and 1930s were products of an emerging postwar black Left that had been impacted by continuing racial violence in the United States after WWI. Spain represented a larger fight for justice and equality that African Americans wished to initiate on U.S. soil. The CP linked black Americans' struggles of class and poverty to world politics, offering black

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<sup>42</sup> "Testimony Before the Subversive Activities Control Board 1954," in *The Good Fight Continues: World War II Letters From the Abraham Lincoln Brigade* (New York: NYU Press, 2006), 120.

<sup>43</sup> Harry Haywood, *Black Bolshevik: Autobiography of an Afro-American Communist*, (Chicago: Liberator Press, 1978), 468.

<sup>44</sup> Canute Frankson to Friend, 6 July 1937, in Nelson and Hendricks, 1.

<sup>45</sup> Canute Frankson to Friend, 2.

<sup>46</sup> Harry Haywood, 470.

<sup>47</sup> Robin D.G. Kelley, "This Ain't Ethiopia, But It'll Do," in *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Working Black Class* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 157.

individuals an opportunity to overcome oppression in a way that mattered to them. They joined the movement in Spain out of concern for black and Spanish people and with a strong moral obligation to fight against the fascist threat that had already conquered the people of Ethiopia.<sup>48</sup> Spain was also one of the few examples of the Popular Front in practice and thus offered CP members an opportunity to experience the radical democracy that they promoted. For Harry Haywood, an African American communist and commissioner in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, Spain was the next logical step in the worldwide drive to defeat fascism and preserve human freedoms. Haywood believed that the Spanish Republic was betrayed by appeasement policies of non-intervention and only involvement on behalf of the CP could release Spaniards from totalistic rule.<sup>49</sup> James Yates, also an African American Communist brigade volunteer, stated in an interview with the *New York Times*, “Many of us blacks felt that going to war was a good chance to get back against the Fascists.” He also stated that Mussolini’s invasion of Ethiopia was “the last straw” in the oppressive and unfair treatment of people of color.<sup>50</sup> Aligned with the CP’s nontraditional action against the spread of fascism, African Americans went to Spain to help free a people of a slavery they knew and feared.

In the end, the Soviet and International Brigade support was not enough to secure a victory for the Republic. The Spanish Prime minister ordered the withdrawal of the International Brigades in November 1938, and by March 1939, Madrid fell to the Axis powers. The Lincolns lost nearly 750 men and sustained a very high casualty rate.<sup>51</sup> The National Committee of the People’s Front bid farewell to international volunteers “with infinite gratitude and with a profound feeling of fraternity.”<sup>52</sup> The fight against fascism did not end on the Spanish battlefield. The surviving Lincolns, like many other volunteer soldiers, helped cement the unity of anti-fascists in the world through their combined efforts in the Spanish Civil War. Many went on to offer their lives yet again for democracy in WWII campaigns. Lincoln veterans lamented over the beginnings of a second global conflict they wished to prevent. However, some army commanders asked Lincoln recruits to educate their fellow soldiers about the Spanish Civil War and the objectives behind volunteer participation. ALB veterans used this as an opportunity to inspire an anti-fascist mindset among Americans in the hope that they would fight against Hitler and Mussolini with the same revolutionary justness.<sup>53</sup>

The Lincolns’ service in Spain, although admirable, fell under political suspicion shortly after the veterans returned home. In 1939, the Roosevelt administration indicted sixteen alleged communists for the recruitment of American volunteers for the

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<sup>48</sup> Kelley, “This Ain’t Ethiopia,” 130-134.

<sup>49</sup> Harry Haywood, 468.

<sup>50</sup> *New York Times*, 7 April 1986.

<sup>51</sup> Landis, 595.

<sup>52</sup> Landis, 595.

<sup>53</sup> Carroll, Nash and Small, 44.

Abraham Lincoln Brigade.<sup>54</sup> Direct attacks on the character of actual volunteers were quick to follow and were manifested in various forms. The military first treated Lincoln veterans as potential subversives for their association with the Communist Party and placed them in non-commanding service units.<sup>55</sup> John Gates was recommended by the ALB battalion for officer's school but was turned down by the examination board even though his recent military service in the Spanish Civil War rendered him more than capable for the position. Gates concluded that the military questioned his loyalty to America and not his leadership skills in their assessment.<sup>56</sup> Other types of discrimination sometimes prevented veterans from graduating training programs or even stopping them from joining their units in assignments overseas.<sup>57</sup> Those who lived in the Spanish Republic as a result of service in the Spanish Civil War had to fill out a questionnaire before seeking employment in the United States Armed Forces.<sup>58</sup> Brigade veterans handled such intolerant treatment by holding on to their unique identity as heroic anti-fascists.

Unfortunately, racist treatment of the ALB volunteers in the United States would also continue to undermine the war efforts of veteran black Lincolns during WWII. James Bernard (Bunny) Ricker, an African American veteran of the ALB, notes the differences in his roles during the Spanish Civil War and WWII in a letter to his wife. He writes that despite his more prominent position in the Spanish Civil War, he was given special orders for limited service at the Fort Bragg Post Headquarters in 1943. To his frustration, Bunny was charged with trash disposal and beautification of the fort grounds.<sup>59</sup> Another veteran, Walter Garland, also had a similar experience. Garland was assigned to the 731<sup>st</sup> Military Police Force at Fort Wadsworth in 1942 based on his demonstration of good faith and dedication to securing victory for the Republic just four years earlier in Spain. However, upon taking up his post at Fort Wadsworth, Garland was assigned to teach a mapmaking class and had to petition several times before being accepted into a training program in machine gun instructions.<sup>60</sup> However, despite such limitations, most black veterans remained committed in the fight against Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.

The Lincoln volunteers who did not immediately enter service in WWII faced criticism for their alliance with the Soviet Union in the Spanish Civil War. Members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, some now veterans of two wars, returned home with plans to resume their political activities in unions, education, and employment. The veterans expected to be greeted with honor for their anti-fascist commitment, but most found themselves the victims of scrutiny for defending a communist republic.

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<sup>54</sup> Landis, 598.

<sup>55</sup> Carroll, Nash and Small, 44.

<sup>56</sup> John Gates to Milt Wolff, 12 February 1942, in Carroll, Nash and Small, 62.

<sup>57</sup> Carroll, Nash and Small, 45.

<sup>58</sup> *Volunteer for Liberty*, April 1941.

<sup>59</sup> James Bernard (Bunny) Rucker to Helen Rucker, 12 March 1943, in Carroll, Nash and Small, 130.

<sup>60</sup> Walter Garland to Jack Bjoze, March 27, 1943, in Carroll, Nash and Small, 130.

Volunteers had their passports confiscated and were listed as “premature anti-Fascists.”<sup>61</sup> The democratic and humanitarian ideals that Lincolns fought for in Spain seemed not to matter once the United States engaged in conflict with the Soviet Union. The postwar world was even more unforgiving towards the veterans. The Cold War era not only pushed domestic politics sharply to the right, but also initiated an anti-communist campaign that challenged all progressive ideologies and actions. After WWII, the entire Lincoln Brigade was put on the U.S. Attorney General’s list of subversive organizations and was not removed until 1965.<sup>62</sup> At the 1948 State Senate Committee on Un-American Activities, a veteran of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade was subjected to biased questioning. The Committee described the *People’s World*, a bilingual newspaper that many Lincolns supported, as “the chief mouthpiece for the Soviet Union and the criminal international conspiracy for the destruction of the United States government.”<sup>63</sup> Even twenty-five years after the end of the Spanish Civil War, the Lincolns endured criticism. The *New York Times* released an article in 1962 describing the events of a recent anniversary reunion among New York Lincoln veterans. As these men left the auditorium to go home, the newspaper reported that they walked by picket signs that read “Down with the Reds,” “Red Animals Inside,” and “Abe Lincoln Brigade Murdered Nuns.”<sup>64</sup>

The veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade remained true to their pledge of world liberalism and the defeat of fascism in the midst of McCarthyism hysteria. In 1938, Lincoln soldiers formed the American section of the Veterans of the International Brigades. These veterans organized an educational non-profit, the VALB, dedicated to promoting social activism and the defense of human rights.<sup>65</sup> In the VALB’s first issue of their national newspaper, *The Volunteer for Liberty*, the veterans still believed in the need for “effective and immediate resistance” to the growth and spread of fascism.<sup>66</sup> These men sought to advance freedom, maintain world peace, and mobilize Americans to adopt and anti-fascist mindset. Their allegiances to the Spanish people remained strong in the postwar era. The veterans continued to provide aid to Spanish families, advocate for the release of Republican prisoners of war, and participate in international campaigns for amnesty.<sup>67</sup> The men who went on to fight in WWII did so in full support of the American government. They fought vigorously and equally for the Allied Front and the Anti-Fascist Front.

For American volunteers, the crisis in Spain formed the inspiration for other social causes they would champion after the war. Some of the same social and political issues of extreme economic disparity and civil rights in Spain found their parallel in the United

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<sup>61</sup> Landis, 599.

<sup>62</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 26 September 1977.

<sup>63</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 20 February 1948.

<sup>64</sup> *New York Times*, 26 February 1962.

<sup>65</sup> *Volunteer for Liberty*, 1938.

<sup>66</sup> *Volunteer for Liberty*, 1938.

<sup>67</sup> Landis, 600

States. The moral convictions that drove the Lincolns to Spain would form the foundation of their protests against the Vietnam War in the 1960s and U.S. intervention in Central America in the 1980s, as well as their participation in equal rights demonstrations.<sup>68</sup> The 1941 issue of the *Volunteer for Liberty* reported that 1,500 ALB Veterans joined the American Peace Mobilization to help with various local and global peace activities that would further the ideals that carried them to Spain.<sup>69</sup>

In postwar life, various Lincoln veterans pursued humanitarian goals. Abe Osheroff used his carpentry skills to promote the welfare of his fellow citizens. Although fascism was not a threat to the democratic spirit in America, racial segregation and oppression hindered black Americans' self-determination. Osheroff raised money for the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Council (SNCC) and then set out to build a community center for black youth in Mississippi. He knew that federal civil rights legislation would "not automatically change the plight of the Negro," so he channeled the political activism of his involvement in the Spanish Civil War to bring about real change. According to Osheroff, the Center "gave Negroes their first movie, their first political activity, their first federal voting registrars, their first medical attention, and their first library."<sup>70</sup> In 1985, Osheroff also led a team of volunteers to Nicaragua to build houses for impoverished citizens neglected by the national government. His defense of the right of self-determination was so strong that he chose again to intervene in foreign affairs that involved the oppressive rule of his own country. For Osheroff, the decision not to act on behalf of world injustices, racism, and poverty "is to live something less than a fully human life."<sup>71</sup> The last surviving veteran, Delmer Berg, followed his service in the Spanish Civil War with a lifetime of labor and civil rights organizing. He was involved in the United Farm Workers, the local California NAACP, the anti-Vietnam War movement, and other justice organizations alike.<sup>72</sup>

The veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade dedicated their time and effort to remembering and representing their privileged role in Spanish Civil War and the fight against world fascism. The telling and retelling of their distinctive narrative has perpetuated discussions among veterans and non-veterans about justice, social progress, and political autonomy. After WWII, Abraham Lincoln Brigade veterans met frequently to honor the accomplishments and lives of deceased comrades. Before the United States recognized the heroism of the Lincolns, ALB soldiers made sure that their fallen friends received a proper military burial service. Eight members of the ALB walked in uniform ahead of the coffin of twenty-three-year-old member, Constantinos Mikades, after his death in early January 1939. Mikades was wounded while fighting for

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<sup>68</sup> Landis, 601.

<sup>69</sup> *Volunteer for Liberty*, February 1941.

<sup>70</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 13 March 1966.

<sup>71</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 28 March 1985.

<sup>72</sup> Alba.org

the Loyalists in Spain and later died of complications in America.<sup>73</sup> In 1977, a group of eight veterans traveled to Spain to relive their wartime experiences and visit the Jarma Valley. The men drank a bottle of cognac they vowed not to open until Spain became a Republic again. With Franco's death in 1975, the men lifted their glasses to the realization of freedom they fought for forty years ago.<sup>74</sup>

A group of once formally classified as a "Communist Front group" is now revered as victors in American history. Currently, there are three memorials dedicated to the veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. The first is located on the campus of the University of Washington in Seattle and the second is located in James Madison Park in Madison, Wisconsin. A third memorial to the veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade was dedicated on the Embarcadero in San Francisco, California on March 30, 2008. According to Teresa Huhle, the newest monument is a donation from Americans who "have set themselves to protect the impossibly important history" of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. These monuments symbolize the modern belief that the Lincolns' decision to fight on the side of the Spanish Republic was righteous and important for the future stability of world politics. The memory of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade is a significant part of American radical traditions that represent human solidarity beyond national borders.<sup>75</sup>

The Abraham Lincoln Brigade represented an American progressive force determined to expel fascism from Spain and the world. Abided by the Communist International, the men and women of the ALB went to Spain in violation of the United States government. They were idealists who believed radical intervention in Spain was necessary to avert a larger world war and protect global democratic institutions. Spain became a battlefield for civil rights, self-determination, and racial integration. Service in the Spanish Civil War symbolized the culmination of the Lincolns' learned lessons of self-sacrifice and determination because of the Great Depression and participation in various labor movements. Although their heroism was overshadowed by Hitler's invasion of Poland and the Red Scare of the Cold War period, ALB veterans never rested in their attempts to secure and promote international peace in the postwar world. The Lincolns will be remembered as defenders of peace and aggressors of fascism.

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<sup>73</sup> *New York Times*, 1 January 1939.

<sup>74</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 26 September 1977.

<sup>75</sup> Teresa Huhle, "I See the Flag in all of That: Discussions on Americanism and Internationalism in the Making of the San Francisco Monument to the Abraham Lincoln Brigade" *American Communist History* 10, no.1 (April 2011).

# JUDY CHICAGO'S *THE DINNER PARTY*: CHALLENGING THE HIERARCHY OF ART AND CRAFT

Lisa Ward

**Abstract:** Inspired by the women's movement of the 1960s, feminist art presented a challenge to the conventions of mainstream Modernism and transformed the art world. Judy Chicago, a feminist artist, used women's traditional art in her iconic installation, *The Dinner Party*, as an artistic and political strategy to expand the category of art to include both women's experiences and handicraft. Her purpose was to redefine the negative connotations of women's traditional art as connected to femininity and domesticity, or "low" art, and recast it as distinct artistic heritage valuable to women. Instead of duplicating previous scholars' analyses of her work that focuses primarily on the artistic merits of the piece, including its materials and sexual imagery, this article examines the ways in which she used women's traditional art to challenge aesthetic hierarchy in art.

The feminist art movement emerged amidst the civil rights, gay liberation, and anti-war movements of the 1960s. Corresponding with the developments within the radical feminist movement, feminist artists sought to change the world through their art by challenging the established art world, the art historical canon, and gender stereotypes.<sup>1</sup> Before feminism, the majority of female artists were denied exhibitions and gallery representation based solely on their gender. Artists participating in the burgeoning feminist movement challenged patriarchal assumptions about the inferiority of women's traditional art, as well as women artists' marginalization in museums, galleries, art historical scholarship, and art history courses.<sup>2</sup> Feminist artists determined that one reason for the invisibility of women in art was the negative associations of women's traditional art, such as embroidery, china painting, and needlework, as either functional or purely decorative.<sup>3</sup> In response to the association of women's traditional art with everyday materials or the domestic realm, feminist artists concentrated on expanding the category of art to include both women's experiences and handicraft. In this context,

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<sup>1</sup> Norma Broude, Mary D. Garrard, and Judith K. Brodsky, eds., *The Power of Feminist Art: The American Movement of the 1970s, History and Impact* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994), 10.

<sup>2</sup> Broude, *The Power*, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Elissa Auther, *String, Felt, Thread: The Hierarchy of Art and Craft in American Art* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), xii.

the once negative associations of women's traditional art as connected to femininity and domesticity were recast as distinctive features of an artistic heritage valuable to women.<sup>4</sup>

When feminist artists began to break down the hierarchy of art and craft, they were reclaiming the value of women's traditional art as practiced in the domestic sphere. In moving women's traditional art from the private to public sphere, they were applying the radical feminist concept of "the personal is political." In a special issue about feminist art history published by *ARTnews* in 1980, Grace Glueck stated:

Certainly by the mid-1970s, markedly female approaches to the making of art were strongly in evidence ... permitting the incorporation into so-called "high" art of the traditional modes and materials of women's crafts—stitchery, quilting, weaving, piercing, applique, china painting, among others—once scorned by the male-dominated art world as "decorative."<sup>5</sup>

The application of female traditional art by feminist artists challenged, and later integrated, feminist politics into the male-dominated art world.

Judy Chicago, a well-known feminist artist, exemplifies the integration of feminism and art in the 1970s. Chronicling the achievements of women throughout Western history, she created *The Dinner Party* through the labor-intensive, traditionally feminine crafts of embroidery and china painting (Figure 1). Chicago made a conscious decision to use decorative art and handicraft as a feminist strategy to challenge the hierarchal conventions in art and women's status in society.<sup>6</sup> *The Dinner Party* raised questions about what constituted "greatness" in art, why women had been excluded from historical narratives, and the ways in which social constructions of gender shaped women's lives. Chicago blurred the distinction between fine art and craft, challenged women's subordinate status as art makers, and played a role in integrating women's art into the male-dominated art world.<sup>7</sup> While Chicago's *The Dinner Party* remains an icon of the feminist movement because of its celebration of women in history, historians have focused more on the debates surrounding the work's controversial imagery and its artistic merits. Instead of simply reiterating previous scholars' arguments over its vaginal forms, iconography, and feminist message, this essay will examine the ways in which Chicago challenged the aesthetic hierarchy in art through her appropriation of embroidery and china painting in *The Dinner Party*.

In order to contextualize *The Dinner Party*, one must understand how Judy Gerowitz became Judy Chicago, a pioneer of feminist art. Judy Chicago was born Judy Cohen in Chicago, Illinois in 1939, and was the daughter of Arthur and May Cohen. Her father worked at a post office, and her mother was a medical secretary. She grew

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<sup>4</sup>. Auther, *String*, 98.

<sup>5</sup>. Grace Glueck, "Redefining the Whole Relationship between Art and Society," *ARTnews* 79, no. 9 (October 1980), 59-60.

<sup>6</sup>. Auther, *String*, 146.

<sup>7</sup>. Auther, *String*, 146.



up in a liberal environment in which her Jewish parents openly discussed their left-wing politics. Her mother instilled her passion for art into her daughter at an early age, and Chicago began drawing at the age of three. Her father, an active member of the Communist Party, left his job in 1948 in the middle of the McCarthy blacklist and the controversy surrounding the family's communist beliefs. Although her father died tragically of a stomach ulcer when she was only thirteen years old, Chicago credits her father with influencing her liberal views toward women.<sup>8</sup>

Her father's political activism formed the foundation of her desire for social change and inspired her political activism in college. Her awareness of the profound sexism inherent in modern art institutions, including art schools, museums, and even artistic styles, developed gradually during her years as student and young artist in Los Angeles in the 1950s and 1960s. When Chicago began graduate school at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in 1958, the predominant artistic style was Minimalism. This abstract form of art uses simple geometric shapes, monumental scale, and the ability to handle industrial materials in a precise manner. Modern art, as defined by critics, was supposed to confine itself to the visual experience without any reference to personal experience. Minimalist art was an abstract, neutral art form, devoid of narrative content and social significance. Implicit in the Minimalist style was the idea that mastery of technical procedures and abstraction were skills typically associated with men in the 1960s. This excluded the personal, emotional experiences that were often considered the exclusive domain of women.<sup>9</sup>

Chicago's early paintings depicted female sexual expression, but rejection from her peers soon persuaded her to turn her attention to Minimalist expression, the art of her male contemporaries. She learned that to have her work to be taken seriously, she must hide that it was made by a woman.<sup>10</sup> By the 1960s, she was gaining recognition for her Minimalist, geometric works that suited the tastes of the art world.<sup>11</sup> Personally, she felt these works became a "neutralized" version of her original vision, a suppression of her real concerns in order to fit into the male-dominated aesthetic.<sup>12</sup> Addressing her attempts to deal with male prejudice, she talks candidly about her feelings:

I began to work with formal rather than symbolic issues. But I was never interested in 'formal issues' as such. Rather, they were something that my content had to be hidden behind in order for my work to be taken seriously. Because of this duplicity, there always appeared to be something of 'not quite right' about my pieces according to the prevailing aesthetic. It was not that my work was false. It was rather that I was caught in a bind. In order to be myself,

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<sup>8</sup> Judy Chicago, *Through the Flower: My Struggle as a Woman Artist* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1975), 1-9.

<sup>9</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 87-90.

<sup>10</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 40.

<sup>11</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 38.

<sup>12</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 40.

I had to express those things that were most real to me, and those included the struggles I was having as a woman, both personally and professionally.<sup>13</sup>

By suppressing her true feminine, artistic expression, she adapted to the male-dominated art world. Although she ultimately rejected a pure minimalist style, she later incorporated many of the geometric designs and color patterns of her earlier work into her feminist art.

Even as her professional life flourished after she graduated with the M.F.A. from UCLA in 1964, Chicago felt increasingly alienated from her work. By 1966, she had her first solo exhibit at the Rolf Nelson Gallery in Los Angeles, and she continued to exhibit her Minimalist work regularly until 1969. Outwardly, she denied her femaleness to survive in a man's world by adopting an attitude of "cool machismo." She found that she gained a certain amount of acceptance by expressing her "male" side, smoking cigars, attending motorcycle races, and hanging out in bars. She even successfully completed auto body school, along with male peers, to legitimize her technique in an environment that focused on formal mastery of materials over content.<sup>14</sup>

After her exposure to radical feminist writing in the late 1960s, Chicago found the courage to break free from the confines of what she viewed as the masculine conventions of modern art. The gathering momentum of the feminist movement marked a turning point in Chicago's career. She describes the tremendous excitement that the early feminist literature inspired in her:

When I read it, I couldn't believe it. Here were women saying the things I had been feeling, saying them out loud ... I identified with all the material in those early tracts as I had never identified with anything in my whole life. ... realizing that at last here was an alternative to the isolation, the silence, the depreciation, and the denial I had been facing.<sup>15</sup>

The turning point in her artistic expression came with the *Pasadena Lifesavers*, one of the pieces included in an exhibition at California State University, Fullerton in 1970.<sup>16</sup> In reflecting on *Pasadena Lifesavers*, she "[saw] the three groups as representing my 'masculine' aggressive side, my feminine 'receptive' side, and the hiding of myself that I was still doing at the time."<sup>17</sup> This group of paintings represents the first step in her struggle to bring together her point of view as a woman with symbolic, visual language. At the first exhibition with an explicitly feminist context, she highlighted the feminist content by posting an official name change at the gallery entrance.<sup>18</sup> The announcement stated that "Judy Gerowitz hereby divests herself of all names imposed

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<sup>13</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 40.

<sup>14</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 36.

<sup>15</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 59-60.

<sup>16</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 57.

<sup>17</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 57.

<sup>18</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 63.

upon her through male social dominance and freely chooses her own name Judy Chicago.”<sup>19</sup> By dropping her married name and adopting the name of her hometown, she kept her identity separate from both her husband and traditional gender roles.

By changing her last name legally to Chicago, she incorporated feminist thought into her life by embarking on a road of lifelong activism to elevate women's status in society. Always outspoken and willing to be her own strongest advocate, she designed the first Feminist Art Program (FAP) at California State University, Fresno in the 1970s.<sup>20</sup> Her activism in art reflected the politics of her emerging feminist ideology and her desire to unite feminism and art. Willing to express her feminine side in art, she used her feminist perspective to emphasize the difference between men's and women's experiences. As a professional woman artist, she hoped to help women express their perception of reality to create both a new women's art and a female audience.<sup>21</sup> Art would change women themselves who, in turn, would challenge society's beliefs.<sup>22</sup> Her vision also included a separate art community for women that supported “making art, showing art, selling and distributing it, teaching other women art-making skills, writing about art, and establishing our own art history.”<sup>23</sup> Based on her attempts to assimilate into the male-dominated graduate program at UCLA, Chicago understood that female artists lacked role models, as well as comfortable spaces in which to express themselves. Considering herself a pioneer of an unexplored feminist frontier, she hoped to “develop women who could be leaders ... and together push the boundaries of ‘new form for new content.’”<sup>24</sup> She was clearly challenging the modernist rule that art should be abstract, free from narrative content, and made on a grand scale from industrial materials associated with male artists.

Pioneering the FAP in the early 1970s, she adopted some of the tenets of radical feminism to create a program committed to social change. Chicago and her students invented a new form of feminist education by combining radical feminism with studio art practice. Some of the basic tenets of radical feminism included consciousness-raising, challenging traditional gender roles, opposing the sexual objectification of women, and creating safe spaces for women. She centered the FAP around women's identities, experiences, and collaborative, discussion-based practices such as consciousness-raising. Chicago and her students also separated themselves from what they defined as male-controlled and male-dominated spaces.<sup>25</sup> She believed that this separation was a powerful strategy to enable women to find their voices without male interference.<sup>26</sup> They created their own women's studies curriculum by studying female

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<sup>19</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 63.

<sup>20</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 97.

<sup>21</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 100.

<sup>22</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 100.

<sup>23</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 95-97.

<sup>24</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 194.

<sup>25</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 72.

<sup>26</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 72.

role models from the past in art history, literature, mythology, and contemporary feminist theory.<sup>27</sup> Most importantly, they encouraged one another “to make art out of the things with which they were really involved.”<sup>28</sup> By teaching young women artists to make art out of their own experiences, she provided the guidance and validation that she failed to receive from male instructors while in graduate school. Chicago achieved this goal in her own art when she began to develop an individualized expression of her sexuality, represented by both butterflies and vaginal forms.

Chicago’s goal for the FAP was to expand the definition of fine art, incorporate the feminine perspective into professional art, and learn how to promote their work independently. Feminist artists often embraced alternative materials to create work that was connected to the female gender, such as handicraft and textiles, as an alternative to the historically male-dominated traditional art forms of painting and sculpture. Believing that creative, successful women had to move beyond the limits of what she called the “female role,” she pushed her students to develop skills traditionally considered masculine.<sup>29</sup> For example, one of the FAP’s first class assignments was to locate and rebuild an off-campus studio space, a task requiring skills in business, renovation, and construction.<sup>30</sup> Chicago and her students eventually converted this space into a female-centered art installation called *Womanhouse* in order to expose women’s oppression by arbitrary beauty standards and gender stereotypes.<sup>31</sup> *Womanhouse* also demonstrated how they began drawing on their personal experiences as women for their subject matter to challenge the modernist idea that art should be abstract and free of narrative content.

*Womanhouse*, a collaborative project, exemplified Chicago and the FAP’s commitment to producing female-centered art in order to break down divisions between art and craft, “high” and “low” art, and modernism and kitsch. It also represented the separatism practiced in the FAP which they viewed as a necessary process for educating young women artists to succeed in the art world. After renovating the house in downtown Hollywood for several months, they finished building seventeen rooms filled with art installations in 1972.<sup>32</sup> They employed house and domestic imagery throughout the project, making the private world of women public. Transformed through a variety of traditional domestic crafts and media including embroidery, crochet, makeup, and costumes, the house reflected a mixture of reality and fantasy. Chicago constructed the most confrontational room, “Menstruation Bathroom,” which featured a white, antiseptic bathroom filled with douches,

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<sup>27</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 86.

<sup>28</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 79.

<sup>29</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 105.

<sup>30</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 104.

<sup>31</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 113.

<sup>32</sup> Judy Chicago, *Beyond the Flower: The Autobiography of a Feminist Artist* (New York: Penguin, 1996), 33.

deodorants, and other products meant to hide the “shameful” signs of menstruation.<sup>33</sup> Blood-stained sanitary napkins spilled over the sides of a white wastebasket in order to highlight the impossible standards of women’s “purity” by depicting a non-idealized version of women’s bodies.<sup>34</sup> *Womanhouse* mirrored the radical feminist strategy of using direct action techniques to challenge male-dominated institutions through the use of shocking imagery meant to illicit strong, emotional responses in its viewers.

While Chicago felt comfortable confronting the social construction of femininity, she sometimes struggled to deal with the “feminine” emotions of her students. Chicago’s support of her students’ challenges to modernist conventions was problematic as she sometimes felt uneasy dealing with the emotional nature of her classes. When she and her students engaged in consciousness-raising activities, they addressed topics such as work, sexuality, relationships, body image, and violence. Focusing on her students’ emotions made her feel like their therapist, and she was torn between her commitment to her teaching and her desire to retreat to the solitude of her studio.<sup>35</sup> Although she challenged gender stereotypes in art, she simultaneously reaffirmed them when she complained about her students’ emotional dependence on her. As a professional artist, she felt that her students should focus more on their training and the quality of their work. Ultimately, her commitment to her students came first, so she encouraged them to express their emotions through art. In this way, consciousness-raising became a method for determining artistic subject matter, which the students carried out in a variety of unconventional media. In addition to using crafts, students used materials such as glitter, fabric, plastic flowers, and household materials.<sup>36</sup> She also encouraged them to express themselves by using performance art, drawing, painting, and sculpture.<sup>37</sup>

One of the most important topics addressed by Chicago and her students was the theme of women reclaiming their sexuality. Sexual imagery was essential to the early feminist art movement because images of women’s bodies had been historically used in art as an object of the “male gaze.” Historically, male fantasies and desires have been projected onto female forms, presenting women as objects of male pleasure. Chicago and her students wanted to symbolically reclaim the female body as a vehicle for female empowerment, conveying women’s thoughts and feelings as experienced in their bodies.<sup>38</sup> Feminist artists, in studying the writing of radical feminists, viewed female sexuality as a form of the social oppression of women by the male-dominated society.<sup>39</sup>

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33. Amelia Jones, *Sexual Politics: Judy Chicago's Dinner Party in Feminist Art History* (Los Angeles: UCLA at the Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Cultural Center in association with University of California Press, Berkeley, 1996), 58.

34. Jones, *Sexual Politics*, 58.

35. Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 81.

36. Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 112-113.

37. Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 112-113.

38. Faith Wilding, “The Feminist Art Programs at Fresno and Cal Arts, 1970-1975,” in *The Power of Feminist Art*, 35.

39. Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 79.

In creating their own erotic heritage, they began to free themselves from patriarchal oppression.<sup>40</sup>

Like radical feminists, Chicago and her students envisioned the eventual transformation of women's sexuality from a source of oppression to a source of empowerment. The development of Chicago's vulvar imagery, or what she termed "central core imagery," led her to use both sexual themes and traditional female art to challenge hierarchy in art.<sup>41</sup> Central core imagery signifies the sexual power, or inner core, of women represented in Chicago's work by butterflies, flowers, and vulvar images. In producing images that expressed pleasure and pride in their sexuality, Chicago and her students reclaimed the word "cunt" by making it a symbol of empowerment.<sup>42</sup> By representing images that may be viewed as "obscene," she challenged the notion of high art's boundaries between obscenity and "pure" aesthetic conventions such as the female nude.<sup>43</sup> Making "cunt" art was exciting and subversive because it signified a reawakening of women's sexuality and their feminist consciousness.<sup>44</sup> She chose the overt representation of the female genitalia to confront the objectification of women in art in which women are represented for the male viewer's pleasure. In a 1973 interview, she explained her view that many female artists used central core imagery in their art.<sup>45</sup> Her first significant work using the idea of the central core was *Through the Flower* (1973), a painting of a flower with red-orange petals that opened to a bright blue-green center. The painting looks as though the viewer is moving through the vagina or birth canal. Her exploration of images of radiant central cores informed her later ideas about the china plates she wanted to make for *The Dinner Party*.<sup>46</sup>

After Chicago left the FAP, her experiences continued to have a profound effect on her artwork and solidified her ideas for *The Dinner Party*. Fascinated by the china-painting tradition, Chicago decided to use the medium in a unique way, as a vehicle to convey women's historical oppression, as well as a source of their creativity. While she admired the beauty and precision of china painting, she also viewed women's crafts as being historically confined to domestic, feminine spaces and, therefore, excluded from the public, male-dominated art world:

I remember one particularly poignant experience of visiting a china-painter's house and seeing, as Virginia Woolf once said, that the very bricks were permeated with her creative energy. All the chairs had needlepoint cushions; all

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<sup>40</sup> Chicago, *Through the Flower*, 79.

<sup>41</sup> Laura Meyer, "From Finish Fetish to Feminism: Judy Chicago's Dinner Party in California Art History," in *The Power of Feminist Art*, 66.

<sup>42</sup> Wilding, *The Feminist*, 35.

<sup>43</sup> Jones, *Sexual Politics*, 92.

<sup>44</sup> Wilding, *The Feminist*, 35.

<sup>45</sup> Jane Gerhard, *The Dinner Party: Judy Chicago and the Power of Popular Feminism 1970-2007* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2013), 141.

<sup>46</sup> Chicago, *Beyond the Flower*, 46.

the beds were covered with quilts; all the walls were covered with oil paintings; all the plates were painted with flowers; and the garden was planted with the kinds of flowers that were painted on the plates. This woman had done all that work, trying as best she could to fit her creative drive—which could probably have expanded into the mural-sized paintings or monumental structures—into the confined space of her house, which could hardly have held another piece of work. The china-painting world, and the household objects the women painted, seemed to be a perfect metaphor for women's domesticated and trivialized circumstances.<sup>47</sup>

Chicago's experiments with china painting ultimately led to the conception of her most famous and monumental work, *The Dinner Party*.

The refined work of handicraft employed in the making of *The Dinner Party* is one of its defining attributes and is essential to uniting the materials with its thematic content. The artwork employs traditional women's art, such as ceramics, china painting, and an array of needle and fiber techniques, to honor the history of women in Western civilization.<sup>48</sup> The installation consists of a massive banquet table in the shape of an equilateral triangle, an emblem of equality.<sup>49</sup> Along each side are thirteen place settings, a reference to Christ and his twelve disciples at *The Last Supper*.<sup>50</sup> The 39 settings commemorate significant women from myth, legend, and history, ranging from "the primordial goddess" to Georgia O'Keeffe, with stops along the way at Sappho, Sacajawea, and Virginia Woolf.<sup>51</sup> At each setting, a large ceramic plate rests on a cloth runner embroidered with the woman's name and lavishly decorated with symbols of her life and achievements. The plates represent vaginal forms, some rising up in high relief, and customized with symbolic attributes of the women they honor. The gleaming, white ceramic tile floor beneath the table bears the names of another 999 women painted in gold.<sup>52</sup> These names are grouped around the place settings to symbolize the long history of women's achievements.<sup>53</sup>

In defining women as important historical actors, Chicago used *The Dinner Party* to challenge the paradigm of history centered around the achievements of great men. Over a five-year period, she conceived and created the piece as a symbolic history of women in Western civilization which took over five years to construct. Her concept was to hold an elaborate dinner party honoring the women that she considered to have made significant contributions to history. Individual place settings include a painted or sculpted porcelain plate and an ornamental needlework runner. Each plate is fourteen

47. Judy Chicago, *The Dinner Party: A Symbol of Our Heritage* (Garden City: Anchor Press, 1979), 10.

48. Chicago, *Beyond the Flower*, 60. Chicago's ethnocentric view of women's history is a major criticism of her work.

49. Chicago, *Beyond the Flower*, 60.

50. Chicago, *Beyond the Flower*, 60.

51. Chicago, *The Dinner Party*, 51-96.

52. Chicago, *Beyond the Flower*, 48.

53. Chicago, *Beyond the Flower*, 48.

inches in diameter, with the names of the women embroidered on the front face of the table runner. Linen, napkins, porcelain flatware, and gold-luster goblets complete the settings. At each corner of the triangular table is what Chicago labeled a “millennium sampler,” with embroidered patterns done with different types of needlework. She deliberately chose embroidery patterns and needlework styles from the historical period unique to each woman’s life.<sup>54</sup>

While Chicago designed each place setting to represent one woman from history, together they tell a “herstory” through women’s traditional art. Each place setting can be viewed as an individual art piece, with a unique formal design, color scheme, iteration of the vulvar theme, and complicated needlework to fit the specific narration presented in the runner. Even Chicago’s selection of the particular fabrics and materials used for each place setting is well-considered. For example, on the Primordial Goddess place setting, the application of leather and shell enhances the image of the “Earth Mother.” For imperial figures, such as the Byzantine empress Theodora and England’s Queen Elizabeth, she incorporates designs in shades of gold. Emily Dickenson’s place setting has pink lace covering the plate and the runner, representing a talented and intelligent woman’s repression in the Victorian Era (Figure 2).

Because Chicago hoped to expand the male-dominated canons of art to include the experiences of women, she specifically utilized materials of the domestic realm and women’s traditional art forms. In this context, she recast the once negative associations of fiber and ceramics with femininity and the domestic sphere as distinctive and culturally valuable features of women’s artistic heritage. Tracing how craft is associated with the female world, Rozsika Parker’s *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine* discusses the formation of a feminine identity through the use of traditional craft. She examines the creation of ideological binaries based on gender which separates utilitarian, non-intellectual craft work made by women from fine art made by the innate genius of male artists. Parker recognizes that both men and women practiced embroidery in medieval times, only later becoming a gendered practice during the Victorian Era when the ideal of femininity was constructed.<sup>55</sup> This is significant because it confirms that the male-dominated art world refuses to acknowledge that patriarchal constructions transformed embroidery into a gendered practice.

When Chicago decided to incorporate sewing and embroidery into her piece, she could barely sew. She needed to find someone to assist her in broadening her knowledge of needlework. Susan Hill became her needlework supervisor and introduced her to ecclesiastical embroidery. They attended an exhibit created by an ecclesiastical embroidery class, consisting of female embroiderers, which included a room full of vestments and altar cloths. Chicago noted the irony of using their talents

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<sup>54</sup> For a complete listing of place settings, refer to Chicago, *The Dinner Party*, and Chicago, *Embroidering our Heritage: The Dinner Party Needlework* (Garden City: Anchor Press, 1980).

<sup>55</sup> Rozsika Parker, *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine*, new ed. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 8.



to decorate a church that, like many organized religions, had deprived women of equality for centuries. The idea that she found most unsettling was that women did not receive credit for their needlework; they were not allowed to stitch their names onto the pieces they spent months, even years, making. This discovery led her to incorporate needlework into *The Dinner Party* as a symbol of women's marginalization throughout history.<sup>56</sup>

In addition to the enormous task of embroidering 39 runners, Chicago attempted to design, sculpt, and fire the same number of plates without any assistance. Chicago worked on *The Dinner Party* independently for over a year, painting and firing test plates and researching women's history to compile a lineage of historical figures from prehistory to the present. She bought a sewing machine capable of embroidery stitching so that she could sew a circle containing biographical text around each plate on a tablecloth that would run the length of the table. After the frustration of numerous plates breaking and endless stitching, she realized that the project was bigger than one person's capability. Rather than reducing the size of her work, she added a group of assistants to her project in 1975. The core group consisted of about twenty people, primarily female volunteers, who oversaw all areas of craftsmanship and research, helped with administrative tasks, exhibition plans, documented the project, and publicized it in order to recruit volunteers and raise funds. Over 400 female volunteers with considerable technical skill volunteered their labor over a period of five years. Collective work, which she initially viewed as a temporary necessity, became the primary means of production in *The Dinner Party*. Chicago, however, retained total artistic control over the project.<sup>57</sup>

Although Chicago relied on her volunteers to perform needlework, embroidery, and china painting, she considered her artistic vision and talent to be superior to her workers' technical skills. While she admired the technical difficulty and precision of women's traditional art, she exhibited a seemingly elitist stance that simultaneously denigrated the art form. For example, after listening to the women discuss the artistic merits of china painting, she noticed that they focused on the difficulty of the technique instead of the content.<sup>58</sup> In Chicago's opinion, "it's the absence of personal content that distinguishes craft from art."<sup>59</sup> She insinuated that her drive to become a professional artist, along with constructing both the narrative and artistic content of the piece, elevated her status above her workers. Although she believed many of the women had the capability to express personal experiences in their work, she wondered why they failed to take their work more seriously.<sup>60</sup> She theorized that their apparent lack of ambition, caused by their lack of self-esteem, resulted from "not only continual dependence upon preformed patterns and designs, but also in resistance to new ideas

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<sup>56</sup> Chicago, *Embroidering Our Heritage*, 7.

<sup>57</sup> Chicago, *Embroidering Our Heritage*, 56-60.

<sup>58</sup> Chicago, *Embroidering Our Heritage*, 10.

<sup>59</sup> Chicago, *Embroidering Our Heritage*, 10.

<sup>60</sup> Chicago, *Embroidering Our Heritage*, 10.

and unfamiliar thoughts.”<sup>61</sup> Her perception of their “lack of ambition” only reinforced the importance in her desire to achieve greatness through her artwork.

In disparaging her workers’ emphasis on technique over content, Chicago adopts the dominant ideology that denigrates women’s craft while simultaneously trying to elevate its status.<sup>62</sup> In her autobiography, she repeatedly refers to her masculine side as the driving force for her artistic visions, yet her feminine side as responsible for the imagery and forms. This duality presents a contradiction because she is attempting to broaden the category of art to include feminine content while reinforcing the gender stereotype that professional artists must embody masculine characteristics. Ironically, Chicago’s beliefs about artists seems to perpetuate this construction of the masculine and feminine dichotomy, despite her awareness of the gendered hierarchy in art that separates art from craft.

The complexity of gender, how it is constructed, maintained, and recreated, also plagues the historiography of *The Dinner Party*. In constructing the female gender through the use of vulvar forms, Chicago reduces the essence of women to their female anatomy. Two of the most common critiques of *The Dinner Party*, and radical feminism in general, are the essentialist and separatist views of women. Radical feminists fought against the notion of “biology is destiny,” or that female biology controls women’s behaviors and personalities. Chicago uses essentialist “core imagery,” or the representation of women by vulvar forms, to define man and woman as inherently different. The idea of difference permeates *The Dinner Party* because she presents women’s culture as entirely separate from the male-dominated world. Many feminist artists of the 1970s were searching for an authentic voice with an affirming message that negated their inferiority by celebrating the uniqueness of women’s culture. By fitting the history of women into the established hierarchy of history, Chicago represents the feminist perspective of her generation. Jane Gerhard, feminist author and educator, describes this dichotomy as capturing the tension between “women’s difference as a source of their oppression and as a source of their uniqueness.”<sup>63</sup> By using *The Dinner Party* to create “herstory,” Chicago further perpetuates the marginalization of women in history. Feminist scholars now recognize that historians must integrate women’s contributions into historiography in order to deconstruct, not reinforce, categories of difference.

Despite Chicago’s intention to reveal the value of women’s culture and historical contributions, most art critics found her overt narrative problematic based on modernist standards. Since the modernist ideal emphasizes minimal narrative content, critics viewed *The Dinner Party* as propagandistic. Nancy McCauley, author of “No

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<sup>61</sup> Chicago, *Embroidering Our Heritage*, 10.

<sup>62</sup> “Cognitive Dissonance,” Kendra Cherry, verywellmind, updated 14 March 2018, <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-cognitive-dissonance-2795012>. Chicago displays an internal conflict, or cognitive dissonance, in which “people experience tension or discomfort when their beliefs or attitudes do not match their behaviors.”

<sup>63</sup> Gerhard, *The Dinner Party*, 137.

Sexual Perversion in (Judy) Chicago,” illustrates how critics maligned its content in writing “nothing more obvious or accessible or didactic has been seen in an exhibition of contemporary art in a very long time . . . reiterate[ing] its theme . . . with an insistence and vulgarity more appropriate to, perhaps, to an advertising campaign rather than to a work of art.”<sup>64</sup> While the modernist perspective represented the artistic criteria of the time, a few, friendlier critics embraced the imagery and iconography of *The Dinner Party* as a thoughtful vision of women’s history. She raises questions about the nature and meaning of the past and the way it has been traditionally perceived. She successfully integrates the public nature of women’s historical significance while using the language of domesticity, a signifier to her audience that the private is now made public.

Despite harsh reviews by art critics, *The Dinner Party* was a resounding commercial success. *The Dinner Party* debuted at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in March 1979. Five thousand people attended opening day, and during its three months on view, over 100,000 people viewed *The Dinner Party*. The number of visitors broke museum attendance records which proved to be more than double the number viewing the exhibitions of two prominent male artists. Men and women stood in long lines outside the museum for up to five hours to view the exhibition. Women reported feeling a sense of camaraderie waiting in line. As women stood in line, they often formed temporary communities and talked, laughed, and even sang songs together. Even if women disliked the vulvar imagery, they left feeling a sense of pride and gratitude for the awareness of women’s history.<sup>65</sup>

Although inserting women into the art historical canon reinforces the hierarchical organization of the art world, Chicago successfully accomplished her goals to both create art accessible to a female audience and expose the gendering of artistic images and materials. *The Dinner Party*’s celebratory attitude of women politicizes the narrative of the piece in a couple ways. First, Chicago subverts the traditional female arts and incorporates female imagery to provide affirmative symbols for women. In the manner of Leonardo da Vinci’s *The Last Supper*, symbolized by the thirteen plates on each side, Chicago invokes the imagery of the masterpiece.<sup>66</sup> Traditionally, the masterpiece signifies pure, aesthetic, universal values in which male art historians elevate art to an iconic status. Because women have been excluded from the mythic status of the artistic genius, Chicago references this gendered construction by creating her own masterpiece. In visiting the installation at the Brooklyn Museum today, just as it was in San Francisco in 1979, one moves around the railing to view the place settings in dim lighting, almost

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<sup>64</sup> Nancy McCauley, “No Sexual Perversion in (Judy) Chicago,” *Art Documentation: Bulletin of the Art and Libraries Society of North America* 11, (Winter 1992): 177, accessed 15 April 2017. <http://proxy.lib.csus.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aft&AN=502763086>.

<sup>65</sup> Gerhard, *The Dinner Party*, 164-166.

<sup>66</sup> Gerhard, *The Dinner Party*, 169.

like a sanctuary.<sup>67</sup> By placing her work outside of the male paradigm, Chicago questions why the canonization of male artists does not apply to women.

Second, Chicago further challenged the notion of “high” art by choosing women’s traditional materials, oftentimes labeled “low” art. Her aim was “to imply that history should be seen as belonging just as much to women as to men, while also paying homage to needlework, which, like china-painting, was primarily a female craft.”<sup>68</sup> The dinner table settings are also consistent with women’s association with the home. It symbolizes women’s domestic roles which includes setting tables, preparing meals, and giving dinner parties.<sup>69</sup> She challenged the status quo with her untraditional methods of using women’s craft, her highly provocative use of vaginal imagery, and her desire to make artistic visual language more accessible to viewers.

Despite the popularity of *The Dinner Party*, art historians, feminists, and critics heavily criticize both the formal elements and subject matter of the piece.<sup>70</sup> Considered to embody the tenets of cultural feminism, *The Dinner Party* has been critiqued as essentialist, separatist, and falsely universal. The formal elements create an alternative women’s space within the museum which attempts to elevate the status of both women in history and women artists. By inserting women into the male-dominated space within a museum, critics chastise her elevation of the “feminine” aesthetic as further emphasizing women’s “Otherness.” These critiques undermine the revolutionary nature of the piece, attacking not only Chicago, but feminism. Consistent throughout the subsequent decades, the criticism of her piece as a celebration of women’s culture lacking in artistic merit reinforces male domination in art. Historiography that uses the same intellectual framework to criticize her art simply reinforces that existing power structure, but fails to analyze how the power relationships are defined and formed. By analyzing how Chicago used women’s traditional art, it is clear that she successfully raised questions about power and authority, constructions of gender, and the use of ideology to create consensus.

As *The Dinner Party*’s feminist message remained controversial for many decades; many museums and galleries unexpectedly became unwilling to exhibit the work. The passionate response by the audience did not prepare her for the hostility of the art community.<sup>71</sup> She was equally unprepared for the negativity of art historians but rationalized it as part of the prejudice against women in the art world.<sup>72</sup> As a result of

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<sup>67</sup> Gerhard, *The Dinner Party*, 169.

<sup>68</sup> Chicago, *Beyond the Flower*, 52.

<sup>69</sup> Chicago, *Beyond the Flower*, 52.

<sup>70</sup> For examples of critical reviews of *The Dinner Party*, refer to Suzanne Muchnic, “An Intellectual Famine at Judy Chicago’s Feast,” *Los Angeles Times*, 15 April 1979; Hilton Kramer, “Art: Judy Chicago’s ‘Dinner Party’ Comes to the Brooklyn Museum,” *New York Times*, 17 October 1980; Renee Graham, “Why Judy Chicago is the Artist the Art World Loves to Hate,” *Boston Globe*, 25 September 1995; and Christopher Knight, “More Famine than Feast: Focusing on the Flawed ‘Dinner Party’ Undermines ‘Sexual Politics,’” *Los Angeles Times*, 2 May 1996.

<sup>71</sup> Gehard, *The Dinner Party*, 182.

<sup>72</sup> Chicago, *Beyond the Flower*, 71.

the theoretical divide between feminists, artists, and art critics, Chicago was met with institutional resistance. Museums, wanting to avoid potential controversy sparked by the vaginal forms, rejected *The Dinner Party* from being shown throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Although the media and the public remained interested in her work, and grassroots organizations managed to continue exhibiting it, it was eventually deprived of permanent housing and left in storage indefinitely.<sup>73</sup>

Adding to the controversy surrounding her work, the anti-pornography movements of the 1980s prevented *The Dinner Party* from being exhibited throughout the decade. From the mid-1970s into the 1980s, public rallies and marches protesting pornography and prostitution drew widespread support from radical feminists, as well as men and women across the political spectrum. Even though *The Dinner Party* remained in storage for a decade, anti-pornography feminists continually debated the pornographic imagery of the vaginal plates.<sup>74</sup> The feminists denounced pornography as degrading to women and as engendering violence toward women.<sup>75</sup> The impact of the rhetoric linking pornography with misogyny impacted the fate of *The Dinner Party* for over two decades. Attempting to preserve her work as a cultural feminist icon, she agreed to donate it to the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) in 1990.<sup>76</sup> Not only did students protest the donation and call for the resignation of several board members in response to the donation, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to prohibit the UDC from renovating their old library to show the work.<sup>77</sup> Chicago maintained that the decision reflected the challenge of feminist values to patriarchy and the continued erasure of women from history.<sup>78</sup>

Towards the end of 1990s, popular feminism made a cultural comeback and audiences viewed *The Dinner Party* for the first time in many years. During the post-feminist era, popular culture celebrated women's experiences, and productions like *The Vagina Monologues* and *Sex and the City* captivated women's attention. After *The Dinner Party* went on display in 1996 at the Armand Hammer Museum on the West Coast, the show's supporters vowed to find it a permanent home. The search seemed to fail, and the piece wound up in storage once again. Chicago's luck changed when a supporter became a board member at the Brooklyn Museum in 2000. The museum then launched a multi-million-dollar campaign to make the renovations necessary to house the enormous installation. The permanent display of *The Dinner Party* opened in 2007, marking a dramatic shift in artistic and social attitudes that resulted in the work's transformation from pornography into a cultural icon with its proper place in history.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Chicago, *Beyond the Flower*, 72.

<sup>74</sup> Chicago, *Beyond the Flower*, 76.

<sup>75</sup> Chicago, *Beyond the Flower*, 77.

<sup>76</sup> Lorraine Sorrel, "Congress Disapproves *The Dinner Party*," *Off Our Backs* 20 (1990): 21.

<sup>77</sup> Sorrel, "Congress Disapproves," 21.

<sup>78</sup> Chicago, *Beyond the Flower*, 71.

<sup>79</sup> Gerhard, *The Dinner Party*, 276-280.

Through the examination of Chicago's use of women's traditional art as a feminist strategy, *The Dinner Party* demonstrates her unparalleled success in challenging sexism in the art world. Through the context, form, process, and content of Chicago's piece, she seeks to address and rectify specific injustices suffered by women. These injustices include the marginalization of women artists from galleries, exhibitions, museums, art programs, and history, as well as the denigration of women's traditional art, such as embroidery, china painting, and needlework. Due to her awareness of the erasure of women's past and confronting this with the monumental tribute, she has ensured the permanence of *The Dinner Party*'s history. In exposing the marginalization of women in art because their work had been labeled craft, Chicago legitimizes the use of women's traditional art and helped make women's personal experiences acceptable subjects for art. The needlework designs on the runners and altar cloths challenged the stereotypical view of women's needlework as purely decorative and thus, destabilized the cultural assumptions about women and craft. Although she failed to fully dismantle the hierarchy in art, Chicago's piece represents the impact of radical feminism on the mainstream art world, especially in shaping today's open artistic climate.

**Figures**



**Figure 1.** Chicago, Judy, *The Dinner Party*, 1974-79, mixed media, 39 x 39 x 39', Brooklyn Museum website, [https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/dinner\\_party](https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/dinner_party) (accessed 12 May 2017).



**Figure 2.** Chicago, Judy, *The Dinner Party* (Emily Dickinson place setting), 1974-79, mixed media, Brooklyn Museum website, [https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/dinner\\_party/place\\_settings/emily\\_dickinson](https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/dinner_party/place_settings/emily_dickinson) (accessed 12 May 2017).

# RUNNING FOR EQUALITY: THE STRUGGLE TO ESTABLISH A WOMEN'S MARATHON

**Brianna Scruggs**

**Abstract:** Less than sixty years ago, female participation in marathons was not only unheard of, it was not allowed by any major athletic governing associations. While some women had completed the 26.2-mile trek in the past, many opponents of female running used pseudoscience to support their argument that long-distance running was unhealthy for women. At the same time, women set out to prove that they should be allowed to run in these races by competing in them unofficially. This paper explores a twenty-year period, beginning with the controversy surrounding female participation in long distance races in the 1960s and 1970s and the struggle female distance runners faced as they attempted to establish an Olympic women's marathon in the 1980s.

On April 19, 1967, racers lining up at the starting line of the Boston Marathon found themselves doing double takes. There was an unusual sight at the seventieth running of the Boston Marathon: a woman warming up alongside the men. Twenty-year-old Kathrine Switzer lined up at the starting line with pride, knowing she stood out from the rest of the racers with lipstick painted across her lips. The runners beside her expressed their enthusiasm at a woman attempting to run the 26.2-mile course from Hopkinton, Massachusetts to the heart of Boston. However, after the first few miles, Switzer heard the sound of leather shoes scraping against the ground, distinct from the sound of rubber running shoes hitting the pavement. It was not long before a large, angry man appeared, shouting, "Get the hell out of my race and give me those numbers!" The man was none other than Jock Semple, the director of the Boston Marathon. Semple swiped and grabbed at Switzer's clothes, attempting to rip her running bib from the back of her shirt. Switzer was freed from Semple's grasp when her boyfriend threw him to the ground. Disheartened, Switzer continued running, hoping that finishing the marathon would prove, once and for all, that "women had the capability to run the marathon distance." Switzer finished the race in four hours and twenty minutes, and pictures of Semple assaulting her caused an outcry as newspapers circulated the pictures in the following days.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kathrine Switzer, *Marathon Woman: Running the Race to Revolutionize Women's Sports* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2007), 87-88, 91-92, 93; Amby Burfoot, *First Ladies of Running*: 22



Although Switzer succeeded in her quest to finish the Boston Marathon, the fight for gender equality in the marathon was far from over. Prior to Switzer's appearance at the 1967 Boston Marathon, and even after it, those in the sports world widely believed and stated that women could not run long distances. Because of this, until the 1970s, society accepted the belief that female distance runners could not compete in United States Track & Field and Olympic-sanctioned marathon events because, unlike men, they could not run 26.2 miles. In an effort to prove that they could run alongside men in marathons, female distance runners overcame many obstacles in their long fight for equality—a struggle that coincided with the women's liberation movement of the late twentieth century—taking on national athletic associations, staunch societal viewpoints, and eventually, the Olympics.<sup>2</sup>

Prior to 1972, the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) did not allow women to run distances farther than ten miles, although women had attempted to prove that they could for nearly a century. The first modern Olympiad was held in 1896 in Athens, Greece. One hundred and thirteen athletes participated officially—all of them male. But one woman was determined to participate, even though Olympic organizers barred her from officially participating in the games. Her name was Melpomene. According to the founder of the modern Olympic Games, women were barred entry into the games because “rather than to seek records for herself, a woman's greatest achievement was to encourage her sons to excel.” Despite this, Melpomene ran the distance from Marathon to Athens unofficially. Hours later, she crossed the finish line, far behind the male entrants. It did not matter that Melpomene had run the race slower than her male counterparts—she had proven, in 1896, that a woman could run the distance.

Yet Melpomene's accomplishment did not translate into the twentieth century, as attitudes towards female runners—and athletes in general—remained negative. Many agreed with the sentiments expressed by Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympics—that a woman should not seek athletic records for herself. Yet despite the fact that female distance running was looked down on, women continued to run throughout the early twentieth century. These women were often referred to as “brazen doxies” for defying gender norms and running. The 1920s also saw a rise in organized running groups for women; these organizations began the fight to end gender discrimination in distance running.<sup>3</sup>

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*Inspiring Profiles of the Rebels, Rule Breakers, and Visionaries Who Changed the Sport Forever* (New York: Rodale Books, 2016), 61-62.

<sup>2</sup> Dusty Rhodes, “History of Women's Running,” in *The Complete Woman Runner* (Mountain View, CA: World Publications, 1978), 241-245; Charles C. Lovett, *Olympic Marathon: A Centennial History of the Games' Most Storied Race* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1997), 128-131.

<sup>3</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, 11 July 1996; Marisol Marquez, “Breaking Records,” *Lola Press* 14 (April 2001), 60,

<http://proxy.lib.csus.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.csus.edu/docview/237233513?accountid=10358> (accessed 12 April 2017); Rhodes, “History of Women's Running,” 241-245.

Although female distance runners faced resistance and even ridicule, this did not stop them from continuing to fight for equal participation throughout the 1920s, until the Great Depression in the 1930s. Instead of making individual efforts to bring about recognition for female runners like Melpomene did in 1896, female runners turned to collective organization in the 1920s. In 1921, The Feminine Sportive Foundation Internationale (FSFI) was founded, which became “the international governing body for women’s athletics,” and sponsored the first world championship race meet for women in 1922. FSFI continued to sponsor racing meets for women throughout the 1920s and began the push for female Olympic events. By 1928, FSFI and the International Amateur Athletic Federation, the governing body for the Olympics at the time, had agreed to sponsor four events for women at the 1928 Olympics. This included the first race for women—an 800-meter dash. However, due to the lack of training for female athletes, the race turned out to be a disaster, and the International Amateur Athletic Federation decided that women could not race distances longer than 220 yards. Furthermore, female events were eliminated from the 1932 Olympic Games.<sup>4</sup>

This setback was not addressed until after World War II, as the Great Depression stifled efforts to recognize women’s athletics. The issue of female distance running was of little import compared to the issues faced by the United States during the Depression and World War II. However, distance running spiked in popularity during the 1950s. As more men began running marathons, women began to insist for inclusion once again, but were met with obstacles at every turn, as they were forced to challenge age-old ideas of gender roles and relations. Following World War II, as men returned home from the war, gender roles were emphasized more than they had been in the previous decade. Women were considered too feeble to run long distances or participate in other athletic events because it “challenge[d] the passivity inscribed on women’s bodies.”<sup>5</sup>

To preserve this dynamic, opponents of female athletes turned to science to justify why women should not participate in athletic events. This discrimination affected girls as young as eight as well as grown women who wished to participate in Olympic-sanctioned events. Little League excluded girls from participating in youth baseball because, at the time, the Executive Vice President of Research for Little League considered their bones inferior and more susceptible to fracture than boys’ bones. However, later research revealed that at this age, female bones are actually more mature than male bones. In higher age groups and amateur athletics, women were barred because it was believed that athletic activity would affect their fertility. While girls were allowed to participate in grade-level track and field events, they were not allowed to run

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<sup>4</sup> Rhodes, 242-243.

<sup>5</sup> Rhodes, 243; Cheryl L. Cole, “Resisting the Canon: Feminist Cultural Studies, Sport, and Technologies of the Body,” in *Women, Sport, and Culture* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1994), 15.

in any events longer than 440 yards, or a quarter-mile. In high schools and colleges, the situation for aspiring female athletes was not much better, as “women and girls were excluded from almost all athletic opportunities in school.”<sup>6</sup>

At the same time, the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) governed female amateur athletics in the United States. The AAU took over jurisdiction of female participation in swimming and track and field in 1923. Beginning in the 1920s and into the 1960s, the AAU encouraged female participation in sports and gave some women leadership roles within the organization. However, these roles were ceremonial and viewed as “token positions.” In fact, many AAU-appointed female instructors were against women running long distances, arguing that it would make female runners barren. On the surface, it seemed like the AAU had taken an interest in female athletes, but in fact, it did little to improve the status of female athletes in the United States. By 1963, the AAU still did not allow women to run races longer than a half-mile.<sup>7</sup>

After the increase in marathon running in the 1950s, distance running became a method of activism in the 1960s. This coincided with the publication of Betty Friedan’s landmark book, *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963, which launched the women’s liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s. According to the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1962, the ideal “American Woman” was a mother of two and a full-time homemaker. Her priority was her family and she was content at home. This coincided with the emphasis on traditional male-female gender roles following the conclusion of World War II, leading many women to wonder if this was all life had in store for them. Freidan addressed the festering dissatisfaction of American housewives in *The Feminine Mystique* and gave a voice to their discontent. This helped to usher in the women’s liberation movement.<sup>8</sup>

One of the many components of the women’s liberation movement was athletic equality for men and women. In *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir argued that female athletes should have equality with male athletes as part of a liberation of the female body, a sentiment later echoed in the 1970s as part of the movement. In 1961, President John F. Kennedy established a commission for women’s equality that was headed by former first lady, Eleanor Roosevelt. After conducting research into women’s participation in athletics for the commission, Roosevelt published “American Woman,” in which she lamented the lack of athletic equality for women. “American

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<sup>6</sup> Rhodes, “History of Women’s Running,” 244; Jackie Hudson, “Physical Parameters Used for Female Exclusion From Law Enforcement and Athletics,” in *Women and Sport: From Myth to Reality* (Philadelphia: Lea & Febiger, 1978), 19-23; Jacqueline Hansen, *A Long Time Coming: Running Through the Women’s Marathon Revolution* (Seattle, WA: CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2013): 13; Maggie Jo Poertner Buchanan, “Title IX Turns 40: A Brief History and Look Forward,” *Texas Review of Entertainment and Sports Law* 14, no. 1, 91.

<sup>7</sup> Joan S. Hult, “Women’s Struggle for Governance in U.S. Amateur Athletics,” *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 24, no. 3 (September 1989), 251-252; Rhodes, “History of Women’s Running,” 245-246.

<sup>8</sup> Stephanie Coontz, *A Strange Stirring: The Feminine Mystique and American Women at the Dawn of the 1960s* (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 1-2, 19.

Woman” did for female athletes what *The Feminine Mystique* did for housewives: Roosevelt’s document finally gave female athletes a platform to express their discontent and promoted their participation in sports, even though it was unofficial. With this increased platform, female runners began to lobby the AAU to increase the distances they were allowed to race. At first, runners who argued that women should be able to run longer than a half-mile were criticized for “exploiting young girls by having them run longer races.” In 1968, after much lobbying by male and female runners alike, the AAU created a women’s committee for running and increased women’s race distances to five miles. It was a small victory for female runners, but a victory nonetheless.<sup>9</sup>

In 1965, twenty-three-year-old Roberta “Bobbi” Gibb decided she was going to run the Boston Marathon. A native of Massachusetts, she had watched the marathon with her family and thought it would be a fun activity. But when she applied to run, she received a reply from race director, Will Cloney, who stated that women were “not physiologically capable of covering 26.2 miles on foot.” After receiving the news, Gibb—who had never run a race before—decided to begin training for the 1966 Boston Marathon anyways. When she woke up on the morning of the race, her father called her delusional, but Gibb was determined. She tied her long hair up in a ponytail, concealed it underneath a hoodie, and hid behind a group of bushes near the starting line. A mile into the race, Gibb knew her fellow racers had discovered she was a woman. Nonetheless, she faced no hostility from her male counterparts. Like Kathrine Switzer would a year later, Gibb found encouragement in her fellow runners. Gibb finished the race in 124<sup>th</sup> place, and although she had never entered the race, making her accomplishment unofficial, she had become the first woman to run America’s oldest and most revered marathon. After completing the race, members of the press asked Gibb why she had run the marathon. In a 2016 interview with *Runner’s World Magazine*, Gibb recalled the moment, saying, “It seemed like they wanted me to say I was a man-hater ... I told them I simply loved running ... I didn’t see any reason why men and women couldn’t run together.”<sup>10</sup>

The Boston Marathon, the oldest marathon in the United States, was considered the “granddaddy of all races,” for its history and prestige. Because of this, a woman running in the race, even one who ran it unofficially, did not go unnoticed. However, instead of advocating for more female participation in distance races or advocating for female entry into the 1967 Boston Marathon, newspapers and magazines focused on Gibb’s attractiveness and her status as a newlywed. The *Record American*, a Hearst newspaper that circulated throughout Boston, hailed Gibb as “Hub Bride” who had managed to complete the marathon after getting married on a few weeks prior. Other

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<sup>9</sup> Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Knopf Vintage Books, 1989), 333; Hult, “Women’s Struggle for Governance in U.S. Amateur Athletics,” 251-252; Coontz, *A Strange Stirring: The Feminine Mystique and American Women at the Dawn of the 1960s*, 1-2, 19; Dusty Rhodes, “History of Women’s Running,” 246; Amby Burfoot, *First Ladies of Running*, 70-71.

<sup>10</sup> Rhodes, “History of Women’s Running,” 246; Amby Burfoot, “The First Lady of Boston,” *Runner’s World Magazine*, May 2016.

newspapers referred to Gibb as “Mrs. Will Bingay,” referencing her status as a married woman. *Sports Illustrated* followed suit, publishing an article about Gibb’s race titled “A Game Girl in a Man’s Game.” The article downplayed Gibb’s accomplishment while emphasizing her status as a “tidy-looking and pretty twenty-three-year-old blonde” newlywed. Other newspapers and magazines, if they did not reference Gibb’s newlywed status or her attractiveness, downplayed her accomplishment or outright ridiculed her for completing the nation’s oldest race.<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile, the Boston Athletic Association (BAA), a branch of the AAU that had governed the Boston Marathon since its creation in 1897, had a crisis on its hands. Since the BAA was a branch of the AAU, they followed AAU rules and regulations. The AAU rules for women running long distances in 1966 was very clear: women could not run more than a half-mile. To distance themselves from Gibb’s achievement, the BAA and its president Will Cloney—who had told Gibb she was “not physiologically capable” of completing the race—issued a message for Gibb and any other women who might have been inspired to run the next Boston Marathon. Cloney’s official press release stated, “Mrs. Bingay did not run in yesterday’s marathon. There is no such thing as a marathon for a woman. She may have run in a road race, but she did not race in the marathon.”<sup>12</sup>

However, this proclamation did not stop Kathrine Switzer. Switzer had become interested in athletic competition as a freshman at Syracuse University in 1964. But at the time, Syracuse University offered only intramural sports teams for female athletes. When Switzer attempted to join the NCAA-certified men’s Track & Field team, the coach told her that while she could not officially join the team, she could train with them. Every day, Switzer would run two miles to the course where the team trained and would run two miles back. It was there that she met her future trainer, an older man named Arnie who had completed the Boston Marathon fifteen times and had once finished in tenth place. It was through his stories that Switzer became inspired to run the race. Yet when Switzer approached Arnie about running the marathon, he told her that the distance was too long for a woman to run. Incensed, Switzer replied, “Well, Arnie, you are wrong. A woman ran the Boston Marathon last April—her name was Roberta Bingay [Gibb].” Her trainer refused to acknowledge that Gibb had completed the marathon, even though Switzer pointed out that it had been reported in several newspapers and magazines, including *Sports Illustrated*. At this, Arnie stated that he would not believe a woman could run a marathon until Switzer herself ran it. She accepted the challenge and registered for the Boston Marathon under “K. Switzer.” The BAA accepted her entry, but only because race officials assumed K. Switzer was a man.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Burfoot, *First Ladies of Running*, 49-50; *Boston Record American*, 20 April 1966; *Sports Illustrated*, 2 May 1966.

<sup>12</sup> Burfoot, *First Ladies of Running*, 50.

<sup>13</sup> Switzer, *Marathon Woman: Running the Race to Revolutionize Women’s Sports* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2007), 93; *New York Times*, 20 April 1967.

Switzer finished the marathon in four hours and twenty minutes, after Jock Semple attempted to “get [her] the hell out of [his] race.” Pictures of Semple and Will Cloney attempting to push Switzer out of the race spread across the country, much to Switzer’s surprise. The pictures overshadowed the winner of the race, and captivated readers with the story of a “girl being attacked ... girl being saved by boyfriend ... girl continuing to run.” Some newspapers stated that Switzer did not finish the race, which infuriated her. Despite the fact that she had clearly crossed the finish line, reporters—and the general public—still refused to believe that a woman could complete the race. That same year, Roberta Gibb again ran the race, finishing in three hours and twenty-seven minutes. But newspapers did not focus on Gibb’s incredible time or Switzer’s completion. Instead, they focused on the fact that they were women. Even worse, some newspapers delved into details about their appearances. One newspaper described Switzer as “the well-built Mata Hari of running that any American boy would lunge for.” Jerry Nelson, who reported on most marathons, pointed out how unflattering running gear looked on women. In an article published in the *New York Times*, Will Cloney stated, “if that girl [Switzer] were my daughter, I’d spank her.”<sup>14</sup>

Two days after completing the Boston Marathon, Switzer received a letter from Jock Semple stating that she was expelled from the AAU. The reasons for expelling her were three-fold: one, that she had run a distance longer than the allowed one-half mile for women; two, that she had “fraudulently” entered the race; and three, that she had run the Boston Marathon with men and without a chaperone. Switzer’s boyfriend, who had helped her complete the race by pushing Semple to the ground, was also expelled from the AAU. Despite their expulsion from the AAU, Switzer found herself inundated with invitations to run marathons in Canada. She soon found herself travelling from Syracuse to Canada, “feeling like [an] AAU draft dodger.” The next year, the application for the Boston Marathon clearly read “MEN ONLY,” for the first time in its history.<sup>15</sup>

The application’s declaration of “MEN ONLY” did not stop Nina Kuscsik or Sara Mae Berman from unofficially running the Boston Marathon in 1969.<sup>16</sup> Although Switzer did not run the Boston Marathon in the following years, she—along with Gibb—inspired other female athletes to run the race despite the protests from the AAU and BAA. Sara Mae Berman did not begin running until she met her husband, Larry. Larry was an avid long-distance runner, and he encouraged his wife to run with him. Together, Sara Mae and Larry—fed up with the AAU rules regarding female participation in road races—began to organize cross-country races for women in their hometown of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Eventually, they went to the AAU and argued that women should be allowed to race distances longer than 1.25 miles. After the Bermans presented the argument to the AAU, “they [the AAU] just laughed.”

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<sup>14</sup> Switzer, 110, 113-116, 118.

<sup>15</sup> Switzer, *Marathon Woman*, 130-131.

<sup>16</sup> *New York Times*, 20 April 1970.

Afterwards, Berman decided to race the Boston Marathon. She completed the race in 1969, finishing in three hours and twenty-two minutes at the age of thirty-two, nearly a decade older than Robert Gibb was in 1966 and twelve years older than Kathrine Switzer in 1967. When Berman reflected on her accomplishment years later, she said, "I didn't run to promote myself, but to promote women's running."<sup>17</sup>

Despite the ties women's distance running had to the feminist movement of the late 1960s and 1970s, Nina Kuscsik did not begin running as a form of liberation. Kuscsik was a housewife and felt little connection to the burgeoning feminist movement predicated on the criticism of housewifery. Furthermore, she had been an athletic teenager and spent her youth competing in skating and cycling competitions—sometimes against men. She never felt that she had been particularly discriminated against at these events, and she never felt particularly inclined towards activism. It was not until she took up running and discovered that women were banned from the Boston Marathon that she decided "something needed to be done." On April 19, 1969, Kuscsik travelled from her home on Long Island to Hopkinton, Massachusetts. Like Roberta Gibb had done three years prior, Kuscsik snuck into the race and finished, albeit unofficially. She finished the race in three hours, forty-six minutes, and only knew her time because a male runner crossed the finish line at the same time as Kuscsik.<sup>18</sup>

After finishing the Boston Marathon that year, Kuscsik said she did not intend to run another marathon. Boston had been a fun experience, but now it was time to go back to life at home. However, she soon grew restless and decided to again run the marathon unofficially. While she considered that accomplishment, Kuscsik began to grow annoyed with the fact that her results were unofficial. She had completed the Boston Marathon three times and yet there was no official record of her ever having run it. Because of this, Kuscsik decided it was time to lobby the AAU, who by 1971 had decreed that "only certain women" could run races longer than five kilometers (3.11 miles), without giving any definitions as to who these "certain women" were. She, along with other runners, was met with some success from the AAU, as they relented and allowed women to officially enter the 1972 Boston Marathon. But this came with a stipulation: women could only enter if they ran a sub-three hour and thirty-minute marathon. Only six women qualified, and the BAA required those women to have a separate starting area than the male racers. Kuscsik finished the race in three hours and ten minutes, becoming the first official women's winner at the Boston Marathon.<sup>19</sup>

After their accomplishments in the Boston Marathon, Switzer, Berman, and Kuscsik all realized the need for collective activism. They enjoyed running and could set up their own races, but the AAU was the "official national governing body and they had the real power." Switzer met Berman and Kuscsik at various races in the 1970s.

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<sup>17</sup> Burfoot, *First Ladies of Running*, 70-75, 75; *Christian Science Monitor*, 3 April 1981.

<sup>18</sup> Charles Butler, "Sole Sisters of '72," *Runner's World Magazine*, November 2012.

<sup>19</sup> Burfoot, *First Ladies of Running*, 105-106; Butler, "Sole Sisters of '72"; *New York Times*, 17 April 1972.

Kuscsik was a member of the Road Runners Club of America (RRCA) while Berman and her husband had founded the Cambridge Sports Union. Both running clubs championed the cause of female long-distance running. At the same time, the public was beginning to take note of how good female runners could be, especially with the accomplishments of Berman and Kuscsik in the Boston Marathon. In September 1970, the RRCA organized the first ever male and female marathon in Atlantic City. The RRCA organized the race specifically to put pressure on the AAU to lift the archaic standards on female running, and the women behind it knew they were finally beginning to gain support from the public. According to Berman, she “felt like [she] was a part of a women’s movement that eventually couldn’t be ignored.”<sup>20</sup>

It was at this time that running organizations and female runners began to submit legislation to allow women to run marathon distances. Despite the fact that women had been allowed to run the Boston Marathon if they met the qualifying times, the AAU remained stagnant. Women had begun to repeatedly prove that they were not too fragile to run the distance, and “the officials and their rules looked pretty silly once the myth of women’s fragility could no longer be used as an excuse.” Pressure began to mount against the AAU, and the official women in entrance to the Boston Marathon—viewed as a benchmark for all other distance races—was viewed as the turning point in female marathon running. Interestingly, President Richard Nixon signed Title IX just two months after women were allowed official entrance into the Boston Marathon. The bill prohibited “sex discrimination in any education program or activity within an institution receiving any type of federal financial assistance,” meaning that if a school provided an official program for male athletes, they must also provide one for female athletes.<sup>21</sup>

Another milestone for female distance running came in 1974 when the AAU finally sanctioned a women’s marathon. While clubs such as the RRCA had hosted women’s marathons, most notably the American National Women’s Marathon Championship in October 1970, the AAU had not officially sanctioned these races. Small successes had been achieved, however, at the 1971 Women’s Convention, the AAU increased the race distance for women to ten miles. While the AAU allowed women to compete in the Boston and New York Marathons by 1972, the organization still had not officially sanctioned a female marathon. Yet further successes made by women in these marathons made their ability to run marathons alongside men hard for the AAU to ignore. In 1974, the AAU hosted its annual National Marathon Championships in San Mateo, California. But there was one difference in this race—it included a national championship for women. That year, all accomplishments made by men in their championships were “overshadowed” by the women’s nationals.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Switzer, *Marathon Woman*, 143-145; Burfoot, 73.

<sup>21</sup> Switzer, *Marathon Woman*, 161.

<sup>22</sup> Jacqueline Hansen, “The Women’s Marathon Movement,” *Marathon & Beyond*, January/February 2012, 62-63, 63; Lovett, *Olympic Marathon: A Centennial History of the Games’ Most Storied Race*, 129; *New York Times*, 28 September 1975.



After becoming the first official women's winner at the Boston Marathon, Nina Kuscsik decided to attend the 1972 AAU convention. Upon arriving there, she found that all opposition to women running the marathon distance had "evaporated." The inclusion of women in the 1972 Boston Marathon, and the later New York City Marathon, had "ended discrimination of women in road racing." But despite their accomplishments in various distance races in America, women like Kuscsik felt that they had further to go. They did not have an international platform where they could display their talents and compete against the best. That platform was the Summer Olympic Games, where women still were not allowed to compete in marathon distances, or any distances greater than 1,500 meters—less than a mile.<sup>23</sup>

In 1976, the New York Academy of Sciences sponsored a sports medicine conference. The conference was designed as a forum for scientists to create a resource for future sports medicine research regarding endurance running. The Academy of Sciences invited Nina Kuscsik to the conference to give a speech on the history of female distance running. Meanwhile, there was a session in which experts in distance running compared the capabilities of female and male distance runners. Following the conference, the attendees gave "unanimous approval" to a resolution supporting an Olympic marathon for women.<sup>24</sup> A section from the resolution reads as follows:

Current research including that presented at this conference demonstrates that female athletes adapt to marathon training and benefit from it in virtually the same way male athletes do. There exists no persuasive scientific or medical evidence that marathon running is contraindicated for the trained female athlete. Therefore, be it resolved that it is the considered judgment of the participants of this conference that a women's marathon event as well as other long-distance races for women be included in the Olympics program forthwith.<sup>25</sup>

Other female runners and athletes began to join the movement for a women's marathon in the Olympics as well. In October 1977, former Olympic ski team captain Suzy Chaffee and silver medalist Cheryl Toussaint, as well as "several thousand other female runners" joined Kathrine Switzer on a relay race from Seneca Falls, New York to Houston, Texas. The course of the relay totaled 2,612 miles and was organized to put pressure on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to create a marathon race for women. Switzer and her fellow runners chose Seneca Falls as the starting point for its historical symbolism, as it was the sight of the first National Women's Convention in 1848. By the time the women completed the relay, each runner had run over fifty miles, over fifty times the distance that women were allowed to race in the Olympics.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Burfoot, *First Ladies of Running*, 106.

<sup>24</sup> David Costill, "An Overview of the 1976 New York Academy of Science Meeting," *Sports Medicine* 37, no. 4 (2007), 283; Burfoot, *First Ladies of Running*, 108.

<sup>25</sup> Burfoot, *First Ladies of Running*, 108.

<sup>26</sup> *New York Times*, 7 October 1977, 18 May 1980.

At the same time, more recent scientific studies disproved the old myth that distance running caused infertility in women. Yet by 1980, those opposed to a women's marathon in the Olympics stubbornly clung to the idea that distance running had an adverse effect on the health of women. Furthermore, there was the idea that women competing in the Olympics would distract male runners. The IOC also stated that a women's marathon would not be popular enough to include in the Olympics. At this time, some experts speculated that the only thing needed for the IOC to approve a women's marathon was a recommendation from an athletic governing body such as the AAU or the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF). Because of this, Kathrine Switzer travelled to Paris in 1980 to present her argument for a women's Olympic marathon to the IAAF. Switzer presented a compelling argument, as "many of the IAAF people had never talked or listened to a woman runner who was so dedicated to the sport." Afterwards, the IAAF approved an addendum to the 1983 track and field championships to be held in Helsinki, Finland which created a women's marathon. Despite this, the IAAF was not yet ready to petition the IOC for a women's marathon. However, upon seeing women race alongside men in IAAF-sanctioned marathons, the president of the IAAF, Adriaan Paulen, decided to support the inclusion of a women's marathon in the Olympics. In a speech to the IAAF in Tokyo, Japan, Paulen said, "It would appear ... in the realm of long-distance running that our lady athletes can come closest to the performances established by their male counterparts." Subsequently, the IAAF joined the fight in petitioning the IOC to create a women's marathon in the 1984 Olympics to be held in Los Angeles, California.<sup>27</sup>

The IOC immediately pushed back against the increased lobbying to include a women's marathon. The chairman of the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee, Paul Ziffren, adamantly opposed the idea of a women's marathon, arguing that if they included an extra event in the upcoming Olympics, they would have to eliminate an already-established event. Furthermore, Ziffren had received requests for more events in other sports, such as cycling and shooting. He believed that if he gave into the demands to include a women's marathon, he would have to green light the other additional events. By including more events in the Olympic Games, the Los Angeles Organizing Committee feared plunging the city into debt, as had happened to previous host cities.<sup>28</sup>

As the AAU had done years before, the IOC also pointed out the negative effects of distance running on women's health as a reason for not including a female marathon in the Olympics. By 1982, most of the myths surrounding the impact of long distance running on female health had been proven false. Dr. Ernst van Aaken, a German scientist and marathon runner, had promoted women's distance running since the 1950s. He began training young women to run marathons in the 1950s, and since then

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<sup>27</sup> *New York Times*, 18 May 1980; Lovett, *Olympic Marathon: A Centennial History of the Games' Most Storied Race*, 127-128; Hansen, "The Women's Marathon Movement," 72.

<sup>28</sup> *New York Times*, 18 May 1980.

had stated that any woman could run a marathon if she had proper training. Van Aaken began hosting women's marathons in his hometown of Waldneil, Germany, including the first marathon ever held specifically for women in 1970. When the issue arose regarding a women's Olympic marathon, van Aaken became a vocal proponent for the race. When other sports medicine experts such as Barbara Drinkwater and Joan Ulliot joined van Aaken in the promotion of a female marathon, the IOC had trouble denying their empirical findings that stated there were no medical issues affecting female marathon runners.<sup>29</sup>

The IOC's reluctance to include a women's marathon resulted in the organization of the International Runner's Committee (IRC) in 1979. This committee, founded by long-distance runner Jacqueline Hansen and her husband, gained prominence because Nike sponsored it. The shoe company ran full-page ads in their magazines promoting the IRC and women's marathons. While the main objective of the IRC was to "increase competitive opportunities for runners worldwide and to help improve the administration of running," the IRC became an active proponent of a women's Olympic marathon. In 1979, more marathons allowed women to compete across the world than ever before. Because of this, the IRC wanted a full program of races—culminating in the marathon—for women in the 1984 Olympics. Furthermore, they pushed for a full program of races in every international racing event outside of the Olympics. It was at this time that the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) joined forces with the IRC and sued the IOC for sex discrimination.<sup>30</sup>

With pressure mounting from the ACLU, various running organizations, the IAAF, and the public, the Executive Board of the IOC scheduled a vote on the women's marathon for the morning of February 23, 1981 in Los Angeles. On that same evening, the Executive Board announced that "a women's marathon had been given its approval and would likely be included" in the upcoming Summer Olympics. It was nearly a unanimous decision, as the only country to vote against a women's marathon was the Soviet Union. Prior to the vote, a rule was in place stating that the IOC could not enact any new events until four years after a vote had occurred. However, the Executive Board chose to bypass this rule and include a women's marathon in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. The last step necessary was the approval of the Executive Board's decision by the "full membership of the IOC" in Baden-Baden Germany. That September, the full membership of the IOC met in Baden-Baden and voted to include a women's marathon in the Olympics.<sup>31</sup>

The first women's Olympic marathon took place on August 5, 1984 at eight in the morning. The weather forecast was smoggy with a high of nearly ninety degrees. The course began at Corsair Stadium in Santa Monica, California, and ran through Venice,

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<sup>29</sup> Lovett, *Olympic Marathon: A Centennial History of the Games' Most Storied Race*, 127-128; Hansen, "The Women's Marathon Movement," 70.

<sup>30</sup> Hansen, "The Women's Marathon Movement," 71; *New York Times*, 20 August 1983.

<sup>31</sup> *New York Times*, 13 February 1981; Lovett, *Olympic Marathon: A Centennial History of the Games' Most Storied Race*, 130-131.

Marina Del Rey, and Downtown Los Angeles before finishing at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. It was a relatively flat race, with the highest point only 300 feet above sea level, which promised a quick course and stiff competition. Of every woman running in the marathon, Joan Benoit of Maine was the favorite. A little more than one year before, Benoit competed in the 1983 Boston Marathon and set the fastest marathon time ever recorded by a woman. By the time she competed in the 1984 Olympics at age 27, Benoit had undergone two surgeries on her knee and hamstring in April of that same year.<sup>32</sup>

When the race began, Benoit took the lead almost immediately. By mile three, she had separated herself from the rest of the runners, a group that included some of the most competitive female marathoners in the world. One such runner, Grete Waitz of Norway, had never lost a marathon that she started and was a five-time champion of the New York City Marathon. Waitz also won the women's marathon at the IAAF world championships in Helsinki. Despite her successes, Waitz had never run a race in heat and smog before. She feared heat exhaustion, and as Benoit ran ahead of her, Waitz decided to slow down because she "was afraid of the heat at the end ... afraid of dying." By the time the runners reached the twentieth mile, Waitz realized that Benoit was going to win the race, as no one could hope to catch up with her. Indeed, after twenty-six miles and three hundred eighty-five yards, Joan Benoit crossed through the tunnel into the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum as the winner of the first ever women's Olympic Marathon. The crowd of 77,083 greeted her with exultant cheers, and eventually, the whole Coliseum turned into "a tribute to the 27-year-old Miss Benoit of Freeport, Me., the world- record holder in the event."<sup>33</sup>

By the time it was over, the women's marathon overshadowed every other event at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. The ACLU and IRC, which had fought for a full program of racing events for women at the Games, had lost their sexual discrimination lawsuit against the IRC. The IOC did not include smaller races for women in Track & Field events. In the end, this decision benefited the women's marathon, as runners who would have competed in smaller distances instead of the marathon chose to race in the marathon out of a sheer desire to compete in the Olympics, no matter the event. The increased participation in the marathon created a large display of female athleticism that made their successes in distance running hard for the public to ignore, as "women marathoners had arrived at the Olympics and no one doubted their right to be there."<sup>34</sup>

On April 17, 2017, a woman lined up at the start of the Boston Marathon in Hopkinton, Massachusetts, and racers found themselves doing double takes. But they were not staring because she was a woman—they were staring because she was seventy-year-old Kathrine Switzer, ready to race in her fortieth marathon since 1967.

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<sup>32</sup> *New York Times*, 5 August 1984.

<sup>33</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 6 August 1984; *New York Times*, 6 August 1984.

<sup>34</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 6 August 1984; Lovett, *Olympic Marathon: A Centennial History of the Games' Most Storied Race*, 136-137.

To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of her first marathon—and the fiftieth anniversary of the first time a woman officially competed in a marathon—Switzer decided to run the marathon. It was the first time Switzer had covered the historic course from Hopkinton to downtown Boston since 1976, and she did so wearing the same bib number Jock Semple had famously tried to grab from her shirt in 1967: 261. Switzer finished the race in four hours and forty-four minutes, only twenty-minutes longer than the time she set at Boston as a twenty-year-old. After she completed the race, the BAA held a special ceremony to retire Switzer's bib number, only the second bib number in Marathon history that the BAA retired.<sup>35</sup>

Over the years, female marathon running worked to “transform views of women’s physical ability and help redefine their economic roles in traditional cultures.”<sup>36</sup> Yet this would not become possible without the efforts of women like Roberta Gibb, Kathrine Switzer, Sara Mae Berman, and Nina Kuscsik. These women used both individual and collective activism to prove to ruling organizations like the Amateur Athletic Union and the International Olympic Committee—and to society as a whole—that women were more than capable of running 26.2 miles. Their efforts created a struggle that lasted nearly twenty years, but triumphantly culminated in the inclusion of women’s marathon in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, where women “showed the world the limitlessness of [their] heroic capability.”<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Emanuella Grinberg, “First Woman to Officially Run Boston Marathon Does It Again, 50 Years Later,” CNN.com, <http://www.cnn.com/2017/04/17/us/boston-marathon-kathrine-switzer-trnd/index.html> (accessed 19 April 2017); *New York Times*, 17 April 2017.

<sup>36</sup> *New York Times*, 15 April 2007.

<sup>37</sup> Switzer, *Marathon Woman*, 392.

# NEW MEXICAN *PARTERAS* AND THE DISAPPEARING MIDWIFE: AMERICAN MIDWIFERY, 1900-1960

Christine Kennedy-Santos

**Abstract:** Beginning in the early-twentieth century, amidst Progressive Era social reforms, the professional specialization of obstetrics emerged. As the medical community modernized, medical professionals called for the standardization of midwifery, as the practice challenged both the superiority and necessity of modern Western medicine. Referred to in newspaper articles and medical journals as dirty, dangerous, and ignorant, apprentice-trained midwives, who were most often immigrant women or women of color, became targeted for the extremely high infant and maternal mortality rate of American women. While a majority ultimately succumbed to the legislative reforms aimed at eliminating traditional- or apprentice-trained midwives in America, one group overcame the medical campaign which sought the demise of their institution, the *parteras* of New Mexico. These Mexican-American midwives, calling on traditions of childbirth passed down through generations, were so vital to their rural community that public health officials incorporated these women into maternity programs, allowing them to continue to provide for their community well into the 1960s.

Beginning in 1910, a debate erupted among American medical professionals regarding the role of the lay midwife in the field of obstetrics. Some doctors viewed midwifery as a minor social concern, but the majority considered it an unsafe practice in need of proper medical education and reform. Amidst the anti-immigrant sentiment of the early twentieth century, the debate became a pointed attack on the lay midwife—most often women of color—and the perceived problems she caused. The history of lay midwifery in the United States (also known as apprentice- or empirically-trained midwifery) dates to the Colonial Era and across nearly every American culture as these women provided vital services to expectant mothers in a largely rural society. But with the advancement of modern medicine around the turn of the twentieth century, physicians and public health nurses (PHNs) pushed for new laws to regulate obstetric care, laws which effectively ended lay midwifery throughout much of the country, with one notable exception: the Mexican-American *parteras* of New Mexico. The *parteras* had a long-standing tradition of providing care to expectant mothers in New Mexico dating back to the earliest days of Spanish settlement. Because they served a rural population in areas where physicians would not travel, and because the *parteras* developed a

partnership with New Mexican public health nurses, they evaded the regulations that caused lay midwifery to subside to modern medicine throughout the rest of the country.

In the early-twentieth century, lay midwives tended to be women of color or immigrant women, usually African-American women in the South, eastern European immigrant women in the North and Northeast, and Mexican-American women in the West and Southwest.<sup>1</sup> At the turn of the twentieth century, midwives handled nearly fifty percent of all births throughout the country and nearly ninety percent in black and immigrant communities.<sup>2</sup> Lay midwives thus played a major role in childbirth throughout the United States, particularly in minority and immigrant communities, creating a significant source of competition for physicians and PHNs wishing to specialize in obstetrics. As such, many medical professionals began to seek ways to discredit or undermine lay midwives.

The traditions of the lay midwife became the focus of professional medical assaults as white male physicians and PHNs leveled gendered and racist attacks on midwives. These medical professionals launched their campaign primarily in medical journals, which nearly ensured that only professional medical voices would be heard, and in which they referred to the “midwife problem” and the need to eliminate midwives.<sup>3</sup> Through appeals to racism, and by arguing to a receptive community with strong and growing political ties in an era that believed that the perfection of mankind could be achieved through science, obstetricians and public health nurses used the language and methods of the Progressive Era to encourage legislation that would follow their method and recognize their expertise above all others.

Though the historical scholarship calls it a debate, the unilateral nature of the attack on midwives was something more like a nuanced smear campaign against midwifery, with a few minor exceptions. The debate itself had roots in Progressive Era health reformers who believed that modern medicine could cure humanity’s ailments, implying that older methods should be left behind. Amid the influx of immigrants, particularly from southern and eastern Europe, activists and reformers sought to improve health conditions among immigrant communities. Many Progressive Era health reformers had a general fear of immigrants, and a specific fear of darker-skinned bodies. In his book exploring American public health in the Philippines at the turn of the century, Warwick Anderson notes that in the same way “Filipinos were figured in colonial science as a dangerous and promiscuously contaminating racial type and major threat to white health,” so too did the public health reformers in American urban

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<sup>1</sup> Katy Dawley, “Origins of Nurse-Midwifery in the United States and Its Expansion in the 1940s,” *Journal of Midwifery and Women’s Health* 48, no. 2 (March-April 2003): 87.

<sup>2</sup> Danielle Thompson, “Midwives and Pregnant Women of Color: Why We Need to Understand Intersectional Changes in Midwifery to Reclaim Home Birth,” *Columbia Journal of Race and Law* 6.1 (2016): 29.

<sup>3</sup> Helen Varney and Joyce Beebe Thompson, *A History of Midwifery in the United States: The Midwife Said Fear Not* (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2016), 34.

centers see the influx of immigrants from the supposed wrong parts of Europe—southern and eastern—as a threat to white health.<sup>4</sup> These immigrants then “became the object of social reformers and public health nurses who set out to Americanize immigrants, reform crowded ghettos, improve working conditions, and reduce poor health outcome.”<sup>5</sup> In the Philippines, American progressive health reformers focused on native Filipinos and “demanded that this ‘inferior’ race try ineptly to become more like them.”<sup>6</sup> In a similar fashion, medical reformers in the United States attempted to force the lay midwife to abandon her traditions and become regulated, professionalized, and standardized, or else eliminated. And remarkably, for a profession that claimed to be based on science, they held these views even in the face of contrary evidence.

Following the release of statistics on birth and death rates by the Bureau of Census after data collection in 1900 and 1915, negative articles appeared in medical journals calling for the regulation or elimination of the lay midwife.<sup>7</sup> Per that census data, the maternal death rate in the United States nearly doubled the rate in England, where midwifery had already become standardized and regulated. Thus, physicians and public health nurses “had the ammunition they needed to begin their midwifery elimination campaign.”<sup>8</sup> These medical professionals placed the blame for the high American mortality rate on “European immigrant midwives who cared for their country women and on African American midwives who provided most of the health care received by southern African American women.”<sup>9</sup> The anti-midwife public health workers often referred to such midwives as “ignorant, dirty, and dangerous,” arguing for their elimination.<sup>10</sup> Placing the blame for the high mortality rate on the midwives allowed the physicians and PHNs to propose a specialty in midwifery for nurses and specialization of obstetrics, which required regulation and oversight.

The high mortality rate constituted part of the argument against midwives, with infant death and infant blindness playing a role as well. Medical professionals attributed maternal deaths by puerperal sepsis—blood infections associated with childbirth—as well as infant blindness attributed to a lack of prophylactic care for ophthalmia neonatorum—an infection of an infant’s eyes usually contracted during delivery—to lay midwives and their perceived unsanitary and superstitious practices. However, studies proved the midwives had a lower incidence rate for both infant blindness and maternal death than did physicians at the time.<sup>11</sup> Yet, the slander campaign continued, as a report

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<sup>4</sup> Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, And Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 9.

<sup>5</sup> Katy Dawley, “Origins of Nurse-Midwifery in the United States and Its Expansion in the 1940s,” *Journal of Midwifery and Women’s Health* 48, no. 2 (March-April 2003): 87.

<sup>6</sup> Anderson, 9.

<sup>7</sup> Thompson, 31.

<sup>8</sup> Dawley, 87; Thompson, 31.

<sup>9</sup> Dawley, 87.

<sup>10</sup> Dawley, 87.

<sup>11</sup> Dawley, 87.



published in 1906 by a nurse from the Public Health Committee of the Association of Neighborhood Workers. F. Elisabeth Cromwell, R.N. demonstrates. Cromwell interviewed over five-hundred midwives in Manhattan, checking for midwifery diplomas, reviewing the contents of the midwifery bag, and taking note of the midwife's home and personal hygiene.<sup>12</sup> The resulting survey "blamed midwives for the high maternal mortality rate, particularly from sepsis, and claimed, from examinations of their bags, that 35% were at least suspicious of performing criminal abortions."<sup>13</sup> None of Cromwell's conclusions favored the lay midwives; meanwhile, her claim that thirty-five percent of midwives might be performing abortions—which were both socially and legally unacceptable at the time—implied a connection between midwifery and criminal behavior, adding to the list of slanders leveled against these women.

Cromwell's survey set the stage for future incriminatory articles published in the *American Journal of Nursing*, the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, and the Children's Bureau Publication put out by the United States Department of Labor, among others. In 1923, E. Blanche Seyfert, R.N., wrote in the *American Journal of Nursing* and continued the theme of the uneducated lay midwife. Seyfert refers to the midwife as the "ignorant, unlicensed woman," and cites the need to "[eliminate] her as an illegal practitioner and lawbreaker."<sup>14</sup> Seyfert found that to associate the midwife "in any way whatsoever with the study of obstetrics would have been a far-fetched thought," yet believed the midwife filled a need, and called for greater supervision and instruction.<sup>15</sup> The idea that lay midwives needed supervision and instruction firmly espoused the ideals of Progressive Era health reform, in which education and professionalization took top priority.

A 1926 editorial in the *American Journal of Nursing* carried the idea of the need for midwife supervision and training further. The anonymous editorial, entitled "Lack of Care of American Mothers," calls attention to the model for obstetric care in Denmark, where the midwife and obstetrician work together, with the obstetrician, stepping in only if the case presents abnormally.<sup>16</sup> The editorialist suggests that for the safety of the mother and child, a "doctor who possesses special knowledge of obstetrics and a woman who possesses special knowledge of normal delivery are necessary," and that "the midwife and the doctor should not in any sense be rivals."<sup>17</sup> While this editorialist was not alone in promoting a more Eurocentric model for delivery, the majority of

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<sup>12</sup> F. Elisabeth Cromwell, "The Midwives of New York," *Charities and the Commons* 17, (1906), reprinted in *The American Midwife Debate: A Sourcebook on its Modern Origins*, ed, Judy Barrett Litoff (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 38.

<sup>13</sup> Varney and Thompson, 34.

<sup>14</sup> E. Blanche Seyfert, "The Midwife, Her Work, and the Need for Her Inspection and Instruction." *The American Journal of Nursing* 23, no. 7 (April 1923): 549.

<sup>15</sup> Seyfert, 548-49.

<sup>16</sup> "Lack of Care of American Mothers," *American Journal of Nursing* 26, no. 4 (April 1926): 298.

<sup>17</sup> "Lack of Care," 298.

early twentieth century health care professionals still preferred the elimination of the lay midwife entirely.

The campaign against lay midwifery that began in medical journals soon expanded to newspapers and other publications, where detractors hoped to inform the public of the perceived dangers of delivery by the lay midwife, while continuing the debate within the medical community. An editorial published in 1914 in the *American Journal of Nursing* following a nursing convention in St. Louis, repeated the theme of the dangerous midwife, declaring: “all social workers come across the dirty, incompetent midwife and know how serious a problem is the question of such women who leave death, invalidism or blindness in their train,” the writer again placing the blame for the high rate of infant blindness and maternal mortality on the lay midwife and her lack of professional training.<sup>18</sup> Per the editorialist, the immigrant woman is to blame for employing the midwife: “In our large cities most of the wives of foreigners of the laboring class are attended in labor by midwives.”<sup>19</sup> During this time, “Americans of the Progressive Era came to view scientific and other specialized knowledge as the province of professionals.”<sup>20</sup> Part of the solution to the problem of the lay midwife then, according to the editorialist, was to educate immigrants to employ competent doctors, though the author noted additional obstacles, specifically that “the competent obstetrician who will serve the poor for a moderate fee does not grow on every bush.”<sup>21</sup> While the editorialist offers no solution for the higher cost of the trained obstetrician, they suggest that the professionalization of midwifery provides a better option for solving the midwife problem, calling for the “establish[ment] of numerous good schools where midwives will be properly trained,” as well as “induc[ing] visiting nurses to add midwifery to their accomplishments.”<sup>22</sup> Professionalization of specialties, in this case obstetrics, seemed to be the solution among Progressive Era activists and reformers while advocating public health causes. That such specialization would benefit the growing field of obstetricians—men who came from predominantly white upper- and middle-class backgrounds—at the expense of women who had served immigrant communities for generations was considered a side-effect of the effort to normalize and standardize the practice.

Having composed an article for the *American Journal of Public Health* on the midwife debate prior to the convention, Carolyn Conant Van Blarcom, a public health nurse from New York and a vocal opponent of the lay midwife, presented her interpretation of the “midwife problem” at that session on midwifery at the St. Louis convention. Her article, “Midwives in America,” condemns the lack of regulation of the lay midwife in the United States in which “any untrained, ignorant woman who chooses to style

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<sup>18</sup> “Editorial Comment,” *American Journal of Nursing* 14, no. 9 (June 1914): 694.

<sup>19</sup> “Editorial Comment,” 694.

<sup>20</sup> Charlotte G. Borst, *Catching Babies: The Professionalization of Childbirth, 1870-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 1.

<sup>21</sup> “Editorial Comment,” 694.

<sup>22</sup> “Editorial Comment,” 694.

herself a midwife,” can deliver a baby.<sup>23</sup> Van Blarcom argues that the “United States of America is the only civilized country in the world in which the life and health and future well-being of mothers and infants are not safeguarded as far as possible by statutory requirements,” referring to the lack of regulation on the lay midwife in America versus the much stricter midwifery laws in Europe.<sup>24</sup> Giving credit to the stricter laws, Van Blarcom refers to the ninety to ninety-five percent of midwife-assisted deliveries in Denmark without “the same high death-rate among infants, nor the amount of unnecessary blindness which exists in this country.”<sup>25</sup> Van Blarcom’s reference to Denmark—a country in northern Europe—was a sign of the times’ racial stereotypes, as native-born white Americans perceived northern European culture and learning superior to traditional practices that accompanied immigrants from eastern and southern Europe.

Infant blindness presented an issue of grave concern to Van Blarcom as the Secretary for the Committee for the Prevention of Blindness in New York. Her belief that midwives were “ignorant, careless, and dirty because they are neither trained nor supervised” followed the thought of the majority of public health professionals, who believed the lay midwife’s superstitions and lack of training led to the many cases of infant blindness.<sup>26</sup> Van Blarcom notes that the “American midwife assures her patients that it is natural for babies to have sore eyes, and she prescribes such remedies as milk, lemon juice, lard, raw potatoes ... and when the babies go blind, she piously declares that it is the Divine Will.”<sup>27</sup> Yet Van Blarcom stated that regardless of how “the majority of [midwives] practicing here [are] dirty, ignorant, and untrained,” she and her fellows “are sorry to have to admit that on the whole, the patient is better off in [the midwife’s] hands than in the care of many of the physicians who compete with her.”<sup>28</sup> Van Blarcom thus shifted the blame of the issue from the midwife herself to her ignorance and lack of proper training, noting many documented cases of infant blindness attributable to untrained physicians at a meeting of the American Association for the Study and Prevention of Infant Mortality in 1911. She thus cited the need for training and professionalization of midwifery to eliminate that problem.<sup>29</sup> For Van Blarcom and many other progressives, education was the key to solving the “midwife problem,” but for some, that education was best used by male professional doctors and licensed public health nurses, both of whom were most likely to come from the white, middle class.

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<sup>23</sup> Carolyn Conant Van Blarcom, “Midwives in America,” *American Journal of Public Health* 4, no. 3 (March 1914): 200.

<sup>24</sup> Van Blarcom, 200.

<sup>25</sup> Van Blarcom, 197.

<sup>26</sup> Van Blarcom, 198.

<sup>27</sup> Van Blarcom, 198.

<sup>28</sup> Van Blarcom, 198.

<sup>29</sup> Varney and Thompson, 42.

Clara D. Noyes's article for the *American Journal of Nursing*, "The Midwifery Problem," defends the midwife's place in history, while also calling for additional training. Noyes, a nurse who served as the General Superintendent of Training Schools and the General Director of the Schools of Nursing at Bellevue and Allied Hospitals in New York City, calls attention to the negative perception of the midwife in America: "the word 'midwife' in America, at least, is one to which considerable odium is attached and immediately creates a mental picture of illiteracy, carelessness and general filth."<sup>30</sup> With language that is simultaneously supportive and degrading, Noyes notes that the midwife "represents all the nationalities on the face of the globe," and yet also remarks, "in our great cities the midwife swarms in great numbers and plies her trade among the foreign population."<sup>31</sup> Noyes, observing that "there seems to be little chance of eliminating the midwife except by education of both the midwife and the people," calls attention to the European model of treating the midwife as a health care practitioner, providing education and certification as an answer to solving the "midwifery problem."<sup>32</sup> While Noyes's moderates her racism when discussing the midwife, the tone of the article reflects the same attitude as previous publications on the "midwife problem," with the midwife as a problem to be solved through education and certification, thus eliminating any cultural traditions perceived as strange or dangerous.

Some articles recognized cultural values and perceptions as a reason for immigrant communities' use of midwives, though even these sources usually associated midwifery with "backward" immigrant practices. The cost of the midwife, which averaged between two and ten dollars in the early twentieth century, versus the cost of a physician that averaged between ten and twenty-five dollars was a significant difference, particularly when considering the additional services the midwife provided.<sup>33</sup> These additional services, including: "post-natal care, housekeeping, and mother's help," factored in to why immigrant women "hired service of midwives because they were 'really worth more' than physicians."<sup>34</sup> Grace Abbott of the Immigrants Protective League of Chicago argued for the "necessity of considering the traditions and prejudices of our immigrant population," referring to the choices made by the immigrant women of Chicago in choosing a midwife over an obstetrician for delivering their babies.<sup>35</sup> Abbott notes that the protection of the "mothers and babies from the untrained and therefore careless, dirty, and dangerous midwife," is an important and yet divisive issue, with immigrant women preferring midwives due to the higher status they hold in Europe, while the campaign against midwifery had proven largely successful

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<sup>30</sup> Clara D. Noyes, "The Midwifery Problem," *The American Journal of Nursing* 12, no. 6 (March 1912): 466.

<sup>31</sup> Noyes, 466.

<sup>32</sup> Noyes, 467.

<sup>33</sup> Thompson, 30.

<sup>34</sup> Thompson, 30.

<sup>35</sup> Grace Abbott, "The Midwife in Chicago," *American Journal of Sociology* 20, no. 5 (March 1915): 684.

among native-born American white women, who rarely used a midwife in childbirth.<sup>36</sup> Abbott, while arguing for consideration of the cultural reasons for the use of a midwife in childbirth, continues the racist and xenophobic attack against the midwife as previous articles, with references to the midwife as ignorant, dirty, careless, and untrained, as well as the preference for the midwife as a “prejudice” that the immigrant woman must overcome.<sup>37</sup> Other supposed advocates of midwives for cultural reasons argue similarly, referring to the lack of training of the lay midwife, while continuing to reference the lack of cleanliness of the lay midwife, as well.

Dr. J. Whitridge Williams made one of the most persuasive arguments against midwifery in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in 1911, which was based on a survey he sent to professors of obstetrics at medical schools throughout the country.<sup>38</sup> In the article, Dr. Williams argued that the survey would expose the root of the “midwife problem,” attributing it to a lack of medical education and a failure “to train practitioners competent to meet the emergencies of obstetrical practice.”<sup>39</sup> The survey revealed as much, with many of the forty-three respondents admitting they were not obstetric specialists and could not perform cesarean sections, despite teaching and training their students to do so.<sup>40</sup> Many of the respondents had very little practical experience, having seen very few obstetric cases before assuming an obstetric professorship, with one of the respondents admitting he had never seen a labor and delivery at all.<sup>41</sup> Several professors also admitted being as responsible as midwives for maternal deaths, if not more, with Williams noting, “why bother about the relatively innocuous midwife, when the ignorant doctor causes quite as many absolutely unnecessary deaths?”<sup>42</sup> Dr. Williams thus confirmed the lack of education and proper training as the primary cause of maternal and infant mortality and other issues; yet, later in the survey, Williams asks the professors what to do about the “midwife problem,” to which eighteen “advocated the regulation and education” of midwives while fourteen suggested the abolition of midwives entirely.<sup>43</sup> Dr. Williams and others repeatedly identified a dearth of proper obstetric education as the root issue, but many early twentieth century practitioners continued to press for the abolition of midwifery, demonstrating the staying power of racial and ethnic stereotypes and perhaps the self-interest of obstetric specialists and public health nurses.

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<sup>36</sup> Abbott, 685.

<sup>37</sup> Abbott, 685.

<sup>38</sup> Judy Barrett Litoff, *American Midwives: 1860 to the Present* (Westport: Greenwood Press Inc., 1978), 64.

<sup>39</sup> J. Whitridge Williams, M.D., “Medical Education and the Midwife Problem in the United States,” *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 58 (January 6, 1912) as appeared in the *American Midwife Debate: A Sourcebook on its Modern Origins*, 86.

<sup>40</sup> Litoff, 65.

<sup>41</sup> Williams, 89.

<sup>42</sup> Williams, 97.

<sup>43</sup> Williams, 97.

For public health nurses, the appeal of specializing the field of obstetrics grew out of numerous public health policies calling for better maternal and infant outcomes in the early 1900s. In an attempt to improve infant and maternal mortality rates, the United States Children's Bureau—another product of Progressive health reforms—was established in 1912 with goals including the studying and improving of maternal and infant health outcomes.<sup>44</sup> The federal Children's Bureau first studied infant and maternal mortality, a study that had never been undertaken by any previous agency, and the resulting dismal numbers led many to push for additional Progressive health reforms.<sup>45</sup> The study also led to the passage of the Shepherd-Towner Act in November 1921, which provided funds administered by the United States Children's Bureau and the State Department of Health for the “instruction of untrained midwives” by trained public health nurses.<sup>46</sup> The Shepherd-Towner Act represented a large step forward for Progressive health reform activists, who amidst opposition from the American Medical Association, testified for the bill before Congress, asking “how [Congress] would answer women who asked if the legislature wanted infants and mothers to die.”<sup>47</sup> Excluding Massachusetts, every state accepted the grants provided by the bill, with “fourteen states deciding that licensing, supervising, and instructing midwives was the most needed service.”<sup>48</sup> With legislation driving the effort, education and professionalization of lay midwives thereafter remained the focus of public health reformers.

With official government sanction for training and professionalization efforts, such efforts and their perceived virtues expanded greatly, as reflected in medical and social journal publications. Educating the lay midwife became the rallying cry in publications concerned with the “midwife problem,” with nearly every article calling for midwives to be trained and certified and for stricter laws and regulations to force such certification. Midwifery schools began to emerge in major cities, for example, the Bellevue School for Midwives, which opened in New York in 1911, and the Preston Retreat Hospital in Philadelphia in 1923.<sup>49</sup> The schools originally sought to provide lay midwives with the necessary standardized education to become registered and certified, but as the attack on lay midwifery continued, the push for professionalization shifted and a new specialty emerged: nurse-midwifery, which was a hybrid of a public health nurse who was also trained in approved and certified midwifery.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Sister M. Theophane Shoemaker, *History of Nurse-Midwifery in the United States* (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1947), 9.

<sup>45</sup> Varney and Thompson, 74.

<sup>46</sup> Shoemaker, 10.

<sup>47</sup> Richard W. Wertz and Dorothy C. Wertz, *Lying-In: A History of Childbirth in America* (New York: The Free Press, 1977), 208-209.

<sup>48</sup> Wertz and Wertz, 209.

<sup>49</sup> Varney and Thompson, 42; Shoemaker, 10.

<sup>50</sup> Shoemaker, 10.

In 1947, Sister Mary Theophane Shoemaker submitted her dissertation on the history of nurse-midwifery in the United States to the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. At the time of her submission, nurse-midwifery had only existed in the United States for roughly twenty years. As an empirically-trained midwife, Shoemaker made a point of noting in her dissertation that the terms “obstetrics,” “midwifery,” and “nurse-midwifery” were often used interchangeably, though sometimes with very different meanings.<sup>51</sup> As Shoemaker explains, “obstetrics [is] ‘the art of managing childbirth cases; that branch of surgery which deals with the management of pregnancy and labor,’ as defined in a medical dictionary.”<sup>52</sup> She notes that the same dictionary does not provide a separate definition for midwifery, rather referring the reader to obstetrics, “implying that the two words are synonymous.”<sup>53</sup> The medical dictionary did not have a definition of nurse-midwifery, as the term was so new, so Shoemaker defined it herself as “the art and science of obstetrics or midwifery as practiced by a graduate, registered, professional nurse who has taken a course in midwifery at a school for nurse-midwives and has met all the requirements for graduation.”<sup>54</sup> In essence, early calls for the professionalization of midwifery engendered the nurse-midwife. By the time of Shoemaker’s dissertation in 1947, three distinct groups were providing obstetric care: physicians who were generally white males, nurse-midwives who were generally white females, and lay midwives, who Shoemaker referred to as “native” or “indigenous” midwives. Such lay midwives were “untrained or partially trained women who attended confinements in the neighborhood of their homes.”<sup>55</sup> With regulations on midwifery well-established by the time of Shoemaker’s study, lay midwives often found themselves effectively regulated out of practice, which many states deemed illegal.<sup>56</sup>

Lay midwives often found it difficult to afford the education and training needed to become certified midwives. Many found themselves excluded from classes and seminars, most often due to the costs associated with travel to the classes.<sup>57</sup> While the classes were federally funded, “the travel and lodging costs were not included. The costs, therefore, acted as a barrier to poorer midwives of color who, without such training, would likely be eliminated from, or regulated out of, the profession.”<sup>58</sup> To attend a midwifery school, lay midwives needed at least \$100—though specific costs varied by school—and often had to fulfill several requirements, including passing a literacy test.<sup>59</sup> For immigrant and black midwives, “these requirements posed

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<sup>51</sup> Shoemaker, 2.

<sup>52</sup> Shoemaker, 1.

<sup>53</sup> Shoemaker, 1.

<sup>54</sup> Shoemaker, 2.

<sup>55</sup> Shoemaker, 2.

<sup>56</sup> D. Thompson, 33.

<sup>57</sup> D. Thompson, 35.

<sup>58</sup> D. Thompson, 35.

<sup>59</sup> D. Thompson, 36.

difficulties ... especially [for] black women who were generally still un- or under-educated post-abolition, and for many immigrants who did not speak English.”<sup>60</sup>

While lay midwives throughout most of the country experienced difficulties becoming certified as nurse-midwives, those in New Mexico had a different experience. New Mexico’s regulations for midwifery were not as strict as the rest of the country, particularly when World War II left the state with a severe shortage of physicians.<sup>61</sup> Prior to the war (and before the midwife debate and the shift from empirically trained midwifery to licensed nurse-midwives in the 1920s), New Mexican communities generally accepted the Mexican-American lay midwives known as *parteras*. These midwives were usually not certified nurse-midwives, instead coming from an older apprenticeship tradition.<sup>62</sup> By 1943, New Mexico had one the highest infant mortality rates of any state in the country, and much of the state remained isolated from the modern health systems serving the rest of the country.<sup>63</sup> As such, *parteras* played an important role in providing obstetric care in these isolated areas.<sup>64</sup> Cultural traditions, coupled with Catholic religious values, left New Mexico’s large Hispanic population uncomfortable with using white male doctors to deliver their babies and thus, preferred delivery by *parteras*.<sup>65</sup> Their preference for a *partera* included not only the shared language but also the shared cultural and religious traditions surrounding birth.<sup>66</sup> To these communities, *parteras* were vital and valuable members of the local community.

One *partera*, Jesusita Aragon, also known as Doña Jesusita, delivered a prolific number of babies through her career in northern New Mexico in the town of Las Vegas. She assisted in the delivery of at least 12,000 babies by the time she retired in 2000 at the age of 93, though Aragon claimed as many as 20,000.<sup>67</sup> One of the most well-known of the *parteras* of New Mexico, Doña Jesusita completed her training through apprenticeship, beginning work with her grandmother, Dolores Gallegos, at the age of thirteen.<sup>68</sup> *Parteras* usually began their apprenticeship later in life. After they had finished having children of their own, they would apprentice under an experienced *partera* who was ready to retire and pass on her experience.<sup>69</sup> At thirteen years old, Aragon was an exception, delivering her aunt’s baby while her grandmother was away

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<sup>60</sup> D. Thompson, 36.

<sup>61</sup> Felina Mychelle Ortiz, “History of Midwifery in New Mexico: Partnership Between Curandera-parteras and the New Mexico Department of Health,” *Journal of Midwifery & Women’s Health* 50, No. 5 (2005): 416.

<sup>62</sup> Mary N. Marquez and Consuelo Pacheco, “Midwifery Lore in New Mexico,” *The American Journal of Nursing* 64, No. 9 (1964): 81, accessed 29 March 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3419421>.

<sup>63</sup> Ortiz, 413.

<sup>64</sup> Fran Leeper Buss, *La Partera* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1980), 113.

<sup>65</sup> Ortiz, 413.

<sup>66</sup> Ortiz, 412.

<sup>67</sup> Ortiz, 415.

<sup>68</sup> Ortiz, 415.

<sup>69</sup> Ortiz, 412.



attending another birth.<sup>70</sup> This successful solo delivery prompted Aragon's grandmother to begin Jesusita's apprenticeship early.<sup>71</sup>

Aragon provided a service to her community that was not only welcomed, but ultimately necessary, as many women lived in isolated villages which physicians would not travel to.<sup>72</sup> In the rural villages of northern New Mexico, the population tended to be Hispanic and poverty-stricken, the cost of paying a physician to travel to and attend a birth was thus often more than the family could afford. By the 1930s, *parteras* were responsible for delivering more than twenty percent of all births in New Mexico and more in rural counties. In San Miguel County in remote northern New Mexico, *parteras* delivered seventy-two percent of the births.<sup>73</sup> In an area underserved by modern medicine, *parteras* thus provided essential medical care, but they could only do so with the consent of the state's medical professionals. One of the most well-known *parteras* serving northern New Mexico, Jesusita Aragon, delivered at least 12,000 babies by the time she retired at the age of 93 in 2000. Aragon primarily practiced around the rural villages of Las Vegas, New Mexico and served a vital role as a health care provider in those communities.

While New Mexico's Department of Health recognized the value of including the *parteras* within the medical community, the relationship between white public health professionals and Hispanic *parteras* was not always smooth. In a biennial report released by the New Mexico Department of Health covering 1937 and 1938, the director of the Division of Maternal and Child Health wrote of the necessity of *parteras*, citing the cultural traditions of the Hispanic women of northern New Mexico—the "time-honored folkways"—as well as difficulty accessing villages and lack of funds to pay doctors as the challenges that made it impossible to phase out *parteras*.<sup>74</sup> Public health nurse Edith Rackley, claimed that upon her arrival in rural northern San Miguel County in 1936 that midwives delivered more than ninety-five percent of all births in the county.<sup>75</sup> Yet, most medical professionals merely tolerated *parteras*, despite their acknowledged necessity. Dr. Harold Mortimer—who set up a private practice in Las Vegas, New Mexico in the 1930s and maintained it until 1975—referred to the midwives working in the area as "gals [who] were just using hand-me-down, word of mouth knowledge they had acquired. Some of them were very good and knew their limitations; others didn't," downplaying not only their importance but also their contribution to the medical community.<sup>76</sup> Mortimer describes his contact with the midwives as limited, stating that "there was a coolness between the M.D.s and those

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<sup>70</sup> Buss, 35.

<sup>71</sup> Buss, 35.

<sup>72</sup> Ortiz, 413.

<sup>73</sup> Ortiz, 413.

<sup>74</sup> Ortiz, 413.

<sup>75</sup> Buss, 114.

<sup>76</sup> Harold M. Mortimer, M.D., Oral History, Oral History of Medicine Project, 1983, 12.

people. We rarely saw them.”<sup>77</sup> Mortimer did encounter Aragon, yet, does not refer to her by name until prompted by the interviewer, “I saw one more than the others because she was the most active – a middle-aged person with an active brain who did a fairly good job. But most of them were on the periphery of the whole works and we didn’t have any contact with them.”<sup>78</sup> Later when the interviewer brings Aragon up again, asking if she was a “major medical figure,” Mortimer replies, “she was just a midwife.”<sup>79</sup> Mortimer’s dismissal of Aragon reflects how well-rooted the disdain for midwives had become in the medical community by the 1930s.

In contrast to physicians’ attitudes regarding *parteras*, New Mexican public-health nurse, Elizabeth Budlong recognized the value of the *partera* as filling a need within rural communities, despite “odd” cultural customs. She settled in New Mexico in 1947, first in Las Vegas and later ending up in Taos—both communities surrounded by rural villages in northern New Mexico.<sup>80</sup> While Budlong described the *partera* custom of “[putting] a raisin in the umbilicus” as a “folkway,” she believed the midwives served a vital role in these communities, citing the up to fifty-mile distance some pregnant women lived from doctors—distances only midwives were willing to travel.<sup>81</sup> Another health practitioner in northern New Mexico, Dr. Edith Millican, graduated from Women’s Medical College in 1939 and spent time in northern New Mexico in the 1940s, then China, before returning to New Mexico in 1951.<sup>82</sup> Dr. Millican worked with Aragon in Las Vegas, New Mexico, often seeing her patients for prenatal care, with Aragon handling the delivery.<sup>83</sup> Millican found little fault with the lay midwives of northern New Mexico, yet realized her colleagues did not accept her viewpoint, as often the only interaction her fellow doctors had with the *parteras* was when a problem arose with a delivery.<sup>84</sup> While this occurred infrequently, *parteras* and their methods usually felt the brunt of the blame for emergency deliveries.<sup>85</sup> That medical professionals’ interactions with *parteras* usually only occurred when something went wrong only served to reinforce medical professionals’ stereotypes.

Many health practitioners found the *parteras*’ customs to be strange, and in keeping with the campaign against lay or apprenticed midwives that had begun in the 1910s, believed *parteras* to be “superstitious, dirty, and ignorant.”<sup>86</sup> *Parteras* incorporated religion into their customs for birthing children, by placing statues of saints around the birthing room, using prayers, calling on the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Holy Trinity,

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<sup>77</sup> Mortimer, 12.

<sup>78</sup> Mortimer, 12.

<sup>79</sup> Mortimer, 13.

<sup>80</sup> Elizabeth Budlong, R.N., Oral History, Oral History of Medicine Project, 1983, 10-18.

<sup>81</sup> Budlong, 18.

<sup>82</sup> Edith Millican, M.D., Oral History, Oral History of Medicine Project, 1983, 2.

<sup>83</sup> Millican, 24.

<sup>84</sup> Millican, 24.

<sup>85</sup> Millican, 24.

<sup>86</sup> Ortiz, 413.

or lighting religious candles.<sup>87</sup> If the child died in labor, before the child could receive the sacrament of baptism, the *partera* buried the child under a water spout, “so the baby could have water whenever it rained.”<sup>88</sup> The *partera* believed that “difficult or births and cases of long labor were punishments for being ill-tempered or disrespectful to their elder,” and in hopes of easing the delivery, the *partera* “would try to find out what the suffering woman had done to deserve the punishment, and she would have the client make amends.”<sup>89</sup> The *partera* also believed the atmosphere of the birthing room to be critical in a successful delivery, “nothing of a disturbing, unpleasant or exciting nature could be brought to the attention of the mother ... transgression of this rule was apt to have fatal results;” for example, in *Maternity Care in a Spanish-American Community of New Mexico*, one *partera* claims a woman she assisted in labor died two days after childbirth when the woman’s husband returned home drunk and without groceries or the money to buy the groceries.<sup>90</sup> While these practices may seem strange from a medical perspective, *parteras* served social constructs, reinforcing communal bonds while providing medical expertise acquired through experience.

Quite a few birthing traditions involved necessary positions of labor, to ensure the most successful results postpartum. Other birthing traditions of the *partera* involved a kneeling birth position, or having the laboring woman hold on to a sheet suspended from the ceiling for leverage; having the laboring woman swallow three beans or three squash seeds, one at a time to assist in the expulsion of the placenta; sealing the room of the laboring woman to prevent drafts from entering the room and bringing illnesses to the laboring woman or child; and a forty-day post-partum diet that assisted the new mother in healing and milk production.<sup>91</sup> For the white public health practitioners, these traditions merely reinforced their ideas of the *parteras* as superstitious and ignorant.

Educating the *parteras* to provide standardized care—and thus, no longer ignorant or superstitious—became a focus of the funds from the Shepherd-Towner Act. Public health officials in New Mexico identified “supervising them and providing one-on-one education” as most important to improving maternal and infant outcomes.<sup>92</sup> The establishment of the Midwifery Consultant Program by the San Miguel County Demonstration Project in 1938 created classes and clinics for the *parteras* to standardize the care they offered, while simultaneously placing them under the supervision of a nurse-midwife.<sup>93</sup> Edith Rackley, the supervising nurse for the demonstration project in 1936 prior to the establishment of the program, recalls setting up classes in rural villages

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<sup>87</sup> Ortiz, 412.

<sup>88</sup> Ortiz, 412.

<sup>89</sup> Buss, 412.

<sup>90</sup> Sister Mary Lucia Van der Eerden, *Maternity Care in a Spanish-American Community of New Mexico*, (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1948), 17; Van der Eerden, 17.

<sup>91</sup> Marquez and Pacheco, 81-83.

<sup>92</sup> Ortiz, 414.

<sup>93</sup> Ortiz, 414.

for midwives to receive their certification to practice midwifery.<sup>94</sup> In a private sector response, recognizing the urgent need for maternity care services in New Mexico, the Medical Mission Sisters sent Sister M. Theophane Shoemaker to the Maternity Center Association (MCA) in New York City to become a certified nurse-midwife. In 1944 Shoemaker, along with nurse-midwife and fellow MCA graduate Helen Herb, established the Catholic Maternity Institute in Santa Fe, a private educational program and a successful nurse-midwifery practice with minimal governmental oversight.

Still, *parteras* persisted in their traditional practices. Aragon recalls sixty-five midwives still worked in Las Vegas, New Mexico when she moved there in 1952.<sup>95</sup> Millican recalls that as late as 1957, ten midwives still practiced in the area despite the establishment of several local clinics.<sup>96</sup> *Parteras* appealed to an expectant mother because they would come to her, rather than requiring her to travel to a clinic for delivery, but also due to the other services the *partera* provided beyond delivery, with the *parteras* continuing to provide care using traditional methods. Rackley recalls the importance of the *partera* in northern New Mexican villages:

When I came in 1936 the midwives were very important people in their villages, and they helped with many other things besides births ... often whatever ailment they had, they went to the midwife. The midwives often dispensed herbs for different complaints and also played counselor to the villagers. The midwife was the only type of leader in a village community except for men who were politically inclined, and of course, except for religious leaders. People would go to the midwife because there was no other woman leader. It was the only profession open to women ... So, the midwife was a very special person, especially for other women.<sup>97</sup>

To be chosen as a *partera* was thus an honor for Mexican-American women, and not one to be taken lightly. *Parteras* remained active in New Mexico throughout World War II, providing an invaluable service to Mexican-American women in northern rural villages. In 1942, over 678 *parteras* practiced in New Mexico, and between 1942 and 1965, reached a peak of 800, before declining to less than 100 by 1965.<sup>98</sup> Aragon continued her midwifery practice until the age of 93, yet often consulted on obstetric care well past her retirement.

The *parteras* of New Mexico held a unique position within their communities which allowed them to weather the midwife debate of the early-twentieth century. While the specialization of obstetrics and standardization of midwifery inhibited the practice of midwifery in America, particularly as physicians and public health officials deemed the institution dangerous, dirty, and ignorant, New-Mexican *parteras* continued to serve

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<sup>94</sup> Buss, 117.

<sup>95</sup> Buss, 115.

<sup>96</sup> Buss, 114-115.

<sup>97</sup> Buss, 115-116.

<sup>98</sup> Ortiz, 416.

their communities with vital care. With important shared cultural traditions and knowledge of obstetrics held in high esteem among the Mexican-American mothers they served, and due to the need for obstetric care in rural communities, the *parteras* continued their practices regardless of certification. With the shortage of available physicians during World War II, extreme poverty of many expectant Mexican-American mothers in the rural villages of northern New Mexico, and high maternal and infant mortality rates as compared to the rest of the country, the Progressive Era reforms that shaped midwifery and professionalized obstetrics in the rest of the country fell to the wayside, as maintaining a partnership with the *parteras* remained the most viable way to improve maternal and infant outcomes.

# MAKE THE WORLD FAMILIAR: NATIVE AMERICANS AND ACTS OF ENGAGED RESISTANCE

Michelle Trujillo

**Abstract:** This research paper is a California-focused discussion highlighting powerful acts of Native American engaged resistance: the intentional work of decolonizing historic narrative as well as sacred lands, building presence in a dominant culture, and creating a future based on unique Native cultural perspectives. Specific cases include the Wiyots of Tuluwat Island, the site of an 1860 murder spree perpetrated by white settlers, and Alcatraz Island where the 1969 Native occupation sparked significant pro-Indian legislative actions. Remarkable examples of how Native-specific strategies of survivance and traditional legacies such as inter-tribal gathering are presented, along with selected visual art that are direct responses to history shaped by Native-colonizer interactions and include themes of memory, sovereignty, and continuance.

In the Yosemite Miwok legend “How Meadowlark Started Death,” the great trickster Coyote and Meadowlark discuss how to deal with the body of a dead Miwok. Coyote offers to raise the body from the dead, as he does not like to see people die, but Meadowlark sagely advises, “No, do not. If he gets up again, there will be too many people. They will become so hungry that they will eat each other.” Coyote listened to Meadowlark’s words, “There will be others to replace those that die. A man will have many children. The old people will die, but the young will live.” And so, it was determined that people should always die, making way for new generations.<sup>1</sup>

California’s Native people, composed of many different cultures, set a precedent of sustainability and environmental stewardship inextricably linked to spirituality and culture. Indeed, a foundational principle to California Indians is the belief that their first ancestors were created from the earth of their long-established dwelling places.<sup>2</sup> For tens of thousands of years,<sup>3</sup> Indigenous people adapted the landscape to optimize floral and faunal habitats for access to food sources. Materials for weaving baskets, which were used for gathering food, holding water, and cooking—activities performed daily

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<sup>1</sup> Frank LaPena, Craig D. Bates, Steven P. Medley, eds., *Legends of the Yosemite Miwok* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2007), 31.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen Powers, *Tribes of California*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 5.

<sup>3</sup> Jo Anne Van Tilburg, *Ancient Images on Stone*, (Los Angeles: University of California, 1983), 9.

as well as for ceremonies and rituals—were also ensured by this agricultural method and sustainable approach.<sup>4</sup>

The reclaiming and decolonizing objectives of contemporary California Indians counters the dominant culture's intrusion upon Indigenous adaptation, resulting in a faux nostalgia that colonizers believed gave them license to destroy first and ask questions later. By the early twentieth century, ethnographers had begun to focus on preserving relics of Native American culture out of fear that the customs and artifacts were rapidly disappearing.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, they were; California Governor Peter H. Burnett (1851) was committed to “a war of extermination ... until the Indian race becomes extinct ... While we cannot anticipate this result but with painful regret, the inevitable destiny of the race is beyond the power or wisdom of man to avert.”<sup>6</sup> Governor Burnett paid militias and “ragtag group[s] of unemployed miners” \$843,573.48 between 1850 and 1852 to hunt down and kill Indians.<sup>7</sup> A subtle process occurred during which Indian culture itself, and not just the artifacts produced within that culture, became a museum piece: a thing to be preserved and controlled. This mindset reinforced how majority ideology “fashion[s] natives and nature as an absence, as a tragic, nostalgic closure of [Indigenous] enlightenment.”<sup>8</sup> Native disappearance did seem a logical expectation to a majority culture that believed California Indians lacked the “moral virtue” to adapt and change with the times.<sup>9</sup>

Since first contact, whites have usurped the Indigenous narrative, whether intentionally or not, by appropriating land, bodies, and even history itself for all manner of agendas and exigencies. Indigenous people have been creating ways to reclaim, protect and reestablish Native voices ever since. The presumption that “only white cultures evolved and developed ... and [Indigenous cultures] did not change, except in the direction of global demise” is a damaging myth that persists.<sup>10</sup> It creates the contradiction that if Native culture is perceived as unable to adapt, those who assimilate are no longer viewed as “real” Indians.<sup>11</sup> Native voices reclaim their stories to decolonize the fallacy of stagnation because this stereotype “still structures our thinking, and contribute[s] even more to the formation of popular misconceptions of Native Americans, their art, and their culture.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Malcolm Margolin, ed., *The Way We Lived*, (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2003), 54.

<sup>5</sup> Janet Catherine Berlo, ed., *The Early Years of Native American Art History*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1992), 46.

<sup>6</sup> California Research Bureau, *Early California Laws and Policies Related to California Indians*, Kimberly Johnston-Dodds, (Sacramento, CA, 2002), 15.

<sup>7</sup> Margolin, *We Lived*, 165; CRB, 16.

<sup>8</sup> Gerald Vizenor, *Native Liberty: Natural Reason and Cultural Survivance* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 1.

<sup>9</sup> Berlo, *Art*, 47.

<sup>10</sup> Berlo, *Art*, 47.

<sup>11</sup> Berlo, *Art*, 48.

<sup>12</sup> Berlo, *Art*, 88.

The holistic teachings of the Meadowlark legend, told for generations, live in every politically purposeful action and art piece highlighted in this paper. From the inter-tribal occupation of Alcatraz Island in 1969, to Wiyots patiently recovering their ancestral land bit by bit, from an apology issued by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to art created in response to specific historical events, this paper shows how Indian activists recast history, build presence, and create a future from their unique cultural perspectives. As with the Meadowlark story, each retelling of the history of California Native people reveals new depths of knowledge: methods of resilience in the face of invisibility, the ability to heal and reclaim ancestral land for continuance of spirituality and identity for future generations. The legend's literal message applies; new generations have indeed taken the place of those lost to slaughter, indenture, or kidnapping and later, to manifestations of residual wounds such as alcoholism, suicide, domestic abuse. Its allegorical teachings provide a framework for a future shaped by the inextricable link with nature and place, community and gathering.

Indians proactively devised methods to ensure the survival of some aspects of their culture while under the oppression of colonizers, and an excellent example is the ceiling at Mission Dolores in San Francisco. Painted in a traditional basket-weave pattern using ochre, cinnabar and charcoal, these are the same colors applied to the body during traditional dances of Ohlone Kuksu, which are a form of spiritual expression.<sup>13</sup> Sacred colors and patterns are prominently displayed in a Catholic setting, evidence of mission Indians' ability to pierce the austere religiosity of the Spanish priests. Ojibwe writer Gerald Vizenor, describes survivance as "an active sense of presence over historical absence ... a continuance of stories."<sup>14</sup> Survivance is a way of being and a point of view that is fundamentally woven into creative acts of political purpose that is more than mere survival and resistance to domination.<sup>15</sup> It is an "active and creative" mindset that, as examples in this paper will show, seeks creative ways to execute political action to decolonize Native spaces of expression, reappropriate geography, and both reclaim and re-create culture.<sup>16</sup> Activists and artists presented in this paper know, as the mission Indians knew, that "contemporary Indian life has to include daily resistance to the imagined Indian that seeps from the past into the present."<sup>17</sup>

History provides evidence of the depth and reach of the trauma forced upon California's Indigenous and Native people. Beyond Spanish settlement and subjugation within the mission system, the Gold Rush brought drastic social and economic changes that launched California's economic and social trajectory, and for Indians, it ushered in an era of horrors, bloodshed, and unrecoverable loss that still reverberates in historic

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<sup>13</sup> "California Art and Native Culture," California Indian Museum & Cultural Center, accessed 12 December 2017, <https://cimcc.org/education-center/california-native-art-and-culture-hd/>.

<sup>14</sup> Vizenor, *Native Liberty*, 1.

<sup>15</sup> Vizenor, *Native Liberty*, 1.

<sup>16</sup> Vizenor, *Native Liberty*, 1.

<sup>17</sup> W. Jackson Rushing, III, ed., *Native American Art in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 136.



readings and family lore. Survivance is the force that drives activists to voice these stories. Pioneers arrived with a “sense of heroism and self-righteousness” which was heightened by Indigenous resistance to the invasion of their land and people.<sup>18</sup> Native oral histories such as creation stories were “read” in the geographic features of their dwelling areas.<sup>19</sup> Being ripped from ancestral land meant leaving their existential realities and connections to identity, as well as teachings that had been developed over millennia by previous generations. Gold mining methods such as hydraulic mining polluted and destroyed sacred sites and dwelling places along with “mountains, rivers, and canyons.”<sup>20</sup> The unearthing of over 1,000 tons of mercury for use in gold extraction compounded environmental destruction, and 250 million cubic meters of toxic sediments made their way to the San Francisco Bay.<sup>21</sup> Due to disease, starvation, and murder, the Indian population withered from approximately 150,000 to an estimated 50,000 between 1845 and 1855.<sup>22</sup> Lucy Young (Lassik) put the nightmare of the era this way, “I would like to tell you the whole story from 1846 up to the present date. I am afraid it would not be allowed to be put in print.”<sup>23</sup>

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century laws institutionalized the government’s intent of Native extermination. Senate Bill No. 129, passed by California legislators in 1850, sanctioned mistreatment and exploitation of California Indians by whites.<sup>24</sup> Named *An Act for the Government and Protection of Indians*, the bill served to further disconnect Indians from ancestral lands and life-sustaining resources, topography that “structured how California Indians told their histories as well as how they understood one’s identity.”<sup>25</sup> The bill allowed “any person” to go to the Justice of the Peace in order to acquire Indian children for indenture and gave property-owning whites the right to apply for removal of Indians from their property. This bill also excluded options for legal recourse for Native families who were torn apart, as well as denied justice for children whose parents were murdered while defending them from kidnapping.<sup>26</sup> Kidnapping stories of Native children being sold as slaves and servants to whites ranged from 1855 to 1864 in California newspapers, documenting nearly a decade of children disappearing into unknown situations.<sup>27</sup> Vagrancy laws already existed but were tailored toward steering even more Indian bodies to uses of indenture

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<sup>18</sup> Berlo, *Art*, 89.

<sup>19</sup> William J. Bauer, Jr., *California Through Native Eyes: Reclaiming History* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016), 28.

<sup>20</sup> Laura Lee George, *Northwest Indigenous Gold Rush History: The Indian Survivors of California’s Holocaust, Indian Teacher and Educational Personnel Program* (Humboldt State University, 2002), 9.

<sup>21</sup> George, *Northwest*, 11.

<sup>22</sup> Margolin, *We Lived*, 163.

<sup>23</sup> Bauer, *Native Eyes*, 3.

<sup>24</sup> CRB, 5.

<sup>25</sup> Bauer, *Native Eyes*, 28.

<sup>26</sup> CRB, 10.

<sup>27</sup> CRB, 10.

and slavery in which their owners were entitled to, among other benefits, the “earnings of said Indians, for and during the term for which each is respectively so bound.”<sup>28</sup>

[The Indian] did not know what he was playing, did not know the rules of the game, did not know that he had his lands . . . stacked like chips; he only knew that every time the white man said, ‘Come on, let’s deal with one another,’ that *he* lost something. The game was too complex for the red man, and not because he did not himself understand barter, but because he did not have the means of making an elaborate set of rules and have the power to enforce them.<sup>29</sup>

The taking of Indian history continued in the early part of the twentieth century, with amateur historians and pioneer societies that recounted California’s blossoming economy as a result of the efforts of “hardy pioneers” whose “bravery, nobility, and sacrifice for the common good” were exalted and praised.<sup>30</sup> The blinders of privilege and notions of Indian inferiority made their way into California’s creation story—a myth that marginalized Indigenous experiences and diminished their contributions to the point of invisibility.<sup>31</sup>

The 1887 General Allotment Act (Dawes Act) took away nearly two-thirds of tribally owned reservation land and gave it to settlers without financial recompense to tribes.<sup>32</sup> Efforts of the majority culture to take resources and remove Indians from their land continued in the form of federal allotment and assimilation policies in the early twentieth century. After being expelled from their land, California Indians would be forced to assimilate into the majority culture, or so the logic went, and cultural ties would be further destroyed.<sup>33</sup> This was the situation in which California Indians were caught: an inescapable quagmire of displacement and poverty. Termination policies of the 1950s and 1960s, “bent on consigning Native people to the past,” continued the same blunt approach for nearly seventy years by eradicating federal tribal recognition, selling tribal lands, and guaranteeing the disenfranchisement of Indians.<sup>34</sup> Government efforts to weaken Native ties through dislocation were effective, but it motivated people in the Indian diaspora to put an essential custom into practice, one that would prove to be an effective political strategy.

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<sup>28</sup> CRB, 8.

<sup>29</sup> Daniel M. Cobb, *Say We Are Nations: Documents of Politics and Protest in Indigenous American Since 1887* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2002), 9.

<sup>30</sup> Bauer, *Native Eyes*, 23.

<sup>31</sup> Bauer, *Native Eyes*, 22.

<sup>32</sup> “Tribal Nations and Other American Governments Through History,” National Congress of American Indians, accessed 12 December 2017, <https://view.publitas.com/ncai/tribal-nations-and-the-united-states-an-introduction/page/14-15>.

<sup>33</sup> Cobb, *Nations*, 9.

<sup>34</sup> Cobb, *Nations*, 56.

*Asserting Rights: Gathering as an Act of Presence and Visibility*

The occupation of Alcatraz Island in 1969 was a gathering of Natives from many different cultures and a continuance of a customary practice of inter-tribal gathering. As an act that asserted cultural heritage, civil rights, and religious diversity, the symbolic action of taking the island acknowledged the Indigenous inhabitants who were the first people of California.<sup>35</sup> When ships saw the island as they entered the bay, it would remind people of the “true history of this nation.” Under the denomination “Indians of All Tribes,” the American Indian Center located in San Francisco’s Mission District issued a letter and a proclamation. The activists wanted to draw attention to poor Native Americans and their continued need for financial, social, and political opportunities. Their letter expressed a deep desire for “Indian progress,” to “preserve our dignity and beauty,” and that they wanted to “come up and not have to stand behind anymore.” The letter also specifically detailed the need for higher education designed for the unique status of Native people, their “desperate need of self-assertion for their way of life and their desperate needs, both economic and political.”<sup>36</sup>

The act of occupation created a platform for Indians of all tribes to voice grievances and tell their stories. The group sharpened their message of self-determination by creatively citing historic references. Brought to the collective consciousness through media exposure were descriptions of poor conditions on reservations, as well as harmful policies and forced dependence on government programs and loss of culture. The Proclamation lays out how the activist occupiers would take the land by employing the same tactics as colonists and white settlers. Their proclamation was partly tongue-in-cheek, presenting a mandate from a dominant position of magnanimity. The island, they said, was claimed anew by the “right of discovery,” and it would be paid for in \$24 worth of glass beads and red cloth, mimicking the sale of Manhattan Island by Indians to colonists. The land would be held in trust “for as long as the sun shall rise and the rivers go down to the sea,” and would be administered by the BCA, Bureau of Caucasian Affairs. It reflected past mistreatment by echoing language used to oppress Indians: “We will offer them our religion, our education, our life-ways, in order to help them achieve our level of civilization and thus raise them and all their white brothers up from their savage and unhappy state. We offer this treaty in good faith and wish to be fair and honorable in our dealings with all white men.”<sup>37</sup>

Many legislative changes occurred during and shortly after the Alcatraz occupation. Some include the Indian Self Determination and Education Act, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, the Indian Child Welfare Act, the Indian Financing Act, and the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. Notably, the position of Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs was created, a post which would later be occupied by Kevin Gover,

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<sup>35</sup> Indians of all Tribes, Proclamation Letter, 1969.

<sup>36</sup> Proclamation Letter.

<sup>37</sup> Proclamation Letter.

who conceptualized and delivered the apology to all Native Americans in 2000. Mount Adams was returned to the Yakama Nation in Washington State, and forty-eight thousand acres of the sacred Blue Lake lands were returned to Taos Pueblo in New Mexico. During the occupation of Alcatraz Island, President Nixon “quietly rescinded” the dreaded termination policy which removed Native Americans from their land without any payment for those lands during the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>38</sup> Regionally, Nixon granted land near Davis to establish a Native college. D-Q University, founded in 1971, which was California’s only tribal college at the time.<sup>39</sup> The university became accredited as a two-year college in 1977 but lost accreditation in 2005.<sup>40</sup>

The occupation of Alcatraz Island inspired Native Americans nationwide to take part in an agenda of self-determination. Two of these efforts were cross-country walks organized in the Bay Area, and each selected Alcatraz Island as their starting point. They were called the Longest Walk (1978) and Long Walk for Survival (1980), and both presented a unified front of Native agency in bringing awareness to oppressive policies and Native issues such as environmental rights, the protection of sacred sites, reaffirming Native sovereignty, domestic violence, sterilization of Native women, and addiction.<sup>41</sup> The strategy of implementing long-distance walks was a response to historic forced removals in which tribes were marched on brutal, long-distance journeys and away from ancestral lands. Their implementation of these contemporary walks, which traversed the United States, was a remembrance of ancestors lost to previous removals. For example, in 1863, U.S. soldiers forcibly removed Concoos from the Sacramento Valley to the Round Valley reservation. A march of approximately 100 miles, it was a hot and brutal episode that began with 460 people and finished with just 270.<sup>42</sup> Since 1996, the annual commemorative walk, called California’s Trail of Tears, takes place to remember those who were subjected to it, and to affirm healing and

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<sup>38</sup> Willie Edward, Troy Johnson, “Facing the Sun: The Fortieth Anniversary of the Alcatraz Occupation,” *News from Native California* 23, no. 4 (2010): 19.

<sup>39</sup> “About Us,” D-Q University, last modified 16 March 2016, accessed 12 December 2017, <http://www.d-q-u.org/about-us>.

<sup>40</sup> “The college derives its name from two important figures from Native history. The ‘D’ stands for the name of the Great Peacemaker who inspired the found of the Iroquois Confederacy... The ‘Q’ represents Quetzalcoatl, an Aztec prophet who symbolized the principles of wisdom and self-discipline.” American Indian College Fund, *Real Indians: Portraits of Contemporary Native Americans and America’s Tribal Colleges*, (Denver: Melcher Media), 100.

<sup>41</sup> April Chee, “The Longest Walk: Activism and Legislation in Indian Country,” National Museum of the American Indian, 1 July 2016, accessed 12 December 2017, <http://blog.nmai.si.edu/main/2016/07/the-longest-walk-activism-and-legislation-in-indian-country.html>; Jill Tucker, “Cross-Country American Indian Longest Walk Kicks off in SF,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 12 February 2017, accessed 12 December 2017, <http://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Cross-country-American-Indian-Longest-Walk-10927194.php>.

<sup>42</sup> Bauer, *Native Eyes*, 91; Lee Romney, “Retracing a Grim Past,” *Los Angeles Times*, 19 September 2004, accessed 29 March 2018, <http://articles.latimes.com/2004/sep/19/local/me-march19>.

cultural presence.<sup>43</sup> Memories of removal span generations and indeed, it can take generations before tribe members venture a reconnection to ancestral lands. These physical spaces sometimes bear evidence of years of use and even neglect; in these cases, efforts to heal memory means healing the land.

*Reclaiming Land: Survivance Through Persistence*

Native stories, identity, and culture are inextricably linked to land that hold landmarks and geographical features that are not only characters in traditional stories but also mark important events. Before 1860, springtime on Tuluwat Island (located off the coast of Eureka in Northern California) brought an air of excitement and purpose, for many arrangements had to be made in preparation for a grand annual event. February of 1860 was no different, and the Wiyot people were getting ready for their World Renewal ceremony, a massive undertaking which lasted seven to ten days.<sup>44</sup> Near the end of the ceremony, at around 4 A.M., an estimated six or seven settlers attacked the unsuspecting group with axes and hatchets, killing nearly all of the upwards of seventy people still on the island. This story gained notoriety partly because an account written by Bret Harte was published in periodicals from San Francisco to New York City.<sup>45</sup> Details give a ghastly picture of mutilated bodies of mostly women and children with axe wounds to the head. Bret Harte's article corroborates other accounts that out of about seventy people killed, "at least fifty or sixty were women or children."<sup>46</sup> The pain and cultural destruction of the massacre remains deeply wounding for Wiyots. In a 1997 interview, Tribal Chairperson for the Table Bluff Reservation, Cheryl Seidner (Wiyot), shared oral history that was passed to her: Those who survived did so because they fled the island but of those who were present, possibly only three survived, and one was an old woman who was stuck in the mud. When found, she was singing a song, on which Seidner reflected, "I could only think it was a mourning song." Seidner disclosed that "when the massacre took place it really took away a lot of our identity. The old people who lived through it wouldn't talk of it anymore. They just said it's gone, our singers, our regalia, our food, our land, we lost everything."<sup>47</sup> The women and children on the island that night were not equipped to resist the murderers. Despite the continued struggle for understanding of cultural decimation, appropriation, and white entitlement, efforts of daily resistance and survivance have created a new story for Tuluwat Island: one of reclaiming land, spirituality, and culture.

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<sup>43</sup> Romney, "Retracing a Grim Past."

<sup>44</sup> "Duluwat [sic] Island Plaque," Atlas Obscura, accessed 12 December 2017, <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/duluwat-island-plaque>; "Cultural," Wiyot Tribe website, accessed 12 December 2017, <http://www.wiyot.us/cultural>.

<sup>45</sup> George, Northwest, 3.

<sup>46</sup> Rex D. Green, "Indian Island Massacre: A Decade of Events Leading to Genocide and Removal of the Wiyots 1850-1860," (senior seminar paper, 2002), 29.

<sup>47</sup> George, Northwest, 4.

The work to counter attitudes of entitlement is not a thing of the past. In 2017, a wealthy white citizen complained about Eureka City Council's decision to transfer 200 acres of Tuluwat Island to the tribe.<sup>48</sup> During a radio interview, he speculated about offering the city more than the estimated value of the land in order to purchase it so that he and his family could continue recreating in the area. His reason was because he "use[s] Indian Island. I like it; my kids do." He was worried about losing access to the island and pointed out that the Wiyot people had not clarified if their ownership of the land excluded public use. His sense of entitlement to "Indian Island" had him feeling "astonished and flabbergasted" that the city of Eureka had transferred the land back to the Wiyots.<sup>49</sup> A Yurok tribe member's response to the antagonism expresses values of survivance:

The Wiyot People, as the original inhabitants and stewards of Indian Island, have what I equate to a genetic-historical connection to Indian Island. The cultural connection of the tribe to Indian Island goes back countless generations and their people are intrinsically tied to the Island. In fact, I would argue that their individual and collective well-being and prosperity and the healing of the tribe's genetic memory with regards to the historical trauma and deliberate attack by Eureka's great businessmen of the time, to commit genocide of the Wiyot people, is truly contingent upon the environmental health and return of this land to its original inhabitants/stewards [sic].<sup>50</sup>

It has taken over a decade for Wiyots to reclaim their ancestral land. In 2000, grassroots fundraising, partnerships, and community and private donors allowed the Wiyot to buy back 1.5 acres of the historic village site of Tuluwat on Indian Island.<sup>51</sup> In 2004, the city of Eureka voted unanimously to return the northeastern tip (45 acres) of the island. Since successfully reappropriating stewardship, Wiyots have engaged in impactful conservation efforts including the removal of over 60 tons of scrap metal, tons of garbage, removal of "tens of thousands of tons of toxins and hazardous waste, and removal of non-native and invasive plant species."<sup>52</sup> Restoration work was completed to shore up and prevent further erosion of an ancient shell mound estimated to be more than 1,000 years old and covering an area over six acres.<sup>53</sup> Finally,

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<sup>48</sup> Ryan Burns, "Rob Arkley Wants to Buy Indian Island to Keep Eureka from Returning it to 'The Natives,'" *Lost Coast Outpost*, 31 July 2017, accessed 12 December 2017, <https://lostcoastoutpost.com/2017/jul/31/rob-arkley-wants-buy-indian-island-prevent-eureka/>.

<sup>49</sup> Hunter Cresswell, "Arkley's Indian Island Offer Sparks Outrage," *Times Standard News*, 3 August 2017, accessed 12 December 2017, <http://www.times-standard.com/article/NJ/20170803/NEWS/170809934>.

<sup>50</sup> Cresswell, "Arkley's Offer."

<sup>51</sup> "Tuluwat Project," Wiyot Tribe website, accessed 12 December 2017, <http://www.wiyot.us/tuluwat-project>.

<sup>52</sup> Cresswell, "Arkley's Offer."

<sup>53</sup> "Tuluwat Project." Fortunately, Wiyots reclaimed this physical history. In 1909, a number of white Mill Valley citizens found a nearby midden to be "unequalled...material for making tennis

in 2014 – 154 years after the massacre – Wiyots once again performed their World Renewal ceremony.

*Recasting History: The Messenger Matters*

Rampant and savage violence, and the establishment of unfair laws are prominent aspects of Native American history. But just as significant are acts of agency and resistance. To propagate the myth of inevitable decline and exculpate the wrongdoings of colonizers, these stories were couched in notions that Native culture was stagnant while Western culture was ever-changing and indeed the engine of progress. In 2000, however, a Pawnee employee of the Bureau of Indian Affairs was getting ready to confront this historic myth. Assistant Secretary Kevin Gover issued a formal apology on behalf of the Bureau of Indian Affairs for the “systematic genocide and ethnocide practiced by the bureau since its inception in 1824.”<sup>54</sup> Never before had these words, including “ethnic cleansing,” been used in the context of the U.S. government’s treatment of Native Americans.<sup>55</sup> In his statement, Gover acknowledged that the Office of Indian affairs was “an instrument by which the United States enforced its ambition against the Indian nations and Indian people who stood in its path.” The admission of the BIA’s responsibility for deep trauma and shame that transcends generations required acceptance of the “moral responsibility of putting things right.”<sup>56</sup>

As a federal apology, Gover’s message was not a response to specific depredations inflicted upon Indigenous and Native people nor was it to ask forgiveness. Instead, it was a gesture to acknowledge and validate the version of history “that Native people know to be true.”<sup>57</sup> One of the most important aspects of Gover’s speech is that he decolonized historic narrative and “issue[d] a corrective history.”<sup>58</sup> Native Americans perceived the statement in different ways, including dismissing Gover’s act as too little, too late. Susan Masten, chairwoman of California Yurok tribe and president of the National Congress of American Indians however, thought it was a “heroic and historic moment ... for us there was a lot of emotion in that apology. It’s important for us to begin to heal from what has been done since non-Indian contact.”<sup>59</sup>

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courts, and the excellent courts of [neighbors] attest this [sic].” Thousands of yards were discovered at this Mill Valley location, and the article claimed “this rancheria hill is many hundred years old,” when it most likely was much older. “Shells from Mounds Good for Courts,” *cdnc.ucr.edu*, *Mill Valley Independent*, 23 April 1909, accessed 12 December 2017, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=MVI19090423.2.18&srpos=11&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-rancheria-----1>.

<sup>54</sup> Harvard University Native American Program, *Reframing the Issues: A Path Towards Healing for Native American Communities in Massachusetts*, Patrik Johansson, (Cambridge, MA, 2001),

<sup>55</sup> Rebecca Tsosie, “The BIA’s Apology to Native Americans: An Essay on Collective Memory and Collective Conscience,” *Taking Wrongs Seriously* eds. Elazar Barkan and Alexaner Karn (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 189.

<sup>56</sup> Tsosie, “Apology,” 187.

<sup>57</sup> Tsosie, “Apology,” 193.

<sup>58</sup> Tsosie, “Apology,” 191.

<sup>59</sup> Johansson, *Reframing*, 13.

Assistant Secretary Gover's cultural identity is tightly linked to his issuing the apology; why would a Native American be the messenger of such a statement, especially considering that Assistant Secretary Gover's own ancestors must have suffered the very same treatment that the apology addresses? By looking through a survivance lens, it is possible to create space for deeper interpretation, one that recognizes Assistant Secretary Gover's gesture as the making of a profound correcting of history. This more critical reading of the BIA apology reveals an imaginative and creative approach to using his platform as Assistant Secretary. Gover's apology "locates responsibility where it belongs: on the original wrongdoers and those in privy with them."<sup>60</sup> Gover's speech was direct and had a clear purpose, an artful approach to a reckoning long overdue. But messages of great impact take many forms and move beyond artful to art itself.

*Visual Sovereignty: Historic Responses and Giving Voice to Personal Stories*

Contemporary artists are part of this legacy of engaged resistance and response to history by creating works that uphold possibility for reflection of experiences, healing trauma, and expressing identity through their works. Wintu/Nomtipom artist and California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) Professor Frank LaPena has pointed out, "Indian art is not realism, abstract, mixed media or traditional items but includes all of these things and more, for it is a diverse and rich combination of cultural expressions."<sup>61</sup> The way "the American Indian has tenaciously held on to his arts ... as the fabric that binds and holds together many dimensions of his very existence" is a testament to imagination and creativity as important responses to colonization.<sup>62</sup> Northern California is home to many Indian artists who have created a distinct body of work that offer responses to history and provide a unique viewpoint on survivance discourse.<sup>63</sup> Frank LaPena has "made significant contributions to virtually every realm of expressive culture, from painting and writing, to ceremonial song and dance," as well as being a "longtime leader of the Maidu Dancers and Traditionalists."<sup>64</sup> He was born in 1937 in San Francisco and was sent to an Indian boarding school and then to foster care before returning to Dunsmuir and the Redding-Shasta area to reconnect with family upon graduating from high school.<sup>65</sup> LaPena's contributions to the growth and continuation of Native arts and culture is prolific and deserve exponentially more space

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<sup>60</sup> Tsosie, "Apology," 190-193.

<sup>61</sup> Peter Selz, *Art of Engagement: Visual Politics in California and Beyond*, (San Jose: University of California Press, 2005), 160.

<sup>62</sup> Ramon Gonyea, ed., *Spirit of the Earth. An exhibition of contemporary Native American art* organized by the International Native-American Council of Arts, (1980), 14.

<sup>63</sup> Sigrid Benson, interview, 20 November 2017.

<sup>64</sup> "Images of Identity," CSUS, accessed 12 December 2017, <http://www.al.csus.edu/sota/ulg/pastexhibits/images-of-identity/site/lapena.html>.

<sup>65</sup> Frank LaPena, "May Our Spirits Forever Dance Upon this Land," *News from Native California* 23, no. 1 (2009): 18.



than what is here. He has contributed to the journal *Native News from California* since its beginning in 1987, is a professor emeritus at CSUS, having taught art and ethnic studies there from 1971 to 2002, and taught a few courses in later semesters.<sup>66</sup> In LaPená's piece, *House of Sound: Mount Shasta* (Figure 1), he is "remembering stories of Creating, that the mountain is alive, and that it has been teaching people for many generations."<sup>67</sup>

His spiritual motif is overlapped with representation of the ancient topographical presence of Mt. Shasta, reifying the spiritual-environmental core of Native American cultures. The volcano is a source of ancient wisdom and *House of Sound* reflects his belief that "art making is a spiritual act, empowering the maker to achieve a greater understanding of life."<sup>68</sup> But this is not to say an image like this is not political, for *House of Sound* also reflects LaPená's memories of his younger days when he could swim in its waters before it was "dammed and polluted."<sup>69</sup> The volcanic peak of Mt. Shasta is a "sacred place for healers and shamans," imbuing the image with LaPená's elemental spirituality.

Dalbert Castro's (Nisenan) painting *Maidu Walk* (Figure 2) features a direct response to history. He painted the Sutter Buttes in the distance while Concows were being forced on the long walk back to Round Valley, and the buttes bear witness. Like Mt. Shasta, the buttes are a sacred place that live in memory, just as lost ancestors do. The Sutter Buttes inform Native history about "doctoring, the journey of those moving into the other world upon passing from this life."<sup>70</sup> Maidu people died during this walk and some may have even had the sacred buttes within eyesight as they moved into "the 'other world.'" Castro's painting upholds presence of the marching Concows and resists the invisibility of lost history. This platform of presence is offered to all Indians who have been forced on a long walk because while the image is literal, it evokes a common experience shared by so many other Indian cultures. Many of these kinds of stories are not told by the elders because "they are just too painful," but images Indian artists create speak on behalf of those whose stories are too painful to tell.<sup>71</sup>

Humor is an integral form of communication in Native cultures. For example, Navajos have a "first laugh" rite where family and kin are invited to symbolically receive salt and bread after the child laughs out loud for the first time, and Hopi *kashares*, or clowns, consider the ability to elicit laughter a "sacred duty."<sup>72</sup> Humor is considered the "best and sharpest weapon" American Indians can wield against colonialism and is an effective tool for discourse in Hulleah Tsihnahnajinnie's image *Hoke-tee*.<sup>73</sup> (Figure 3)

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<sup>66</sup> "Images of Identity"

<sup>67</sup> Frank LaPená, "Sometimes, In My Imagination," *News from Native California* 12, no. 4 (1999): 16.

<sup>68</sup> Selz, *Engagement*, 161.

<sup>69</sup> Selz, *Engagement*, 162.

<sup>70</sup> LaPená, "Imagination," 15.

<sup>71</sup> Frank LaPená, "Imagination," 16.

<sup>72</sup> Kenneth Lincoln, *Indi'n Humor: Bicultural Play in Native America*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 6.

<sup>73</sup> Lincoln, *Indi'n Humor*, 7.

Tsinhnahjinnie (Taskigi/Diné), an internationally exhibited artist, is also Professor of Native American Studies at the University of California, Davis and the Director of the C.N. Gorman museum which is dedicated to the “creative expressions of Native American artists of diverse cultures and histories.”<sup>74</sup> Tsinhnahjinnie has received the Eiteljorg Fellowship for Native American Fine Art, a Chancellor’s Fellowship at UC Irvine, the First Peoples Community Artist Award, and has been a Rockefeller artist-in-residence.<sup>75</sup>

In *Hoke-tee*, Tsinhnahjinnie superimposed the image of an Indigenous child standing on a chair (Tsinhnahjinnie refers to it as a “space scooter”) and the child hovers above the surface of the moon. In the background is an astronaut holding space baggage and whose back is to the audience while he walks away. Tsinhnahjinnie creates a scene of “man going to the moon trying to claim it, but when he gets there, there is a little aboriginal baby floating around on her little space scooter. So colonismo spaceman picks up his bags and takes off because it is just too much!” Tsinhnahjinnie’s works are created “entirely from an Indigenous perspective for Native audiences.”<sup>76</sup> Her statement describing the scene of *Hoke-tee* exemplifies humor’s ability to give access to deeply painful history and turns it into a narrative of absurdity.

Artist Devaney Rain Royalty (Ponca/Cree/Tsalagi/Cherokee Deer Clan) confronts aspects of identity in her drawing *Native Ways Forgotten*. (Figure 4) Her imagery brings together Cherokee, Hopi, Maidu, Blackfoot and Ponca cultures. The convergence of elements from different Native cultures echoes the traditional act of inter-tribal gathering, as with the occupation of Alcatraz Island, which has been an event of gathering that has occurred every year since the first in 1969. Inspired by the Lakota Ways Calendar, *Native Ways Forgotten* is an act of resistance to the “fading away” of these traditions as well as an homage to their influence on the artist.<sup>77</sup> Royalty’s drawing is an interpretation of the twelve months of Native American traditions in which “each month is sacred. Love, Fortitude, Generosity, Honor, Courage, Compassion, Respect, Truth, Sacrifice, Wisdom, Humility.”<sup>78</sup> In her artist’s statement, Royalty expresses annoyance at how others think she does not “look Native,” but it is clear she creates a Native space within her art that is all her own.

Shonna Alexander’s (Chukchansi, Miwok) *Matilda Neal* (Figure 5) exemplifies survivance in that, like Castro’s *Maidu Walk*, it creates space for presence of ancestors and continuance of stories and traditions that not only live in the painting, but in the artist, herself. Alexander’s painting of her great-great-great Chukchansi grandmother was inspired by a photo of her “carrying a burden basket” and symbolizes the

<sup>74</sup> “About the C.N. Gorman Museum,” C.N. Gorman Museum, accessed 12 December 2017.

<sup>75</sup> “For the 9 to 5 Side of Things,” Hulleah J. Tsinhnahjinnie, accessed 12 December 2017, <http://www.hulleah.com/9to5.htm>.

<sup>76</sup> Veronica Passalacqua, “Hulleah J. Tsinhnahjinnie,” accessed 12 December 2017, <http://www.hulleah.com/essay.htm>.

<sup>77</sup> Devaney Rain Royalty, artist statement.

<sup>78</sup> Devaney Rain Royalty, artist statement.

cultivation of tradition within Indigenous and Native families.<sup>79</sup> Alexander's artist statement begins with a greeting in her culture's language and notably, there is no English translation. The visual work is accessible to all; however, part of the artist's message is reserved for Native eyes only. This is a powerful choice of sovereignty and adds to Alexander's overall intention of honoring her family.

Native American acts of engaged resistance highlighted in this paper represent a small sample of the countless activists and artists who act conscientiously and with clear intention to create presence and continuance, as well as to both reestablish and re-create culture. They are reclaiming cultural and physical spaces that were once a balanced and consistent cycle of ceremony and careful environmental stewardship. Meadowlark and Coyote imbued their teachings with lessons of resilience for a reason: wounds from the depredations of colonialism, self-interested government policies, and an apathetic majority culture continue to require daily resistance. Creativity and imagination are part of a force that renews and adapts, and that force is survivance.

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<sup>79</sup> Shonna Alexander, artist statement.

## Figures



**Figure 1.** Frank LaPena, *House of Sound: Mount Shasta*, 1996. Mono-transfer print.



**Figure 2.** Dalbert Castro, *Maidu Walk*, 1980, Collection of Oakland Museum of California.





**Figure 5.** *Shonna Alexander. Matilda Neal, 2017.*  
*Maidu Museum and Historical Site.*

# NATIVE HAWAIIAN CULTURAL COLONIZATION OF NATIVE CALIFORNIANS IN THE SACRAMENTO-FOOTHILLS AREA, 1839-1920s

Nicole Johnston

**Abstract:** This research intends to examine the blended Hawaiian-Native Californian heritage of the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians. That starting point led to several examples of nineteenth-century interactions between Native Hawaiian immigrants and Native Californian peoples in the Sacramento-Sierra Nevada Foothills area. Although Native Hawaiians colonized the Native Californian communities that they joined with some Hawaiian and Euro-American cultural practices and values, the joint legacies between the two peoples also preserved and perpetuated Native Californian cultural practices and identities. The lives of Mele Kea'a'la Azbill and Pamela Cleanso Adams, as illuminated through census records and documents from the Meriam Library's Dorothy M. Hill collection, illustrates the joining of two existentially threatened cultures and identities during the Gold Rush and following decades.

A 2012 article in the Placerville, California *Mountain Democrat* added fuel to an ongoing local legal feud regarding the federally-recognized Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, Shingle Springs Rancheria (Verona Tract), California. Contention over the rights and privileges afforded to this tribe emerged as Cesar Caballero, who did not belong to the tribe and claimed to be "chief of the real shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians," asserted that the Shingle Springs-Verona Tract band actually consisted of Native Hawaiians rather than Native Americans. The two documents that Caballero presented to the public's attention were a 1916 Bureau of Indian Affairs letter stating that there were Hawaiians—"not Indians"—among the grantees of the federally-purchased Shingle Springs rancheria land for "homeless Indians" and an 1890 *Mountain Democrat* article that he claimed proved that Hawaiians and Native Americans were separate groups living in the Sacramento-Placerville area at the time of the land purchases. Caballero argued that these Hawaiians had access to wealth and social power unavailable to the local Native Americans, and that the twenty-first century federal recognition of Hawaiians as Miwok was a new iteration of that inequality.<sup>1</sup> Although

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<sup>1</sup> Mayer.

Caballero ended up morally discrediting himself with fraud and contempt of court unrelated to the aforementioned documents, his assertions received noted interest in El Dorado County as they added to arguments from other county residents concerning the rancheria's alleged negative effects on the surrounding community, particularly in regards to its casino.<sup>2</sup>

Caballero's claims raised interesting questions regarding the interaction between Native Hawaiians and Native Americans in the Sacramento-Foothills region prior to the 1906 and 1908 federal appropriations to purchase and improve "land suitable for cultivation" for landless Northern California Indians.<sup>3</sup> What interaction was there between the two peoples, and should the Shingle Springs Miwok Band be considered Native Hawaiian interlopers, as Caballero claimed? Although Native Hawaiians (Kanaka Maoli, as they referred to themselves) visited California as ship workers throughout its Mexican era, the first to settle inland were the ten indentured laborers who accompanied Swiss pioneer-entrepreneur John Sutter to the Sacramento Valley in 1839. Providing critical labor in the founding of Sutter's Fort, these workers built temporary, Hawaiian-style grass shelters before constructing the Fort's adobe walls.<sup>4</sup> The Kanakas' familiarity with Euro-American social and economic practices, acquired in Hawai'i, was critical to fruitful interactions with New Helvetia's Native Californian workforce.<sup>5</sup> As the tempest of the Gold Rush and California's transition into U.S. statehood swept away Sutter's empire, more Native Hawaiians, many of them former ship workers, joined the thousands of immigrants descending upon the Sacramento-Sierra, Nevada foothills area to mine.<sup>6</sup> Primarily male, these mostly commoner-class Native Hawaiians also encountered, interacted with, and in some cases, married, Miwok, Maidu, and Wintu Native Californians in the Sacramento-Foothills region.<sup>7</sup> Notable Kanaka-Indian settlements existed in Irish Creek, El Dorado County during the 1850s-1860s and Verona (also referred to as Vernon Township) on the confluence of the Feather and Sacramento Rivers in Sutter County in the 1850s through the early-twentieth century.<sup>8</sup> Between 1839 and the 1920s, these Hawaiian immigrants colonized their Native Californian families and communities with elements of two cultures, thus

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<sup>2</sup> Cris Alarcon, "Miwok Chief Cesar Caballero Jailed in Name Dispute for Contempt," *Mountain Democrat*, 31 March 2012; "Category: RedHawk Casino Tribe," Save Our County: Protecting, Restoring, and Sustaining El Dorado County, California, last updated 12 June 2017, accessed 13 December 2017, <https://saveourcounty.net/category/redhawk-casino-tribe/>.

<sup>3</sup> *Cong. Rec.*, 59th Cong., 1st sess., 1906, Ch. 3504; *Cong. Rec.*, 60th Cong., 1st sess., 1908, Ch. 153.

<sup>4</sup> Charles W. Kenn, "Sutter's Canacas," *Sutter County Historical Society: News Bulletin* 1, no. 5 (April 1956): 3-4.

<sup>5</sup> Ashley Riley Sousa, "An Influential Squaw: Intermarriage and Community in Central California, 1839-1851," *Ethnohistory* 62, no. 4 (October 2015): 707-727.

<sup>6</sup> Kenn, "Sutter's Canacas," 3-4.

<sup>7</sup> David A. Chang, *The World and All the Things Upon It: Native Hawaiian Geographies of Exploration* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 157-194.

<sup>8</sup> Richard H. Dillon, "Kanaka Colonies in California," *Pacific Historical Review* 24, no. 4 (February 1955): 17-23.



furthering two survival strategies. Sharing the Hawaiian adoption of Euro-American cultural practices and values increased these groups' chances of economic, political, and social success amidst Euro-American-domination and competition for resources in the Sacramento-Sierra Nevada foothills area, and Native Hawaiian language and lifestyle preserved some of the Kanakas' own cherished, existentially threatened culture. However, this cultural colonization did not eradicate Native Californian culture and identities in these groups, as the Americanized descendants of these families claimed and perpetuated a unique blend of Native Hawaiian and Native Californian cultural heritage and identities.

Native Hawaiians first adapted to Western capitalism, nation-state political systems, and Christianity in their homeland; in California, they actively encouraged their Native Californian companions to join in this assimilatory approach. While certain aspects of Native Hawaiian culture, such as reliance on fishing and family networks with community-based values, were lost to socio-economic upheaval, Kanaka immigrants found an opportunity to rebuild some of these practices, such as the Native Hawaiian language, among the Native Californians that joined their communities at Irish Creek, El Dorado County, and Verona, Sutter County.<sup>9</sup> As racialized peoples, there was some incentive for Native Californians to obtain and maintain Hawaiian, rather than Native American, identities, as Native Hawaiians had access to more political power and received more Euro-American tolerance for their customs.<sup>10</sup> Although Euro-Americans considered Native Hawaiian traditions inferior to their own, Hawaiian cultural attributes were nonetheless deemed charmingly exotic rather than dirty and barbaric, as the practices of the "Digger Indians" of the area were viewed throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>11</sup>

Aside from the active acceptance of its Native Californian recipients, Native Hawaiian-perpetuated cultural colonialism was imposed sympathetically. Native Hawaiians and Californians shared the challenges of susceptibility to Western disease and racialization, as Maidu independently embraced assimilation (when it was available to them) as a means to avoid genocidal violence and removal to reservations.<sup>12</sup> As indigenous subsistence cultures, harmonious, if not identical, values intertwined the

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<sup>9</sup> Edward Smith Craighill Handy, *Cultural Revolutions in Hawai'i* (New York: American Council, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1931), 30-36; Dillon, "Kanaka Colonies," 17-23; David A. Chang, *The World and All the Things Upon It: Native Hawaiian Geographies of Exploration* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 157-194.

<sup>10</sup> Genevieve Y. Pankhurst, "Hawai'i in California," *San Francisco Sunday Call*, March 26, 1911; Clifford E. Trafzer, and Joel R. Hyer, *Exterminate Them: Written Accounts of the Murder, Rape, and Enslavement of Native Americans During the California Gold Rush* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1999), 36-54.

<sup>11</sup> Pankhurst; Trafzer and Hyer, 36-54; James J. Rawls, *Indians of California: The Changing Image* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), 190-200.

<sup>12</sup> Stephen Magnanini, "Sacramento Indians Hope Bill Will Restore Sovereignty—In Hawai'i," *Sacramento Bee*, 13 May 2009; Dawn Hodson, "Memorial Planned for Local Indian Chief," *Mountain Democrat*, 6 December 2012.

paths of Native Hawaiian and Californians such as the cultural emphasis on generosity and the importance of community.<sup>13</sup> This combination of cultures and peoples resulted in a new amalgamation of identities as exemplified in the lives of Mele Kea'a'la Azbill, the daughter of a Hawaiian ali'i (noble) and Concow-Maidu chief's daughter, and Pamela Cleanso Adams, a Maidu woman who thrice married Native Hawaiian husbands of Verona in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.<sup>14</sup>

John Sutter recognized his Hawaiian employees as agents of the Western cultural values and practices that he wished to perpetuate in New Helvetia, writing that "These [Native Hawaiians] were very glad to go with me, and at the expiration of their time they would not leave me. [The two women] made themselves very useful by teaching the Indian girls to wash and sew ... I could not have settled the country without the aid of these Kanakas. They were always faithful and loyal to me."<sup>15</sup> Here Sutter indicates the Hawaiians' value to him as effective laborers and producers, as well as educators who could teach the local Native Americans about the Westernized society that Sutter wished to perpetuate in his New Helvetia colony.<sup>16</sup> At this time, the Hawaiian Islands were still the sovereign Kingdom of Hawai'i. Between 1819 and the establishment of Sutter's Fort in 1839, Native Hawaiian society underwent radical material changes and social upheaval—both imposed and voluntary—in response to its rapidly accelerating interaction with European and American imperialistic ambitions.<sup>17</sup> These changes shaped the Native Hawaiian individuals who journeyed to the Sacramento-Foothills region during the mid-nineteenth century, thus inherently influencing their interactions with Native Californians.

With an indigenous culture based on subsistence-level agriculture and fishing, many nineteenth century Hawaiians realized that they were vulnerable to economic and political exploitation, as well as cultural loss, when facing an Anglo- and American-dominated landscape of capitalist imperialism.<sup>18</sup> The stories of those Kanaka Maoli who decided to follow Sutter or the promise of gold to the Sacramento-Foothills area of California were undoubtedly a product of Hawaiian responses to the influence and threat of imperialist Western powers.

A common Kanaka response to changing conditions in Hawai'i was to seek both economic opportunity and knowledge of the rapidly globalizing world by working abroad.<sup>19</sup> The Hawaiian people were rapidly decimated between the eighteenth and

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<sup>13</sup> Hank Meals, "Kanakas O Kaleponi" *Notes on Hawaiian History in Northern California* (Nevada City: North Columbia Schoolhouse Cultural Center, 2003), 5-6.

<sup>14</sup> Chang, *The World*, 157-194.

<sup>15</sup> Cited in William M. Holden, *Sacramento: Excursions Into its History and Natural World* (Fair Oaks: Two Rivers Publishing Company), 53.

<sup>16</sup> Ashley Riley Sousa, "'An Influential Squaw': Intermarriage and Community in Central California, 1839-1851," *Ethnohistory* 62, no. 4 (October 2015): 707-727.

<sup>17</sup> Chang, *The World*, 81-94.

<sup>18</sup> Chang, *The World*, 139-141, 145-146.

<sup>19</sup> Chang, *The World*, 26-27, 145, 155, 162-163.

nineteenth centuries by diseases caught via exposure to foreign sailors and missionaries, with one estimate indicating a population decrease of 84% between 1776 and 1840.<sup>20</sup> These deaths, combined with the Christianizing efforts of Euro-American missionaries (aided by Tahitian and Kanaka Maoli converts) unraveled Hawaiian social structures far beyond the eradication of the famous *kapu* (taboo) social code.<sup>21</sup> Recognizing the power of literacy as displayed by Europeans and Americans, Hawaiians of all ages eagerly learned to read their newly developed written language, particularly in the form of textbooks produced by Anglo-American missionaries.<sup>22</sup> Thus, Native Hawaiians were rapidly educated, and educated themselves, about their place in a globally-connected world (from a Protestant, Euro-American perspective), and about what kind of behaviors were expected from Western-aculturated people.<sup>23</sup> Consequently, Native Hawaiians were primed to be both workers and educators in service of rapidly spreading Euro-American culture. Economic shifts led young men in particular to seek employment abroad, an opportunity that was enhanced by Hawaiians' reputation as skilled, dependable ship workers.<sup>24</sup> Euro-American missionaries also led Native Hawaiians to become missionaries themselves to other "pagans," particularly their Polynesian "cousins," such as Micronesians.<sup>25</sup> Missionary textbooks introduced Native Americans to Hawaiians as a homogenous, hunter-gatherer "pagan race."<sup>26</sup> Native Hawaiian culture was likewise deemed part of a savage, inferior pagan world, but the Anglo-American missionaries' social hierarchy granted the Hawaiians a slightly higher, if still inferior, position as agriculturists who had been redeemed by the adoption of Christianity and Western lifestyles.<sup>27</sup> Whatever personal attraction the Kanaka Maoli might have had to the Native Californian communities that they encountered in the Sacramento-Foothills region (an opportunity for available female partners being a natural motivating factor for this mainly young, male diaspora), Hawaiians had been primed by their religious education to view these indigenous peoples as similar to them and in dire need of conversion.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Sara Kehaulani Goo, "After 200 Years, Native Hawaiians Make a Comeback," *Pew Research Center*, published April 6, 2015, accessed December 13, 2017, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/04/06/native-hawaiian-population/>.

<sup>21</sup> Chang, *The World*, 8, 92-97.

<sup>22</sup> Chang, *The World*, 96-102.

<sup>23</sup> Chang, *The World*, 105-108, 233.

<sup>24</sup> Ashlyn Weaver, "Euro-American Settler Perspectives of California Native Hawaiians (1830s-1920s)," *McNair Scholars Journal*, 17 (2015):128-129.

Hank Meals, "Kanakas O Kaleponi," 2.

<sup>25</sup> Chang, *The World*, 195-208.

Kenn, Charles, trans. "A Visit to California Gold Fields." *Seventy-Fourth Annual Report of the Hawaiian Historical Society* (1966): 7-16.

<sup>26</sup> Chang, *The World*, 229-231.

<sup>27</sup> Chang, *The World*, 232-233.

<sup>28</sup> Chang, *The World*, 165-172, 195-208.

A second Hawaiian response to encountering Western systems and values was the Great Mahele land redistribution under King Kamehameha III in 1848.<sup>29</sup> Although too late to directly affect the Native Hawaiians who worked for Sutter, this pivotal shift in Hawaiian land usage certainly affected a large number of the Kanaka Maoli who came to California during the Gold Rush. This redistribution introduced the concept of private land ownership to the Native Hawaiians as previously, agricultural lands had been held and used in common and administered by the ali'i nobles or chiefs.<sup>30</sup> Kamehameha and his foreign advisors divided these shared lands into separate private holdings for the kings, ali'i and commoners.<sup>31</sup> The provision of private land claims to the lowest class of Native Hawaiians was explained as an act of royal prudence and largess that would promote independent subsistence farming and private industry.<sup>32</sup> These changes were intended to remedy ali'i exploitation of the farmers in their jurisdiction, which had been an earlier response to rapidly expanding trade with the West.<sup>33</sup> The subsequent Kuleana Act of 1850 required historical land tenants to present evidence for their claims in order to receive permanent title under the new system.<sup>34</sup> As a result, many Native Hawaiian commoners rapidly lost access to the lands that they had ancestrally farmed as the new laws were poorly enforced while ali'i and foreigners manipulated them to produce a land grab for the wealthy.<sup>35</sup> The way was paved for a foreigner-owned, plantation-dominated agricultural system in Hawai'i.<sup>36</sup> With no lands to farm or keep fish ponds on in the traditional manner, many Hawaiian commoners must have keenly felt the need to shift from a familiar subsistence economy to one of uprooted wage labor—however dearly these Kanaka may have loved their native home, the opportunities there were fast eroding as the Kingdom of Hawai'i attempted to adapt to and compete with the Western powers that were encroaching upon its wealth.<sup>37</sup>

Thus, the Native Hawaiians at Sutter's Fort, Irish Creek, and Verona were uniquely primed to realize the necessity of adaptation and assimilation in the face of Western imperialism.<sup>38</sup> Sutter's faithful Kanaka employees may have sympathized with the Native Americans whom Sutter employed as laborers and *vaqueros*—they, too, had been

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<sup>29</sup> Diane Lee Rhodes, "Overview of Hawaiian History: Changes After the Death of Kamehameha, Great Mahele," National Park Service: A Cultural History of Three Traditional Hawaiian Sites on the West Coast of Hawai'i Island, last updated 15 November 2001, accessed 13 December 2017, [https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/kona/history5g.htm](https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/kona/history5g.htm).

<sup>30</sup> Rhodes, "Overview of Hawaiian History."

<sup>31</sup> Rhodes, "Overview."

<sup>32</sup> Rhodes, "Overview."

<sup>33</sup> Rhodes, "Overview."

<sup>34</sup> Rhodes, "Overview."

<sup>35</sup> Rhodes, "Overview."

<sup>36</sup> Rhodes, "Overview."

<sup>37</sup> Handy, *Cultural Revolutions in Hawai'i*, 30-36.

<sup>38</sup> Richard H. Dillon, "Kanaka Colonies in California," *Pacific Historical Review* 24, 4 (February 1955): 21.

called from centuries of land-based, subsistence lifestyles to learn new skills in order to trade their labor for wages (ironically, these Hawaiians who cared for Sutter's herds in Mexican California may have been themselves introduced to ranching by the Mexican *vaqueros* who worked cattle in Waimea, Hawai'i beginning in the 1830s).<sup>39</sup> In 1862, a white missionary visiting Irish Creek noted that the two "squaws" living in the colony (which included both Kanaka men and women) "spoke Hawaiian correctly, all dressed neatly, and were busy cutting, sewing, washing, and ironing the family clothes"—an echo of Sutter's earlier commentary about Native Hawaiians instructing Native American women in Western feminine virtues.<sup>40</sup> By instruction and example, Native Hawaiians indicated the possibilities of cultural assimilation to Native Americans: they shared racialized physical attributes such as dark skin and tattoos, but they could successfully adopt Euro-American ways.<sup>41</sup> Although they were sometimes prevented from competing with Euro-Americans as racialized foreigners, Native Hawaiians (and the Native Americans who joined their communities) engaged in the local economy as miners, fishermen, and farmers, rather than returning to subsistence-level economic pursuits.<sup>42</sup>

Beyond imparting the necessity of adapting to a capitalistic economy, Native Hawaiians were uniquely prepared by their experiences with Euro-American political colonization in the sovereign Kingdom of Hawai'i to adapt to the political system in American California.<sup>43</sup> Several Native Hawaiian men from Vernon Township became naturalized citizens in the late nineteenth century, and were registered to vote.<sup>44</sup> Meanwhile, their wives, although born in California, would, along with other Native Americans, not even be considered citizens until 1924.<sup>45</sup> Native Americans in Northern California were subject to genocidal violence, removal to reservations, and forced labor but Native Hawaiians were not and it would seem that this legal protection could be a factor in Indian women seeking marriage with Hawaiian men.<sup>46</sup> A striking example of this difference in political status is illustrated in former Sutter employee Ioane Kea'a'la's experiences.<sup>47</sup> After joining his second wife's Concow Maidu community at some point

<sup>39</sup> Sousa, "An Influential Squaw," 707-727; *Encyclopedia Britannica*, "Waimea, Hawai'i county, Hawai'i, United States," last updated 25 July 2011, accessed 13 December 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Waimea-Hawai'i-island#ref847813>.

<sup>40</sup> Dillon, "Kanaka Colonies in California," 20.

<sup>41</sup> Stephen Magnanini, "Sacramento Indians Hope Bill Will Restore Sovereignty—In Hawai'i," *Sacramento Bee*, 13 May 2009; *Sacramento Bee*, "Dead Century Old Indian Woman's Funeral Is Set," 1 October 1932.

<sup>42</sup> Dillon, "Kanaka Colonies in California," 22.

<sup>43</sup> Chang, *The World*, 242-246.

<sup>44</sup> Great Register of Sutter County, 1892, 16, available at <http://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>45</sup> Dwight Dutschke, "American Indians in California: An Introduction," *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California* (8 October 2014) accessed 13 December 2017, [ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1054/files/american%20indians%20in%20california.pdf](http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1054/files/american%20indians%20in%20california.pdf).

<sup>46</sup> Dutschke, "American Indians in California."

<sup>47</sup> Meals, "*Kanakas O Kaleponi*," 4-7.

Sousa, "An Influential Squaw," 720-723.

during the 1850s, Kea'a'la was forced to Round Valley Reservation along with his Concow brethren-by-marriage in an infamous 1863 push to remove all Native Americans from Butte County.<sup>48</sup> Although marked as an Indian, Kea'a'la retained his status as the citizen of a recognized sovereign nation.<sup>49</sup> Empowered by this knowledge and the literacy that he acquired in a Hawaiian mission school, Kea'a'la wrote a letter to King Kamehameha IV to intervene, effectively arguing that his wife and family shared his status and could not be legally imprisoned on a reservation.<sup>50</sup>

In the spiritual realm, too, Hawaiians had unique opportunities as Protestant (Congregationalist) missionaries to Native Californians, with one white missionary commenting in 1863 that “the [white churches in California] have done absolutely nothing for [the Native Californians’] salvation. Yet is the good work done [by] certain pious Kanakas, who ... have settled near them, intermarried ... and taught some of them the way of life.”<sup>51</sup> It seems that the majority of Native Hawaiian conversion of Native Americans occurred in Native Hawaiian-Maidu communities during the Gold Rush and afterwards.<sup>52</sup> A white Hawaiian missionary's 1862 report indicates that Native Hawaiians in the Irish Creek-Georgetown area were effectively converting the local Maidu to Protestant Christianity, and teaching them to read the Bible in the Native Hawaiian language.<sup>53</sup> Literacy was critical to adapting to Western culture both economically and religiously, which was why the Kanaka Maoli had rigorously pursued the creation and spread of their native written language. In sharing literate Christianity with the Maidu, Native Hawaiians were not merely imposing their dominance, but granting access to power to these Native Californians. However racialized, these Maidu were now Christians, and their intercessors were also racialized, former pagans rather than “white” peoples of European origin. This equality between missionaries and converts must have led to a more harmonious dynamic than that which existed in the missions. Furthermore, Protestantism was a more Euro-acceptable form of Christianity for the Native Californians to adopt than the Roman Catholicism imparted by the Spanish missions.<sup>54</sup> Euro-Americans tended to view Catholicism as a foreign, superstitious, subservient version of Christianity that led to “ignorance and indolence,” making its adherents across ethnic groups less eligible for assimilation.<sup>55</sup> These were attributes that were also inherently ascribed to indigenous peoples.<sup>56</sup> Kanaka Protestant

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<sup>48</sup> Margaret A. Ramsland and Henry Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians* (Chico: Association for Northern Californian Records and Research, Meriam Library, 1974), 10-13.

<sup>49</sup> Ramsland and Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians*, 10-13.

<sup>50</sup> Ramsland and Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians*, 10-13.

<sup>51</sup> Dillon, “Kanaka Colonies in California,” 21.

<sup>52</sup> Sousa, “An Influential Squaw,” 711-713.

<sup>53</sup> Dillon, “Kanaka Colonies in California,” 19-20.

<sup>54</sup> Alan Arnett, review of *Missionaries of Republicanism: A Religious History of the Mexican-American War*, by John C. Pinheiro, *First Things*, August 2014, <https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2014/08/americas-war-against-catholics>.

<sup>55</sup> Arnett, review of.

<sup>56</sup> Pankhurst, “Hawai'i in California.”; Trafzer and Hyer, *Exterminate Them*, 36-54.

zeal, accompanied by Biblical literacy and sober living habits, as displayed in the Irish Creek community, could deflect these kinds of spiritual judgments.<sup>57</sup>

Sharing the Bible in Native Hawaiian was part of a larger trend of Native Hawaiians sharing their language and other cultural attributes with the Native Californians, with whom they built communities. According to scholar David Chang's Hawaiian language-research, Native Hawaiians in the Sacramento-Foothills area did learn to speak Maidu, but they also strongly perpetuated their Hawaiian language among their Native Californian spouses and descendants.<sup>58</sup> Ioane Kea'a'la ensured that his daughter Mele could recite her noble Hawaiian genealogy, and despite being born and raised in an Indian village, her brothers were adopted out to Mahuka's Vernon community after their parents' deaths.<sup>59</sup> This Hawaiian-Indian settlement was known as "The Hawaiian Village" or "Hawaiian Refuge" rather than the "Indian" village, despite its genetically-mixed inhabitants.<sup>60</sup> The 1911 *San Francisco Call* article making this claim is suffused with racially and culturally condescending commentary, the "big brown men and women" of Verona are presented as exotic, if somewhat pitiful, industrious, if somewhat languorous, dreamers and folk artists somewhat tragically out of step with their time and place.<sup>61</sup> There is no mention of intermarriage with Native Californians in the article, and one could easily see the advantages of "passing" as Hawaiian rather than maintaining a politically and socially less powerful Indian identity.<sup>62</sup> After all, Euro-American views of Native Californians, as evidenced in Northern California newspaper articles from the 1850s, were also permeated with a sense of pity for what was perceived as a naive race, out of step with the modern world.<sup>63</sup> However, whereas Native Hawaiian taro and group music-making were described as delightfully foreign in the *Call* article, Sacramento-Foothills Indian customs were seen as filthy and savage, as evidenced in an 1853 *Daily Alta California* article describing a Native Californian gathering as having "made the night hideous with dancing and howling" while dining upon "broiled beef guts ... pulverized acorn, grass seed, and preserved worms."<sup>64</sup> Clearly, as racialization was unavoidable for these "brown people," it was better and safer for them to be thought of as exotic, rather than savage, so it is possible that the Native Californians in the Vernon community were eager to embrace Hawaiian acculturation.

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<sup>57</sup> Dillon, "Kanaka Colonies in California," 19-20.

<sup>58</sup> Chang, *The World*, 172-184.

<sup>59</sup> Ramsland and Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians*, 14-17.

<sup>60</sup> Kenn, "Sutter's Canacas," 4; Pankhurst, "Hawai'i in California." "The Hawaiian Village" was noted for preserving Hawaiian customs more effectively than those Kanaka Maoli who remained in their native islands.

<sup>61</sup> Pankhurst, "Hawai'i in California."

<sup>62</sup> Pankhurst, "Hawai'i in California."

<sup>63</sup> Trafzer and Hyer, *Exterminate*, 36-54. 1850s California saw the peak of settler and Indian interaction.

<sup>64</sup> Trafzer and Hyer, *Exterminate*, 45; Pankhurst, "Hawai'i in California."

Part of this Hawaiian acculturation was economic, as well. Verona residents thrived on independent fishing and agriculture, providing a familiar lifestyle to Native Hawaiians who had been compelled to leave ancestral coastal waters, fishing ponds, and taro fields in search of wage labor abroad.<sup>65</sup> These indigenous traditions were difficult to maintain in a Hawai'i that had so rapidly and radically lost its social structures and sovereignty.<sup>66</sup> Although fishing was a familiar means of subsistence to Native Californians as well, agriculture was not. As the *Call* article would suggest, the Vernon community incorporated these activities into a lifestyle that was more culturally Hawaiian than Maidu.<sup>67</sup>

Edward Mahuka, a prominent member of the Vernon community during the 1870s and 1880s, was twice married to Native American women (the first Concow Maidu, the second Wintu) with whom he fathered children in the 1860s through 1880s.<sup>68</sup> The males were sent to Hawai'i to be educated, and did not return to California—possibly a pragmatic choice, but one that regardless gave prominence to Hawaiian ties in these Kanaka-Maidu children's mixed heritage.<sup>69</sup> According to Chang's translations of Hawaiian-language newspaper accounts regarding the El Dorado County Kanaka communities, Mahuka journeyed to retrieve his daughter from her maternal Maidu family after his first wife died from disease.<sup>70</sup> Despite resistance from the girl's Concow Maidu relatives, Mahuka took the girl with him, perhaps indicating (as with his sons' education) that he strongly preferred having his children socialized and educated among Hawaiians, even though these descendants were equally Native American.<sup>71</sup> Again, this may have been due to pragmatic considerations and fatherly love, given that Native American-identified peoples were subject to violence and removal in late nineteenth century California, but whatever the motivations, Hawaiian acculturation was clearly prioritized for those Native Americans and part-Native Americans who lived among Kanaka.

Thus, these Kanaka Maoli individuals and communities in the Sacramento-Foothills region acted as agents of Euro-American imperialism in their interactions with Native Americans before and after the Gold Rush, and colonized those Indians who joined them with elements of Native Hawaiian culture. However, these trends did not completely eradicate the Indian cultures and identities of those who joined these Kanaka communities. Some Native Californian cultural elements and aspects of identity certainly survived in these communities, from Pamela Cleanso's Maidu facial tattoos to the acorn preparation described in an 1868 account of women's activities at a

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<sup>65</sup> Pankhurst, "Hawai'i in California."; Dillon, "Kanaka Colonies in California," 19-20.

<sup>66</sup> Handy, *Cultural Revolutions in Hawai'i*, 30-36.

<sup>67</sup> Pankhurst, "Hawai'i in California."; Dillon, "Kanaka Colonies in California," 19-20; Rawls, *Indians of California*, 190-200.

<sup>68</sup> Chang, *The World*, 172-180.

<sup>69</sup> Kenn, "Sutter's Canacas," 4.

<sup>70</sup> Chang, *The World*, 172-180.

<sup>71</sup> Chang, *The World*, 172-180.



Hawaiian-led school in Colfax.<sup>72</sup> Other cultural practices and values must have felt familiar to Kanaka and Indian alike—for example, both Native Hawaiians and California Indians were renowned for their swimming, fishing, and basket-weaving skills, valued connection to family and land, and held generosity and the good of one's community as guiding ethics.<sup>73</sup> Some of the most striking examples of mutual respect and cultural mixing between Native Hawaiian and Native Californian cultures are found in the Kea'a'la family story. As mentioned previously, Ioane Kea'a'la atypically joined at least one Native American community rather than living among other Kanaka with an Indian spouse, but his family was intertwined with the members of the Vernon Hawaiian Village.<sup>74</sup>

Ioane Kea'a'la's first personal engagement with Native Californian communities was directly linked to his work for Sutter. Kea'a'la was overseer of the primarily Indian vaqueros at New Helvetia, and his first wife was Sinamein, a Plains Miwok woman of the Gualacomne fishing village that worked with New Helvetia to export fish to neighboring ranchos, and even across the Pacific to Hawai'i.<sup>75</sup> It appears that both Kea'a'la and Sinamein were powerful figures in their communities, and that, even as marriage to one of Sutter's managers may have been advantageous for an Indian woman, Kea'a'la's marital connection to the Miwok community may have given him significant status and respect among his Indian subordinates.<sup>76</sup> Kea'a'la certainly provided important personal ties to both Euro-American and Hawaiian power—he was unique among Kanaka as an ali'i, he was one of Sutter's overseers, and also forged a critical connection to John Bidwell by saving the American settler from drowning in an accident.<sup>77</sup> In Kea'a'la's second marriage to the Concow Maidu chief's daughter, Su-My-Neh, the Hawaiian found another connection to family and the land as well as a spouse who also held elite status in a tribal social structure.

After Ioane's and Su-My-Neh's deaths in the 1870s, a balanced Hawaiian-Indian heritage was well-displayed in the life of his daughter Mele Kea'a'la, who was an infant during the Concow removal in 1863.<sup>78</sup> Although Mele Kea'a'la lived with her Concow Maidu relatives outside of a reservation on the Bidwell's protected Indian rancheria while her siblings, as mentioned previously, joined the Mahukas in Vernon Township,

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<sup>72</sup> *Sacramento Bee*, "Dead Century Old Indian Woman's Funeral Is Set," 1 October 1932; Dillon, "Kanaka Colonies in California," 21.

<sup>73</sup> Meals, "*Kanakas O Kaleponi*," 5-6; Weaver, "Euro-American Settler Perspectives of California Native Hawaiians (1830s-1920s)," 134; Ramsland and Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians*, 14-17.

<sup>74</sup> Ramsland and Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians*, 14-17; Chang, *The World*, 170.

<sup>75</sup> Sousa, "An Influential Squaw", 720-723.

<sup>76</sup> Sousa, "An Influential Squaw", 720-723.

<sup>77</sup> Ramsland, Margaret A. and Henry Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians* (Chico: Association for Northern Californian Records and Research, Meriam Library, 1974), 1-9. Kea'a'la's motivation for leaving a rapidly changing Hawai'i may have been linked to his family's notable cultural conservatism.

<sup>78</sup> Ramsland and Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians*, 1-9.

these families and communities were closely tied.<sup>79</sup> Kea'a'la's life events, the family she would build, and the ways that she would identify herself to outsiders were unique among the communities she walked between, but all shed light on the ways that other half Hawaiians-half Indians may have viewed themselves and their mixed heritage.

A pivotal event occurred in Mele Kea'a'la's life in 1881 when Hawaiian King David Kalakaua stopped in Sacramento on his return from a world tour and requested to see the local Native Hawaiians.<sup>80</sup> Mahuka accordingly readied his community, presumably including the Indian and half-Indian members including his own immediate family, to greet the King, and also asked the Bidwells to send teenaged Mele Kea'a'la.<sup>81</sup> Kea'a'la was allowed to go to Sacramento, accompanied by her own Native Californian family members from the Bidwell Rancheria.<sup>82</sup> Kalakaua, initially mistaking Kea'a'la for a Native Californian who happened to resemble a Hawaiian, was fascinated when Mahuka explained the story of her mixed heritage. Kea'a'la recited her noble genealogy in Hawaiian to Kalakaua, who then announced that they were related, and that Kea'a'la should join the royal retinue in the honored position of Guardian of the King's Kahili (royal standard).<sup>83</sup> After serving the royal family for several years in Hawai'i, Mele Kea'a'la permanently returned to California after King Kalakaua's death in 1891.<sup>84</sup> She married a half-white, half-Wailaki man named John Azbill, and after some time spent working on farms in the Central Valley, Kea'a'la called upon John and Annie Bidwell's generosity in memory of Ioane Kea'a'la, securing a home for her husband and children as well as a powerful position among her Concow Maidu relations at the Chico rancheria.<sup>85</sup> Kea'a'la-Azbill had reaped the benefits of assimilation to Western values as well as Hawaiian identity and acculturation—she had been able to move freely and confidently about the world, and was able to act as an effective advocate for the Concow Maidu in a white-dominated community.<sup>86</sup> However, Kea'a'la-Azbill also strongly identified as Native American, and raised her half-Native Californian children accordingly. Kea'a'la-Azbill participated in Maidu ceremonies and crafted traditional Maidu baskets.<sup>87</sup> She wove cradleboards for her infant children, prepared acorns with Henry and his siblings, and her daughter who survived infancy had a coming of age ceremony with several other Maidu girls.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Ramsland and Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians*, 13-17.

<sup>80</sup> Ramsland and Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians*, 17.

<sup>81</sup> Ramsland and Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians*, 17.

<sup>82</sup> Ramsland and Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians*, 17.

<sup>83</sup> Ramsland and Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians*, 17.

<sup>84</sup> Ramsland and Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians*, 18-19.

<sup>85</sup> Ramsland and Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians*, 19-25.

<sup>86</sup> Ramsland and Azbill, *The Forgotten Californians*, 19-25.

<sup>87</sup> Henry Azbill. 1971. Interview by Dorothy Hill. Transcript, p. 5-6, Dorothy M. Hill Collection, Special Collections, Meriam Library, California State University Chico, box 2, folder 3.

<sup>88</sup> Azbill 1971; Azbill, Henry. 1970. Interview by Dorothy Hill, Mary Jones. Transcript, P. 1 Dorothy M. Hill Collection, Special Collections, Meriam Library, California State University Chico,

Here was a fascinating example of dual acculturation—Mele Kea’a’la’s upbringing had evidently prepared her to thrive in both Native Hawaiian and Concow Maidu society. Mele Kea’a’la did live more closely among Native Americans than those women who married into other racial groups, including Native Hawaiian communities, but enduring connections between relatives in these various groupings and personal dedication to preserving traditional practices suggest that Native American women were not completely divorced from their culture after marrying into other races.<sup>89</sup>

However Kea’a’la-Azbill thought of herself, it is interesting to see how she was viewed by Euro-American federal officials through the lens of two early twentieth century censuses. By noting the way that her unusually well-documented life was recorded compared to others of various Hawaiian-Indian backgrounds, one may glimpse the ways that complex cultural identities could elude standardized record-keeping and labels in a race-conscious era. In the 1916 California Indian Census rolls Kea’a’la-Azbill, along with her entire family, are simply recorded as “Digger” Indians.<sup>90</sup> However, four years later in the 1920 nationwide Federal census, Kea’a’la-Azbill is listed as “White,” with the Hawaiian language as her native tongue—while her husband and children are all marked as Indian.<sup>91</sup> Interestingly, the handwritten record appears to show a number of strike-throughs and modifications—it seems that the census-taker assumed at first that Kea’a’la-Azbill, living in a primarily Native Californian community in Chico, was necessarily an Indian, but upon learning of her Hawaiian acculturation, assumed that she must have been born in Hawai’i.<sup>92</sup> There was no room in either of these documents for the racial and cultural complexities and ambiguities that characterized Kea’a’la-Azbill’s life and identity. Also, it appears that Hawaiian acculturation could literally move one into the category of whiteness. Although in 1920, Hawaiian culture and identity was still exotic and foreign, it seemed to have been perceived as culturally closer to assimilation than Indian culture and identity.<sup>93</sup> Earlier, in the 1880 Vernon Township census, Edward Mahuka, his Wintu wife Jane, and their Hawaiian-Wintu children are all recorded as “black,” yet another Kanaka neighbor was

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box 2, folder 3; Azbill, Henry. 1969. Interview by Craig Bates. Transcript, p. 8, Dorothy M. Hill Collection, Special Collections, Meriam Library, California State University Chico, box 2, folder 4.

<sup>89</sup> Azbill, Henry. 1966. Interview by Jim Neider. Transcript, p. 11, Dorothy M. Hill Collection, Special Collections, Meriam Library, California State University Chico, box 2, folder 4; Victoria Brady, Sarah Crome and Lyn Reese, “Resist! Survival Tactics of Indian Women.” *California Historical Society Quarterly* 63, no. 2 (1984): 140-151.

<sup>90</sup> Bureau of Indian Affairs, Census of the Digger Indians of Greenville, Butte County, California, June 2, 1916, available at <https://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>91</sup> Department of Commerce-Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920, Chico City, Butte County, California, population schedule, available at <https://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>92</sup> Fourteenth Census of the United States.

<sup>93</sup> Weaver, “Euro-American Settler Perspectives of California Native Hawaiians (1830s-1920s),” 135; Dutschke, “American Indians in California: An Introduction.” The 1920 census assumed that Kea’a’la-Azbill was born in 1863 sovereign Hawai’i, rather than the state of California.

recorded as “black,” his wife as “Indian,” and their child as “mulatto.”<sup>94</sup> At this point in time, it would seem that Native Hawaiians’ dark-skinned physical appearance and cultural differences overrode their considerable degree of assimilation into Euro-American culture, but it is interesting that, again, acculturation apparently overrode Indian origin in the case of Mahuka’s wife.<sup>95</sup> Whether or not Jane Mahuka thought of herself as a Wintu woman, one must read beyond her official record to get a glimpse of what her self-identification may have been.<sup>96</sup>

Pamela Cleanso Adams’ record is critical for evaluating the heritage of the twenty-first century Verona Band, as she was one of the group’s two matriarchs through whom all Band members were descended (as of 2015).<sup>97</sup> Adams, who was born around 1850, was known by a variety of last names as she married three times to Native Hawaiian men who maintained both English and Hawaiian names.<sup>98</sup> Her *Sacramento Bee* obituary refers to her as “one of the last Digger Indians in the Sacramento valley. Three stripes tattooed on her chin signify that she was a member of 1-11’s tribe here in the early days.”<sup>99</sup> Adams was Maidu, undisputedly a Native Californian, and yet her federal public record offers curious, conflicting definitions of her identity that may have not been the result only of official oversight, but perhaps also of Adams’ acculturation in, and identification with, the Kanaka-dominated Vernon community that she married into. For example, the 1920 Federal Census (at which point Adams had moved to Sacramento) indicates that she was a white or Hawaiian (a “w” and “ha,” in pencil and ink, respectively, occupy the race box) female born in Hawai’i, similar to Kea’a’la-Azbill’s record that same year, but without the birthplace corrected. Of course, Adams was not genetically Native Hawaiian at all, and unlike Kea’a’la-Azbill, Adams’ half-Indian descendants living in the same household were listed simply as “white.”<sup>100</sup> Eight years later, however, Adams, her son, and his family were listed as Indians, “tribe unknown” in the California Indian Census.<sup>101</sup> In 1956, the Adams family was still remembered as one of the specifically Hawaiian families that had lived in Vernon.<sup>102</sup> Had Adams previously come to think of herself as Kanaka, or, as her descendants claim, was she culturally Indian throughout her life, a fluent Maidu speaker who had

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<sup>94</sup> United States Census Bureau, 1880 Manuscript Census, Vernon Township, Sutter County, California, available at <https://www.ancestry.com>

<sup>95</sup> Chang, *The World*, 181.

<sup>96</sup> Chang, *The World*, 181.

<sup>97</sup> Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, “Proposed Amendments to the Articles of Association,” *Tribal Newsletter*, December 2015, 7.

<sup>98</sup> *Sacramento Bee*, “Dead Century Old Indian Woman’s Funeral Is Set,” 1 October 1932. The obituary referred to her as a “century old” upon her death in 1932.

<sup>99</sup> *Sacramento Bee*, “Dead Century,” 1 October 1932.

<sup>100</sup> Fourteenth Census of the United States; Chang, *The World and All the Things Upon It*, 176.

<sup>101</sup> Indians of California Census Rolls Authorized Under the Act of May 18, 1928, 45 stat., p. 602, available at <https://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>102</sup> Bernice B. Gibson, “The Hawaiian Colony of Vernon.” *Sutter County Historical Society: News Bulletin* 1, no. 7 (October 1956): 5.

realized the political safety and cultural acceptance that a Hawaiian appearance could provide? Perhaps a clue may be found in the cultural collaboration between Kea'a'la-Azbill's son Henry Azbill and Adams' grandson artist, Harry Fonseca.

Beyond his family's claims to land and formally recognized identity as Native Americans within the Shingle Springs (Vernon) Band, Fonseca sought to become re-aculturated in both his ancestral Native Hawaiian and Maidu cultures, which was greatly aided by his association with Mele Kea'a'la-Azbill's son.<sup>103</sup> Henry Azbill was well-regarded as a Concow Maidu elder during the 1960s and 1970s, during which he perpetuated Native American culture among both Maidu and non-Maidu, including sharing his extensive cultural knowledge with anthropologists at the California State University, Chico.<sup>104</sup> Azbill also honored his Hawaiian culture, and therefore was an ideal candidate for leading Fonseca to a better understanding of his family's dual heritage.<sup>105</sup> Native Californians' cultural losses were not confined to those who married into other racial groups—after decades of extermination, removal, and reeducation, many individuals of Native Californian descent, like the Adams/Fonseca family, were subjected to experiences that could (but as shown earlier, did not always) detach them from specific tribal identity and cultural practices.<sup>106</sup>

With these conflicting official records contrasting with mixed family legacies of acculturation and assimilation, Cesar Caballero could certainly find historical documents that seemed to support his claims of Verona Band illegitimacy in 2012, but it is unfortunate that the *Mountain Democrat* did not take a critical look at his evidence. Caballero's claim that Hawaiians were present in El Dorado in the late nineteenth century, separate from Native Americans and doing materially much better, is not supported by the experiences of the Kea'a'ala-Azbill family, Irish Creek community, or Vernon Village, nor the 1890 *Mountain Democrat* article he specifically cited.<sup>107</sup> This article, by Placerville local Sara Darlington, laments that Native Hawaiians and Native Californians—although physically, circumstantially, and culturally similar—were adapting to Euro-American dominance so divergently *in their respective native territories of Hawai'i and California*. The Hawaiians mentioned in this article clearly lived in their native islands, as indicated by their attendance at Kamehameha and Kawaiahaohao Schools; while Darlington may have been referring to Native Hawaiians' successful assimilation more generally, her examples of success were not local.<sup>108</sup> It is possible that the Native Americans in poor material and spiritual states mentioned in this article were

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<sup>103</sup> Frank LaPena, Judith Lowry and Carla Hills, "When I Met Harry," *News from Native California* 20, no.3 (Spring 2007): 7-9.

<sup>104</sup> LaPena et al., "When I Met Harry," 7-9; Dorothy M. Hill Collection, "Henry Azbill, interviews, and other papers Interviews", Special Collections, Meriam Library, California State University Chico, box 2.

<sup>105</sup> LaPena et al., "When I Met Harry," 7-9.

<sup>106</sup> Dutschke, "American Indians in California: An Introduction."

<sup>107</sup> Sara Darlington, "Sketches," *Mountain Democrat*, 10 April 1890.

<sup>108</sup> Sara Darlington, "Sketches," *Mountain Democrat*, 10 April 1890.

indeed Caballero's Miwok ancestors, but this tragic comparison clearly does not apply to the different circumstances and mixed heritage of the Vernon community.<sup>109</sup>

Another of Caballero's criticisms of the Shingle Springs (Verona) Band—that they are not Miwok—may be borne from the lack of evidence of specific Miwok heritage for Pamela Adams and Annie Murray (although the tribe proposed adding “Maidu” to their Federally-imposed name in order to honor Adams' and Murray's Maidu-language fluency).<sup>110</sup> However, it does not appear that the Hawaiian-Indians of this group ever claimed to be Miwok, or that they were present in El Dorado County before the Federal government, knowing that the Vernon community was of mixed tribal ancestry, decided to grant it lands in Shingle Springs.

The 1916 letter presented as proof that members of the Vernon Band were Hawaiian actually undermines this claim. Indian Agent John Berrell listed “Annie Murray and Parnelia [sic] Adams” as full-blooded Indians, with the latter having “Kanata [sic] Hawaiian Island Indian[s]” married into her family.<sup>111</sup> As all Miwok Band members as of 2015 were direct descendants of one of these two women, no member was possibly full-blooded Hawaiian.<sup>112</sup> Although Adams' confusing 1920 Census record is held as proof that some full-blooded Hawaiians were incorporated into the Verona Band, this interpretation is clearly unfounded.

The complex legacy of Native Hawaiian-Native Californian interaction in the Sacramento region was characterized by cultural colonization, but also cooperation towards shared goals of economic, political, and social survival in a tumultuous era. Although Native Hawaiians instituted aspects of Western and Hawaiian culture among the Native Californians they collaborated with, they also helped to establish spaces and families where Native Californian culture could survive and eventually flourish. Division and resentment between Hawaiian-Indians and Native Californians who were not Hawaiian-colonized are primarily the product of U.S. Federal government interference, rather than Native Hawaiian exploitation of Native American identity. Inaccurate federally-imposed labels and the transfer of Native peoples across ancestral borders, rather than a genetically and culturally mixed heritage, undermines the legitimacy of the Shingle Springs-Verona Miwok Band. So long as inequalities among indigenous peoples of varying backgrounds are maintained through such poorly organized attempts at redress, these peoples may be motivated to reject opportunities to collaborate beneficially with each other—as Kanaka, Maidu, Wintu, Wailaki, and

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<sup>109</sup> Sara Darlington, “Sketches,” *Mountain Democrat*, 10 April 1890.

<sup>110</sup> Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, “Proposed Amendments to the Articles of Association,” *Tribal Newsletter*, December 2015, 7.

<sup>111</sup> John J. Berrell, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior: United States Indian Service, “Census of the Indians at and near Verona in Sutter County, California: Also 15 Living in Sacramento,” 4 January 1916.

<sup>112</sup> Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, “Proposed Amendments... Articles of Association.” 7.

Miwok individuals did in nineteenth-century California—in favor of trying to secure financial advantage.

# DELAYED DREAMS: DUST BOWL MIGRANTS IN CALIFORNIA'S CENTRAL VALLEY, 1930-1945

**Thomas Lerner**

**Abstract:** In the 1930s, nearly one-third of a million people migrated to California because of the Dust Bowl. The combination of the Great Depression and the environmental conditions that caused the Dust Bowl devastated areas in the Southwest and Great Plains region. Though the actual location of the Dust Bowl is in parts of New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and Colorado, the bulk of the migrants came from four southwestern states: Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas and Missouri. Many of these migrants would have preferred to stay in their own states, but desperation forced them to move. They thought they had found a paradise in the West where they could come and start over. They came to California because of their perceptions of the state, but the migrants who came to California's Central Valley found out that this land of opportunity did not initially match the perceptions they had of it. They perceived California as a "paradise" where jobs were abundant, but instead they faced unemployment, homelessness and discrimination. It was not until the defense industry started to boom and the economy improved in the 1940s that the migrants were able to get jobs make a decent and comfortable living in California.

Dorothy Louise Price Rose had moved to California with her family when she was fourteen years old. Financial troubles and the hope of finding work had prompted her father to move the family West. After a set of difficult years in Oklahoma, her father believed that he could find work and build a better life for his family in California. Dorothy was one of eleven people crammed into a Dodge pick-up truck that her father had bought to make the journey. When her family finally arrived in California after a three-month detour in Arizona, the Golden State did not provide them with the kind of life they had expected. The first home that the Rose's lived in was an old chicken coup and instead of finding stable employment, her father had to do whatever odd jobs that he could find. Dorothy faced discrimination in school for being an "Okie" and her family faced humiliation when they had to accept aid. It was not until jobs became more abundant and the economy improved during World War II that the Rose's lives began to steadily improve in California. Dorothy's father got a good job in a cannery



and the family was finally able to rent a better house. Initially, California was a disappointment to Dorothy and her family, but over time the state became her home.<sup>1</sup>

Thousands of other families that migrated to California in the 1930s from states impacted by the Dust Bowl experienced situations similar to the Rose family. The combination of the Great Depression and environmental conditions that caused the Dust Bowl devastated areas in the Southwest and Great Plains region. Though the actual location of the Dust Bowl was in parts of New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Colorado, the bulk of the migrants came from four southwestern states: Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas and Missouri. In the 1930s, nearly one-third of a million people had migrated from these states to California. Many of these migrants would have preferred to stay in their own states, but desperation forced them to move. Luckily for them, they had a paradise in the West to which they could come and start over, or so they thought. They came to California because of their perceptions of the state, but the migrants who came to California's Central Valley found out that this land of opportunity did not initially match the perceptions they had of it. They perceived California as a "paradise" where jobs were abundant, but instead they faced unemployment, homelessness, and discrimination. It was not until the defense industry started to boom and the economy improved in the 1940s that the migrants were able to get jobs make a decent and comfortable living in California.<sup>2</sup>

In the midst of the Great Depression, severe droughts hit the Great Plains region. This resulted in the failure of crops across the region, and a substantial loss of jobs for people who relied on the crops for employment. Financial hardships that resulted from unemployment was what motivated many Dust Bowl migrants to leave their homes. Though the popularized dust storms and dust pneumonia were responsible for motivating some people to leave their homes, the vast majority of people who migrated from the Dust Bowl area did so because they needed to find work. After being pushed from their homes, they were pulled to one particular state where they believed that they could find work and provide for their family. Out of desperation, thousands of migrants from states in the Southwest trekked across the United States to California, where they believed lay a paradise and a solution to all their troubles. For many, the migration to California was an act of survival. When asked if his father would have taken the family to California without the promise of a job, a migrant from Oklahoma, Joyce Seabolt, revealed that, "We would have had to because we had to survive. We literally had lost the farm ... We had no money coming in. We'd already lost our source

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<sup>1</sup> Dorothy Louise Price Rose, interview by Stacey Jagels, Los Angeles, CA, 7 April 1981, California Odyssey: Dust Bowl Migration Archives, CSU Bakersfield, Bakersfield, CA.

<sup>2</sup> Timothy Egan, *The Worst Hard Time* (New York: First Mariner Books, 2006), 9; James N. Gregory, *American Exodus: The Dust Bowl Migrations and Okie Cultures in California* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), xiv, 6.

of food when we lost the farm so we had to leave. California was the promised land in those days.”<sup>3</sup>

Decades before the Great Depression, California became a magnet for migrants. Starting with the Gold Rush, California “sustained a reputation as a place where fortunes were made, where opportunities abounded.” The exodus of people from the Dust Bowl area to California was nothing new, for they were simply just following the footsteps of many other Americans. As Walter J. Stein points out, “In moving to California, the Okies were conforming to a familiar American pattern. For Great Plains farm people, the West had always seemed a land of economic opportunity.” When hard times hit areas impacted by the Dust Bowl, this drive west was intensified. When commenting on why people from the Dust Bowl area came to California, Earl Butler, a migrant from Missouri, stated, “It was a case of GO WEST. The future was here, the work plentiful, and the wages good.” For migrants from the Dust Bowl area, after being forced from their homes, they were pulled westward to California in particular because of their spectacular visions of the state.<sup>4</sup>

California's longstanding image as a paradise and Promised Land was certainly a reason why migrants from the Dust Bowl traveled to the state. When asked why his parents decided to move to California, Bobby Glenn Russell, a migrant from Arkansas, stated, “I guess dad always wanted to come to California ... The land of milk and honey. The sun shined all the time. It was the Garden of Eden type of thing.” When mentioning how he perceived California in his music, Woodie Guthrie also refers to California as a Garden of Eden, as well as a “paradise” and a “sugar bowl.” Robert Dinwiddle, said that he decided to come to California over other states because family members told him, “It's just like going to heaven.” Family members and friends who had come out to California before him told him how “beautiful” and what a “pretty country” California was. Part of this idea of California being a wonderland was because of the weather. When asked about what she pictured California to be like before his family moved there, Martha Lee Martin Jackson said, “warmer winters and a sunny, better place to live.” Besides the perception of California as a sunny paradise, the belief that an abundance of jobs existed in California during this period is what predominantly pulled the migrants in.<sup>5</sup>

For a group of people who had just lost their means to provide for their family, a land supposedly abundant and high-paying was a profoundly powerful attraction. No

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<sup>3</sup> Joyce Vernon Seabolt, interview by Stacey Jagels, Tulare, CA, 19 and 22 March 1981, transcript, California Odyssey.

<sup>4</sup> Gregory, 9; Walter J. Stein, *California and the Dust Bowl Migration*, (Westport: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1973), 22; Earl Butler, interview by Judith Gannon, Lindsay, CA, 3 February and 7 March 1981, transcript, California Odyssey.

<sup>5</sup> Bobby Glen Russell, interview By Judith Gannon, Orange Cove, CA, 3 and 10 February 1981, transcript, California Odyssey; Woodie Guthrie, “Do Re Mi,” on *Dust Bowl Ballads*, recorded 1940, Rounder Records, 1988, CD; Robert Dinwiddle, interview by Stacey Jagels, Visalia, CA, 18 and 20 February 1981, transcript, California Odyssey; Martha Lee Martin Jackson, interview by Stacey Jagels, Clovis, CA, 10 March 1981, transcript, California Odyssey.

other factor caused Dust Bowl migrants to choose to migrate to California than the prospect of employment. In explaining why people from the Dust Bowl area came to California, Mrs. James Dunn stated that, "The migrant was told he could get a good job, good wages, and a sanitary place to live in. For this and other reasons he left his home and friends and [the] state he knew to come to a strange state and live among strange people" When asked about the kinds of rumors he heard about California in Oklahoma, James Harvey Lackey said, "They would tell you that you could get a job – that was the main thing. There were no jobs back there [Oklahoma]. Main thing was you could get a job out here [California]." The migrants assumed that they could easily get a job in California because of the types of jobs available there.<sup>6</sup>

Dust Bowl migrants assumed jobs would be easily attainable in California because of the state's well-known agricultural industry and expanding cotton production. Migrants believed that they could acquire a job as a fruit or cotton picker or working as a farmhand – types of jobs that many did in their home states. As one newspaper put it, "Agricultural successes here in potatoes, cotton, and other produce and the crop failures in the Dust Bowl region appear to explain the phenomenon of the shifting population of homeless persons." Across the country, everyone knew of California's "agricultural successes," so for a large group of displaced people familiar with agricultural work, California had a strong pull. Joe Zaragoza, a Mexican who settled in the San Joaquin Valley in the 1920s, stated that, "They came out because of work – there was a lot of field work picking cotton, chopping cotton, picking grapes and working around the sheds." Cotton was one crop in particular with which migrants were very familiar.

A *Monthly Labor Review* article analyzing the number of migrants who came to California between 1935 and 1936 found that California's cotton crop in 1935 definitely played a role in drawing the migrants to the state because many of the migrants had come from cotton-growing states. In 1937, an article in the *Los Angeles Times* stated that "At a meeting here of some 100 religious, welfare, civic, and governmental representatives from the San Joaquin Valley, blame for the bulk of the transient labor problem was placed on fame of California's growing crop, coupled with her climate." Whether it was as a farm hand or a fruit or cotton picker, migrants from the Dust Bowl flocked to California because they were led to believe that jobs were available.<sup>7</sup>

Word-of-mouth information from friends and family members who had already been to California also led migrants to believe that they could find work there. As Stein put it, "Those who advertised California most to the Okies were the Okies

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<sup>6</sup> Mr. James Dunn, "Letter to VOTAW," Dust Bowl Migration Archive, Special Collections, University Library, CSU Sonoma; James Harvey Lackey, interview by Stacey Jagels, Bakersfield, CA, 31 March and 2 April 1981, transcript, California Odyssey.

<sup>7</sup> *New York Times*, 18 July 1937; Joe Zaragoza, interview by Stacey Jagels, Bakersfield, CA, 5 February 1981, transcript, California Odyssey; Edward J. Rowell, "Drought Refugee and Labor Migration to California in 1936," *Labor Monthly Review* 43, no. 6 (December 1936): 1356; *Los Angeles Times*, 29 June 1937.

themselves.” Even before the Great Depression hit, people in the Southwest knew about the good conditions in California. People from this region had been steadily migrating to California since 1910, and when they returned home or wrote relatives or friends, they would inform them about their experiences. In the 1920s, California’s economy was still booming, and jobs were available for anyone who wanted to work. A positive image of California formed in many of the migrant’s heads even before the droughts began and the economy started crumbling in the early 1930s. Migrants who already came to California in the 1920s and the early 1930s encouraged friends or family members to follow their footsteps to better conditions. This was exemplified in the Farris’s journey to California in 1938. When explaining why her father decided to leave Texas and take the family to California, Golden Mae Jarrell Farris declared that someone talked her father into moving there. She stated that when her father was having a difficult time in Texas, “It was at that time that a friend came back to Texas for a visit. The family had come out to California three years earlier. He talked to my father and convinced him that he would be much better off coming to California and working as a farm hand than staying in Texas and trying to farm there.”<sup>8</sup>

Another factor that may have motivated people from the Dust Bowl area to migrate to California were fliers from Californian farms that advertised jobs. Though the existence of these fliers is debated by some people in California, many migrants stated that these fliers did exist. Clara Beddo Davis, a migrant from Oklahoma, stated that, “They printed fliers and sent them out from California to Oklahoma and distributed them around for people to come out here ... The fliers said what big money you could make and what wonderful living places you had—how you could make money working in the grapes and picking cotton” Davis is not the only migrant from Oklahoma who stated that they had seen fliers from California advertising work. Mildred Lenora Morris Ward, a migrant from Oklahoma, argued that she saw such advertisements in the newspapers: “They probably came from those large corporate farmers.” She went on to illustrate that these corporate farmers wanted a lot of workers in California because laborers were starting to organize during this period. It was not just the migrants who stated that these fliers existed. Catherine Sullivan, a social worker employed by the State Relief Administration in Kern County during the 1930s, was also under the assumption that these fliers, or handbills as she states it, existed. When talking about why a family from Arkansas migrated to California, she stated that, “They had been lured here by handbills that were extolling the wonders of California.”<sup>9</sup>

These instances of California handbill advertisements are contradictory to what others believe. Some sources state that these fliers did not dramatically influence the

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<sup>8</sup> Stein, 22; Gregory, 6-7; Butler Interview; Golden Mae Jarrell Farris, interview by Stacey Jagels, Fresno, CA, 10 March 1981, transcript, California Odyssey.

<sup>9</sup> Clara Beddo Davis, interview by Stacey Jagels, Bakersfield, CA, 29 January and 12 February 1981, transcript, California Odyssey; Mildred Lenora Morris Ward, interview by Judith Gannon, Dinuba, CA, 19 and 24 January 1981, transcript, California Odyssey; Catherine Sullivan, interview by Judith Gannon, Bakersfield, CA, 27 February 1981, transcript, California Odyssey.

flow of migrants to California, while other sources doubt these fliers existed at all. In, *California and the Dust Bowl Migration*, Stein reveals that the La Follette Committee, when conducting an investigation into California's agricultural system, found no evidence to support the claim that a conspiracy existed among Californian growers to lure workers to the state. A Californian newspaper, *The Madera Tribune*, declared that factors other than farm advertisements attracted the migrants to California when it pointed out that, "The antagonizing classes of the state are trying to throw the blame for the situation on the farmers themselves, claiming farmers encouraged migration to get cheap labor. The plain truth is the great bulk of this migration has resulted from the fact that California pays the highest agricultural wages." Whether these advertisements existed or not, their existence does not make much of a difference because, as Stein states, "There was simply no need to advertise for Okies; they came without being lured to the state." The migrants already had their vision of California as a land of jobs and opportunities formed with or without additional help from advertisements.<sup>10</sup>

Within their first moments of arriving in California, many migrants realized that the state would not be as they expected. Many took the southern route when entering California, which brought them through the desert before entering California. When asked about her first impression of California when she arrived, Mildred Ward stated, "Well my first impression was that it was a desert and I thought, my goodness this is not what I thought California was going to be like." The desert was a marked contradiction from what Ward and other migrants envisioned of California to be like. For some, this would foreshadow even more disappointments with the state to come. Once the migrants reached California's border they had to go through inspections that gave them their first taste of discrimination from Californians. A migrant from Oklahoma, Hattye Shields, stated that when her family arrived at the border the inspection shocked her and that, "There were cars lined up [like] you wouldn't believe. Anyone that was carrying any goods at all, any household goods or anything, was pulled over and just really checked thoroughly." The treatment the migrants received from the border inspectors made some realize that this state may not be the paradise they envisioned it to be. In regards to the disrespect her family received at the border, Shields said that, "To be treated like that in that situation with these border guards or whatever they called themselves—inspectors—was very, very demeaning to them." For a great deal of migrants, their experiences at the border would be just a prelude to the hardships California had to offer.<sup>11</sup>

One of the most severe hardships the migrants faced when coming to California was finding employment. They quickly realized California's job market was not as robust as they had believed and that conditions in California would be different from what they heard in rumors and stories. The migrants who settled in the rural areas of

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<sup>10</sup> Stein, 19-22; *Madera Tribune*, 22 August 1939.

<sup>11</sup> Ward Interview; Hattye Shields, interview by Judith Gannon, Anaheim, CA, 24 May 1981, transcript, California Odyssey;

the Central Valley had a harder time finding employment than those who settled in big cities like Los Angeles. James N. Gregory states that, "In contrast to the cities ... the non-metropolitan settings offered severely restricted job opportunities and equally restrictive social prospects." When the migrants did obtain work, often it either paid too little or was not permanent. In the Central Valley, migrants would often only find work for a limited amount of time when pickers were needed for certain crops like cotton. By 1937, estimated 70,000 Dust Bowl migrants chose to settle in the San Joaquin Valley alone and many of that number had a difficult time finding steady employment. With so many unable to find permanent work, and more arriving each year, many migrants in the Central Valley had to start living in horrible conditions.<sup>12</sup>

Unemployed in an unfamiliar state, thousands of miles away from where they grew up, Dust Bowl migrants in California's Central Valley found it difficult to acquire basic necessities like shelter. Those unable to buy or rent a home often had no other choice but to live in one of the migratory labor camps throughout the Central Valley. Though these camps did provide the migrants with a place to live, not all the camps provided adequate living conditions. Conditions in the camps ranged from harsh and dirty to completely unsanitary and dangerous. In regard to the California's migration problem in July 1937, the *Madera Tribune* revealed that, "Deplorable conditions in many unsupervised labor camps constitute the worst feature of the situation. Families are crowded together in unsanitary tents and shacks. Infant mortality has increased." When migrants could not get into labor camps, they would camp out wherever they could and create squatter settlements throughout the Central Valley. Earlier in July 1937, the *Madera Tribune* also stated that, "Deaths from mal-nutrition and exposure were reported today by an investigator after a survey of tens of thousands of 'dust bowl' refugees camping in California's valleys in squalor," and that, "Seventy thousand homeless, jobless families are camping in the county between Bakersfield and Stockton in the San Joaquin Valley." Though the number of "jobless, homeless families" camping out in the Central Valley the paper used is probably a little high, thousands of migrants did have to live in filthy conditions. No one captured the harsh conditions the migrants in the Central Valley lived in better than Dorothea Lange and Paul Schuster Taylor.<sup>13</sup>

Lange's and Taylor's book, *An American Exodus: A Record of Human Erosion*, contains a collection of photographs that reveal the difficult conditions that Dust Bowl migrants lived in after they migrated to California. Her photographs are immensely powerful because they show that these people lived in conditions like those in third-world countries. One photograph, titled, "Squatter Camp on the Outskirts of Holtville, Imperial Valley," shows migrants camped out on the side of the road next to heaps of trash. Another photograph shows a dismal squatter camp where 150 migrant families lived, while an additional one shows the tiny shacks families lived in if they were lucky enough to get into a labor camp. Unable to rent or buy a home in California and unable

<sup>12</sup> Gregory 61-63; *New York Times*, 18 July 1937.

<sup>13</sup> *Madera Tribune*, 27 July 1937; Gregory, 64; *Madera Tribune*, 13 July 1937.

to go back home, the migrants literally created their own settlements wherever they could. These photographs, along with Steinbeck's famous book, *The Grapes of Wrath*, brought California's migrant problem to the rest of the nation's attention. These people needed help, and they received it, reluctantly, in the form of state aid.<sup>14</sup>

Californians gave relief to Dust Bowl migrants as reluctantly as they received it. Contrary to what a lot of Californians believed, the migrants did not happily or eagerly accept aid from the government. They usually took relief only as a last resort and would be humiliated by doing so. "There was stigma against welfare or aid or charity and, there was pride," Seabolt explained. When asked about how the migrants felt about receiving aid in California, Ward stated that, "The people were very proud, and they hated to take any kind of assistance. They wanted to make it on their own. We didn't come here to get to get a handout we came here to work." This is consistent with what Paul S. Taylor wrote in his article, "Again the Covered Wagon." He declared that, "It is hope that draws the refugees to California, hope of finding work, of keeping off or getting off federal relief ... of finding surcease of trouble." Despite their reluctance to take aid, with no work available in California, migrants often did not have any other choice. Dorothy Rose said that when her family finally had to accept a little relief from the state that, "we were humiliated by it." Receiving aid humiliated them because they did not want to be seen as freeloaders. The *Madera Tribune* expressed how the migrants wanted felt when it stated that, "These migrants are Americans. They are not hoboes or tramps. They want work, not relief." This view of the migrants was rare for a lot of Californians because a great deal of Californians viewed them as lazy "bums" who planned to take advantage of the state's relief.<sup>15</sup>

Californians attacked the migrants for taking aid because they believed that the migrants specifically migrated to California to take advantage of the state's high relief payments. In a time of great economic distress, Californians did not react kindly to a group of people who supposedly planned to leach off their state. This resentment can be seen in various Californian newspaper articles from this time. In 1939, when referring to the migrants in an article in the *Los Angeles Times*, Westbrook Pegler called the migrants "an overly big share of lazy whiners and deadbeats" and said that they, "have dumped themselves on California, attracted by the climate, the cheapness of existence and the relatively lavish relief rates." When talking about a homeless migrant and his family in Bakersfield, the *New York Times* stated, "this laborer and his wife have no worries. If work becomes too hard to get or the pay is below their standard, they firmly believe the government will support them in a pinch." The migrants are represented as a group of freeloaders who are becoming dependent on government aid. What is not revealed in these papers is how the migrants actually felt about having to

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<sup>14</sup> Dorothea Lange and Paul Schuster Taylor, *An American Exodus: A Record of Human Erosion* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1939), 116-121.

<sup>15</sup> Seabolt interview; Mildred Ward interview; Paul S. Taylor, "Again the Covered Wagon," *Survey Graphic*, July 1935, 348-352; Rose interview; *Madera Tribune*, 27 July 1937.

receive aid. Though some migrants certainly did take advantage of government aid, many of the migrants just wanted to work and provide for their family. To their dismay, the perception of all Dust Bowl migrants as freeloaders and “deadbeats” became widespread among Californians. This image of them would encourage Californians to treat them as harshly as other groups of newcomers throughout the state’s history.<sup>16</sup>

The attack on the migrants for taking aid was just one aspect of the cruel treatment Dust Bowl migrants received from Californians, for they would also face heavy discrimination from Californians and be treated like second-class citizens. This type of treatment towards migrants was nothing new, for the state’s citizens often treated newcomers with hostility and contempt, especially in times of economic distress. Gregory points out that in California, “When economic opportunities narrowed or when war or political struggles raised anxieties, immigrants were often singled out for exclusion.” Throughout California’s history, Californians would push out groups of people they disliked, many being farm laborers like the Dust Bowl migrants. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Chinese became the first group of people to experience ill treatment from Californians. The state’s depression in 1870 caused animosity towards the Chinese, leading to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the anti-Chinese riots in 1893. The Japanese became the next group targeted for exclusion in the beginning of the twentieth century, where in 1913, “the State of California enacted the Alien Land Act, which forbade aliens not eligible for citizenship, mainly Asians, from owning property.” Mexicans experienced exclusion after the Japanese, when Californians “embarked on a program of voluntary repatriation for Mexicans and Mexican-Americans” to get rid of the unwanted workers in 1930. This outmigration of Mexicans from California set the stage for Dust Bowl migrants to become the next group of farm laborers to experience discrimination and hostility from Californians.<sup>17</sup>

Though being white and American citizens, Dust Bowl migrants faced discrimination from Californians like the Chinese, Japanese and Mexicans. Californians used the term “Okie” to label the migrants from the Dust Bowl, even though only a fraction of them came from Oklahoma. Timothy Egan, in his book *The Worst Hard Time*, revealed that when the migrants got to California, “No matter where they had come from, or if they had some schooling or owned land, they were called the same thing: *Okie*. It meant being no better than a throwaway rag.” This is a word that could be very demeaning and is similar to other derogatory terms used to put down specific groups of people. For migrants, to be an Okie meant that you were essentially white trash and lower-class. The use of this word often led to conflicts between Californians and migrants, some even violent. In one instance, an Oklahoman Migrant, Loye Lucille Martin Holmes, got into a physical altercation with a Californian woman because she humiliated her children by calling them Okies and would not let her children play with

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<sup>16</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 14 November 1939; *New York Times*, 18 July 1937.

<sup>17</sup> Gregory, 79; Charles J. Shindo, *Dust Bowl Migrants in the American Imagination* (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 14-16; Stein, 36-37.



them because she suspected them to “have some kind of disease or lice.” After her children told her what the woman said, Holmes revealed that, “I was over there in that woman’s house and jerked her door open ... I slapped her right beside the head.” Migrants like Holmes reacted in such a manner when disrespected because over time they got fed up with facing discrimination almost everywhere they went in California.<sup>18</sup>

The migrants faced discrimination from Californians in their local communities, as well as at school and at work. Whether at church, at the store or on the street, migrants dealt with animosity from Californians. Mildred Ward stopped going to her church because the people there did not treat her kindly and one Sunday morning the minister said that, “we just find it virtually impossible to integrate these people [migrants] into our western culture” in his sermon. Migrant children dealt with cruel treatment not only from their classmates, but from their teachers as well. Californian kids teased migrant children because of the way they talked or dressed. When discussing her experiences at school after coming to California, Martha Jackson stated, “We said a lot of words differently. They teased us a lot about that.” Teachers often treated migrant children with contempt and would not give them as much attention as Californian children. Adult migrants experienced similar discrimination when looking for employment, where Californians always came before migrants. James E. Lambert Jr., a migrant from Oklahoma, saw the favoritism Californians received in the 1930s firsthand. He stated that, “If there was a job opening and you’re from California, you got the job and the Oklahoma [people] take what was left ... They seemed to cater to the California people first.” In a time of economic uncertainty and hardship, Californians put each other first and treated the newcomers with disdain for a specific set of reasons.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to the belief that Dust Bowl migrants intended to take advantage of aid, Californians also detested them because they believed they stole jobs from Californians and destroyed the state's landscape. With jobs already limited because of the Great Depression, Californians did not like thousands of unemployed, homeless people coming to their state. In 1937, the *Madera Tribune* stated that, “The California [employment] bureau reported that in the San Joaquin Valley, the labor supply was 20 percent higher than it was last year, due largely to the influx of ‘dust bowl’ immigrants.” With an increasing amount of people needing work, Californians got protective over their jobs. Gregory, in *American Exodus*, reveals that when talking to a committee of legislature in 1938, California Citizens Association secretary Thomas W. McManus summed up how many Californians felt when he urged that “California jobs go to Californians and not the horde of empty bellies from the Southwest.” Californians’

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<sup>18</sup> Timothy Egan, *The Worst Hard Time* (New York: Mariner Books, 2006), 235; Davis interview; Loye Lucille Martin Holmes, interview by Judith Gannon, Bakersfield, CA, 23 and 24 February 1981, transcript, California Odyssey.

<sup>19</sup> Mildred Ward interview; Jackson interview; Stein, 62-63; James E. Lambert Jr., interview by Michael Neely, Oildale, CA, 10 and 17 February 1981, transcript, California Odyssey.

discriminatory and cruel behavior towards Dust Bowl migrants may have begun with the fight over jobs, but it was not the sole reason they lashed out against them.<sup>20</sup>

The migrant's impact on California's landscape also frustrated Californians. An article in *Business Week* stated, "Down through the San Joaquin Valley the tens of thousands of destitute families, settled in filthy tents, are bringing slum conditions to the country, overflowing hospitals, threatening financial disaster to the five valley counties." Californians legitimately feared that the migrants would ruin their state, so their ill treatment of the migrants was not without cause. Harold H. Robertson, field secretary of the Gospel Army concluded that, "Unless measures are adopted to provide medical treatment and rehabilitation, and some plan to stop this homeless horde from coming into California, by fall this state will be facing the most serious health, moral, economic and sociological problem in its history."<sup>21</sup>

Californians and the federal government did go to great lengths to keep the "homeless horde" in their own states and out of California. By the end of the 1930s, the Farm Security Administration (FSA) starting to give loans out to families in Dust Bowl states "in an attempt to keep them on land." By 1940, contrary to what Californians believed, the FSA spent more money trying to keep families in the Dust Bowl on their land than on aid. An article in the *Los Angeles Times* stated that, "The Farm Security Administration has spent 20 times as much money trying to 'anchor' farmers at major sources of migration as has been expended for shelter, relief and medical care after arrival of migrants in California." Californians also used their own methods to push migrants away. Californians posted signs and billboards along the route from the Dust Bowl area to California to keep them away. In *The Worst Hard Time*, Egan reveals that one sign outside Tulsa on Highway 66 stated, "No jobs in California if you are looking for work – KEEP OUT." Californians also posted in newspapers that their state did not have any available jobs for the migrants. One in particular announced that, "Residents of other states should contact their own employment service bureaus before starting for California in search of employment." In one extreme example of how Californians tried to keep migrants out, L.A. Police Chief, James E. Davis, even went so far as to block people from entering the state at California's border in 1936. His goal was to keep out incoming "indigents and tramps." Californians made it abundantly clear that they did not want people from the Dust Bowl area in their state, and this exclusion from California made the migrants band together to get through the difficult times.<sup>22</sup>

With so many Californians treating them as second-class citizens or pushing them away, migrants decided to group together in their own communities, and in doing so, created their own Okie subculture in the Central Valley. When they arrived in

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<sup>20</sup> *Madera Tribune*, 28 July 1937; Gregory, 96.

<sup>21</sup> "Dustbowlers Worry California," *Business Week*, 24 September 1938: 33-34; *Madera Tribune*, 20 July 1937, 33-34.

<sup>22</sup> *Sotoyome Scimitar*, 28 March 1940; *Los Angeles Times*, 24 March 1940; Egan, 288; *Madera Tribune*, 28 July 1937; "California: No Hobo Utopia," *Literary Digest*, 15 February 1936, 9.

California, migrants found that California did not have as much of a communal feeling as the states they came from. The towns and cities they typically came from were more close-knit and people generally helped one another. In California, instead of finding a helpful community, they found a people that resented their presence. This lack of communal feeling in an unfamiliar state forced migrants to band together and form their own separate communities in the Central Valley. This is how the Okie subculture in California's Central Valley initially began. Gregory wrote that, "Settling in separate neighborhoods called Little Oklahomas, socializing primarily with newcomers like themselves, they created a distinct subculture based on values and institutions brought from their region of birth." Because migrant populations in the Central Valley did not assimilate as well into Californian society as the migrants in other parts of the state, the presence of an Okie subculture grew stronger in the Valley. The creation of their own communities and the formation of the Okie subculture gave the migrants in the Central Valley a way to deal with the disappointment and hardships they faced in California.<sup>23</sup>

The migrant's disappointment with California is clearly seen in Okie folk music and literature from this period. A migrant poem called "Nuts to California" that states, "They told us this was the land of milk and honey, but I guess the cow went dry and the tumblebugs got in the beehive," sums up the disappointment people felt with California when the state was unable to provide them with what they needed.<sup>24</sup> The song "California Blues" expresses how awful some migrants thought California turned out to be when they arrived. Part of the song states, "Rather drink muddy water An Sleep in a holler log ... Than to be in California Treated like a dirty log." Another song, "Sunny Cal," serves as a warning from anyone else from the Dust Bowl states wishing to come to California. Part of the song says, "They say 'Come on, you Okies, Work is easy found Bring along your cotton pack You can pick the whole year round ... But listen to me Okies I came out here one day Spent all my money getting here Now I can't get away.'" Numerous other Okie artists sung about their experiences in California, but no one captured the experiences and disappointments of the migrants better than folk singer Woody Guthrie.<sup>25</sup>

Woody Guthrie arrived in Los Angeles from Oklahoma in 1937. Though he lived in L.A., he successfully captured the experiences of migrants all over the state in his music. Several of his songs capture the disappointment Dust Bowl migrants felt when they arrived in California. One of his most popular songs, "Do Re Mi," says, "California is a garden of Eden, a paradise to live in or see, But believe it or not, you won't find it so hot, If you ain't got the do re mi." This song implies that, unless you

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<sup>23</sup> Lambert interview; Gregory XVI, 52, 139

<sup>24</sup> "Nuts to California," Dust Bowl Migration Archive, Special Collections, University Library, CSU Sonoma

<sup>25</sup> "Curley" Reeves, "California Blues," Dust Bowl Migration Archive, Special Collections, University Library CSU Sonoma; Jack Bryant, "Sunny Cal," recorded 1940, The Charles L. Todd and Robert Sonkin Migrant Worker Collection, 1940-1941, Library of Congress, accessed 6 March 2017, <https://www.loc.gov/item/toddbib000522/>.

come to California with a good amount of money, the state will not be as great as you expect it to be. The song not only captures some of the disappointment people felt with California, but also serves as a warning to others not to come to California. Another one of his songs, "Dust Bowl Refugee," clearly reveals Guthrie's dissatisfaction with California when he says, "From that Dust Bowl to the Peach Bowl, / Now that peach fuzz is a-killin' me." Guthrie's music was so popular with migrants because they could relate to it. He successfully captures the frustration and hopelessness many migrants throughout California felt. In the concluding section of "Dust Bowl Refugee," Guthrie illustrates the hopelessness migrants felt when he says, "I'm a dust bowl refugee, / I'm a dust bowl refugee, / And I wonder will I always / Be a dust bowl refugee?" Fortunately for the Dust Bowl migrants, their conditions in California would start to improve sooner than they expected.<sup>26</sup>

Conditions for the Dust Bowl migrants started to steadily improve by the end of 1940. The onset of World War II brought thousands of jobs to California and an end to the Great Depression. The defense industry boom that accompanied World War II created an explosion of jobs in aircraft factories and shipbuilding yards in big cities like Los Angeles and San Diego. During this period, many new migrants from the Dust Bowl area and migrants already settled in the Central Valley moved to big cities like L.A. for jobs, creating a shortage of farm labor in the Central Valley. In a small span of time, there went from an oversupply of farm labor in the Central Valley to a shortage, forcing farmers to change their attitudes about the migrants. When talking about the migrants in 1940, Arthur Caylor of the *New York Times* wrote that, "Instead of being unwanted and jobless, these farm people may prove the salvation of the agricultural industry, making it possible to turn, even in time of stress, to a large, already-here group of experienced farm labor." The migrants quickly went from being "bums" and "freeloader" to saviors. By 1941, instead of pushing the migrants away, Californian farmers became "glad to see Okies and Arkies."<sup>27</sup>

Farmers were not the only ones to change their attitudes about the migrants, for by the end of 1940, the whole state of California started to accept the migrants. An article in the *Los Angeles Times* stated that, "So our migrants today are tremendously important. They are here and both their good and their bad are becoming an integral part of our character and our future. Our Oakies [must] become okie-dokes." This is a completely different view of the migrants compared to how Californians saw them just a couple years earlier. With Californians finally starting to embrace and treat them with respect, migrants could finally start to feel comfortable in California. By 1942, the stigma surrounding Dust Bowl migrants all but disappeared. A *New York Times* article from that year concluded that, "The return of status, economic and social, to these former disinherited, is one of the most satisfying things that has come out of the war." With

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<sup>26</sup> Gregory 229-232; Woody Guthrie, "Do Re Mi," and "Dust Bowl Refugee," on *Dust Bowl Ballads*, recorded 1940, Rounder Records, 1988, CD.

<sup>27</sup> *New York Times*, 17 November 1940, 20 July and 16 November 1941; Gregory, 172-175.

jobs now in abundance and Californians finally accepting them, California started to become the state the migrants envisioned it to be before they set out from their Midwestern homes.<sup>28</sup>

With the onset of World War II fixing their unemployment problems and changing Californians' attitudes towards them, Dust Bowl migrants' lives started to improve. The lives of Dorothy Rose and her family began to improve in California once her father got a job in a cannery during the war. She stated that because of World War II, "We were able to rent a better house. I think we even got a telephone ... it was better."<sup>29</sup> Migrants started to make more money than they ever had in California and many found new careers that they enjoyed. When mentioning how the war changed her father's circumstances in California, Golden Mae Farris said that "For the first time in his life he was making a decent living." When the war hit, James Lackey quit his strenuous job at DiGiorgio Ranch and moved to Los Angeles to work at Cal Ship. In L.A., he learned how to weld and ended up making three times as much money as a high-pressure pipe welder than at DiGiorgio. The war opened new opportunities for Lackey and numerous other migrants that otherwise would not have been possible. With their circumstances completely turned around by the mid-1940s, the Dust Bowl migrants finally started to live successfully in California and could now proudly call the Golden State home.

When they left their homes in the Midwest broke and desperate, Dust Bowl migrants did not expect to travel thousands of miles to California only to encounter unemployment, homelessness, and discrimination. Pulled there by their spectacular visions of the state, they dreamt that they could find work, provide for their families, and start a new life in California. The migrants who arrived in California's Central Valley in the 1930s were initially disappointed with the state when it did not live up to their expectations, but as quickly as the Great Depression and droughts ruined their lives, World War II reversed their circumstances. The defense industry boom and the improvement of the economy that accompanied the onset World War II in 1940 opened up thousands of new jobs for the migrants in California. Throughout the 1940s, most of the migrants who settled in the Central Valley in the 1930s found jobs, acquired homes, and became accepted by Californians. Their dreams of a prosperous life in California seemed crushed when they initially arrived in the state, but they found that their dreams were not crushed, just delayed.

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<sup>28</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 24 September 1941; *New York Times*, 17 May 1942.

<sup>29</sup> Rose interview; Farris interview; Lackey interview.



# AN EXTRAORDINARY LIFE REMEMBERED: THE LILLIE MAE KING (RANSOM) FAMILY COLLECTION

**Moriah Ulinskas**

In 1998, a single banker's box of photographs and ephemera was donated to the History Center at the San Francisco Public Library from Leland House – a homeless shelter run by the Catholic Charities of San Francisco. The box contains the remnants of the life of Lillie Mae King, a single mother who raised four sons in the Fillmore district in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Lillie Mae worked as a nurse, an apartment manager, and was treasurer of the Western Addition Community Organization (WACO), which successfully sued the City of San Francisco's Redevelopment Agency to stop the displacement of Fillmore residents as the area underwent aggressive redevelopment. The box includes Lillie Mae's communications, rosters of WACO members, pamphlets about relocation, community organizing materials, tax documents, meeting minutes, zoning study plans, and the organizational ledger.

The most recent document in the collection is a letter addressed to Lawrence Ransom, Lillie Mae's youngest son, from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors informing him that they had adjourned their scheduled meeting in respect of Lillie Mae's memory. The letter was dated March 19, 1986 – Lillie Mae King had died of a heart attack, a week earlier, at the age of 66. Lawrence died 12 years later at Leland House, a shelter for the chronically homeless, who then donated his jumbled box of belongings to the library. The irony that Lillie Mae's youngest son died in a homeless shelter was not lost on me. The possibility that the history of Lillie Mae King—and everything that she stood for—may have faded out of memory in that shelter, too, horrified me. In many ways Lillie Mae King stands for all the ordinary, yet extraordinary, community members who organized themselves against the postwar rush towards redevelopment in American cities during the latter half of the twentieth century.

The following is a small sampling of images, which can be found in the Lillie Mae King (Ransom) Family Collection of Photographs and Papers, (SFP 92), San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library. The authors and dates of these photographs are unknown. Many thanks to Christina Moretta, San Francisco History Center Photo Curator, for the opportunity to process this collection and the encouragement to bring it into public discourse. The finding aid is here: [http://pdf.oac.cdlib.org/pdf/csf/sfpl/SFP\\_92\\_ead.pdf](http://pdf.oac.cdlib.org/pdf/csf/sfpl/SFP_92_ead.pdf)



*Lillie Mae King as a young woman*





*Lillie Mae King and Jesse Ransom, Sr.*

Born in Texas in 1920, Lillie Mae King joined the Great Migration of African Americans – who traveled from the south to California – as a young girl. She graduated from San Francisco's Girl's High School in 1937 and met a sailor named Jesse Ransom, who appears in snapshots and on birth certificates, but seems to have disappeared from the family before Lawrence's birth.



*Lillie Mae King and sons*

Lillie Mae King was a diligent conservator of her children's histories. As the processing archivist, I read through their birth and baptism certificates, well- baby books, report cards, folders stuffed with newspaper clippings in which they appear winning spelling bees, scoring touchdowns and breaking records at track and field events. Class pictures, diplomas, prom photos, and certificates of completion of various vocational training programs pepper the collection.



*Lillie Mae's youngest son, Lawrence, front center*



*Boy Scouts in the Fillmore. Jesse Ransom, Jr. far right.  
Possibly Leonard and Christopher Ransom, middle*



*Selection of news clippings featuring Chris Ransom,  
Lillie Mae King's third son, 1960s.*



Lillie Mae King became a registered nurse, received a certificate in apartment management, and became the treasurer of WACO – an umbrella organization which represented 52 organizations, businesses, and churches threatened by redevelopment in the Fillmore in the 1960s.







*Lillie Mae King at work*

As WACO's treasurer, Lillie Mae put countless hours into organizing and advocating for her community. On December 26, 1968 WACO filed a lawsuit against the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency which resulted in the withholding of agency funding until a satisfactory relocation plan was in place for community residents.





## BOOK REVIEWS

James Goodwin. *Confronting Dostoevsky's Demons: Anarchism and the Specter of Bakunin in Twentieth-Century Russia*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2010. Pp. viii, 251. \$90 (hardcover). ISBN 9781433108839.

Fyodor Dostoevsky's allegorical masterwork *Demons* has engendered literary, cultural, and political dialogue since its first publication in 1872. Indeed, there are undoubtedly as many interpretations of the tragedy as there are translations of it. In his endeavor to illuminate "the impact of *Demons* on post-revolutionary Russian discourse," James Goodwin presents three divergent Soviet perceptions of the novel from the 1920s (4). Goodwin, an Associate Professor of Russian Studies at the University of Florida, exposes the cultural transformation of Russian high culture engendered by the Bolshevik Revolution and ensuing civil war, as the phenomena generated new context for interpreting Dostoevsky's writing. Goodwin explains how the opposing conceptions of *Demons* prevailing early-Soviet academia rectified the book's reputation, thus preserving its presence during a period of strict government censorship. To Goodwin, political controversy surrounding *Demons* ultimately "challenged the architects of Soviet culture to confront their Bakuninist heritage" (6).

Goodwin concentrates on the scholarship of Leonid Grossman, Viacheslav Polonsky, and Aleksei Borovoi, juxtaposing their interpretations of *Demons*, while in the process, also explaining the political and social forces that shaped them. To Grossman, who wanted to rehabilitate Dostoevsky's reputation by means of exploiting Bakunin's antagonistic legacy, the novel was a prophetic representation of the October Revolution, in which Dostoevsky used Bakunin as the historical prototype for Stavrogin. Although Grossman's thesis challenged the notion of a constructive Bolshevik Revolution, it retained the anti-anarchist view of the nascent Soviet regime. Polonsky and Borovoi refuted Grossman's claim, both asserting that Stavrogin was based off multiple prototypes and not exclusively modeled after Bakunin. Borovoi, an ardent anarchist, aimed to dispel popular myths surrounding anarchism and Bakuninism by contesting Grossman's conclusions; whereas, the Marxist Polonsky, who respected anarchism and its support during the revolution, sought to provide an alternative Marxist perception of Bakunin. Grossman's thesis ultimately provided both Borovoi and Polonsky the opportunity to rectify the legacy of Bakunin and the anarchist's relationship with the Soviets. Ultimately, all three hoped that the heightened discussion of *Demons* would result in its restoration to Russian literary canon (which did not happen until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989). Regardless, by analyzing the polemics of *Demons* and its multiple interpretations, Goodwin shows how scholars utilized the names of famous authors and their novels to support their political views during periods of political persecution and civil unrest.

Goodwin advances the historiography of Soviet and anarchist history as he illustrates the effects of political culture in academia. By identifying the motives of Grossman, Polonsky, and Borovoi, he creates a vivid picture of the political clout plaguing early-Soviet scholarship. He challenges the historical assumption that the Marxists terminated their anarchist alliance after their ascendancy to political power, as both communists and non-communists understood the important role of anarchism during the revolution and thus, sought to maintain the positive legacy of Bakunin. Indeed, antithetical to Soviet culture, early-Soviet Russia experienced an unnatural alliance between the communists and their opponents to preserve the revolutionary spirit of Bakunin.

James Goodwin examines a peculiar aspect of Russian history, highlighting the significance of historical literary criticism and its representation of political thought. Foucauldian in its essence, Goodwin conveys the importance of political structures and their ability to define knowledge. He has included detailed and concise histories of Russian anarchism and *Demons*, allowing him to place Grossman, Polonsky, and Borovoi's interpretations within their broader political and social contexts. Those interested in the history of power and knowledge in post-Revolutionary Russia will undoubtedly be pleased with this thoroughly researched monograph, while readers seeking popular interpretations of Dostoevsky may be disenchanted with its repetitiveness. Nevertheless, *Confronting Dostoevsky's Demons* is a detailed study about a unique topic that expands the historiography of Russian anarchism, early-Soviet culture, and, naturally, Dostoevsky.

Kyle Brislan

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A. Finn Enke. *Finding the Movement: Sexuality Contested Space, and Feminist Activism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007. Pp. xvi, 359. \$23.95 (paper). ISBN 970822340836.

A. Finn Enke's work contributes to and expands on historical narratives of feminism and the women's liberation movement with geographical studies. She explains that geographical and historical narratives have already shown that feminism and women's liberation was made up of diverse people, that the movement was throughout the United States and not just in coastal cities, and that it developed through grassroots efforts, as well as, more formal avenues. However, Enke argues that historical accounts have not shown how widespread the movement really was. She explains that the historiographical limitations of the movement are largely a result of being confined to a study of "feminist-identified organizations and people who embraced a feminist identity." Enke shows with a "focus on sites of activism," how diverse feminist activity was and how they went beyond direct identification. Through this analysis of everyday places, Enke hopes the reader will gain a better understanding

of the different ways women varied in activity and identity and contested their environment (5).

The central argument of *Finding the Movement* is that feminism and women's liberation activism between 1960 and 1980, in the Twin Cities, Detroit, and Chicago grew out of or developed from women's intervention in "public spaces and by creating new kinds of space." Women developed "commercial and civic space," such as bars, bookstores, cafes, and parks, they also created new public institutions, like women's health clinics, shelters and coffeehouses that focused around women's needs and resources (5-6).

The structure of Enke's work is broken into three main sections Part I, II, and III, with each part encompassing two chapters. The first part of *Finding the Movement* focuses on commercial spaces. She analyzes how women navigating through house parties and bars impacted the "nighttime marketplaces," and investigates feminist bookstores and cafes to see how dynamic these alternative marketplaces were. She explains that women could not avoid these capitalist structures but were able to "intervene in conventional commercial terrain by creating alternative spaces in commerce and community in bars, bookstores, restaurants, and cafes" (20). Enke shows that entrepreneurial women navigating through a capitalist terrain created businesses from their ideological perspective, stating "the existence of feminist commercial venues would benefit women, improve their status in the public world, and even change the marketplace itself" (63).

The second part of this work covers civic spaces and focuses on women's efforts to gain access and use of softball diamonds. It analyzes how the "politicization of civic space" drew women into the feminist label even if they claimed no feminist motives. This section also studies how "explicitly feminist and 'out-lesbian' organizations" existed in the same spaces. Enke explains that she focuses on public parks because they are "conceived as the most civic of all the urban public spaces" (20). All three cities parks would help guide the movement and its activities. Because the uses and users of these civic spaces were socially stratified under constructs of gender, race, and class, these public spaces were heavily contested.

The third part of this work covers institutional spaces and analyzes well-known feminist spaces, such as shelters, health clinics, coffeehouses and clubs. These spaces, as Enke explains, institutionalized feminist activities, and because these spaces interacted with more mainstream institutions, they altered them and the public landscape. Enke states that feminists' activities left a lasting impression on mainstream institutions. The need to address the public landscape and institutionalize feminist activities came as a result of women not being seen as a credible economic participant, placing them within a class struggle. As Enke describes, women before the mid-1970s were denied by most banks to open their own accounts or to take out loans without a father or husband's signature. Much of the same was required for women who sought to rent or mortgage a home.

The strength of *Finding the Movement* is also its greatest challenge. As Enke shows the feminist movement was grassroot and coherent but not unified. The fact that the movement was built from more than just the people who identified as feminist not only opens new avenues for approaching the feminist movement it also muddies the waters in that it can encompass a wide range of variables that may distract one from the larger movement itself. Although, these things could seem miss guided or overstated her method is very much appropriate for our current realities, as Enke states her goal is to “not replicate the boundaries set by 1970s feminist institutions but to interrogate them as socially and historically constructed” (257).

*Jon Fletcher*

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Kate Brown. *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. 3, 406. \$27.95 (paper). ISBN 9780199855766.

In *Plutopia*, Kate Brown examines the communities behind the production of plutonium during the Cold War. Focusing on Richland in eastern Washington state and Ozersk in the southern Russian Urals, Brown suggests more similarities between these “middle-class” communities than differences (3). Her attempt breaks from orthodox views of the Cold War, which emphasize the ideological battle between capitalism and communism, instead focusing on the damage left behind from the nuclear arms race. By analyzing records, archival data, and interviews, Brown uncovers the reasons why people continue to live in contaminated areas and how this affected their lives.

The first part looks into the decision-making process of General Frank Matthias, an American civil engineer, and the DuPont Corporation. Brown displays how New Deal funds, existing infrastructure, and land grabbing techniques were used in the late 1940s to construct the first industrial-scale plutonium plant for the Manhattan Project (15, 18). Located in the Columbia Basin, Hanford provided a sense of secrecy by its harsh landscape. Due to the segregation and prison-like conditions found at the camp, DuPont and General Matthias failed to find nonwhite employees willing to work. As plutonium research expanded, Brown argues that women were placed in high-risk environments intentionally by their supervisors. This risk, Brown claims, could have been avoided, but winning the war took precedence over common American lives (59).

In Part two, Brown shifts her attention to the Soviet Union. She addresses the image of espionage within the West and its lack of coverage in the USSR (76). Ironically, Brown notes that espionage developed as a counter measure against exclusion from global affairs during the Cold War. Tactics and strategies mostly associated with the USSR today were initially developed in America, specifically those of security and surveillance (77). Located in the Urals, the Soviets began shipping scientists to work alongside prisoners. The lack of security provides some insight into

shattering the traditional Soviet myth. These difficulties demonstrate the ineffective state the USSR found itself in trying to duplicate the American nuclear project.

In the third part, the author examines the impacts nuclear facilities had on the surrounding communities. Only a few years in, scientists quickly discovered the effects radiation had on humans and the environment. Cases of thyroid cancer became prominent after the start of nuclear research, causing temporary shutdowns in nuclear plants. Throughout various stories, the author points to incidents of low- and medium-level waste dumped into the Columbia Basin and the Techa River (191). Having the third-highest rates of leukemia after Nagasaki and Hiroshima, the residents of the southern Urals demanded higher involvement of their government, not less (198).

Lastly, Brown suggests that the Vietnam War and Watergate scandal produced a political climate in which corporations could not simply hide their problems (276). Covering up nuclear disasters became less convincing to both the Americans and Russians as documents began leaking to the press. These documents provided activists a platform to fight for biological rights and transparency in government. Even after the events of Chernobyl and Maiak, residents remained loyal to Cold War communities (284). Both governments played key roles in dispersing misinformation about radiation illness, often citing faulty medical studies to muddy scientific data (332).

Overall, *Plutopia* is a fascinating transnational account of the Cold War that delivers a powerful anti-nuclear message. Using the plutonium communities as the main focal point, Brown is able to expose other important topics such as race, gender, and social inequality. In addition, Brown does a great job incorporating women into her book, using them frequently to narrate their personal history. By exposing the inner workings of the nuclear security state, the author reminds readers the cost of providing national security by constantly reinforces her earlier claims that these distant communities share more similarities than differences (337). Brown concludes, “these determined people are, in other words, any number of us, as we are all citizens of plutopia” (338).

*Spencer Gomez*

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Margot Canaday. *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011. Pp. 296. \$23.95 (paper). ISBN 9781400830428.

In her book, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America*, Margot Canaday outlines the ways in which American definitions of sexuality have been shaped alongside definitions of American citizenship. She examines citizenship through three primary avenues: immigration, focusing on medical and psychological definitions of deviancy that could be used to prevent an immigrant from remaining in the country; the military, the standards and discharge practices of which affected veterans for the rest of their lives; and welfare, particularly the ways in which eligibility

for aid was determined. Woven through descriptions of legal and administrative struggles is a story of sex and gender in the growing American state, illustrating a persistent theme within American culture that condemns the “feminization” of men while emphasizing the importance of the nuclear, reproductive family as the basic economic unit of United States society. The importance of marriage and family to early twentieth century American conceptions of citizenship is emphasized by contrasting the social infamy and failure of the Federal Transient Program (FTP) with the success of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Though the CCC was specifically aimed at unmarried men, it never developed the reputation for sexual deviancy gained by the FTP, in part because it was presented as training its clients to be husbands and breadwinners (108-125).

In a break with prevalent historiographical patterns in which attitudes toward homosexuality are examined primarily through military regulation, Canaday’s decision to focus heavily on welfare programs provides a clear view of the way in which heterosexuality, particularly within the context of marriage, became another way in which citizenship, and with that, full participation in American society, was granted (138-139). *The Straight State* is divided into two parts, organized by chronology and theme with “World War II-era VA bureaucracy” as the core of the content (15). The formation of a distinct homosexual identity through twentieth century American state building, particularly in the years following World War II, is a key component of her argument. In support of this claim, Canaday traces vague ideas about “sexual deviancy” as something medically measurable in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century records of the Bureau of Immigration (31) to a modern identity legally defined by a confluence of actions, attitudes, and demeanor, among a number of other nebulous factors left to the discretion of regulators (253). Through the use of immigration records, court cases, and correspondences between officials in social programs, she illustrates the complexities of American sexual life. The issue of homosexuality in women is largely absent from the first half of the book, as nearly all the pre-World War II social programs examined were directed exclusively at men. The inclusion of women in the United States military created a greater awareness of the possibility of same gender sexual and romantic activity, even as official ignorance of female homosexual practice made it more difficult to regulate (184-198). Further supporting her assertion that “the crafting of an individual identity and state centralization ... had gone hand in hand,” (254) Canaday includes descriptions of later means of immigration screening for homosexuality, and resistance of INS officials to more inclusive legislation (247-250).

Though the lack of a narrative structure might prove challenging to the reader, as might Canaday’s decision to incorporate contemporary administrative language that can be initially somewhat jarring to a modern audience, *The Straight State* is a valuable resource to a reader unfamiliar with patterns of sexual regulation in American society. By her own admission, Canaday devotes little attention to actual warfare, in favor of the administrative records that provide an insight into the development of definitions of homosexuality seldom touched by other historians. She also does not address the

Lavender Scare in any great detail, stating that that topic has been well covered by others. Despite the areas in which it is lacking, *The Straight State* is well-organized and thoughtfully written, enjoyable, informative, and often poignant in its descriptions of individual and group struggles for full enjoyment of American citizenship.

*Anjelica Hall*

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Chris Barber. *King Arthur: The Mystery Unraveled*. South Yorkshire: Pen and Sword History, 2016. Pp. 7, 269. \$21.38 (hardcover). ISBN 9781473861824.

The world has held fascination of King Arthur for numerous generations. Innumerable people have presented King Arthur differently, from oral histories (songs and legends), to academic texts, to Hollywood films, and even modern Japanese anime series. Chris Barber helps readers distinguish between King Arthur the myth and King Arthur the literary figure. Barber's in-depth investigation of this dichotomy pushes the discourse to highlight the legitimate historical figure of King Arthur. The historiography of King Arthur places him within the so-called "Dark Ages" of the fifth and sixth centuries of Britain. Barber utilizes various ancient manuscripts to shift the Welsh genealogies to the forefront of this discourse to definitively reveal the ancient Celtic prince "Arthur." Barber acknowledges that much of the scholarship on Arthur attempts to stifle his legitimate origins by "anglicising" the Welsh names and locations. Arthur's own nemesis (the English) turned him into their own glorified hero!

Lecturer and historian Chris Barber, Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) and Fellowship of the Royal Geographical Society (FRGS), published over thirty texts on ancient ziggurats, industrial archaeology, hill walking, history, and the myths and legends within Wales. Barber's previous text *Journey to Avalon* (co-authored by historian David Pykitt) situated his scholarship on Arthur as a historical figure. Now throughout *King Arthur*, Barber argues how "Welsh history continues to be ignored by the majority of Arthurian scholars and it is only by getting to grips with the complex matter of ancient Welsh names, titles and geography that the answers to many previously unanswered questions can be provided" (9). Barber establishes his twenty-one chapter and 269-page text as an intricately comprehensive deductive investigation to successfully illumine his thesis for his readers.

Barber's text discusses a vast array of information including ancient historians of Arthur (Gildas Sapiens and Geoffrey of Monmouth), Arthur's education and coronation, Myrddin (Merlin), the Round Table and Excalibur, the many battles of Arthur, the island of Avalon, and Henry VII the supposed "King that was promised." Chapter 1 establishes the genealogies of Arthur's true identity. A seventh-century Latin manuscript made the first recorded mention of "Artur (Arthur)." That Arthur originated from "the area on the north-west coast of Scotland, colonised by the Irish Gaels" (11). However, Barber assesses the origins of at least six different Arthurs

throughout Welsh history, in order to bring us to the historical figure “Athrwys al Meurig, the hereditary King of the Silures, the Celtic tribe that inhabited south-east Wales” (15-16). Chapter 12 narrates the enemies of Arthur. Barber details how around 410 CE the Roman Empire fell and Britain became a battleground between two warring dynasties “the legitimate Romano-British chieftains ... and the Gewissei” (169). An alliance between the Siluria, Dumnonia and Armorica of the Romano-British dynasty eventually ousted the Gewissei out of Britain.

*King Arthur* contains nineteen pages of end notes, over 150 sources (primary and secondary), an appendix depicting the historically-driven chronology of Arthur, and an appendix depicting how Barber tracks King Arthur's identity. All of his sources provide ample support of his thesis, and to the topic of King Arthur itself. Barber even includes a photo gallery in his text with over forty-five different pictures of ancient images depicting Arthur, as well as modern photographs depicting historically significant locations related to Arthur and his contemporaries. Barber's text does read as a data dump of information. This structure runs the risk of intimidating first-time readers away from learning about a cross-generational, and enchanting topic. All the same, Barber undoubtedly unravels the mystery of King Arthur for academic and casual readers alike.

*James G. Juarez*

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Robert C. Tucker. *Stalin in Power: The Revolution from Above: 1928-1941*. New York: W.W Norton & Company, Inc., 1990. Pp. xxii, 707. \$29.95 (paper). ISBN 9780393028812.

In Robert C. Tucker's *Stalin in Power: A Revolution from Above: 1928-1941*, Tucker covers Stalin's rise into power and how he attained that power. In this work, Tucker argues that Stalin's leadership style relies heavily on the fact that he was not merely seeking power, but rather, that power was the means to larger ends: fame and glory (3). Tucker goes through several pivotal periods in which Stalin's power was accumulated, separating the chapters into sections labeled: The Setting, The First Phase, and the Second Phase. Through these different chapters, Tucker describes not only how Stalin came into his position of power, but also how this coming into power aided his ultimate desire for fame. Tucker uses each of the previously designated phases to illustrate the evolution of Stalin's power, as well how Stalin's need for fame was less and less disguised as time went on and his power accumulated.

In the first section of the book, the Setting, Tucker discusses Stalin's obsession with Russian history and the ideals of his hero, Lenin. Tucker includes an in-depth description of Russian history, particularly the parts that Stalin was obsessed with (Ivan Grozny, the Muscovites, Peter the Great, etc.). This description of Russian history allows the reader to become familiar with the subjects that Stalin would extensively



cover in his future arguments for collectivization and *dekulakization*. In this section, Tucker also includes a description of Lenin's legacy and the ideals of Lenin's that Stalin would cling to, as well as the ideals that he would reject. In this chapter, Tucker describes the turbulence that was prevalent after Lenin's death and the ideas that split the Communist party in Russia.

In the next section of the book, the First Phase, Tucker describes the beginnings of Stalin's power claim, a phase in which Stalin is not yet in complete control; for a while at least, Stalin had to pretend as though he was a team player. Tucker discusses how Stalin tore apart the Communist Party from the inside, first taking the side of the Right side of the Party and then once the Left was cast out, he left those on the Right to attack them (Ch. 3 and 4). In this phase, Tucker gives the reader an idea of how clever Stalin was in defeating the opposition within the party and clearing the way for him to make a stronger claim to power. Tucker also shows how in this first phase, Stalin begins to be more obvious in his quest for fame and how ruthless he is willing to be in pursuit of that desire.

In the Second Phase, Stalin is more secure in his claim to power within the party and is more comfortable not only wielding his power but being more open about his power. Tucker describes Stalin in this stage as being able to act out his fantasies of his hero-image (Ch. 15). Tucker uses this section to emphasize the atrocities that Stalin committed in the quest for his hero-image and the way that this dream of his blinded him to what was good for Russia (or, Tucker argues, that Stalin just does not care in comparison to his goals).

*Stalin in Power* by Robert C. Tucker is an essential read for anyone interested in Stalin's acquisition to power and the motives behind it. It is cleverly written and uses a wealth of diverse sources to argue the point of Stalin desiring fame more so than power.

Darian McMillan

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Thomas J. Segrue. *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005. Pp. 432. \$19.95 (paper). ISBN 9780691162553.

In *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*, Thomas Segrue examines postwar Detroit's transformation from America's "arsenal of democracy" in the 1940s to a contemporary city plagued by unemployment, poverty, physical decay, and racial isolation (1). Segrue generally writes against the "underclass" debate, which focuses on a culture of poverty, economic restructuring, or the marginalization of cities in national social policy, to explain the urban crisis. Instead, he argues that the historical interplay of race, economics, and politics between the 1940s and 1960s laid the foundation for the "fiscal, social, and economic crises that confront urban America today" (5). Beneath the

façade of postwar prosperity in the 1950s, the convergence of deindustrialization, racial conflict, and politico-ideological conformity in northern industrial cities like Detroit fostered persistent urban inequality. In many ways, African Americans have disproportionately borne the impact of that inequality, which was primarily shaped and contested in the housing and labor markets of the postwar city. Using Detroit as a case study, Segreue illustrates the dynamics of American industrial capitalism including its manifestations in residential segregation and employment discrimination, and the deeply embedded struggles of postindustrial life.

When Detroit reached its industrial zenith in the 1940s, it was a city rife with growing racial tensions that unfolded in neighborhoods and workplaces. During World War II and the immediate postwar years, African Americans increasingly migrated to the urban North seeking steady, well-paying industrial jobs and the prospect of homeownership. However, they faced nearly insurmountable barriers – a combination of structural and human forces – that reinforced patterns of racial inequality. Though both blacks and whites suffered from the city's housing shortage until the mid-1950s, blacks had been confined to overcrowded, substandard housing in the inner city and a few scattered enclaves as well as systematically discriminated against through federal neighborhood classifications based on racial economic homogeneity, restrictive covenants, and institutionalized refusal to lend to blacks. While public housing offered a solution, the deference to localism within New Deal social programs allowed working- and middle-class homeowners to successfully rally against “negro housing” in their communities, ensuring only a few, racially-segregated projects (81). Moreover, African Americans faced various discriminatory hiring practices and were consistently relegated to low-paying, hazardous, and insecure jobs across Detroit industries. For instance, corporate management relied on personal references for hiring decisions (which was reinforced by segregated housing patterns) and union localism reflected individual workplace customs like racial divisions and the primacy of economic issues. Thus, casual black labor not only marked their vulnerability to market fluctuations, but also crystalized images of the black urban “underclass.”

As African Americans made occupational gains in the 1950s, Detroit began the process of deindustrialization which exacerbated their plight and had far-reaching consequences into the present. With the rise of powerful unions and technological advances, employers turned to automated production to increase output and reduce labor costs. Additionally, high labor costs and tax burdens, the lack of available land, and federal reallocations of the Cold War defense budget inspired “runaway shops” in the Midwest, South, and West (128). The relocation of industry and decline in entry-level manufacturing jobs not only transformed Detroit's industrial landscape, but disproportionately affected black migrants and youth (who lacked seniority or worked in unskilled sectors). The opening of the city's housing market in the 1950s and 1960s solidified class and spatial divisions among the African American community whereby “those who were able to obtain relatively secure, high-paying jobs were able to purchase their own homes [and] those who were trapped in poor-paying jobs and

thrown out of work by deindustrialization remained confined to the decaying inner-city neighborhoods” (188). As Segrue demonstrates, the simultaneous occurrence of economic dislocation and black mobility in postwar Detroit created a sense of crisis among white homeowners (214). Indeed, the homeowners’ movement was a response to blacks moving into formerly all-white neighborhoods and a concentrated effort to maintain racial boundaries. For many working- and middle-class whites, the crossing of residential color lines constituted an “invasion” of territory and a threat to their identities that justified violent retaliation.

*The Origins of the Urban Crisis* is an insightful and well-researched book that necessarily complicates post-World War II American history. While scholars have traditionally focused on America’s national affluence in the 1950s and attributed the decline of its inner cities to race riots of the 1960s, Segrue traces the “deeper, more tangled, and perhaps more intractable” roots of racialized poverty to an earlier historical period – the 1940s to 1960s. (5). His case study on Detroit utilizes letters, newspaper articles, census statistics, maps, survey data, and memoirs to effectively show how the confluence of race, class, and (residential) space during this critical period transformed the city. This work offers significant contributions to U.S. historiography including insights into racialized labor and relations in the postwar era, enduring class divisions among African Americans, and spatialized identities during the Cold War.

Vivian Tang

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Miroslava Chavez-Garcia. *Negotiating Conquest: Gender and Power in California, 1770s to 1880s*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2006. Pp. 241. \$39.95 (paper). ISBN 9780816526000.

*Negotiating Conquest* is a detailed work on the Spanish and Euro-American colonial periods in California, with a specific focus on the roles Indigenous and Hispanic women played during this time. These women faced severe hardships as California was invaded by Spanish soldiers and then later invaded again by white frontiersmen. *Negotiating Conquest* seeks to examine those hardships, and how women contested male power to lessen their burdens. It does not shy away from its subject matter and thoroughly conveys the agonies of this age.

The book is broken up into six chapters, with the first three devoted to the process of Spanish colonization and how Spanish colonial society functioned within (what was at the time) a remote and under-supplied region of New Spain/Mexico. It takes a blunt look at the atrocities committed by conquistadores against Native peoples, Native resistance to Spanish rule, and the fate of Native peoples as the Spanish became increasingly present in California. It also examines the role Spanish women played in helping quell the militant edge to Spanish male encroachment into California, and in stabilizing Californian Spanish society. It details the racial and gender-based hierarchy

set up in California by Spanish men, and then transitions into what became of that society after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Gold Rush. The last three chapters are devoted to how Spanish and Native women survived in what increasingly became a white man's world (as many of the white frontiersmen who came to California to take advantage of the Gold Rush arrived without female companions).

During both of these periods, women were disproportionately subjected to violence. The book covers both the mass rapes Native women endured and the abusive marriages Spanish women struggled to end for years even after divorce was legalized in California. But rather than focus solely on the damage Spanish and white men did to (usually outnumbered) women, the book examines how women sought to protect themselves and what lengths they would go in order to escape harm. Thus, the book's title, as it seeks to examine how women contested male power and how they negotiated their roles rather than submitted to them.

The book is full of rich and meticulous specifics, bringing the era to life without getting bogged down, using those details to flesh out the big picture and her arguments. The massive effort Chavez-Garcia went through while doing research is clear and pays off. Her analysis of primary sources is sound, as she regularly acknowledges holes in the record and does not claim what she cannot support with fact (though she does make reasonable speculations). She uses data from primary sources to form useful period statistics, and traces subtle changes in women's roles over time as the societies they lived in changed around them. She also looks at the limits of female power, and at the unsuccessful attempts as much as the successful ones. Overall, it is a thorough book that handles its content well and is absolutely worth reading.

*Megan Wilson*



## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

### Kyle Brislan

Kyle Brislan is currently pursuing an MA in History with special interests in Russian studies and transnational radicalism at California State University, Sacramento. In 2014, he graduated *magna cum laude* from Hawaii Pacific University with a BS in Diplomacy and Military Studies. He is the recipient of the George and Eleanor Craft Graduate Scholarship in History, Rose-Christenson History Research Travel Scholarship, and Faculty Graduate Writing Prize in History at Sacramento State. His current research focuses on the anarchist experience in Revolutionary Russia and the cultural effects of radical discourse on ideological heterogeneity. After completing his MA, Kyle plans to continue his education at the doctoral level, where he seeks to expand upon his current understanding of Russian and anarchist history.

### Alayna Kelly

Alayna Kelly graduated from California State University, Sacramento in May 2017. She completed her undergraduate studies with a BA in History and a minor in Education. Following graduation, Alayna enrolled in a master's program for Education through the University of Phoenix. As part of this program, Alayna will also obtain a single subject credential in Social Sciences. In the Fall of 2018, Alayna will begin her career in education at Woodland Christian School as a 9th grade English and 10th grade History teacher. Alayna currently resides in Woodland with her husband Torrance Kelly.

### Lisa Ward

Lisa Ward graduated from California State University, Sacramento with an MA in history in the Spring of 2017. She also received a MS in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling from Sacramento State and a BA in Art History from University of California, Davis. She specializes in U.S. History with an emphasis on gender studies and popular culture. For the past five years, she has taught U.S. History, American Government, Ethics in Society, and business courses at a vocational junior college. She recently began working as an adult education teacher at Highlands Community Charter School.

### Alayna Kelly

Alayna Kelly graduated from California State University, Sacramento in May 2017. She completed her undergraduate studies with a BA in History and a minor in Education. Following graduation, Alayna enrolled in a master's program for Education through the

University of Phoenix. As part of this program, Alayna will also obtain a single subject credential in Social Sciences. In the Fall of 2018, Alayna will begin her career in education at Woodland Christian School as a 9th grade English and 10th grade History teacher. Alayna currently resides in Woodland with her husband Torrance Kelly.

### **Christine Kennedy-Santos**

Christine Kennedy-Santos received her M.A. in history with specializations in American medical and twentieth-century Mexican-American history from California State University, Sacramento in 2018. She completed her BA in history at Sacramento State in 2014. Her research interests include the history of childbirth, midwifery, folk practices, and traditional methods of birthing, as well as alternative and folk medical practices surrounding immigrant communities and communities of color in American history. She has worked as a supplemental instruction leader with the Peer and Academic Resource Center at CSUS since 2017.

### **Michelle Trujillo**

Michelle Trujillo begins the Public History Master's Program at CSUS in Fall 2018. Her multi-cultural upbringing prompted a lifelong interest in history and archaeology. She has a B.A. in Communications with a minor in Film Studies and has run her own private business for the past thirteen years along with being a photographer and videographer.

### **Nicole Johnston**

Nicole Johnston graduated *summa cum laude* from Sacramento State in the Fall of 2017 with a BA in History. She hopes to someday put her interest in California history to use as a public historian, a career path that came to Nicole's attention during her current job as the office manager for a concrete-repair company that specializes in historical restoration. In the meantime, Nicole's historical research supports a variety of personal costuming, cooking, and fiction-writing projects.

### **Thomas Lerner**

Thomas Lerner and is currently completing his Master of Arts in History at California State University, Sacramento. He is specializing in U.S. History and U.S. foreign policy. He completed his Bachelor of Arts in Social Science at CSU Sacramento in 2014 after he received two Associate of Arts in 2011 from San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton, California. The Associate of Arts I received from there were in Interdisciplinary Studies-Social and Behavior Sciences and Teacher Education Preparation. He plans to begin a career in teaching after he completes my MA in the Fall of 2018.

## Moriah Ulinskas

Moriah Ulinskas is an audiovisual archivist whose work supports collections which fall outside mainstream historical narratives and institutions. From 2011 to 2017, she served as Diversity Chair for the Association of Moving Image Archivists, has been an organizing member of the Community Archiving Workshop since 2012, and was Preservation Program Director at the Bay Area Video Coalition from 2011 to 2014. She is a contributor to the recently published *Citizen Internees: A Second Look at Race and Citizenship in Japanese American Internment Camps* and is pursuing a PhD in Public History at UC Santa Barbara and CSU Sacramento.





## SCHOLARSHIPS, AWARDS, AND PRIZES 2016-2017

The History Department at California State University, Sacramento is proud to recognize our students' achievements in obtaining scholarships, awards, and prizes for the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 academic years. Congratulations!

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Aaron Jackson (\$250)

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Michelle Bowler (\$200)

### KENNETH N. OWENS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC HISTORY

Margo Lentz-Meyer (\$500)

Sydney Hinton (\$500)

### PETER H. SHATTUCK UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Alayna Campos (\$4,881.50)

Jalil Kochai (\$4,881.50)

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Westby Mize (\$1000)

### DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Nicole Allison (\$2,000)

### SENATOR NICHOLAS C. PETRIS SCHOLARSHIP IN HELLENIC STUDIES

Katherine Koulouris

Megan Bruner

Solon Skarlatos

Jason Dean

## SCHOLARSHIPS, AWARDS, AND PRIZES 2017-2018

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Spencer Gomez (\$2,000)

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Kyle Brislan (\$250)

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Kyle Brislan (\$500)

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Eric Wagner (\$1,000)

### PETER H. SHATTUCK UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Jose Guzman Dominguez (\$4,881.50)

Megan Radcliffe (\$4,881.50)

### THOMAS SWIFT SCHOLARSHIP

Jose Guzman Dominguez (\$3,000)

### DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Matthew Jacobs (\$2,000)

### SENATOR NICHOLAS C. PETRIS SCHOLARSHIP IN HELLENIC STUDIES

Katherine Koulouris (\$2,000)

Jose Guzman Dominguez (\$2,000)

Matthew Ray (\$1,000)



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