# Clio

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# CLIO

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# FROM THE EDITORS

We are pleased to present to you the thirty-first edition of Clio, Sacramento State's award-winning history publication. It is an understatement to say that this year's production was a first in many ways. The logistics of the Covid-19 pandemic meant that Clio was produced in a fully virtual work environment. The pandemic presented challenges we could not have ever foreseen. Our final product is a testament to the resolve and dedication of the history department at Sacramento State. The scholarship found within the pages of this journal is a record of the passions and achievements of the exceptional contributing authors and editorial staff of Clio.

For many of us, this journal represents unparalleled professional development and training for our future as scholars. Throughout this semester the Clio undergraduate and graduate students have learned the intricate processes of academic publishing; from submitting calls for papers, to selecting and evaluating submissions, to establishing positive collaboration between editors and authors for a polished academic journal.

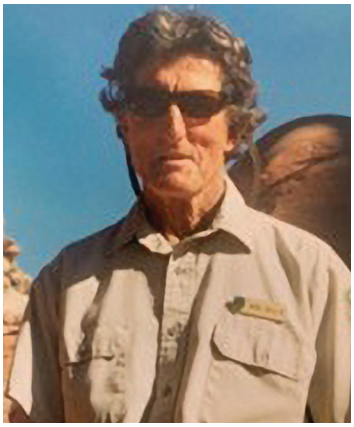
The editorial staff would like to extend our deepest appreciation to Dr. Aaron Cohen whose support and guidance made the production of this journal possible. We are heavily indebted to Stacie Tillman for keeping us on schedule and within budget. Thank you to Sheree Meyer and the Department of Arts and Letters for their continuing support of Clio and the students of the history department. Special thanks are due to our advertisers within campus and abroad, whose generous support has funded the production of Clio. Last, but certainty not least, we want to recognize the student editors and contributing authors who provided the bulk of the labor demanded of producing this year's journal under extraordinary conditions. None of this would have been possible without your contributions. As editors-in-chief, it was our honor to work with all of you.

Jonathan L. Brimer and Elvy Seyman Villados

# IN MEMORIAM

Michael Mullin (August 16, 1938 - May 27, 2020)

Memorial provided by Michael's domestic partner, Naneki Elliott.



Michael Mullin, known as Gerry to his earliest friends, was born August 16, 1938 in Los Angeles County, CA. On May 27, 2020, he died at age 81 at home in Green Valley, AZ, of cancer.

Michael grew up as a beach kid in Manhattan Beach, CA. He learned to swim early and swam in the ocean throughout his life even during the winter months. His family also lived briefly in the San Francisco Bay area and in the Chicago suburbs. He graduated in 1956 from Arcadia High School, Arcadia, CA., where he was a member of the track team. Michael loved to run and he continued this activity into his early 1970s.

Michael 's father wanted him to get a job right out of high school, but Michael wanted to continuehis education. Thanks to the encouragement of a neighbor, he applied and was accepted to UCSanta Barbara. In 1960 he received his B.A. in History and went on to get his M.A. at UCSB in the History of the High Middle Ages. He then was accepted for the Phd program at Berkeley where he was awarded a doctorate degree in American Colonial History with his Dissertation on Slave Resistance. His teaching career, spanning 39 years, included the City College of San Francisco, SmithCollege, University of Hull in East Yorkshire, England, Nottingham College in the UK and then Sac State from 1971 until 1995. Most of his teaching revolved around Colonial America. Withthe encouragement of one of his professors at Berkeley, he took his dissertation material and wrote his first book *Flight and Rebellion: Slave Resistance in Eighteenth-Century Virginia*, published by Oxford University Press and nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in 1972. In 1975 Harper & Row published his *Documentary History of American Negro Slavery*. In 1992 the University of Illinois Press published *Africa in America: Slave Acculturation and Resistance in the American South and the British Caribbean 1736-1831*. Just before he passed, Michael completed a draft of a new book, *Voices of the Underdog and*

*other Stories of People of Color Fighting Back Against Racism*, using the power of art and dance.

Michael was a life-long learner. Curious about everything, he read voraciously, not only books in his field of academic study but on a wide range of topics. As an intrepid explorer, you could find him constantly traveling to Asia, the Americas, Europe, and Australia. He haunted museums, taking copious notes of each painting or sculpture. Later in life he also developed an interest in Buddhist meditation and taught yoga to seniors for the last five years. He was born a lover of the sea and of the desert. His love of the desert began as a boy with childhood asthma who was sent off to the California high desert for holidays to clear his lungs. He would hike for hours even in the heat, exploring the terrain, reveling in its stark beauty and silence. This love of the desert led him, after retirement, to volunteer at such National Parks as Bandelier in New Mexico and Arches in Utah. Chaco Canyon, also in New Mexico, was his favorite. He volunteered as a campground host there for 17 years and that's where he met his domestic partner, Naneki Elliott, in 2005. They continued to volunteer at Arches and at Chaco together for several years. Michael began his academic career in Santa Barbara and that's where he and Naneki ended up residing for 11 years until one year ago when they moved to Green Valley. In the 15 years they were blessed to have together, they ventured out on 21 major trips ranging from the northwest to the southwest to the northeast of the U.S. and across Canada, Europe and Australia by RV, car, trains, planes and buses.Michael has been blessed with five children: Mike Mullin of Bend, OR; Jeannine Mullin of Woodland, CA; Sarah Mullin of Chico, CA; Matt Mullin of Davis, CA and Megan Damon of Lakewood, WA. He has ten grand-children.Many thanks to Arista Hospice for helping Michael during his final passage. Donations in honor of Michael can by made to his choice of Doctors Without Borders. Since his wish was to have his ashes scattered off the California coast in Santa Cruz, there will be a seaside ceremony there when the time is right.

I want to thank all of his friends and family for loving Michael for the true Renaissance man that he was. As one dear friend said, "I want you to leave me your hair and your brains." He has left us with the memory of those things and more: his generosity of spirit, his amazing aesthetic sense, his humor, his wisdom, his love for his family and friends, his love of the natural world, his embracing life to the fullest and, at the end, ever the teacher, his showing us how to embrace death with dignity and grace.

# Barriers and Bridges: The Third World Liberation Front and the Strategies of a Successful Strike

## Amber Verdugo

**Abstract:** For six months in 1968-69, Third World Liberation Front protests at San Francisco State University raged across the campus. The longest running student protests in U.S. history, the TWLF spread to university campuses across California, demanding greater diversity among staff, increased enrollment for students of color, and the creation of an ethnic studies department. The Third World Liberation Front strikes faced opposition from an administration resistant to change, misrepresentation by a biased media with a vested interest in the outcome, and frictions and prejudices within their own community that must be overcome to build a strong coalition with which to confront entrenched power structures and force change. Relying heavily on primary documents and writings of Third World Liberation Front leaders, I demonstrate how the Third World Liberation Front used the diversity of their community to overcome these challenges, in the interest of understanding how protest movements function and what makes them successful.

In 1967 tension was brewing at San Francisco State University. Black, Asian American, and Latinx students demanded more students of color be admitted and more professors of color be hired. Students of color collectively became aware of a curriculum committed to a form of educational imperialism which centered on European experiences and contributions, while ignoring or obscuring those of non-European peoples. The firing of an African-American graduate student working as a professor of English ignited the atmosphere of dissatisfaction. Students of color demanded self-determination, characterized as the ability to define their own identity rather than have it defined for them by a Eurocentric educational process. Armed with fifteen demands, they waged protests that disrupted classes and caused the resignation of two university presidents. The protests spread from San Francisco to UC Berkeley and beyond, culminating in the longest student strike in American history, and resulting in a dramatic change in university education.

In March of 1967, Black Student Union president Jimmy Garrett drafted a proposal for an Institute of Black Studies. Dr. Nathan Hare was hired to head the new department, but the administration was reluctant to provide funding. Students and faculty worked for more than two years to get a Black Studies program at SFSC before being told they would not get funding for it.[1] In an impromptu speech at Fresno State College, George Murray said, "we maintain that political power comes from the barrel of a gun," exhorting students to seize power from those who would not relinquish it.[2] Although those present stated Murray was speaking metaphorically, the administration accused him of encouraging student violence and promptly fired him.[3] They also shut down the proposals for black and ethnic studies, breaking their promises and leading students to believe a protest would be necessary to force change, "We have trusted white America long enough, she has betrayed our trust

1. "San Francisco State: On Strike," 1969, *The Newsreel.* https://archive.org/details/cbpf_000124.

2. Daryl Joji Maeda, "Campus Activism," in *Rethinking the Asian American Movement* (Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011), 35.

3. Daryl E. Lembke, "Suspension of Panther Instructor Considered," *Los Angeles Times,* October 31, 1968; Nancy J Adler, "Head of San Francisco State Resigns," *New York Times,* November 27, 1968.

for the last time. If she will not act, we must," the student actions proclaimed.[4] The Third World Liberation Front's Central Committee, previously engaged in planning a curriculum for the promised Ethnic Studies program, promptly shifted focus to planning a protest.[5]

The administration at San Francisco State University could not have expected the firing of one teacher to have such a dramatic impact. When the school fired George Murray, a master's student and part-time English professor, for his outspoken opposition to the Vietnam War, the action became a catalyst that set off an already tense situation between the Black Student's Union and the administration.[6] It became a rallying cry for the decolonization of education reaching more than eighteen universities before the end. In their efforts to wage a successful strike against the college, students overcame many obstacles. The administration was resistant to challenges to a system that benefited the entrenched power structure and were not shy about bringing in police to demonstrate their authority. The press, when it did not ignore the struggle, portrayed the students as militant radicals engaged in a childish battle for unrealistic goals. This mattered as the media has the power to define a movement. It produces the rhetoric through which the public understands what is happening and influences the positions the public takes. Additionally, the students had to overcome the tangible friction and prejudices between minority communities within the movement to build solidarity and prevent the movement from fracturing within. The Third World Liberation Front developed strategies borrowed from the civil rights movement and revolutionary forces in the global south to raise awareness and push back against the administration's policies. They used small, independent media to oppose large news organizations that sought to minimalize and undermine them. They strengthened connections both on campus and in the surrounding community, building support by building bridges to overcome the barriers stacked against them.

## The Administration

Relations between administration and students was acrimonious long before the firing of Murray. Accusations of racist practices were made against the school after an altercation at the school newspaper resulted in the summary expulsion of four black students.[7] In March, students from the Third World Liberation Front, as the student movement came to be called, occupied the campus YMCA office in protest of the firing of teacher Juan Martinez and to demand the school's acceptance of more students of color.[8] The student occupation lasted weeks, while President Summerskill resisted demands from Governor Ronald Reagan and the board of trustees to call police in to remove the demonstrators. Summerskill felt that police wielding batons and pepper spray would make an already delicate situation worse. He sympathized with student demands, saying "We must face the fact that they're dissatisfied

4. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, "Shut it Down! A College in Crisis, San Francisco State College, October, 1968 to April, 1969," Staff Report to the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence by William H. Orrick, Jr., 72. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED084943.pdf.

5. Maeda, "Campus Activism," 35-36.

6. Asal Ehsanipour, "Ethnic Studies: Born in the Bay Area from History's Biggest Student Strike," *KQED News*, July 30, 2020. https://www.kqed.org/news/11830384/how-the-longest-student-strike-in-u-s-history-created-ethnic-studies.

7. Helene Whitson, *Strike! A Chronology, Bibliography, and List of Archival Materials Concerning the 1968-1969 Strike at San Francisco State College* (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, National Institute of Education, Educational Resources Information Center). https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED158735.pdf.

8. Helene Whitson, *Strike!;* Daryl Joji Maeda, "Campus Activism," in *Rethinking the Asian American Movement* (Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011), 34.

with this world that we gave them and they're trying to correct our mistakes.'"[9] But after four hundred students engaged in a nine-hour student sit-in in his office, his patience was tested. Police were called in and twenty-six students were arrested. Facing criticism from trustees and Governor Reagan for not being more aggressive in his handling of the demonstrations, Summerskill resigned three days later, to be replaced as president by Robert Smith, whose short-lived reign would also be plagued with challenges from the Third World Liberation Front.[10]

San Francisco State University had always been the school for sons and daughters of immigrants and the working-class. The students commuting from the inner city graduated to become teachers and social workers for their communities.[11] This was not the school for wealthy students who spent their time partying in dorms; this was the school for students who lived at home and worked their way through. Unable to rely on scholarships or family money, roughly 80% of the students at San Francisco State held jobs to pay for their education.[12] San Francisco State was a community college; most of its students grew up on the blocks surrounding it. Yet many of the neighborhood youth found it inaccessible. While approximately 70% of students in San Francisco Unified School District were minorities, they made up only 4% of San Francisco State's enrollment.[13] Inspired by the successes of the civil rights movement, students at San Francisco State sought to redress the racial and economic disparities in their communities to create a college "more accessible and relevant to communities of color."[14]

The Third World Liberation Front formed in the spring of 1968 focusing on "the eradication of institutionalized racism."[15] The students coalesced around three goals: special admissions for minority students, the development of a Third World curriculum controlled by minority students and faculty, and control over faculty hiring and firing in their department, including the immediate reinstatement of George Murray. A coalition constructed from the existing clubs for minority students on campus including the Black Students Union (BSU), Asian American Political Association (AAPA), Pilipino American Collegiate Endeavor (PACE), and the Latin American Student Organization (LASO), the TWLF united students of color around self-determination and a desire for recognition of their own diverse cultures.[16] They presented fifteen demands to the administration including the creation of a Department of Black Studies with accompanying bachelor's degree program, the creation of a School of Ethnic Studies, the admission of all nonwhite students who applied in the Fall of 1969 without regard to their academic standing, and, importantly, that the college would not take disciplinary action against any students or staff for their participation in the strike.[17] They considered their demands non-negotiable and

9. "John Summerskill Resigns," *KPIX Eye on the Bay*. San Francisco: CBS5, February 22, 1968, Bay Area Television Archive. https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/sfbatv/bundles/187247.

10. Helene Whitson, *Strike! A Chronology, Bibliography, and List of Archival Materials Concerning the 1968-1969 Strike at San Francisco State College*. U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, National Institute of Education, Educational Resources Information Center. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED158735.pdf.

11. "San Francisco State: On Strike," 1969, *The Newsreel*. https://archive.org/details/cbpf_000124.

12. Maeda, "Campus Activism," 28.

13. Ehsanipour; "San Francisco State: On Strike."

14. Maeda, "Campus Activism," 29.

15. Kanji, "The Third World: A Response to Oppression," *Gidra*, April 1, 1969. Independent Voices. https://voices.revealdigital.org/?a=d&d=GIDRA19690401-01.2.1&e=-------en-20--1--txt-txIN----------1.

16. Karen Grigsby Bates and Shereen Marisol Meraji, "The Student Strike That Changed Higher Ed Forever," *Code Switch: NPR*, (March 21, 2019), https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2019/03/21/704930088/the-student-strike-that-changed-higher-ed-forever.

17. Whitson, *Strike*, 14-17.

were unwilling to compromise on the proposal they had outlined, as a Black Student Union leader stated, "The dog believes…that if we demand 10 things, all the niggers really want is 5."[18] Rather, the students demanded a yes or no response. Any counter proposal written by the college was seen as "a continuation of white elites dictating the needs of racial minorities."[19] The Administration's response to the TWLF demands was dismissive; Governor Reagan spoke disparagingly of "a little dissident group with their fifteen non-negotiable demands" while the *Los Angeles Times* stated the students' demands.[20] Meanwhile, some faculty members were "bemused by the mildness of the student's demands.[21]

While students hoped their demands would be met with little resistance, Professor Juan Martinez, an early ally of the TWLF, knew from experience that minority students "would have to create a multiracial coalition and engage in direct action if they wanted to force the institution to change."[22] After months of protests, sit-ins, occupying buildings, and demonstrations with little progress, the TWLF determined, with advice from Stokely Carmichael, that they must shut down the campus, "seize power if they want to transform the college."[23] The strike began on November 6th. By November 8th, class attendance was halved.[24] Although the media often portrayed the TWLF as "militant" or "radicals," the Third World Liberation Front operated with a strategic playbook that was evasive, yet provocative.

Taking a lesson from Robert Taber's *War of the Flea*, which covered guerilla tactics in places like Indochina and Cuba, the students used a variety of tactics to irritate and aggravate the administration, while spreading their message of overthrowing an educational system steeped in white supremacy. Initially, students engaged in minor acts of civil disobedience, known as the 'War of the Flea,' after Robert Taber's 1965 book of the same name, and intended to disrupt the smooth functioning of the college. Actions such as putting cherry bombs in toilets, clogging sinks, disrupting classes by "pounding on walls and chanting," interfered with the operations and served to "undermine the legitimacy of the existing order."[25] They undertook these actions in small teams which could spread throughout the campus to sow chaos. They set small fires, cut electrical cords, and generally spread mayhem and inconvenience wherever they went. After committing acts of mischief, they melted into the student body and disappeared. They saw these acts "less as strategies for victory and more as tactics to heighten consciousness" of the disparity of power between students and administration that all students shared.[26] It served to spread awareness of the protest and force the administration to respond.

Just as civil rights workers in the South recognized that the violence of the oppressor could be used a political weapon against them, the TWLF likewise deliberately

18. John H. Bunzel, "War of the Flea' at San Francisco State," *New York Times*, November 9, 1969.

19. Harvey Dong. "Third World Liberation Comes to San Francisco State and UC Berkeley," *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* (2009): 100.

20. *Asian Americans*. Season 1, Episode 4, "Generation Rising," PBS Documentaries, 2020; John Dreyfuss. "15 S.F. Demands: What College Militants Seek Some Will Be Granted, Others Seem Wholly Unattainable," *Los Angeles Times*, December 11, 1968.

21. Kay Boyle. "Excerpt from: The Long Walk at San Francisco State," In *Words That Must Somehow be Said: Selected Essays by Kay Boyle, 1927-1985*. (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1985), 79. https://archive.org/details/wordsthatmustsom00boyl/page/78/mode/2up.

22. Maeda, "Campus Activism," 34.

23. Maeda, "Campus Activism," 37.

24. Maeda, "Campus Activism," 38.

25. Ehsanipour; Joe Bartl, "Strike Violence Grows, Police Invade Campus," *The Daily Californian*, February 5, 1969. University of California, Berkeley Digital Collections; Bunzel, "War of the Flea."

26. Maeda, "Campus Activism," 38.

encouraged retribution from the those in power. They understood creating conditions that forced retaliation would lead to success. When university administration called in police in response to the protests, it played right into the TWLF's strategies because "if a police overreaction can be provoked…radical activists win immediate converts among the so-called 'silent majority.'"[27] While a BSU flyer promoting a campus demonstration stated, "at the request of the Third World students, we will try to avoid any confrontations with the police," however, those confrontations, when they came, would generate the support that the Third World students needed if their movement was to succeed.[28] As protestors interrupted classrooms to encourage other students to support them, the San Francisco Police Tactical unit was called out, at one point engaging with approximately 2000 student protesters who they threatened with weapons and beat with batons.[29]

While some claimed the activists were responsible for "forcing the college to call the police, and forcing the police to use violence," many faculty members questioned the administration's decision to bring police on campus.[30] They were dismayed at the violence of the police response as "the vigorously growing progressive student movement…was ruthlessly suppressed by large numbers of helmeted police sent by authorities."[31] On November 13th, after a week of widespread vandalism, violent police reprisals, and multiple arrests, the faculty began discussing a strike of their own in solidarity with the students. Faculty meeting notes stated, "the instructional program of (San Francisco State) is hereby suspended indefinitely effective immediately…until solutions are determined."[32] On November 20th, President Smith initiated a Convocation with the Third World Liberation Front to discuss their demands, a move which "Governor Ronald Reagan…condemned as 'further vacillation,'" demanding the college immediately reopen.[33] Meanwhile, the Strike Committee felt Smith's address dealt solely with a desire to reopen the college and did not seriously consider the students' demands. They determined that "only through collective action of students and faculty united and striking…will the trustees yield."[34] Exasperated by his inability to reach resolution between "militant student groups and the political forces of the state," President Smith resigned on November 27, 1968.[35] He was immediately replaced by S.I. Hayakawa, a linguist and English professor who had no interest in embracing the diversity in his student population. Hayakawa believed racism was simply a failure of language, and assimilation was the only way to end it.[36] In a press conference, Hayakawa spoke about the ethnic studies program, claiming there was no need for one because "Sansei can always relate to Japan if he is dissatisfied with

27. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. "Shut it Down! A College in Crisis, San Francisco State College, October 1968 to April, 1969," Staff Report to the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence by William H. Orrick, Jr., 154. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED084943.pdf.

28. Black Students Union, San Francisco State. "No One is Free Unless Everyone is Free," November 7, 1968. 1968-1969 San Francisco State College Strike Collection. University Archives, J. Paul Leonard Library, San Francisco State University. http://digital-collections.library.sfsu.edu/digital/collection/p16737coll7/id/440.

29. Dong, "Third World Liberation," 101.

30. Bunzel, "War of the Flea."

31. "Pocka Pocka Pocka Zap!" *AFT Weekly News*, vol 1, No 2, February 14, 1969. SF State College Strike Collection. https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/strike/bundles/237244.

32. "Faculty Actions (Week of November 12-15)," Notes from San Francisco State College Faculty meeting, 15 November 1968. SF State College Strike Collection. https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/strike/bundles/187920.

33. "California Board Meets," New York Times (1923-Current File), November 26, 1968.

34. "No Negotiation/Smith Unmasked," San Francisco State Strike Committee notes. November 20, 1968. SF State College Strike Collection. https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/strike/bundles/187959.

35. Nancy J Adler, "Head of San Francisco State Resigns," *New York Times (1923-Current File),* November 27, 1968.

36. Daryl J. Maeda, "Down with Hayakawa!" in *Chains of Babylon: The Rise of Asian America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 41, 46.

American society," indicating any student who did not care to assimilate into white America, could essentially go back where they, or their family, came from.[37]

"Hayakawa vows firm control," the headline to the *Los Angeles Times* article proclaimed as President S.I. Hayakawa assumed command of the school.[38] Hayakawa was militantly opposed to the protests, which he felt were akin to anarchy and he vowed to stand firm against them.[39] He was willing to take drastic action to end the disruption to campus operation, declaring that students found to be interfering with campus activities would be suspended and possibly expelled, and faculty members who did not meet with their classes would be subject to disciplinary action.[40] According to Hayakawa, "There are no innocent bystanders in this situation, because a bystander, even if innocent in intent, serves to shield with his body the activities of troublemakers."[41] After Hayakawa declared a state of emergency and banned students from assembling as well as the use of amplifiers on campus, the TWLF parked a truck with amplifiers in the back on a street outside the campus entrance where they were picketing. Hayakawa mounted the truck and tore the electrical wires out of the amplifier in an incident that made him "a hero to conservatives."[42] After a particularly violent confrontation between 300 police and more than 4000 protesters that resulted in many injuries and several suspensions, Hayakawa gleefully declared it to be the "Most exciting time I have had since my 10th birthday!"[43]

Student activists responded to Hayakawa's intransigence by doubling down on the strike. Borrowing the tactic of coercive violence used by the NAACP to enforce boycotts of segregated businesses in the south, protesters aggressively discouraged students from breaking the strike.[44] Fights would frequently break out as protesters prevented students from crossing the picket lines.[45] Indicating their willingness to enforce the strike, the Strike Committee at San Francisco State stated, "Their presence in classrooms is both the basis for striking students to take militant action… and the justification of Hayakawa for sending in the pigs."[46] Through their actions, strike breaking students were putting the protesters at risk. When confronted about the use of violence, one student responded, "Why do people in this country condone the violence of police and the army in Viet Nam, but condemn the violence of Third World peoples who have no recourse?"[47] Choosing to directly challenge those who did not support the protest, students made their demands impossible to ignore and created a campus that was unwelcoming for detractors. Fiery speeches by BSU and TWLF students helped bolster activists and gave them the courage to face down the police violence and the administration's retaliation. Mexican American Student Confederation (MASC) leader and member of the TWLF Manuel Delgado recognized

37. Editorial. "Fantasy in Our Schools," *Gidra*, Vol 1. Issue 2, May 1, 1969. Independent Voices. https://voices.revealdigital.org/?a=d&d=GIDRA19690501-01&e=-------en-20--1--txt-txIN----------1.

38. Daryl E. Lembke and John Dreyfuss, "SF State Opens: Disorder Erupts," *Los Angeles Times*, December 31, 1968.

39. "SF State on Strike."

40. S. I. Hayakawa, "Declaration of Emergency," 2 December 1968. SF State College Strike Collection. https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/strike/bundles/187927.

41. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, "Shut it Down!" 153.

42. Maeda, "Campus Activism," 41.

43. "Hayakawa: Reign of Terror," *The Daily Gater*, December 5, 1968. San Francisco State University Digital Repository. https://sfsu-dspace.calstate.edu/bitstream/handle/10211.3/159532/Dec_5_1968.pdf?sequence=1.

44. Akinyele Omowale Umoja, "We Didn't Turn No Jaws," In *We Will Shoot Back: Armed Resistance in the Mississippi Freedom Movement*, (New York: New York University Press, 2013), 162.

45. "20 at Berkeley Are Held in Clash: 10 Are Injured When Police Battle Demonstrators," *New York Times*, February 5, 1969.

46. Strike Committee, "Hayakawa's 'Most Exciting Day,'" December 4, 1968. SF State College Strike Collection. https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/strike/bundles/187958.

47. Kanji. "The Third World."

the importance of the strike's goals, "We understood that there was a larger struggle for freedom, privilege and respect for Third World people that we had to be a part of," regardless of the consequences.[48]

In addition to arresting and suspending students, Hayakawa took additional measures to punish those who supported the strike. After the Reverend Cecil Williams was paid a $400 speaking fee by the student government, a fee which was proclaimed "Extraordinarily high" by President Hayakawa, Reverend Williams promptly signed it over to the TWLF. This action prompted Hayakawa to accuse the student government of using its finances to "subsidize campus turmoil."[49] Shortly thereafter, several officers of the Associated Student Union were removed from their positions for allegedly diverting funds to the Black Student Union and Third World Liberation Front in a blatant attempt by Hayakawa to suppress dissent through punitive measures.[50] Hayakawa sought to demonstrate that participants and those who supported them would be punished. He suspended two African American professors for disrupting his speech to the faculty, stripped control of student funds from the student government, and summarily fired lecturer Kay Boyle after she defended student protesters.[51] Nesbit Crutchfield, leader of the Black Students Union, was arrested for "illegal assembly, resisting arrest and intent to injure and maim."[52] He spent more than 16 months in jail.

Images of police beating and kicking students, and bloodied student faces flooded the news. In response to accusations of police brutality, the Board of Governors claimed to have investigated and found "99% turn out to be false…Just remember that there is no pretty way to make an arrest."[53] In response to questions from faculty and reporters, they replied, "there are those who have the power to put an end to this whole violent thing immediately and they are choosing not to do it," thus, putting the responsibility for not being beaten by police on the protesters. [54] By doing this, the Board of Governors indicated their alignment with conservatives who believed the students anti-colonial ideology was the cause of their suppression, rather than a reaction to it. Students for a Democratic Society in their support of the strike stated, "Hayakawa thought if he used enough police terror we would quit and give up the strike, but instead…(we) met their clubs and mace with rocks and bottles."[55] The choice to resort to police, with their liberal use of batons, tear gas, and arrests, to stifle the protests enraged the faculty and increased the activist's audience. The violence gained the attention of the press and drummed up support for the Third World Liberation Front's cause. By choosing to fight back, the university ultimately lost the fight as the "brutal and poorly disciplined police department" radicalized the campus community and led to the most sensational campus revolt ever seen.[56]

Influenced by the civil rights movement and guerilla forces in Africa and South America, the Third World Liberation Front developed an impressive set of strategies.

48. Harvey C. Dong, "The Origins and Trajectory of Asian American Political Activism in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1968-1978 (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2002), 57.

49. "California Checks Finances at State College: Investigation Begun in July on Student Government -- One Fee Stirs Furor," *New York Times*, December 24, 1968.

50. "Student Officers Ousted," *New York Times*, February 18, 1969.

51. Semas, Phil. "Tet Offensive at SF State," *The Daily Californian,* February 18, 1969. University of California, Berkeley Digital Collections; Lembke and Dreyfus, "SF State Opens."

52. Ehsanipour, "Ethnic Studies."

53. "San Francisco State: On Strike."

54. "San Francisco State: On Strike."

55. Students for a Democratic Society, "Chapter Position on SF Strike," *New Left Notes*, December 23, 1968. *Independent Voices.*

56. "Pocka Pocka Pocka Zap!"

Their tactics included hit-and-run style vandalism, disruptive behaviors impeded the learning environment, direct confrontations with detractors, and sinuous protest marches that evaded capture while effectively spreading the movement's message. These tactics served to raise the campus's political consciousness and reinforce the Third World activist's dedication to their cause while making campus operations nearly impossible and making themselves impossible to ignore.

**The Media**

The sidewalk in front of the *San Francisco Chronicle* building was completely blocked with students picketing the offices. More than fifty students marched, carrying signs and drawing the attention of reporters and passersby as they protested the coverage that newspapers, including the *Chronicle*, had been giving the Third World Liberation Front strike. According to student spokesperson Garner DeMarco, "The press has slandered the strike and lied about the nature of what black and white people in this country are fighting for."[57] DeMarco contended the bias from the press came as no great surprise as the board of trustees for the school contained members who represented each of the major bay area newspaper associations, Hurst, Time-Mirror and Ritter.[58] Whether the claim of bias can be entirely attributed to this fact or not, it is nonetheless true that the large area newspapers treated the strikers with a mixture of contempt and sensationalism.

The way the media chooses to frame a story has the power to inform or mislead an audience. It can promote a cause or strip a protest of legitimacy. Large media companies often find themselves beholden to those in power. With interested parties entrenched in the system (or on the board of trustees), they often use language which minimizes protesters and upholds existing power structures, or makes protesters appear as militant terrorists rather than rational actors seeking the public good. Independent and student-run media gave potency to protesters, assigning them agency, a voice, and stressing the legitimacy of their demands. The language they used obscured or minimized the violence generated by protesters and highlighted the violence committed by agents of power. Images of police, theoretically dedicated to protect and serve, were shown beating students bloody with batons filled newspapers. Depending on how the media framed those images, this brutality could appear a reasonable response to a dangerous mob or alarming oppression of the legitimate exercise of free speech. In the pages of independent journalism, students hurling rocks in the face of such brutality looked like heroism, not thuggery.

The media's choice of language had the ability to distort the balance of power between students and authorities. The media relies heavily on a handful of framing devices they rely on when confronted with a protest movement, including trivialization (underplaying or making them seem insignificant), marginalization (making a movement's members seem unrepresentative of society as a whole), relying on authorities for information, rather than on the members of the movement itself, and focusing on violence.[59] A *Los Angeles Times* article stressed the "ridiculous" nature of the TWLF demands, while the *New York Times* infers that the striking teachers are

57. "The Turning Point: The San Francisco State '68 Strike," *Labor Video Project* (0:15:03), published December 8, 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qd6-P3kHRBY **due to sound quality of old video footage, I am not confident of the name of the speaker and am making my best guess.

58. "The Turning Point: The San Francisco State '68 Strike."

59. Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 29.

merely envious of their better paid peers across the bay, trivializing the important changes they are attempting to make in their school.[60] The same *New York Times* article insinuated that "beatniks" and "hippies" are influencing the protest, making it clear the demonstrators are not really part of normal society.[61] These papers rarely bothered to interview the strike leaders, preferring to rely on interviews from authority figures. The *Los Angeles Times* quotes Hayakawa as he rejects the "BSU disruptions and threats of gangsterism," meanwhile Governor Reagan is quoted referring to "the so-called teacher's strike" and patronizing the students who he says, "are finally willing to go inside and talk like they always should have."[62]

But focusing on the violence of the protests was what the media excelled at. Reporter Art Seidenbaum painted a picture of chaos and war-like scenes at the student strike, stating that "SF State suffered a guerilla action," a term which would have been particularly loaded against the backdrop of the Vietnam War, this painted the demonstrators as enemy combatants against the state, with students unsure if they were "commuting to classes or combat." Seidenbaum's language describes the protesters as "older" "street people" from "ghettos" and stressed the similarities between the police and the students: both used walkie talkies, both had nonlethal weapons (never mind that the students had rocks and sandwiches, while the "nonlethal weapons" of the police consisted of batons, tear gas and mace).[63] This use of language was an attempt to put the students on equal footing with the police, as though they were evenly matched armies facing each other across a battlefield. In another *LA Times* article, readers were informed that "negro militants have purchased seventy-six concealable weapons,"[64] implying that BSU funds had been used to purchase the weapons with the intention of forcing a favorable resolution of the SF State strike, despite protests from the BSU bookkeeper to the contrary. Meanwhile, a *New York Times* article depicted students as the aggressors against the victimized police, "students armed with rocks and with picket sign poles two inches square…drove a dozen policemen into the library" where they remained until they were "rescued" by their peers.[65] The same article illustrated who the aggressors were: "Negroes, Asians, American-Indians, and other nonwhites."[66] Considering the historical background of Native Americans being referred to as savages, common stereotypes of African Americans as aggressive and violent, as well as the context of an ongoing war with an Asian country, this language was inflammatory and certain to paint a mental picture of a dangerously uncivilized mob attacking the campus.

In a culture where most Americans got their information from a handful of newspapers all delivering an analogous message, there was little space for an opposition movement to define itself outside of that media environment.[67] To counter this, the Third World movement relied upon student journalists and small, independent newspapers to generate their own imaging of who they were and what they were after. In comparison to the picture the *LA Times* and other large newspapers presented

60. Dreyfuss, "15 S.F. Demands;" Lawrence E. Davies, "Coast College Unrest: San Francisco Liberalism and Faculty Envy of Berkeley Viewed as Factors," *New York Times*, Jan 11, 1969.

61. Lawrence E. Davies, "Coast College Unrest."

62. Art Seidenbaum, "San Francisco State; Shambles on 19th Ave: Sixth in a Series S.F. State," *Los Angeles Times* June 8, 1969, L12; "Reagan 'Gratified' by UC Berkeley Action," *Los Angeles Times*, March 15, 1969.

63. Art Seidenbaum, "San Francisco State."

64. "Student Funds at S.F. State Tied to Gun Purchase: Investigators Say Check made Out to BSU Official was used to Buy Weapon," *Los Angeles Times*, December 26, 1968, 3.

65. Lawrence E. Davies, "380 Arrested at San Francisco as Students Clash with Police," *New York Times*, January 24, 1969.

66. Davies, "380 Arrested at San Francisco as Students Clash with Police."

67. Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, 3.

of the strike, writer for *The Daily Californian*, Joe Bartl, titled his article "Police Invade Campus," making it clear the hostile intruder was not the students, but the police. Bartl reported on campus violence, such as students attempting to cross the picket line being attacked by strikers, and the attack on a plainclothes police officer which resulted in a violent melee, but his approach made no secret of his perspective on the legitimacy of the police presence. [68] In an editorial in the same paper, the author used graphic imagery of "the blood stained beast (which) stalks the campus" in describing police committing acts of brutality against protesters, and even against students who were simply on their way to class, and delivering "deliberate, vicious, and unprovoked beatings upon prisoners."[69] Press that was friendly to the strike referenced civil rights issues and focused on violence committed by police, presenting protester's violence as a reasonable response, "The bloody arrest of TWLF spokesman Jim Nabors yesterday provoked a series of battles between police and striking students," student journalist Michael Hall informed his readers, justifying the defensive violence of students as they attempt to protect one of their leaders from inhumane treatment by police.[70] In support of the movement's goals, a *Gidra* editorial stated, "Ethnic studies will tell everyone about the contributions of the heretofore ignored people of color."[71] Recognizing the legitimacy of the movement's voices, *Gidra* writer Kanji gave space for movement leaders to define the meaning of their movement, "The TWLF identifies with the economically, politically, and militarily exploited and oppressed peoples throughout the world," Dr. Juan Martinez is quoted as saying.[72]

Faced with an unsympathetic media with a history of viewing opposition movements in terms of conflict and deviance, the Third World Liberation Front found allies among small, independent journalists that helped balance the message being presented by the major media sources. While large newspapers presented the protesters as needlessly violent and destructive, and the movements goals as unreasonable and radical, voices from *The Daily Californian, Gidra* and others helped counter that with depictions of unhinged violence on the part of the police, and helped clarify the aims of the TWLF as important and realistic, while giving space for the movement to speak for itself.

**The Community**

Overcoming forces of caustic assimilation and racism required a strong community. Protestors faced pushback from those, like Hayakawa, who wanted to retain the status quo and who believed the solution to racial prejudice was assimilation—in essence, if the students were not so diverse, then no one will be bothered by their diversity. But white society had continuously chosen to shut out minorities, regardless of attempts to acculturate, leading the Third World Liberation Front to "(seek) their own methods of change and growth," said BSU leader James Garrett.[73] These methods included embracing their own unique cultural diversity, rather than choos-

68. Joe Bartl, "Strike Violence Grows."

69. "The Horror," *The Daily Californian, Editorial*, February 19, 1969. University of California Berkeley Digital Collections. https://digicoll.lib.berkeley.edu/record/53318?ln=en#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&r=0&xywh=-1636%2C-389%2C12799%2C7777.

70. Michael Hall, "Jim Nabors Beaten," *The Daily Californian*, February 19, 1969. University of California, Berkeley Digital Collections. https://digicoll.lib.berkeley.edu/record/53318?ln=en#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&r=0&xywh=-1636%2C-389%2C12799%2C7777.

71. "Fantasy in Our Schools," *Gidra*, editorial, Densho Digital Repository.

72. Kanji, "The Third World."

73. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. "Shut it Down!" 73.

ing to assimilate into a white society that seemed to have no place for them. The movement also faced attacks from the National Socialist Liberation Front (NSLF), a student activist arm of the National Socialist White People's Party. The NSLF launched a counterprotest to the TWLF accusing black students at San Francisco State of destroying the college, "a gang of subhuman blacks behaving like a tribe of lobotomized, antisocial chimpanzees at your school" were proof that "Higher education and Negroes do not mix" according to flyers inviting students to meetings to discuss their "FINAL SOLUTION" to the problem.[74] Building the community that could stand strong against this toxic environment was the most important work of the TWLF, and it came with its own set of challenges.

Integrating the manifold needs and concerns of the diverse groups into a single focus was integral to the success of the Third World Liberation Front. Solidarity between the disparate groups was aided by the efforts of members of the Black Panther Party "whose platform called for multiracial unity."[75] The success of this strike hinged on uniting "Asian American, Black, Latino and Native American students in a multiracial Third World coalition."[76] To ensure each ethnicity was equally represented, the Central Committee for building the Institute for the Development of Ethnic Studies was comprised of two delegates from each of the represented student groups. The TWLF understood "that race impacted each of its constituents, but in different ways that necessitated specificity in research and teaching."[77] Respect for each other's different needs in the context of the shared experience of imperialism helped to unite the students. The choice to work with existing student groups, the AAPA, BSU, LASO, ICSA and PACE, among others, rather than attempting to build a coalition from scratch, allowed the Third World Liberation Front to benefit from existing organizational structures and membership rolls, giving them the advantage of producing an organization with large numbers quickly, formed from students who knew and trusted each other and had the necessary skills for effective activism. The Third World Liberation Front announced itself to the campus community with a cultural festival featuring music and dances from their many traditions.[78] In this way, they presented themselves as an interesting and exciting addition to their campus and spread awareness of who they were and what they represented in a manner that captured the attention of their fellow classmates, while also celebrating the unique aspects of the cultures of which they were proud.

In order to function successfully, the TWLF had to overcome significant differences between groups that to outsiders appeared largely monolithic. The 1960s were a period of intense unrest around a growing sense of injustice coupled with a collective awareness of group identity which would later be termed "identity politics." The term "Asian American" did not yet exist in America; all Asians were considered "Orientals" to non-Asians, while within their enclaves they were "Filipino" or "Chinese" or "Nissei." Their differing cultures, and even ancient rivalries between their "homelands" that served to create tension between communities were all challenges to overcome in the effort to create the unifying awareness and solidarity necessary to succeed as a movement. In 1968 at UC Berkeley, two students, Emma Gee and Yuji Ichioka, created the Asian American Political Alliance (AAPA) to "(increase)

74. "Had Enough Whitey?" flyer from National Socialist Liberation Front, November 1968. SF State College Strike Collection. https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/strike/bundles/187940.

75. Dong, "Third World Liberation," 101.

76. Maeda, "Campus Activism," 29.

77. Maeda, "Campus Activism," 35.

78. Maeda, "Campus Activism," 35.

visibility of activists of Asian descent" and coined the term Asian American. Gee and Ichioka understood that for Asians to have a political presence, they needed to work together. Giving them a collective identity "also helped unite activists in their fight for greater equality."[79] Richard Aoki, an early member of the AAPA, stated in discussing the importance of crafting your own identity, "Oriental was a rug that everyone steps on, so we ain't no Orientals."[80] When Penny Nakatsu formed a branch of the AAPA at San Francisco State, she created it to be "explicitly pan-Asian," embracing all students of Asian descent.[81] While many Asian American students did not feel SF State offered them an environment that respected their experiences, here they found a space that welcomed them.

Each group brought unique skills to the endeavor, as well as bridges into their communities that allowed for outreach and raising awareness. In addition to building a strong coalition on campus, students of the Third World Liberation Front reached out to their communities in the Bay Area, forming strong bridges that bound the community to the cause of supporting the Ethnic Studies Program and the Third World Liberation Front protests. Much of this grew from structures that the student groups within the TWLF had already established. The Pilipino American Collegiate Endeavor (PACE) had a counseling center in the Mission district which held social events and encouraged Filipino youth to attend San Francisco State. They understood the importance of outreach to rural areas as well as urban, and had supported farmworkers in the grape strike through a campus boycott of grapes which worked to bridge the college experience with existing community needs while forging cross-cultural bonds with the Mexican American students who were also embedded in the boycott.[82] Likewise, the Intercollegiate Chinese for Social Action (ICSA) had long maintained a center in Chinatown which offered tutoring and college readiness from which they had built strong community ties of familiarity and trust. BSU student outreach to ICSA was fundamental to convincing the Chinese students to join the TWLF as they initially felt they had nothing in common with the struggles of black students. Highlighting their shared experiences of discrimination, BSU students were able to connect the ICSA to their own desire for a more equitable society and encourage their participation.[83] The diverse cultures brought their own unique experiences and perspectives to the Third World Liberation Front, building and strengthening it. A flyer for a TWLF meeting urged Nisei and Sansei students to involve themselves to ensure that all concerns were discussed and considered, "It is urgent that all Japanese-American students of San Francisco State college attend this discussion!!! (Bring your parents)" the flyer reads.[84] Including their parents reflected the respect Japanese students had for the older members of their families, but it also illustrated an understanding that community relationships were fundamental to gaining support for the strike, a tactic gleaned from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

79. Anna Purna Kambhampaty, "In 1968, These Activists Coined the Term 'Asian American'—And Helped Shape Decades of Advocacy," *Time Magazine,* May 22, 2020.

80. Diane C. Fujino, *Samurai among Panthers: Richard Aoki on Race, Resistance, and a Paradoxical Life.* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 170.

81. Maeda, "Campus Activism," 32.

82. Ling-Chi Wang, "Chronology of Ethnic Studies at U.C. Berkeley," Newsletter of the Department of Ethnic Studies at U.C. Berkeley, 2, Number 2 (Spring 1997), https://web.archive.org/web/20100609201451/http://ethnicstudies.berkeley.edu/documents/Chronology%20of%20Ethnic%20Studies.pdf; Harvey C. Dong, "The Origins and Trajectory of Asian American Political Activism," 42, 54.

83. Maeda, "Campus Activism," 31.

84. "Nisei and Sansei Students! Are You Completely Uninvolved, Disinterested?" BSU-TWLF meeting flyer. December 1968. SF State College Strike Collection. https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/strike/bundles/187907.

In addition to building community between the various ethnic groups on campus, Third World Liberation Front students understood it was necessary to build bridges with the community outside of the campus; this was a "major strength" for the TWLF.[85] Power structures that feel threatened by change would not support those changes, so it was crucial to garner support from those within the community that could push for that change. By gaining the support of faculty, labor unions and crucially, the surrounding neighborhoods, including the parents of TWLF students, the movement was able to apply pressure on those who had authority.[86]

When Hayakawa was hired to replace President Smith, Asian American students found themselves faced with another challenge. As the first Japanese American appointed to head any major educational institution, many Asian Americans wanted to support Hayakawa. Yet what he represented was assimilation and the denial of unique Asian American cultures. Invited to speak at the California Intercollegiate Nisei Organization, Hayakawa had refused, stating that the only racial barriers Japanese-Americans faced were maintained by this type of ethnically exclusive social group which "should cease to exist."[87] To combat Hayakawa's influence, Asian American TWLF members had to mobilize their communities against him. It became "a struggle for the hearts and minds of the Asian American community." While giving a speech at Disneyland Hotel, Hayakawa was picketed by students from various California campuses in support of the TWLF strike. Carrying signs that read "Hayakawa is a banana!" (Yellow on the outside, white on the inside), and "Hayakawa does not represent us!" they marched outside of the hotel, while inside Hayakawa spoke to members of the Japanese American Citizens League, stating "The Sansei should not be imitating the Negro. He should be urging the Negro to imitate the Nisei."[88]

The majority of the population of SF State was white, and without the support of white students, the strike had no hope of success. In this endeavor, Students for a Democratic Society were welcome allies, "We (maintain) black and Third World students should be in leadership of their own strike…our main role should be to help build support among white students," SDS proclaimed in their newsletter. [89] White students were not allowed to join the TWLF, for "if the TWLF sought to empower Third World peoples, it would not do to acquiesce to white leadership," but many supported the strike and participated in marches and demonstrations. [90] For many, the "Third World is a state of mind, an attitude toward oppression, rather than a color of skin."[91] Where students felt the administration tried "to divide (them), white against black and brown and yellow," the demonstrators focused on class solidarity, rather than racial differences, believing the "Holy Trinity" of Big Business, the School, and the Government, feared "thousands of students and community people" fighting against racism and in the interest of the working class.[92]

The Third World Liberation Front demonstrated a willingness to reach across racial and ethnic lines, to recognize the struggle they shared was not really about

85. Dong, "Third World Liberation," 98.

86. Melanie Young, "The Strike That Led to the Country's First Ethnic Studies Program," *KALW Local Public Radio*, November 29, 2018, https://www.kalw.org/post/strike-led-countrys-first-ethnic-studies-department#stream/0.

87. Maeda, "Down with Hayakawa," 49.

88. Laura Ho, "Pigs, Pickets, and a Banana," *Gidra*, Vol 1. Issue 2, May 1, 1969. Independent Voices.

89. Students for a Democratic Society, "Chapter Position on SF Strike."

90. Maeda, "Campus Activism," 36.

91. Kanji, "The Third World."

92. Black Students Union, San Francisco State. "No One is Free Unless Everyone is Free"; Students for a Democratic Society, "Advance Under Attack!" Flyer for SDS meeting. SF State College Strike Collection. https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/strike/bundles/187964.

the color of their skin, but rather part of a larger struggle against being "educated and trained to sustain, rationalize or justify an expansionist, capitalist, imperialist society."[93] The TWLF was not just interested in improving conditions at SF State. They were determined to build a curriculum that would include "community-oriented courses that served the needs of working-class ethnic communities rather than corporations."[94] They saw their actions as part of a larger movement in solidarity with minority and Third World peoples everywhere, a global community committed to creating a more just world. Manuel Delgado said, "Generally speaking, minorities didn't go around backing each other up," but the experience of struggling together for greater control over their education, for recognition of the contributions of Third World people, strengthened bonds and created community.[95]

**Conclusion**

On March 6th, 1969, Tim Peebles, a student and BSU member, attempted to set off a bomb in the Creative Arts Building. The bomb went off prematurely, Peebles was blinded by the explosive flash, and his chest was crushed.[96] The act of sabotage nearly cost him his life, but it succeeded in its intended purpose: the administration took notice. After months of marches, disruptions, arrests, suspensions, and now this dramatic act of sabotage, the administration was finally willing to settle. By March 21st, the strike had ended. The administration negotiated with students and granted the majority of their demands, including the admission of more minority students, the creation of a School of Ethnic Studies with "non-discriminatory" admission and staffing policies, and outreach "to actively recruit non-white students."[97] While the work of creating an entirely new department from scratch was a daunting task, it could now begin, providing a place where students of diverse ethnicities could learn about each other and themselves.

The expectation that minority students would assimilate and absorb white, western culture was a colonization of the mind, imperialism through higher education. It was a reflection of who holds power. The Third World Liberation Front protests were a denial of the superiority of white culture. It was a demand for recognition of the worthiness of their own cultures and an unwillingness to submit to cultural sabotage. The TWLF wanted to make a school that would create "people who are aware of the context from which they come. They are not stripped from their culture, but enriched."[98] The students wanted to implement a new kind of education, one that would serve the needs of all students—white, black, yellow, brown—and respect all cultures. At its height, 80% of the college was not attending class in support of the strike to demand a change to the classist and racist nature of education, and a desire for an education that would raise consciousness of why poverty and racism persisted.[99] Looking back on the protests, BSU leader James Garrett said, "I felt then and think now, that an organized minority controls the world."[100]

In 1968, universities teaching from a white, western perspective was the norm. The

93. Kanji, "The Third World," *Gidra.*

94. Fujino, *Samurai among Panthers*, 212.

95. Fujino, *Samurai among Panthers,* 211.

96. United Press International. "Student Blinded in Coast Bombing: Condition Critical -- Police See Campus Sabotage," *New York Times*, March 7, 1969.

97. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. "Shut it Down!" 70.

98. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. "Shut it Down!" 103.

99. "San Francisco State: On Strike."

100. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. "Shut it Down!" 95.

inclusion of other cultural perspectives in the classroom was considered a radical notion. Immigrants to America were expected to assimilate, not embrace the culture of their parents and grandparents. The Third World Liberation Front strike was potent, determined, and often violent. It was also undeniably effective. The ethnic studies programs produced by TWLF students became a model for similar programs on college campuses nationwide. The Third World Liberation Front overcame an administration that was resistant to their ideas, violence from police, malicious misrepresentation on the part of news media, and the frictions within their own diverse communities to create a space where their identities were respected. Once, studying the history and culture of any people who were not white and western was considered radical, today all California State University students are required to take an ethnic studies course.[101] Penny Nakatsu illustrated the importance of the program, "Ethnic studies is a way of embracing all of the cultures that make up the world…If we don't understand each other, how are we going to get along?"[102]

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101. Ashley A. Smith, "Gov. Newsom Signs Bill Making Ethnic Studies Course a Requirement at California State University," August 18, 2020, https://edsource.org/2020/gov-newsom-signs-assembly-bill-1460-requiring-ethnic-studies-at-csu/638506.

102. Ehsanipour, "Ethnic Studies."

# Peacetime Propaganda: The Contentious Beginnings of America's Cold War Public Diplomacy Through Voice of America Radio Broadcasting

## Janis Pope

**Abstract**: The Voice of America (VOA) was founded in 1942 and helped the US successfully engage in psychological warfare during World War II. After the war, many Americans and conservative lawmakers called for an to end to the use of wartime propaganda activities, including VOA radio broadcasts. However, the VOA was not dismantled, and its continued existence was widely debated in Congress, with Conservatives seeking to end its "liberal" messaging and Liberals pushing to increase funding instead. Though intensely contested in Congress, as evidenced in newspaper articles and the Congressional Record, the radio broadcasts of the VOA turned out to be a key weapon in fighting the ideological battles of the early Cold War against a well-funded Soviet propaganda machine. The continuation of these broadcasts signaled a drastic change in American foreign policy, as well, featuring a turn away from isolationism and a turn towards sustained global intervention and public diplomacy through propaganda.

> "We bring you Voices of America. Today, and daily from now on, we shall speak to you about America and the war. The news may be good for us. The news may be bad. But we shall tell you the truth." William Harlan Hale, from the first Voice of America broadcast to Germany, February 1, 1942.[1]

During the Cold War, America's foreign policy relied heavily on "public diplomacy," or the use of propaganda, to help combat communism and contain the Soviet spread of communist ideas. "Information services," another code name for American propaganda, were set up around the world starting in the late 1940s and expanded in location and size as the Cold War consumed global attention until the 1990s. The United States sought to counter the anti-capitalist message of the Soviet propaganda machine with an anti-communist, pro-America message, and to spread the message through international libraries, films, and radio broadcasts. Radio broadcasting proved to be a crucial and invaluable part of American foreign policy throughout the entirety of the Cold War. Historian David F. Krugler states, in his work *The Voice of America and the Domestic Propaganda Battles, 1945-1953,* that radio programming "quickly became the ideological arm of anticommunism, seeking to win allies at the same time that it tried to discredit the Soviet Union and other communist nations."[2] In fact, many employees of the United States Information Agency would later comment that the "Voice of America" radio broadcasts were the most useful tool in the fight against the Soviets in the ideological battle for "hearts and minds" during the Cold War.[3]

Despite the invaluable nature of propaganda activities during the Cold War, the early years of their existence after World War II were dogged by domestic battles in the US Congress. Congressional leaders could not agree about the relevance of propaganda activities and international radio broadcasting during peacetime, as well

1. Alan L. Heil, Jr, *Voice of America: A History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 32.

2. David F. Krugler, *The Voice of America and the Domestic Propaganda Battles, 1945-1953* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 1.

3. *United States Information Agency: Review of Operations 1st-15th 1953-1960* (Washington D.C.), 8-11.

as to America's role post-war. Many called for a return to isolationism, while others argued that America now had a new role to play in the world as a global defender of freedom. The Congressional debates focused mainly on the Voice of America (VOA) radio broadcasting, which many felt did not fully represent the American people and leaned too far left to be the true "Voice" of America. The domestic battles continued into the early 1950s and beyond, including battles over funding, doubts about the VOA's effectiveness abroad, and questions over the programming's adherence to anti-communist principles. All of this took place while the VOA was trying to present a united, pro-America message to the world.

While the Cold War is certainly a popular field of study amongst historians, America's use of propaganda and international radio broadcasting in the Cold War, especially in the earliest years, is a remarkably overlooked topic in Cold War scholarship. Academics and political insiders writing during the Cold War were aware of this and tried to draw public attention to the topic, especially during the tumultuous years of the 1960s. In 1968, former foreign service officer Thomas C. Sorensen (*The Word War: The Story of American Propaganda*) advocated for more recognition for the United States Information Agency and its positive international programs. In later Cold War years, communications Professor Donald R. Browne examined the positive and negative effects of Cold War radio broadcasting and its significance as a tool for international communication in his 1982 work *International Radio Broadcasting: The Limits of the Limitless Medium*. These works offer limited views of the overall effects of America's policies simply because they were written while the Cold War was still happening.

Many modern historians have since contributed corrective narratives after the end of the Cold War to fill in missing information in the field. Most agree that the VOA was the most important tool in America's arsenal and that America's entrance into ideological warfare with the Soviets was chaotic. Historians Holly Cowan Shulman (*The Voice of America: Propaganda and Democracy, 1941-1945* (1990)) and David F. Krugler (*The Voice of America and the Domestic Propaganda Battles, 1945-1953* (2000)) examine the early years of the VOA starting in the Second World War, focusing on the types of tactics developed by the program and the Congressional debates over its continued existence post-war. Kenneth Osgood's 2006 work, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and* Abroad, continues the discussion and focuses on the propaganda strategies and tactics utilized during President Dwight Eisenhower's tenure in office, while Nicholas J. Cull's 2008 work, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989*, provides an extensively sourced overview of America's use of peacetime propaganda, paying close attention to the many mediums through which the government disseminated propaganda.

It is within the context of these historians' foundational works that this paper's arguments lie. The early years of the Cold War were a time when American leaders somewhat reluctantly realized the role they needed to play in the world and the necessity of using peacetime propaganda. Though intensely debated in Congress, VOA radio broadcasts and early propaganda activities turned out to be key weapons for the United States in fighting the ideological battles of the early Cold War. The radio programming and information services helped America promote its democratic and capitalistic message to the world, combat Soviet propaganda, and maintain superpower status during the war. The decision to implement psychological warfare tactics during the early years of the Cold War signaled a drastic change in American foreign

policy. The country turned away from isolationism, America's previous foreign policy stance, and turned towards sustained global intervention and public diplomacy through propaganda.

**The World Wars, Propaganda, and the Post-War World**

Though famous for its use during the Cold War, VOA radio programming was born out of an earlier conflict, World War II, and its development challenged America's isolationist world views. America's presence in international radio broadcasting began in the Second World War because of a need to combat Nazi propaganda. The "Voices of America," soon shortened to the "Voice of America" or VOA, was the first American international radio program, and its first broadcast to Germany signaled the entrance of the United States into the psychological warfare of the world conflict.

The United States was new to international radio broadcasting but was no stranger to using propaganda during wartime. During World War I, George Creel's Committee on Public Information (CPI), a government agency, was tasked with using propaganda to get Americans to participate in the war effort. This agency created posters to encourage young men to sign up for the armed forces or to convince families to buy war bonds, among other things. The Committee also created propaganda posters to demonize its German opponent, painting German soldiers as monsters, intent on destroying American values. After World War I ended, the CPI was quickly dismantled in 1919 as wartime propaganda methods were not necessary during peacetime.[4] Though the propaganda campaigns of the war led to a boom in advertising and the motion picture industry in the interwar period, most Americans were worried about foreign propaganda and were keen to return to isolationist practices.[5] In fact, historian Holly Cowan Shulman notes that in the decade following World War I, Americans were "deeply alarmed by the excessive emotions and hatred brought to the surface by George Creel's Committee on Public Information…, and most of the nation… rejected propaganda as a formal instrument of foreign policy."[6]

While the United States remained isolated for many years, including first years of World War II, it was not isolated from ideological attacks from the Nazis. Nazi propaganda threatened to undermine the American ideals of freedom of the press and freedom of discussion, so President Franklin Roosevelt reluctantly agreed to the renewed use of American propaganda.[7] Shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt authorized the use of international radio broadcasting, and the VOA was founded During the war, the VOA broadcasted news and modeled itself after the British Broadcast Corporation (BBC), which had a reputation for reporting factual information both good and bad[8] In contrast to Joseph Goebbels's Nazi propaganda machine, the VOA strived to present the truth, but it also still engaged in psychological warfare tactics. Historian Nicholas Cull asserts that VOA news programs had a "crushing effect on morale" when broadcasting German losses to German troops

4. Nicholas J. Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 8-9.

5. Cull, *The Cold War*, 9.

6. Holly Cowan Shulman, *Voice* of *America: Propaganda and Democracy, 1941-1945* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 5.

7. Cull, *The Cold War*, 11-12.

8. Julian Hale, *Radio Power: Propaganda and International Broadcasting* (Essex: The Anchor Press Ltd, 1975), ix.

in the field.[9] The United States continued using international radio broadcasting to great success throughout the war.

The rest of the allied powers, especially the Soviets, also utilized information services and propaganda activities during the war. The Soviets had been using propaganda regularly since the 1920s, with Lenin making first use of international radio broadcasting to spread his Communist message to the villagers of the newly created USSR. During the Second World War, the Soviets poured huge amounts of money into propaganda activities, including broadcasting radio messages laced with "ponderousness, parochialism, and partiality."[10] One of their major wartime strategies was to make foreign troops question their alliances. In broadcasts from their stations in Germany, the Soviets lambasted Flemish soldiers for their poor choice in allegiances to "capitalist" nations. "Flemings, Soldiers! In the Belgian state you have always been citizens of inferior status. In the Belgian Army you are treated in the same way as the French and English treat their black colonial troops, as cannon fodder and nothing more."[11] The Soviets did not purport to be objective in their broadcasting, unlike the BBC and later the VOA. After the war's end, Soviet radio propaganda continued to be a fully-funded part of Soviet foreign policy meant to counter any "imperialist" message from the capitalist West as well as present its own "stellar record as a progressive nation" and attack the enemies of communism.[12]

In the United States, however, most Americans expected that when the war ended, the use of propaganda would also conclude, much as it had at the end of World War I. President Harry Truman issued an executive order in August of 1945 dismantling the Office of War Information, moving some of its domestic components to the Department of State and encouraging private industry, instead of the government, to now spread the "truth" about America. He stated, "To the fullest possible extent, American private organizations and individuals in such fields as news, motion pictures and communications will, as in the past, be the primary means of informing foreign peoples about this country. The government's international information program will not compete with them…[nor will it] attempt to outstrip the extensive and growing information programs of other nations."[13] Interestingly enough, Truman did not mention curtailing radio activities, and in fact, the VOA was not dismantled. Instead, it was one of the programs transferred to the State Department.

While Truman did not foresee a need for continued wartime propaganda activities, some government officials and congressmen did see a need for continued overseas information services, including radio broadcasting. They fought an uphill battle, however, in seeking to continue activities and acquire funding because a majority in congress, along with many Americans, sought a return to previous isolationist policies that kept America out of global politics. The continued use of the VOA, with its international reach and therefore non-isolationist purpose, became a key topic of foreign policy debates and decisions in the following years.

9. Cull, *The Cold War*, 15.

10. Hale, *Radio Power*, 20.

11. Donald R. Brown, *International Radio Broadcasting: The Limits of the Limitless Medium* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982), 69. This message was broadcast to the Dutch Army on May 13, 1940.

12. Browne, *International Radio*, 85.

13. Harry S. Truman, "Statement by the President Upon Signing Order Concerning Government Information Programs," August 31, 1945, https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/public-papers/120/statement-president-upon-signing-order-concerning-government-information (accessed March 17, 2020).

**Battles for Relevancy and Funding, 1945-1947**

Starting in late 1945, most Americans wanted their government to return to focusing on domestic policies and life on the home front. They were content to let the BBC spread the Western image to the world and to have the United States step back from international activities. There was still widespread angst over propaganda, "both the word and the operation itself. It was felt to be something German, or Russian, certainly undemocratic and unnecessary."[14] Much like the feeling after the First World War, Americans wanted to focus on their own country again, first and foremost. Still, some Americans argued that the message of Western "freedom" needed to be propagated internationally.

In December 1945, William Benton, the Assistant Secretary of State in Charge of Public Affairs, published an article in the *Journal of Educational Sociology* detailing positive new uses for information services in the United States during peacetime. His article highlights the benefits and the influence of VOA radio programming in the world, which at that time was broadcast in over forty languages and for close to 1,200 hours a week.[15] Benton states, "It is all that the people of other lands hear about us… Further, [the radio programs] reach vast areas of the world which otherwise would be completely shut off from America."[16] However, knowing that most Americans were not sure about continued international intervention, Benton also addressed the concerns of the public, and conservative Congressmen, and tried to convince them to change their minds.

> We are known to be immensely strong. Yet Axis propagandists found ready belief for the story that good living had made us so weak and spineless we would not and could not fight… Now I am not going to suggest that any role that the Government can play abroad will clarify this picture readily or quickly… [Information] is a slow laborious business… It can, however, help to correct mistaken ideals. It can make available the facts about our actions and our policies as they develop out of our customs, our laws, our institutions, and our politics... In an atomic age – understanding, not bombs, is the last, best hope on earth.[17]

Benton continued this fight for better funding, recognition, and support for governmental information activities. However, he would have to wait out a major conservative push calling for the termination of the VOA and hope that President Truman would realize the renewed need for American involvement in world affairs.

In the midterm elections of 1946, Republicans gained a majority in Congress and "promised budget cuts and the elimination of unnecessary government programs,"[18] including the VOA and other information service activities. Previously, during the later years of the war, conservative Congressmen and newspaper editorialists had complained about President Roosevelt's liberalist policies both before the war with his New Deal programs and during the war with his left-wing foreign policy. They asserted that the Office of War Information represented the "soft pink underbelly

14. Hale, *Radio Power*, 33.

15. Heil, *Voice of America*, 47.

16. William Benton, "The Voice of America Abroad," *The Journal of Educational Sociology* 19, no. 4 (December 1945): 211.

17. Benton, "The Voice of America Abroad," 213-214.

18. Krugler, *The Voice of America,* 52.

of Roosevelt's New Deal,"[19] and they later would liken New Deal liberalism to communism. After the war, conservative Congressmen continued to rail against excessive government spending and activities that came out of Roosevelt's administration, and they questioned whether VOA programming promoted the New Deal political agenda. Senator Joseph McCarthy from Wisconsin would begin his search for "subversives" in the State Department, especially within the VOA staff, during this period of suspicion and debate over the purpose of the government's information services.

In 1947, the "geopolitical tides began to shift," and the conflict of global ideologies heated up.[20] With Churchill stating that an "Iron Curtain" was descending upon Europe in late 1946, Radio Moscow stepped up its broadcasts of verbal attacks on the United States. In early 1947, the Soviets also militarily threatened the sovereignty of Greece and Turkey as the British had to withdraw support from these nations due to rebuilding efforts in their own country.[21] These weak nations were now subject to falling under Communist rule, and something had to be done to protect the freedom of these "friendly" nations. President Truman lobbied Congress in March 1947 to provide political, military, and economic assistance to Greece and Turkey so that they could become "self-supporting and self-respecting" democracies.[22] In what would become known as the Truman Doctrine, Truman outlined how the fall of Greece and Turkey would "have a profound effect upon those countries in Europe, whose peoples are struggling against great difficulties…Collapse of free institutions and loss of independence would be disastrous not only for them but for the world."[23] He asked for Congress to allocate $400,000,000 for this intervention as well as authorize the deployment of American civilian and military personnel to Greece and Turkey to supervise war reconstruction efforts, protect the countries from Communist threats, and help with economic recovery.[24] In a surprising twist, Truman's devotion to preserving the freedoms of other countries reversed his earlier policy of returning to prewar American ideals and staying out of the international arena. His Truman Doctrine allowed for increased use of international radio broadcasting, government-sponsored information services, and propaganda to help contain the Communist message being spread in Europe and the Middle East. This single move saved VOA programming from certain death in Congress and elevated it as an essential tool of American foreign policy. The Truman Doctrine also marks the drastic change in American foreign policy from isolation to internationalism.

The debates in Congress over the funding, ideology, and purpose of continued international broadcasting activities ramped up due to Truman's new policy of American global intervention during peacetime. The conservative Republicans, now in leadership roles in both the House Appropriations Committee and its State Department Subcommittee, were even more adamant about controlling information services because it was now unlikely that they could outright dismantle any of the activities in light of Truman's new stance. In the months after Truman's speech, visible discord between Democrats and Republicans manifested in many debates. In the spring of 1947, the House sparred about the funding allocations for radio broadcast-

19. Cull, *The Cold War,* 18.

20. Heil, *Voice of America*, 47.

21. Heil, *Voice of America*, 47.

22. Harry S. Truman, "Address of the President to Congress, Recommending Assistance to Greece and Turkey, March 12, 1947," 2. From the National Archives: The Truman Library and Museum: https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/research-files/address-president-congress-recommending-assistance-greece-and-turkey (accessed March 17, 2020).

23. Truman, "Address of the President to Congress," 4.

24. Truman, "Address of the President to Congress," 4-5.

ing and the necessity of government produced propaganda (as opposed to private industry produced propaganda). Conservative legislators were vocal in their distrust of the "voices" coming out of America. Republican Representative Walt Horan of Washington stated, "If the Voice of America is to prevail, certainly it should reflect the best attitudes of all our people…There is indeed grave danger when our foreign policy is subject to design and origin by a small group in a department or bureau."[25] He further asserted that if not all Americans' voices were to be represented, then the government should have no part in producing the broadcasts. Other Republican congressmen argued that since the Committee could only vote on funding for activities designated by law, increasing funding for information services like the VOA was, in actuality, not even permitted by the rules of the House Appropriations Committee. International radio broadcasting and propaganda were not technically lawful parts of US foreign policy so conservative representatives used this loophole to justify their cuts to the State Department budget.[26] Conveniently, this rhetoric also masked their true intentions which were to shortchange liberal ideals about disseminating the story of America to the world.

Democrats vehemently defended the VOA and the other activities of the State Department, which at this time was headed by General George C. Marshall. Marshall had garnered considerable fame and respect for his actions in the second World War and he was well-respected in Congress. Democratic Representatives played on this sentiment and challenged their conservative colleagues not to slash Marshall's State Department budget. Virginia Democrat Vaughan Gary beseeched the House to support Marshall's impending plan to help Europe rebuild. "It is unthinkable that we will now tie his hands and subject him to embarrassment in the delicate negotiations in which he is engaged by denying him sufficient funds to finance an adequate program."[27] The VOA was an essential part of Marshall's future plan to notify Europeans from where their aid was coming.

Newspapers at the time also reported heavily on the outcomes of the funding debates in the spring of 1947. On May 19, the *New York Times* reported that the House Appropriations Committee refused to grant the overall State Department budget request of "$31,000,000, including $19,000,000 for the broadcasts" of the VOA, and highly encouraged that State Department "broadcasts be turned over to private industry, as recommended by an advisory committee."[28] Later that summer, another *New York Times* article reported that the VOA was forced to reduce its "foreign broadcast programs by 40 per cent" because of Congressional funding cuts that reduced their budget from an already meager $8,400,000 to $6,900,000.[29] (In comparison, England, as reported by Congressman James P. Richards in June 1947, was spending "forty to fifty million dollars" on propaganda activities and Russia was spending "more than all the other nations of the world combined."[30]) Spending cuts handcuffed the reach of the VOA broadcasters and their ability to tell the "truth" about American values abroad. Conservative efforts to curb international information activities and block parts of the Truman Doctrine looked successful that sum-

25. U.S. Congress, *Congressional Record,* 80th Cong., 1st session, May 13, 1947, Vol. 93, pt. 4: 5205, https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRECB-1947-pt4/pdf/GPO-CRECB-1947-pt4-10-1.pdf (accessed February 23, 2020).

26. U.S. Congress, *Congressional Record,* May 13, 1947, Vol. 93, pt. 4: 5193.

27. U.S. Congress, *Congressional Record,* May 13, 1947, Vol. 93, pt. 4: 5198.

28. "Broadcasts Vital, Benton Declares," *New York Times* (May 19, 1947): 12.

29. Hulen, Bertram D, "Government Trims 'Voice of America'," *New York Times* (July 30, 1947): 6.

30. U.S. Congress, *Congressional Record,* 80th Cong., 1st session, June 6, 1947, Vol. 93, pt. 5: 6553, https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRECB-1947-pt5/pdf/GPO-CRECB-1947-pt5-12-2.pdf (accessed February 23, 2020).

mer until some legislators returned from an eye-opening visit to Europe.

A joint congressional committee, headed by Republican Senator H. Alexander Smith and Republican Representative Karl Mundt, visited twenty-two countries, including many in Europe, in the summer of 1947 and became convinced that America needed to step up its international information program. Now, with first-hand knowledge, the lawmakers asserted that the United States was behind the Soviets, the British, and "even tiny Holland" in information services and in representing the country to an international audience searching for meaning after the war.[31] In June, Edward Cox of Georgia stated that "Russia is on the air 24 hours out of the day disseminating false information about the United States."[32] With this kind of presence, it was easy to see how communism was spreading to the broken places in Europe after the war. Former Ambassador to Russia, Secretary W. Averell Harriman, also reported that Soviet efforts of misinformation confused listeners in Europe about the conditions in America. He stated that Soviet propaganda gave the general impression that "America was in an economic chaotic condition and that [Americans] were living in greed and…not thinking of any of the suffering that existed anywhere in the world."[33] Most senators and representatives started to pay closer attention to this need to combat misinformation even though just a few months earlier conservatives had been adamant in denying funding and support for information services.

Alexander Smith and Karl Mundt started to gather bipartisan support for a new bill – H.R. 3342, The United States Information and Education Exchange Act (Public Law 80-402) – which would create an officially sanctioned government information and exchange program. Mundt, a conservative, became adamant that the US needed to become more visible in Europe. He and the other lawmakers who visited Europe came back to "plead for this kind of legislation," for which "[every] responsible authority…with the heavy duties of protecting America and promoting and preserving the peace [was] a strong [supporter]."[34] Mundt also supported the VOA as one of the most important operations to protect in the State Department. "In my opinion, it would be tragic to muffle the Voice of America…through denying the appropriations…or by darkening the beacon light of American freedom… H.R. 3342 provides the machinery and the methods for projecting the voice and spirit of America."[35] Mundt also appealed to his fellow conservative colleagues, who opposed adopting a more international brand of foreign policy.

> As I have said, this is not a program to be abhorred by isolationists and to be acclaimed by internationalists… The question we face today is not whether we should attempt to isolate ourselves in an atomic era…[but] whether the great United States should incapacitate itself by denying to ourselves weapons of information and communication which all other important nations are now utilizing with accelerating speed and significance... If we incapacitate ourselves by disqualifying ourselves as effective leaders…how are we going to maintain peace? How are we going to resist and offset the propaganda coming out of the poisonous mouths in many parts of the world…[reaching] the hearts and minds and eyes and ears of the

31. Heil, *Voice of America,* 47.
32. U.S. Congress, *Congressional Record,* June 6, 1947, Vol. 93, pt. 5: 6540.
33. U.S. Congress, *Congressional Record,* June 6, 1947, Vol. 93, pt. 5: 6541.
34. U.S. Congress, *Congressional Record,* June 6, 1947, Vol. 93, pt. 5: 6547.
35. U.S. Congress, *Congressional Record,* June 6, 1947, Vol. 93, pt. 5: 6548.

> world… If we refuse to tell the American story ourselves, who will replace us on the air waves and on the printed pages of the world?[36]

While some legislators still disagreed with the sanctioning of peacetime propaganda cultivated by the government, most were convinced to support Mundt's bill. Smith and Mundt also added safeguards into the bill to ensure its success including, Congressional oversight of some information activities, FBI checks for all State Department employees, and the promise not to use propaganda domestically. These provisions assuaged conservative fears that no ultra-left leaning commentators would be hired or present questionable messaging to the world.

Evidence of Soviet jamming of VOA broadcasts in Europe also drew officials' awareness to the importance of the programming. Sources covertly relayed that Soviet authorities were worried about the effectiveness of VOA programs, which were "much more effective than British-Russian broadcasts because news [is] generally reported factually…and [hits] the mark while British broadcasts are too British and too full [of] offensive items."[37] With growing concerns over Soviet jamming efforts and the promises of safeguards against the reach of American propaganda services, all members of Congress got behind the new legislation.

Unofficially known as the Smith-Mundt Act, H.R. 3342 did not pass until the beginning of 1948, but at that point it received unanimous support. The *New York Herald Tribune* noted on February 8, 1948, "It is not very often that either house votes unanimously on anything, and when they both do it…one can only describe it as a unique performance indeed. What is even more unusual is the remarkable change of mind manifested by the members of Congress."[38] The *New York Times* noted that it really was due to those European visits of key Republican congressional leaders that changed everything in Congress and assured the "greatly enlarged appropriations" for information and propaganda activities.[39] The seriousness of Soviet propaganda efforts, as well, pushed Americans to accept the need for an official American voice in Europe and around the world. The Smith-Mundt Act enabled the US government "to promote a better understanding of the United States in other countries, and to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries" through the creation of information services and cultural and educational exchanges.[40]

**Moving Forward: America's New Propaganda Policy, 1948-1950**

After the passage of the Smith-Mundt Act, the State Department and President Truman adopted new, more aggressive foreign policy strategies to counteract the messages of the Soviet propaganda machine. The *New York Times* reported that the "Full 'Voice of America"' would be restored with the prospect of a budget close to $20,000,000 and a possible projected budget of up to $50,000,000 in the years to follow.[41] Propaganda and information services/exchanges quickly rose to high priority

36. U.S. Congress, *Congressional Record,* June 6, 1947, Vol. 93, pt. 5: 6549.

37. "The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Smith) to the Secretary of State," U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947, Eastern Europe; the Soviet Union, Volume IV*. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v04/d418 (accessed February 20, 2020).

38. Hale, *Radio Power*, 33.

39. Bertram D. Hulen, "Full 'Voice of America' To Fight Propaganda," *New York Times* (December 21, 1947): E7.

40. "US Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948," found on *U.S. Agency for Global Media* website: https://www.usagm.gov/who-we-are/oversight/legislation/smith-mundt/ (accessed April 3, 2020).

41. Hulen, "Full 'Voice of America' To Fight Propaganda," E7.

for the Truman administration, and Congress recognized the imminent dangers in not supporting these activities.

1948 was a year of intense global tension and uncertainty: Communists took over in Czechoslovakia, the Soviets blockaded Berlin, Gandhi was assassinated in India, Israel was founded in the Middle East, and the Yugoslavian ruler Tito broke ties with Stalin.[42] Within all of this melee, the United States moved swiftly forward with its new legally sanctioned information program and sought to win global "hearts and minds" to the side of capitalism and the American way of life. The *New York Times* reported in the summer of 1948 that the VOA was "being stepped up from a mild information service to a full-fledged, hard-hitting propaganda machine" to combat "full-lunged competition" from Russia in the "taut air wave war."[43] The State Department fully acknowledged its use of propaganda, "no longer reluctant" to deliberately aim radio programming towards people in remote areas that may not know about America .[44] The VOA broadcasts also began to take a stronger line and responded to Soviet aggression with counterattacks, flavoring its information programs with increased pro-American propaganda.

European nations took notice of these changes in America's international policy. In England, London's newspaper *The Times* reported on a myriad of speeches and policies coming out the United States, including President Truman's inaugural speech in January 1949. In this speech, "addressed to the American people" but with a message "meant for the world," Truman spoke of his vision for new world projects to strengthen friendships in the free world and halt the spread of communism.[45] *The Times* noted that "for the first time, each of the great Powers openly accepts a world view of politics."[46] From an international point of view, this US plan calling nations to work together for peace seemed hopeful and like the "best practical reply to Communist accusations of the ineradicable selfishness of capitalist societies."[47] Truman worked with the State Department to make good on his new plan and found other willing partners in the British. Together with the BBC, the VOA opened up broadcasts to Iran in hopes of gaining new allies in the Middle East.[48] The United States continued broadcasting to Eastern Europe, as well, despite increased Soviet jamming, which was becoming quite sophisticated. However, these attempts also drew increased interest in VOA programming in villages and cities behind the Iron Curtain because people wanted to see what was causing these jamming efforts.[49] In Rumania, a location of Soviet jamming efforts, the US Ambassador reported that Rumanians "listen to the priest on Sunday and to the 'Voice of America' on the other six days of the week."[50] The VOA became America's first line of defense in a psychological war with the Soviets.

**Contention over Korea and Communist Accusations, 1950s-60s**

In 1950, the Korean War became the first real military manifestation of the Cold War, and the VOA once again became a valued weapon in the United States wartime

42. Heil, *Voice of America*, 48.
43. Austin Stevens, "'Voice of America' Girds for Battle," *New York Times* (August 11, 1948): 1.
44. Stevens, "'Voice of America' Girds for Battle," 1.
45. "America and the World," *Times* (January 21, 1949): 5.
46. "America and the World," 5.
47. "America and the World," 5.
48. "U.S. Broadcast to Iran," *Times* (March 22, 1949): 3.
49. Stevens, "'Voice of America' Girds for Battle," 1.
50. "Rumanian Faith in America," *Times*, (June 14, 1947): 4.

arsenal, just as it had been in the Second World War. However, its renewed status also brought renewed conservative backlash about its agenda and programming. Once again, the conservative members of Congress disagreed with how the VOA was reporting on the war and issues on the home front. They thought the radio broadcasts were covering up or downplaying domestic issues and debates concerning the Korean War.[51] However, the VOA was actively trying to present a unified message to foreign audiences as well as to the UN troops, who were mostly Americans, fighting in Korea. The issues in Congress "disrupted the VOA's efforts to build worldwide support for U.S. action in Korea and rebut communist propaganda, for [the issues] conveyed an image of domestic political turbulence and an unpopular war."[52] In this time of war, using psychological warfare tactics such as radio broadcasting meant using programming as an advantage. The VOA producers thought it best not to bring down the morale of America's own troops by broadcasting about domestic issues.

Shortly before the outbreak of the Korean War, Truman introduced a new political platform, known as the "Campaign of Truth," at a spring 1950 luncheon with the American Society of Newspaper Editors. Truman called upon the media to help the government in combatting "false propaganda with truth all around the globe."[53] Truman implored journalists and private businesses to join in the Campaign of Truth, for he believed that the United States must use every means necessary, governmental and private, to spread America's message of freedom and democracy. He highlighted the VOA for already having provided an invaluable service by spreading truth behind the Iron Curtain. In his speech, Truman remarked, "[The Voice of America] has been so successful that the Soviet government is using a vast amount of costly equipment in an attempt to drown out our broadcasts by jamming. We must devise ways to break through that jamming and get our message across."[54] After Truman's speech, the government dedicated more resources to countering Communist rhetoric and allocated funding to install new equipment and transmitters around Europe that were capable of breaking through jamming. The United States hoped to capture the Soviets in a "transmission ring" that would allow at least some VOA programming to break through jamming efforts.[55] This transmitter technology, combined with a new harder-hitting tone in the VOA broadcasts, represented a shift forward in aggressive American foreign policy.

Truman's campaign to tell America's "truth" was just getting started when the Korean War broke out, and while the war did unite the government to fight against communism overall, conservatives found new complaints and renewed old complaints about the liberal policies of the executive branch. With everyone in America looking to place blame for the Korean War, "Congressional Republicans blamed North Korean aggression on years of soft appeasement policy in the Far East."[56] They believed that Roosevelt and Truman had given in to the Soviets too easily during the Second World War, and they were concerned that the VOA was "whitewashing Democratic appeasement in Korea" by slanting its message to favor the liberals.[57] The VOA, on the other hand, was circuitously blaming the Soviets and ignoring the conservative

51. Krugler, *The Voice of America,*117.

52. Krugler, *The Voice of America,* 118.

53. Harry S. Truman, "Address on Foreign Policy at a Luncheon of the American Society of Newspaper Editors," from the National Archives, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/public-papers/92/address-foreign-policy-luncheon-american-society-newspaper-editors. (accessed March 17, 2020).

54. Truman, "Address on Foreign Policy."

55. Browne, *International Radio Broadcasting: The Limits of the Limitless Medium,* 100.

56. Krugler, *The Voice of America,* 119.

57. Krugler, 120.

complaints, which just added to the conservatives growing anger. Senator Joseph McCarthy had already begun his investigations into State Department personnel, especially the VOA staff, for their suspected Communist leanings and possibly partisan programming. In 1951, the *New York Times* reported on Senator McCarthy's attempts to raise "questions of possible disloyal influences in Voice of America programs."[58] These attacks were adamantly denied by State Department leadership, but they had an overall negative effect on the reputation of the VOA. This became clear when members of the House rejected a $97,500,000 budget request to expand the VOA operations and allocated just $9,533,939 instead.[59] With such a reduced budget, VOA officials found it hard to do their jobs and carry out operations while also defending themselves and VOA programming against McCarthy's attacks.

President Truman strongly believed that McCarthy would expose himself and look incompetent through repeatedly false accusations. In Truman's Campaign of Truth, "the 'Truth' became a metaphor for not only the administration's answer to Soviet lies but also to McCarthy's falsehoods."[60] Truman even stepped-up efforts to publicly defend the VOA and the important job it was doing as the "voice of truth and freedom."[61] Nevertheless, McCarthy continued his attacks throughout the end of Truman's presidency and continued to gain traction with Americans. Even when fellow Republican Dwight Eisenhower became president in 1953, the attacks did not stop and instead intensified. Reed Harris, the Deputy Director who oversaw VOA operations, resigned his position in 1953 after pressure from Senator McCarthy, who charged Harris with mismanagement in the handling of VOA programming and staff. McCarthy proclaimed that Harris's "gross mismanagement 'could not be merely the result of incompetence or stupidity,' but must be deliberate and therefore Communist-inspired."[62] Upon his ouster, Harris accused McCarthy of "trying unfairly, through one-sided testimony, to establish that the Voice of America followed 'a pattern to support communism,'" which Harris asserted severely damaged the government's Cold War propaganda efforts.[63] In House subcommittee hearings, McCarthy was accused of "hampering American psychological warfare against communism by staging 'a show trial rather than a scrupulous investigation.'"[64] Many people, though, believed that McCarthy had something, when in fact he had little evidence for any of his accusations. The VOA personnel and programs paid the price and were damaged by McCarthy's attacks.

Throughout the Senate hearings and the entirety of the Korean War, the VOA was still tasked with producing radio broadcasts to help win the "hearts and minds" of foreign publics and win support for American policies abroad. However, VOA officials were unsure of how to do this. They constantly had program scripts scrutinized by Congress and often were unclear on what actual US foreign policy was since it was not openly shared. At certain times, officials had to guess as to what to report out on their programs. While trying to maintain a façade of American unity, the VOA script writers had to figure out a way to write new programming that met both international and national demands, all the while being dogged by Congressional loyalty checks.[65]

58. "Voice Challenged on 'Disloyal' Aides," *New York Times (*April 29, 1951): 29.
59. "Voice Challenged on 'Disloyal' Aides," 29.
60. Krugler, *The Voice of America,* 97.
61. Krugler, 217.
62. Thomas C. Sorensen, *The Word War: The Story of American Propaganda* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 33.
63. "Reed Harris Quits As 'Voice' Official,'" *New York Times* (April 15, 1953): 19.
64. "Mundt Says 'Voice' is 'Justified' Idea," *New York Times* (March 9, 1953): 15.
65. Krugler, *The Voice of America,* 218.

During the summer months of President Eisenhower's first year in office, McCarthy's attacks hampered America's ability to carry out its foreign policy agenda. Eisenhower was a firm believer in the use of psychological warfare tactics, especially radio broadcasting, as he had seen the power of such strategies during World War II. Though he was not a proponent of McCarthy's attacks, , he had been worried during the early months of his presidency that questioning the Senator's tactics and accusations may actually legitimize his claims.[66] However, in August 1953, Eisenhower stepped in to rescue the United States information services from McCarthy's grasp. Eisenhower separated all information services and the VOA from the State Department and created the United States Information Agency (USIA) to house them instead. The President's move seems to have been widely accepted by government officials and Congressmen, as the *New York Times* reported that "[no] move was made in the Senate to reject any of [Eisenhower's] plans. The House defeated resolutions to kill the foreign operations and the information agency proposals."[67] McCarthy continued his attacks on the VOA throughout 1953 and 1954, but the creation of the USIA mildly sheltered VOA operations from accusations, and VOA producers could claim support from the president himself. The Senate censured McCarthy in late 1954 for his actions, and his influence in politics died soon after. The battered VOA survived the "brief but traumatic"[68] McCarthy period and went on to rebuild to full power during the following years of Eisenhower's presidency.

During Eisenhower's two terms, information services and radio broadcasting moved to the forefront of national security and foreign policy considerations. President Eisenhower directly worked with his advisers and private companies to promote ideological warfare and to keep his policies, programs, and ideas in the world's eye. He "further shifted the emphasis of American propaganda from virulent anticommunism to the promotion of positive themes about the United States."[69] Eisenhower acknowledged that not every foreign public saw a positive image of America. He recognized that they saw Americans as too materialistic, obsessed with "gadgets and shallow pleasures" and priding "wealth over ideals,"[70] so he sought to overcome these thoughts through an intensified *selling* of the American way. The United States Information Agency and the VOA became official advocates for Eisenhower's policies, including his Atoms for Peace Program in 1953 and his Open Skies program in 1955.[71] While Congress continued to question the use of state-sponsored propaganda, the Congressional battles over funding somewhat dissipated by the later years of Eisenhower's time in office.

In the 1960s, information services and VOA broadcasting became even more valued tools for fighting the Cold War, so much so that US propaganda programs would enjoy the highest levels of recognition, support, and relevancy in their history. With legendary journalist Edward R. Murrow leading the United States Information Agency, the collection and dissemination of information became paramount to everyday activity in the Kennedy administration. Murrow sat in on the President's daily briefings and directly advised Kennedy on national security and foreign policy de-

66. Krugler, *The Voice of America,* 219.

67. "Eisenhower Wins All Agency Shifts," *New York Times (*Aug 02, 1953): 4.

68. Hale, *Radio Power*, 34. McCarthy sealed his fate mainly due to his accusations of communist activity within the US Army. Attacking the US Army was deemed un-American and a step too far by both the American public and lawmakers.

69. Kenneth Osgood, *Total War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2006), 362.

70. Osgood, *Total War*, 359.

71. Cull, *The Cold War*, 488.

cisions.[72] Never before had information officials been so respected or valued. Just a mere decade earlier, Congressional leaders had been arguing about the use of propaganda in American foreign policy and the necessity of radio broadcasting to promote positive messages about America to the world. But by the sixties, the US was fully invested in influencing world affairs through propaganda and interventionist strategies.

## Conclusion: The Legacy of the Early Years

The VOA continued to influence foreign publics throughout the rest of the twentieth century and on into the twenty-first. During the Cold War, it was viewed as an essential tool for presenting America's story to the world and for advocating for American policies abroad. However, propaganda activities, in general, certainly did not always have the support that they enjoyed at the height of the Cold War. The domestic partisan battles in Congress in the late forties and early fifties threatened to dismantle information services and do away with international radio broadcasting. Conservative House and Senate members wanted to return the country's focus to domestic issues after the Second World War and leave the international arena altogether. For this reason, they slashed funding to the VOA and to other internationally focused programs as they tried to turn America away from the ideals of New Deal liberalism. Joseph McCarthy and other Republicans also battered the VOA with accusations about "communist" personnel and liberal broadcasts. However, the VOA and other information services survived with the help of Presidents Truman and Eisenhower as well as with new legislation that legalized the use of peacetime propaganda. The overall escalation of the Cold War also accelerated the United States' participation and intervention in global affairs in order to combat the spread of communism and win international support for freedom and democracy. Though the Cold War ended some thirty years ago, the VOA still broadcasts in over forty languages around the world and is the largest US international broadcaster to date.[73] With its reputation squarely intact and its mission to represent America as a world truth-teller, modern-day attacks on the VOA stand out because they do not happen very often anymore. It is certainly not unprecedented for conservative lawmakers to still publicly voice dissatisfaction with the allegedly leftist messages of the VOA,[74] as was common throughout the Cold War and McCarthy's attacks in the 1950s, but such criticism is more uncommon today since the US government is now actively involved in international affairs. From its tumultuous beginnings in the early Cold War through today, America's public diplomacy through propaganda seems to be a formidable and rooted part of US foreign policy.

72. Sorensen, *The Word War*, 127-130.

73. "Mission and Values," from the Voice of America website, https://www.insidevoa.com/p/5831.html (accessed April 7, 2020).

74. Geoffrey Cowan and James K. Glassman, "Op-Ed: Trump's war on Voice of America is all about him – as usual," *Los Angeles Times*, April 22, 2020, https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2020-04-22/trump-attack-voice-of-america-is-plain-ignorant (accessed April 24, 2020). In the spring of 2020, President Donald Trump publicly criticized the VOA for its coverage of China's response to COVID-19. Trump alleged that the VOA reported foreign "propaganda in its coverage of the pandemic" and that it deliberately promoted China's lockdown policies to slow the spread of the disease. In truth, the VOA reported only facts: the lockdown in Chinese provinces, an unprecedented policy, had been "'successful enough that countries around the world adopted similar measures.'" Though many think Trump's criticism was unprecedented, the history of the VOA proves that attacks like this are nothing new.

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# Destruction of Democracy: International Interference and its Role in the Start of the Crisis of the Congo

## Jonathan L. Brimer

**Abstract**: The Democratic Republic of the Congo, a country with a particularly brutal relationship with imperial Europe, has continued to be plagued with conflict since gaining independence in 1960. The Congo's violent post-colonial history traces its origins to the actions of external actors concerned with preserving their economic and political hegemony in the area. Immediately following Congolese independence, the West began to actively interfere in the Congo's internal affairs. The nation's sovereignty was deliberately ignored in order to continue the exploitation of its abundant resources and to pressure the government into embracing capitalist liberal democracy. Belgium intentionally weakened the Congo by destabilizing the government to allow for the continued extraction of natural resources that had been propping up its economy for nearly a century. The United States, at the height of the Cold War, sought to ensure that Soviet and Chinese Communism stayed out of the Congo by interfering in its diplomatic, parliamentary, and military affairs. Those that resisted western influences met the same brutality experienced under imperialism. This paper exams the immediate impacts of western neo-colonial foreign pressure in the postcolonial era. For the Congo these neo-colonial pressures left the country fractured, with elected leaders assassinated, its parliament corrupted, and in the control of an overtly corrupt dictator.

The relationship between the Congo and the West has been chaotic, violent, and treacherous ever since the two civilizations collided in the nineteenth century. Under colonialism, the Congo Free State was subject to one of the most brutal regimes of the era. As they transitioned from Belgian imperial holding to independence, the Republic of the Congo quickly fell into disarray. The Congo held incredible potential to become a beacon for independent democracies in Africa; it is home to the most valuable mineral deposits in the world, was backed by the United Nations to assist in a smooth transition and had generous support and advisement from former colonies across Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. This would not be the case however, as interference from Belgium and the United States deliberately undermined their freedom in order to project western economic and political interests onto the Congolese government. Within seven months of independence, foreign interventions caused the Congo to descend into a state of disarray. As the crisis began in 1960, few understood why the Congo was so quickly turning into a failed state. With recently available information, including the release of an investigation by the Belgian parliament in 2001, the gradual declassification of American Senate investigations, and the publishing of CIA records on the Congo in 2014, a comprehensive picture can now begin to be painted of the causes of the Congo Crisis. Analysis of this information reveals that the tragedy that befell the Congo was caused by greed, fear, and indifference of Western powers that stood between the Congolese people and their freedom.

Located deep within the interior of the African continent and covered with dense rainforests, the Congo remained largely untouched by western pressure until 1877, when Belgian King Leopold II hired famed explorer Henry Morton Stanley to survey

the region and lay claim to his "piece of the magnificent African cake."[1] In the three decades that Leopold held personal control of the Congo he claimed to be on a mission to civilize its people. In reality he enslaved the region to expand his personal wealth by more than $1.1 billion.[2] Using his own private paramilitary organization, the Force Publique, Leopold forced the Congolese to harvest rubber and ivory. The Force Publique held families hostage to coerce labor out of the able-bodied population, while underproduction was punished by the amputation of limbs, murder, and often times both.[3] As word of Leopold's atrocities reached the West via news from missionaries and explorers, the public led international protests against Leopold's actions, forcing the Belgian government to take control of the colony after the turn of the twentieth century. Although the worst of Leopold's damages ended once parliament controlled the Congo, the Belgians maintained the colonial era slavery of the people, and even expanded its operations once valuable mineral deposits were found within.

Capitalizing on the potential profits from within the Congo, the Belgian government opened the colony to economic and industrial corporations. The Congo sits atop some of the largest deposits of diamonds, copper, uranium, cobalt, and zinc in the world. To exploit the Congo's natural resources, Belgian umbrella corporation Société Générale developed various industrial subsidiaries, including a joint venture with British Tanganyika Concessions Ltd., forming the mining company Union Minière du Haut Katanga (UMHK) in 1906.[4] UMHK was responsible for 80% of the cobalt, 60% of industrial diamonds, and 7% of the worlds copper.[5] Furthermore, the Congo was the only producer of uranium in the world until the 1950s, including the fissile material used in the Little Boy and Fat Man bombs dropped on Japan in 1945.[6] Unilever also fell under Société Générale, harvesting palm oil from the province to produce margarine, soap, and other products. The small European nation has few natural resources of its own and is reliant on imported material for its industries. The Belgians viewed the Congo as a potential goldmine of capital, and its exploitation allowed them to become one of the wealthiest nations of the Western world.

UMHK was the most profitable subsidiary of Société Générale, and to ensure maximum return from their operations they continued the exploitation of the Congolese as a pseudo slave labor force. Until the 1920s the Force Publique forced the Congolese into labor for the UMHK at gunpoint.[7] Working in the UMHK mines was exceptionally dangerous making it nearly impossible to find willing employees; from 1911 to 1918 more than 5,000 deaths were reported in UMHK mines and a casualty rate of nearly five percent was maintained throughout the 1930s.[8] As the corporation moved away from its forced labor practices in the 1920s, they turned to a system of contract labor that paid workers primarily in social and welfare services, offering

1. Roland Oliver and Anthony Atmore, Africa Since 1800 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 88-89; Africa, episode 6: This Magnificent African Cake, presented by Basil Davidson, 1984 (Mitchell Beazley Television: Channel Four Television, 2011), DVD, disc 6.

2. Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa (New York: Mariner Books, 1998), 281.*

3. Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost*, 163-165.

4. Olivier Boehme, "The Involvement of the Belgian Central Bank in the Katanga Secession, 1960-1963," *African Economic History,* no. 33 (2005): 2.

5. John Gunther, *Inside Africa* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955), 671.

6. Gunther, *Inside Africa*, 669.

7. Raymond Dumett, "Africa's Strategic Minerals During the Second World War," T*he Journal of African History* 26, no. 4 (1985): 391.

8. Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost*, 279; "Social Policy of Union Minière du Haut Katanga," African Affairs 46, no. 183 (April 1947): 87.

little if any financial compensation to laborers. When asked why the Congolese were not paid in cash a Belgian once replied that "the Africans drink cash."[9] Instead of money the UMHK provided its labor force with housing, vocational schools, hospitals, minimum caloric count diets, and maternity clinics.[10] The housing was built near the mines to keep their labor force close to the workplace, the vocational schools trained children to be miners and periphery laborers, the food ensured the miners had enough energy to work the grueling twelve hour days, and the maternity clinics ensured that there would be a steady supply of new labor in the coming generations. The welfare director for Union Minière, Dr. L. Mottoulle, once stated in a public lecture, "In the first place, the fundamental assumption is that Africans are children."[11] The Belgians cared little for the development of the Congo, were only concerned with generating profits to flow into Europe and harbored extremely racist views of the Congolese people.

The end of World War II brought independence to many colonies around the world, but Belgium was making plans to drag the process out in the Congo for as long as possible. Their strategy included two parts; one form within the government of the Congo, and another that would suppress independence movements with help from the United States. The Belgians made European college education and training prerequisites to hold senior positions in the civil services and officer ranks of the military.[12] Unobtainable to the Congolese natives, these impossibly high standards ensured that positions of power in the Congo would only be held by white people. They believed that by creating a monopoly on state administration, a dependence on Belgian nationals would develop, lasting long after the Congo achieved independence. To suppress political dissent Belgium began to increase the armaments of the Force Publique, asking the US government for assistance in 1952, which they agreed to and sent $7 million in aid and equipment.[13] America was now a direct contributor to Belgium's neocolonial ambitions. This relationship was further reaffirmed in 1958 when US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, officially declared that America would not interfere in Belgium's Congo operations, stating that the US "would not prejudge the results" of the colonial practices of their ally.[14] The natural resources of the Congo were far too valuable for Belgium to simply turn over to the Congolese people. They sought to prolong independence in the colony in order to engineer ways to secure their economic interests and reinforce their control along with the support of the most powerful Western nation of the era.

While the Belgian motivations for limiting the Congo's independence were strictly economic, America had ideological concerns for the country, and both hoped their alliance would be mutually beneficial. Belgium's industrial output was solely reliant on imported raw materials, most of which came from the Congo, and without them their economy would collapse. The United States was preoccupied with a heightening Cold War, believing shifts in power would open the door for Communist influences to enter Africa. The American government watched anxiously as new leaders began to emerge within the Congo. Potential leaders of the region were rated on their

9. Gunther, Inside Africa, 673.

10. "Social Policy of Union Minière," 88.

11. "Social Policy of Union Minière," 89.

12. Ernest W. Lefever, *Uncertain Mandate: Politics of the U.N. Congo Operation* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), 7.

13. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Vol. XI, Africa and South Asia eds. Paul Claussen, et al. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1983), Document 175.

14. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958-1960, Vol. XIV, Africa, eds. Harriet D. Schwar and Stanley Shaloff (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992), Document 90.

Communist tendencies as p were developed to allow the US to control the political outcomes of the region.[15] These motivations allowed fear and greed to overtake America and Belgium, clouding their judgement and influencing their policies with the Congo. As the Republic of the Congo was on the verge of independence, the governments of Belgium and the United States began devising actions to undermine the country's sovereignty. The massive profits made from UMHK and other economic interests propped up the Belgian economy. The rabid fear of Communism's the attention of the United States. The US was also dependent on resources drawn from the Congo to fight the Cold War. This resulted in both countries working together to manipulate the Congo's political landscape. This dual interference from western powers denied the Congo its independence and instead plunged the infant state into years of turmoil.

**From Independence to Disorder**

Despite Belgium's plans for decades of gradual emancipation and the Force Publique's attempts to suppress political dissent, the Congolese began to demand immediate independence. In the mid-1950s the Congolese protested en masse to end Belgian colonial rule. Inspired by independence gained in neighboring African nations, the rising political movements within the Congo attracted international attention and forced Belgium to accelerate their timeline.[16] By 1958 political parties had been formed, elections were held, and a new star began to emerge within the Congo's political scene. A former postal clerk and outspoken political leader who had been jailed for his activism, Patrice Lumumba held the largest following of the Congolese people as the leader of the Mouvement National Congolais (MNC) party.[17] With the support of fellow pan-Africanist, Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah, Lumumba became the primary negotiator in a series of UN mediated roundtable discussions in Brussels that would lead to the Congo's independence. After he was elected Prime Minister by popular vote, Lumumba began to form the government on June 8, 1960, naming Joseph Kasa-Vubu as President, and setting a date for official independence of the Congo on June 30.[18] For the first time in nearly a century, the people of the Congo had independence within their grasp, placing their faith in Lumumba to lead them onto the world stage. This pride and determination that accompanied independence would soon dim as the nation found itself in turmoil, with its former colonizer's continued to attempts to force their hegemony on the Congo.

Events that occurred during the Congo's independence day celebrations provided an indication of things to come for the new government. King Baudouin of Belgium gave a speech praising Leopold's rule in the Congo, claiming "…he did not announce to you as a conqueror, but as a civilizer," and further reiterating "… we have not hesitated to grant you this independence from the very start."[19] Baudouin's oration

15. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958-1960, Vol. XIV, Africa, eds. Harriet D. Schwar and Stanley Shaloff (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992), Document 96.; Document 101.; US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXII, Africa, eds. Nina D. Howland, et al. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2014), Document 5.

16. Kwame Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo: A Case Study of Foreign Pressures in an Independent State* (New York: International Publishers, 1967), 11.

17. Jitendra Mohan, "Ghana, the Congo, and the United Nations," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 7, no. 3 (October 1969): 371.

18. Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo*, 11; Mohan, "Ghana, the Congo, and the United Nations," 372.

19. Marouf Hasian Jr. and Rulon Wood, "Traumatic Realism and Sublime Decolonization: Remembering the Mass-Mediated Representations of King Baudouin's and Patrice Lumumba's Speeches on Congolese Independence Day, June 30, 1960," *Controversia* 6, no. 2 (Fall, 2009): 26.

displayed the ignorance and callousness of Belgium towards the Congo's historical struggles, angering many in the audience. In response Lumumba rushed the stage to deliver an impromptu speech arguing that, though they would maintain diplomatic relations with Belgium, or any other nation, they would never forget the atrocities they endured under colonial rule.[20] The native population praised Lumumba's speech while the foreign audience was roiled at his blunt statements. Western media lambasted the address as a "viscous attack."[21] The independence day speeches accentuated tensions between Belgium and the Congo, and alienated Lumumba from potential allies.

Tension between white settlers and the Congolese reached a tipping point just days after independence. The Belgians continued to maintain control over every senior position within the military and civil administration; all 1,100 officers of the 25,000 soldiers in the Force Publique were white men, as were the thousands of paid government administrators. The Belgians, assuming they would control the Congo's government after its independence, left in place the strict qualifications for career advancement and admitted only a handful of Congolese into the training programs by 1960. Though they now had independence, discontent was rising amongst the Congolese over the stranglehold that Belgium placed on the government. These tensions exploded when on July 5 the commander of the Force [22], General Janssens, walked into a dining hall in the capital city of Leopoldville full of Congolese soldiers and wrote on a chalkboard "Before Independence After Independence." Janssens, as the senior ranking officer in the Force Publique, believed that Congo's independence would cause a reduction in discipline within the military, and intended to reassert his dominance over the Congo by stating that nothing had changed with independence. Instead of reinforcing his control, arrogant action did just the opposite and sparked a mutiny within the Congo's military. This mutiny was the first clash of many in what would become known as the Congo Crisis.

The mutiny became both an opportunity for the Congolese to reclaim leadership of the country and an outlet for the Belgians to broadcast propaganda aimed at creating the appearance of white settlers as victims. The mutineers focused on removing the Belgian power structure they felt was limiting Congolese democracy, and successfully completed their goal in three days. During the mutiny the Congolese soldiers ousted the all-white officer corps and civil administrators, installed their own leaders, and renamed the Force Publique as the Armée Nationale Congolaise (ANC). Senior ranking NCO Joseph Mobutu was promoted to colonel and named the Chief of Staff of the ANC.[23] As the mutiny spread across the Congo, so too did stories of violent attacks on the white population. Though the revolt was relatively short, it spurred a mass evacuation of white settlers from the Congo, with the Belgians claiming that murderous bands of Congolese soldiers were looting houses and raping women.[24] British refugees however claimed no casualties in their evacuations, nor were there any official reports of violence from the Belgian government.[25] Although there were a few isolated incidents of clashes between Belgians and Congolese, the

20. Patrice Lumumba, "Speech at the Ceremony of the Proclamation of the Congo's Independence," in *Twentieth Century Voices: Selected Readings in World History,* ed. Michael G. Vann (San Diego: Cognella Inc., 2019), 429-431.

21. Ludo De Witte, *The Assassination of Lumumba*, trans. Ann Wright and Renée Fenby (New York: Verso, 2001), 2-4; "Freedom at Last," *TIME Magazine*, 11 July, 1960.

22. De Witte, *The Assassination of Lumumba*, 6.

23. De Witte, T*he Assassination of Lumumba*, 7.

24. "Belgians Flee from Congo Troops," *London Times*, July 8, 1960.

25. "No Britons Among Casualties," *London Times*, July 12, 1960; Harry Gilroy, "Troops of Congo Stage Mutinies," *The New York Times*, July 7, 1960.

vast majority of the reports were sensationalized, intent on delegitimizing the Congo and drawing public sympathy to the Belgians. The arrogant actions of Gen. Janssens demonstrated the Belgians true intent, leaving the mutiny as one of few options the native population had to attempt to claim their independence. Unfortunately, the Belgian settler's stories of Congolese barbarism would result in tragic consequences for the country.

In response to the mutiny and news of attacks on Belgian nationals, the Belgian parliament voted to send their national army into the Congo on July 9. They justified their decision by claiming that the Congo's government was not just dysfunctional, but nonexistent.[26] Paratroopers, against the will of Lumumba and Kasa-Vubu, deployed to the country, seizing major airports, the port city of Matadi, and providing reinforcements to economic interests in the province of Katanga.[27] The Belgians had invaded the Congo, now a sovereign nation, in its most fragile state. While they claimed to have mobilized in the Congo as a stabilizing force, in reality they were reasserting their dominance and ensuring that the Congo would not encroach on the industrial operations that propped up the Belgian economy. The Belgian invasion was only the beginning of the Congo's troubles, with further chaos lying in wait for the near future.

Occurring almost simultaneously with the military mutiny, but out of reach of the now crippled Congolese government, was the secession of the southeastern mining province of Katanga. As a result of the ethnic divisions created during colonialism many outlying provinces developed radically different political ideologies compared to central Congo. Katanga was the center of the Société Générale's most profitable operations and their political leader, Moise Tshombe, was heavily financed by UMHK.[28] Not satisfied with the formation of the new government, Tshombe had been planning to secede Katanga before independence, even approaching the US for support in the days prior.[29] Although the US declined to support Tshombe and advised him to work within the existing government framework, they did not warn the Congo's central government of the impeding political crisis, wanting to maintain their previous agreement of non-intervention held with Belgium. During the mutiny, Belgian officers of the Force Publique fled to Katanga and were reinforced by a large contingent of the Belgian military that deployed in response.[30] Furthermore, the Belgian government committed financial, political, and intelligence advisors to assist in the secession.[31] Katanga province became fortified and financed by Belgium, making it nearly impossible for the Congo to reign in the rogue region on their own. On July 11 of 1960, Tshombe announced the secession of Katanga province from the rest of the Republic of the Congo, and a week later the Belgian parliament approved of "…discreet, but active advisement of the Katangese government."[32] The neighbor-

26. Chambre des Représentants de Belgique, Enquête Parlementaire. Visant à Déterminer les Circonstances Exactes de l'Assassinat de Patrice Lumumba et l'Implication Évetuelle des Responsables Politiques Belges dans Celui-ci Vol I, (Brussels: Publications Officielles Édités par la Chambre des Représentants, November 16, 2001), 57.

27. Chambre des Représentants de Belgique, Visant à Déterminer les Circonstances Exactes de l'Assassinat de Patrice Lumumba Vol I, 42-43.; Nkrumah, *The Challenge of the Congo*, 19.

28. M. Crawford Young, "Post-Independence Politics in the Congo," *Transition* no. 26 (1966): 35.

29. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958-1960, Vol. XIV, Document 103.

30. De Witte, *The Assassination of Lumumba*, 7.

31. Belgian Parliament, Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry in Charge of Determining the Exact Circumstances of the Assassination of Patrice Lumumba and the Possible Involvement of Belgian Politicians: The Conclusions of the Enquiry Committee, (November 16, 2001) 4; Boehme, *The Involvement of the Belgian Central Bank in the Katanga Secession, 1960-1963*, 2-3.

32. Chambre des Représentants de Belgique. Visant à Déterminer les Circonstances Exactes de l'Assassinat de Patrice Lumumba Vol I, 52.

ing province of South Kasai would follow on August 8. Emboldened by the presence of Belgian soldiers in Katanga, along with the money and support from UMHK and Belgium, Tshombe seized the opportunity to become his own president. Belgium, no longer able to control the Congolese government, instead sought to break the most profitable parts of it away to form a separate state that was more compliant to their wants and needs.

Within two weeks of independence the Congo was in disarray, experiencing mutiny, foreign invasion, and secession, forcing Lumumba and Kasa-Vubu to appeal to the international community for support. Initially approaching the US through Ambassador Clare Timberlake, their appeal was declined, and they were advised that their request should go through the United Nations.[33] The US claimed that their dismissal of support was to reinforce the need for the Congo to follow proper diplomatic channels, however, their intervention would have voided their agreement to support Belgium by sending their soldiers into direct conflict with each other. The Congo followed American advice and appealed to the UN on July12, asking specifically for support to combat Belgian military intrusion into the country and help re-secure Katanga. They closed the cable by warning that delays in their support would force the Congo to look outside of the UN for help.[34] The Congo was desperate for military assistance, and explicit that a lack of support from the West would send them elsewhere to find help, even if that meant approaching the Soviet Union. The Congo's request was approved and on July 16, a combined force of soldiers from six nations landed in Leopoldville on US Air Force aircraft.[35] The Congo now had the support it hoped would allow them to regain control of its country, with a coalition force available to counter the Belgian insurgence and Katanga separatists. Although the request provided the Congo with much needed military support, Lumumba's message did considerable damage to his reputation. His threat to look outside the UN was interpreted in many diplomatic circles as an early sign that he was a veering towards Communism.

The UN held an extremely liberal interpretation of the Congo's request for military assistance. The UN deemed the secession as an internal political matter and would not allow their forces to intervene in Katanga, claiming it could "…seriously endanger the impartiality [of the UN]."[36] Although the UN deployed to the Congo to restore order, they failed to acknowledge that Belgian soldiers were the central problem, allowing the Belgian military to operate with autonomy. The only opposition provided by the UN against Belgian presence in the Congo were soft resolutions, proposed by the USSR, nonetheless, requesting immediate withdrawal.[37] The Soviets became one of the most vocal supporters of the Congo, relentlessly trying to brand the Belgians as aggressors in the emerging conflict. Though the Soviets may have been vocal supporters, years of fighting the Cold War with America had hampered their ability to do much more than act as advocates. The UN resolutions were simply ignored by the Belgians who were far better equipped than the Congo's military. The UN forces, not authorized to intervene with the Belgians or Katanga secession,

33. Larry Devlin, *Chief of Station, Congo: A Memoir of 1960-67* (New York: Public Affairs, 2007), 36.

34. United Nations Security Council, Cable Dated 12 July 1960 From the President of the Republic of the Congo and Supreme Commander of the National Army and the Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense Addressed to the Secretary General of the United Nations, S/4382 (New York: UN, July 13, 1960).

35. Devlin, *Chief of Station*, 37.

36. United Nations Security Council, First Report by the Secretary-General on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution S/4387 of 14 July, 1960, S/4389 (New York: UN, July 18, 1960).

37. United Nations Security Council, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Draft Resolution, S/4402 (New York: UN, July 21, 1960).

instead took up the role of maintaining law and order within the Congo. Lumumba and Kasa-Vubu had intended that the well-armed UN force would combat the Belgian backed secession, while the ANC would maintain order and security in the rest of the country. Instead, they received thousands of foreign soldiers that were intent on completing a mission that the Congo believed they could handle themselves and remained impotent against a foreign power directly undermining their sovereignty.

The UN's anticlimactic response to Belgian agitation had increased the frustration of the Congolese government. Lumumba, who felt betrayed by the inaction of the UN, threatened to appeal directly to the Soviet Union for support if the UN did not follow through with the requested operation. In response, the US began a blockade against Soviet incursion into the Congo.[38] America was at the height of their Cold War with the Soviets and the threats from Lumumba were, in their eyes, a mortal sin against democracy. After a week of continued apathy from the UN, Lumumba followed through with his challenge. On July 31 he placed a call to Nikita Khrushchev pleading for Soviet military assistance, though they could not provide any material support; US actions had made it logistically impossible for the Soviets to transport troops or equipment to the Congo.[39] With the American blockade in place Soviet involvement in the Congo was limited to embassy operations and logistical support through the UN. It was well documented, even by American diplomats, that Lumumba was not a Communist, prescribing instead to the non-alignment principles of the Bandung Conference.[40] Regardless, as far as American intelligence officials on the ground and in the State Department were concerned, Lumumba's phone call to Khrushchev had painted himself red. He was now a liability to an organization whose primary goal was preventing Soviet influence around the world.

## The Overthrow of the Government

Now perceived as a threat, certain entities in the American government believed that Lumumba had to be removed from Congolese politics before the state became overrun with Communists. To remove the Lumumba regime, the intelligence community first had to gain approval for the coup from the Eisenhower administration. They did so by assassinating Lumumba's character. Various American diplomatic officials began to advise the president and his cabinet that Lumumba was dangerously unstable; Andrew Cordier of the UN claimed he was a drug addict, the new Congo CIA station chief, Larry Devlin claimed he demanded the company of prostitutes on diplomatic travels, and in National Security Council briefings Allan Dulles reported that Lumumba was on both Soviet and Chinese payrolls.[41] None of these accusations necessarily were true, but were a key part of the US plan to remove Lumumba from office. Mounting a coup in a foreign country would require the cooperation from the highest levels of the government. Convincing the presidential cabinet that Lumumba was dangerously unstable would ensure support. On August 12, the CIA gave Devlin approval to begin planning the overthrow of Lumumba.[42]

38. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958-1960, Vol. XIV, Document 145.

39. Alessandro Iandolo, "Imbalance of Power: The Soviet Union and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1961," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 16, no. 2 (Spring 2014): 43.

40. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958-1960, Vol. XIV, Document 106.

41. Carole Collins, "Fatally Flawed Mediation: Cordier and the Congo Crisis of 1960," *Africa Today* 39, no. 3 (1992): 14; Devlin, *Chief of Station*, 50; US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958 1960, Vol. XIV, Document 106.

42. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIII, Africa, eds. Nina D. Howland, et al. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2014), Document 8.

Receiving approval from Washington, Devlin and his assets promptly began to engineer their coup. Washington's orders required that ousting Lumumba needed to appear legal to the local population.[43] Although many western politicians had lost confidence in Lumumba, he was viewed as a hero amongst the Congolese population, meaning that a blatant coup would likely result in a nationwide revolt. Given a $100,000 budget and with the help of the Belgian intelligence services, Devlin set out to coerce politicians, intending to force a vote of no confidence in the Congo's parliament.[44] For a vote of no confidence to occur, a majority magistrates and senators would have to agree that Lumumba was no longer capable of governing, followed by a formal dismissal by the chief of state, Kasa-Vubu. This would require turning Lumumba's own allies against him. The US chose to coordinate their coup with Belgium to increase their chance of success. The American ambassador to Belgium communicated to them that, "A principle objective of our political and diplomatic action must therefore be to destroy Lumumba government as now constituted, but at the same time we must find or develop another horse to back which would be acceptable to the rest of Africa and defensible against soviet political attack."[45] Prior to the coup America had only agreed not to interfere with Belgian actions in the Congo. Now they were joining forces to deliberately overthrow the Congo's democratically elected leader. To reinforce the scheme and further sway the opinions of moderate politicians, the Belgians and CIA funded anti-Lumumba rallies, knowing they would result in public clashes that would bring negative press to the prime minister.[46] With their machine set in motion, the CIA and Belgian's began to court politicians to support their overthrow, while sowing chaos in the streets throughout the Congo.

President Kasa-Vubu's political power was a key element of the coup, but as a close partner to Lumumba, it would take a considerable amount of work for him to side with Americans. His cooperation was needed both to initiate the vote and to remove Lumumba from office after it had taken place. The US State Department also required plausible deniability in their foreign operations to avoid reprisals from international courts; placing Kasa-Vubu at the center of the political coup would maintain that deniability.[47] Devlin, along with the Ambassador to the Congo, Clare Timberlake, began to regularly meet Kasa-Vubu to convince him of their plan.[48] Devlin and Timberlake used Lumumba's approach to the Soviet's to drive a wedge between the two allies whose relationship was already beginning to strain over the political instability that resulted from the Belgian militaries actions in Katanga and Kasai. Although Kasa-Vubu would appear at the center of the coup, Devlin was the marionette that pulled all the strings. In his debriefing after leaving the Congo in 1967, Devlin reported that he had developed a "three-page plan, step-by-step-by-step, as to what should be done and when…"[49] With the President of the Congo on board Devlin's team could now move forward planning the end of Lumumba's political career.

43. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIII, Document 9.

44. Devlin, Chief of Station, 63; Stephen R. Weissman, "What Really Happened in Congo: The CIA, the Murder of Lumumba, and the Rise of Mobutu," *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 4 (July/August 2014): 16.

45. Chambre des Représentants de Belgique. Visant à Déterminer les Circonstances Exactes de l'Assassinat de Patrice Lumumba Vol I, 89.

46. Belgian Parliament, Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry, 2001, 4; Devlin, *Chief of Station*, 66.

47. US Senate, Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders: An Interim Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, 94th Cong., 1st sess., Report no. 94-465 (Washington, DC, November 20, 1975), 11.

48. Devlin, Chief of Station, 64-65.

49. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIII, Document 17.

After weeks of coordination, by early September Lumumba's coup was expanding in support as it neared fruition. The CIA and their Congolese political collaborators developed a plan that would replace Lumumba with western sympathizer Joseph Ileo after the vote of no confidence was held in parliament on September 7.[50] Knowing that a political proclamation would not be enough to remove Lumumba with his mass support of the majority of Congolese citizens and the military, the UN was brought into the fold to provide further support for the coup. In closed door meetings, Special Assistant in the Congo to UN secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold, Andrew Cordier of the UN agreed that, after the announcement of Lumumba's dismissal, his peacekeeping forces would shut down airports and seize the radio station in the capital city of Leopoldville.[51] They would also provide protection for Kasa-Vubu against any retaliation from the Congo's military. Radio served as the main form of communication within the Congo and by blocking access, Lumumba could not address the public to warn them of the coup, while closing the airports ensured he could not flee to another province to regroup and build support. As a rabid anti-Communist with a particular hatred for Lumumba, Cordier was all too willing to help, often appearing more loyal to America than his UN mission.[52] With Cordier's commitment to UN support, Lumumba's overthrow became a multilateral affair, with the US, Belgium, and elements within the Congo and UN all playing pivotal roles in the operation.

Although Devlin had meticulously plotted Lumumba's coup, with such a complex plan that implicated so many parties, there were many opportunities for something to fail. That failure came when Kasa-Vubu who, encouraged by the Belgians, decided to dismiss Lumumba two days before the parliamentary vote was held.[53] On September 5 Kasa-Vubu took the radio and announced that he had fired Lumumba as Prime Minister, blaming him for the chaos of the Congo.[54] The UN, for their part followed through, closing the Leopoldville radio stations preventing Lumumba's response. Cordier used troops from Ghana to enforce the blockade, alarming one of Lumumba's closest allies, Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah, who promptly admonished the involvement of the UN in an obviously political coup.[55] Devlin's impeccably orchestrated plan had turned into a political catastrophe, foiled by Kasa-Vubu and the Belgians. Kasa-Vubu however had no constitutional authority to dismiss the P.M. without a parliamentary vote, and his actions were considered by most as illegitimate. In the wake of the coup's failure, political support cultivated by Devlin had dried up, public opinion solidified around Lumumba, and Kasa-Vubu's credibility was damaged. A country already suffering from Belgian invasion and budding civil war in its southern provinces was now forced to navigate an unprecedented constitutional crisis.

Although their primary plan to influence Congolese politics had fallen apart, the CIA crafted contingency operations. Their back-up plan came in the form of newly promoted ANC Chief of Staff, Colonel Mobutu. Devlin met Mobutu while courting politicians for his political coup with Kasa-Vubu, and after finding they shared simi-

50. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIII, Document 15.

51. Collins, "Fatally Flawed Mediation," 17; US Dept. of State, Foreign Relations of the United States XXIII, Document 15.

52. Collins, "Fatally Flawed Mediation," 13-14.

53. US Dept. of State, Foreign Relations of the United States XXIII, Document 15; Belgian Parliament, Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry, 2001, 4.

54. Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo*, 35.

55. Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo*, 37-38.

lar hatred for both Communism and Lumumba, the two decided to work together.[56] Mobutu aspired for higher government offices and hoped the CIA could assist in his political career. The CIA felt that he was still too inexperienced to govern but saw the potential benefit in Mobutu as an asset. After the failure of the political coup the American government brought Mobutu onto their payroll, as he and Devlin set off to overthrow the Congo government once again.[57] On September 14 Mobutu mounted his coup; he dissolved the Congolese government, placed Lumumba, Kasa-Vubu, and Ileo under house arrest, and ordered all Soviet and Chinese diplomats to be expelled from the country.[58] After nearly a month of failed plots and mishaps it appeared that Devlin and Mobutu had finally rid the Congo of Lumumba. Not only had they removed Lumumba, Mobutu also removed any Communist influence from the country. Mobutu provided the most complete and efficient solution to complete the CIA's coup.

While the military overthrow of the Congolese government initially appeared to solve many problems, the effort quickly proved trivial. While Mobutu intended to keep Lumumba under his guard, UN forces under the orders of Rajeshwar Dayal, who replaced Cordier after his debacle, intervened and helped Lumumba avoid a likely assassination by ANC troops.[59] Although Lumumba was bound to his residence, he now had a UN buffer between him and Mobutu's soldiers, and was more secure than ever before. Mobutu's coup was brash and lacked any semblance of the legitimacy that the US State Department had requested in removing him from power. Mobutu wanted to form a new government, but Devlin advised him that he had no legal authority to replace the Prime Minister, an action the constitution stipulated only the President could complete.[60] Regardless of the illegal nature of Mobutu's coup, he and Devlin pushed forward with rebuilding the government. To avoid a lapse in political leadership Devlin and Mobutu formed an interim government, the College of Commissioners, to govern until December 31st.[61] Devlin's assistance with Mobutu and the College of Commissioners became an ongoing affair that, in effect, made him a sitting member of the Congolese government.[62] Devlin helped Mobutu to become a "strongman" who directed the Congo behind the veil of the College of Commissioners, and also provided intelligence to prevent various assassination attempts against Mobutu.[63] While Mobutu's coup intended the swift removal of entrenched leaders, it had caused more problems than it solved. The Congo government was now locked in a three-way stalemate, Lumumba was fully protected by UN forces, and Devlin, the senior CIA agent in Leopoldville, had become a senior policy advisor to Mobutu's regime.

56. Devlin, *Chief of Station*, 79; US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIII, Document 19.

57. US Dept. of State, Foreign Relations of the United States XXIII, Document 19.

58. Weissman, "What Really Happened in Congo," 16; US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIII, Document 21.

59. United Nations Security Council, First Progress Report to the Secretary-General from His Special Representative in the Congo, Ambassador Rajeshwar Dayal, S/4531 (New York: UN, September 21, 1960).

60. Devlin, *Chief of Station*, 88.

61. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIII, Africa, eds. Nina D. Howland, et al. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2014), Document 22; Devlin, Chief of Station, 87.

62. Weissman, "What Really Happened in Congo," 16.

63. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIII, Document 37; US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIII, Document 23.

**Eliminating Lumumba**

The political removal of Lumumba was not the only avenue explored to control his influence; both the US and Belgian governments planned assassination operations against the Premier. In a National Security Council meeting on August 25, 1960, President Eisenhower expressed the need to "eliminate Lumumba," which was interpreted by the director of the CIA, Allen Dulles, as authorization for his assassination.[64] Understanding that Devlin's political coup may not work out, Lumumba's assassination became another CIA contingency plan in controlling the political outcomes of the Congo. Concurrently, the Belgians also began to craft their own assassination plot against Lumumba. Spearheaded by Minister Pierre Wigny of the Belgian Parliament, Belgian military commanders in the Congo were given authorization and operational support to carry out an assassination.[65] The Belgians were not content with stopping at Lumumba's political influence and wanted to make him disappear completely. There were now competing parties attempting to murder Lumumba. Though both America and Belgium worked together in overthrowing the Congolese government, they operated independently while attempting to assassinate Lumumba.

The CIA designed three separate plans to assassinate Lumumba. Their preferred method was to kill Lumumba using a secret poison from a lethal shellfish toxin.[66] Bronson Tweedy, the deputy director of the CIA, worked out the details of the assassination, planning to insert a "third country national" in Lumumba's residence to administer the poison that had been delivered to the Leopoldville station from a military base in Maryland.[67] Few agents could gain direct access to Lumumba, and those that could had refused to carry out the assassination attempt, causing the plan to be abandoned. As an alternative, a sniper rifle was sent to an agent in the Congo, explicitly to be used on Lumumba. A case officer claimed, "hunting good here when the lights right," but the shot was never able to be taken because Lumumba had not left his house in weeks.[68] Their final plan involved using a group of commandos under the command of Mobutu to storm Lumumba's home and kill him, however because of the terrain that his home was on, and the UN security detail, they could not find a viable approach to enter the compound.[69] The CIA spent three months attempting to murder Lumumba, but since he was under constant UN protection and never left his home, they could not find an opportunity. Regardless of their lack of success, these assassination attempts, approved and coordinated at the highest levels of the US government, revealed the extent of American involvement in controlling the political outcome of the Congo.

The Belgians, not motivated by the Cold War, still saw Lumumba as the primary threat to their financial interests. that were similar to the Americans plans to kill Lumumba. Named "operation-L," they tried to use poison, sent an assassin into the country under the cover of a journalist, and paid off government officials to arrest Lumumba.[70] Neither of these plans worked. They could not get anyone close

64. US Senate, Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders: An Interim Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, 94th Cong., 1st sess., Report no. 94-465 (Washington, DC, November 20, 1975), 15.

65. Belgian Parliament, Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry, 2001, 5.

66. US Senate, Church Committee Hears Testimony on Shellfish Toxins Ca. 1975, 1975.

67. US Senate, Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders, 29.

68. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIII, Document 33.

69. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIII, Document 32.

70. Belgian Parliament, Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry, 2001, 6.

to Lumumba, and the UN was steadfast in their protection of the Prime Minister. The Belgians however, remained patient and were willing to wait much longer than the Americans to carry out Lumumba's assassination. Their patience would soon be rewarded.

On November 27, for unknown reasons, Lumumba decided to escape his residence that he had been a prisoner in since mid-September. Hiding in the floorboard of one of his servants' cars, Lumumba escaped the security of the UN and Congo militaries and headed for Stanleyville, a city that had become a stronghold of his political support.[71] The escape separated Lumumba from the only thing keeping him safe in the entire country. As news spread of Lumumba's disappearance various military factions in the Congo began a frantic manhunt. Mobutu's soldiers caught him after three days on the run, brutally beat him, then imprisoned him in a compound near Mobutu's home.[72] Whether he was attempting to make a political comeback in Stanleyville, or just tired of being held captive in his own home, Lumumba's escape attempt proved to be futile. Lumumba, who had survived multiple political coups and assassination attempts from two of the most powerful nations in the world, was now in the hands of his enemy.

Mobutu held Lumumba captive in his prisons for more than a month. During that time Lumumba was regularly tortured and beaten in front of reporters and international television cameras.[73] Mobutu was attempting to display himself as a tool of justice and portray the Prime Minister as a traitor to the Congo. Mobutu was also evaluating his options on what he should ultimately do with Lumumba. The Belgians wanted Lumumba themselves and for months had been providing Mobutu and many others with substantial salaries followed by substantial demands, using the Société General as a proxy to shield their involvement.[74] Mobutu was working as a double agent, filling requests for both the US and Belgian governments, and getting rich in the process. After weeks of deliberation, the Belgians convinced Mobutu to transfer Lumumba to Katanga.[75] By maintaining their patience and outbidding America, the Belgians had managed to capture Lumumba. Lumumba was now in their hands and Belgium, once again, was going to force their brutality on the Congo.

On January 17, 1961, Lumumba and two of his closest associates were loaded onto a Belgian transport plane and flown to Elizabethville, the capital of Katanga Province.[76] Prior to their arrival, Kasa-Vubu, who had been released from prison and retaken his place in the government, sent a letter to Moise Tshombe, the secessionist leader of the province, letting him know that he was about to receive "…three packets. You must not refuse to accept them."[77] Five hours after those "three packets" arrived, beaten nearly to death, Lumumba and his colleagues were taken into the jungle behind UMHK property to face a firing line. They were then assassinated by Katangan soldiers under the command of a Belgian police commissioner and three Belgian military officers.[78] The bodies were dissolved in chemicals to hide the evidence and

71. De Witte, *The Assassination of Lumumba*, 52.

72. US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIII, Document 45; De Witte, The Assassination of Lumumba, 54-55.

73. Devlin, *Chief of Station*, 116.

74. Chambre des Représentants de Belgique. Enquête Parlementaire. Visant à Déterminer les Circonstances Exactes de l'Assassinat de Patrice Lumumba et l'Implication Évetuelle des Responsables Politiques Belges dans Celui-ci Vol II (Brussels: Publications Officielles Édités par la Chambre des Représentants, November 16, 2001). 653-654.

75. Belgian Parliament, Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry, 2001, 7.

76. Chambre des Représentants de Belgique. Visant à Déterminer les Circonstances Exactes de l'Assassinat de Patrice Lumumba Vol I, 227.

77. Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo*, 120.

78. Belgian Parliament, Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry, 2001, 8.

provide plausible deniability to the foreign actors involved.[79] Less than six months after becoming the first democratically elected Prime Minister in Congo's history, Lumumba had been murdered by his former colonizers, with the support of his own government. Kasa-Vubu's attitude was jubilant as he kept the Belgian government updated on the situation while it unfolded. In a January 15 note to the Belgian Chief security officer in Katanga, Kasa-Vubu wrote, "I have the honor to ask you to make the necessary preparations for the transfer of prisoners currently detained in Camp Hardy."[80] Lumumba was the man that placed Kasa-Vubu in office, and Kasa-Vubu was "honored" to play a part in his murder. The Americans, Belgians, and the heads of state of the Congo saw Lumumba as the greatest risk to their ambitions, and his murder allowed them to continue to manipulate the Congolese government free from opposition.

## Conclusions

Gaining independence from colonialism would normally be a cause for celebration for any nation, but for the Congo, political freedom brought the country nothing but chaos and destruction. Even prior to their emancipation, Belgium and America had begun to plot against the Congolese government, intent on molding the country in a manner that would benefit their interests over the native population. Western interference brought mutiny, mass migration, secession, military invasion, constitutional crises, and political assassination to the Congo. American intervention was rooted in their unsubstantiated fear of Communism entering the country, though Lumumba was not a Communist, and the Soviets had little intention of meddling in the Congo's affairs. Belgium aimed to control the economic interests that they were so reliant upon. Their avarice would not allow them to come to an agreement with the Congo that would be mutually beneficial to both nations. Fear and greed pushed Belgium and the US to operate counter to their professed democratic principles they professed, and the Congolese people suffered greatly from their actions.

The events covered in this essay, from the days of independence through the assassination of Lumumba, were only the beginning of the Congo's troubles. The Congo Crisis would last through 1964, and then reemerge again in the 1990s. Further devastation befell the Congo following Lumumba's assassination; the fighting in the secessionist provinces grew into a civil war, mercenaries hired by Belgium began to operate openly within the country's borders, UN forces undertook the largest peacekeeping operation ever attempted, and UN Secretary -General Dag Hammarskjold's airplane crashed under mysterious circumstances while visiting the Congo. In 1964 Mobutu seized control of the Congo, ruling as a violent, authoritarian kleptocrat until 1997, when he was overthrown and exiled, and the country again fell into anarchy. During his reign, Mobutu continued to be heavily supported by Belgium, the US, and any other country that could afford his loyalty. The Congo has remained in various states of disorder from its independence in 1960 until present day, and the majority of the blame for this situation falls squarely on the United States and Belgium. Belgium apologized in 2001 for their involvement in the crisis, but has not taken any responsibility for Lumumba's assassination, claiming that it was carried out

79. Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost*, 302.

80. Chambre des Représentants de Belgique. Visant à Déterminer les Circonstances Exactes de l'Assassinat de Patrice Lumumba Vol II, 670.

by Tshombe and his soldiers, without their knowledge.[81] The US, though they have made publicly available their documentation on the Congo, has not formally recognized their involvement, nor held anyone accountable.

The events that followed independence in the Congo are extremely complex, violent and often tragic. Volumes could be dedicated to the topic, and due to the intricacies of the events in the period, several topics were not covered in this study. The Congo provides an excellent case study into the impacts and consequences of western interventions on post-colonial states, but further studies are required to provide a complete understanding of the subject. There was little initial reason for the Congo to deteriorate so early on, and there was no legal or legitimate reason for Belgian and American interference in their sovereign affairs. The unsubstantiated fear of the US and the unbridled greed of Belgium created an environment of chaos that destroyed a country still in its infancy. This lack of moral and political values from the West has left thousands dead, the country in chaos, and had stolen the right to independence from the Congo.

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81. Belgian Parliament, Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry, 2001, 8.

# "A Keg of Dynamite with a One-Inch Fuse": The Marginalization of Vietnamese Refugees in Orange County, California, 1978-1982

**Kelly Cullity**

**Abstract:** This paper examines the resettlement experiences of second wave Vietnamese refugees in the United States during a period of fiscal conservatism and changing racial and ethnic demographics in the late 1970s and early 1980s. After the fall of Saigon and the end of the Vietnam War, Americans often viewed Vietnamese refugees as rescued allies of a lost war who wanted nothing more than to emigrate to the United States. This grossly distorted the experiences of these refugees, many of whom did feel a strong sense of gratitude toward their new country, but also a deep yearning for their former home. By the mid-1980s, many Vietnamese refugees maintained their Vietnamese ethnicity as their primary identifier, shirking any concrete identification with their adopted country while simultaneously constructing a new sense of self within the United States. What were the circumstances in which their new identity developed in America? In what ways did federal, state, and local governments help or hinder their integration into society? And how did native-born Americans respond to the changing demographics of their communities as Vietnamese refugees settled there? This paper argues that in the late-1970s and early-1980s, federal, state, and local governments devoted financial and logistical resources to the efforts of Vietnamese resettlement; yet, the inability to fully fund these government support programs, including welfare, education, and job training, marginalized Vietnamese refugees by limiting their ability to acquire the skills necessary to integrate into American society. An examination of the experience of Vietnamese refugees in Orange County, California specifically, it is clear that the nativism and xenophobia felt by native-born Americans further exacerbated the marginalization refugees already experienced as a result of these government policies. These two realities – nascent anti-Asian feelings and limited, ineffectual government assistance - made it increasingly challenging for Vietnamese refugees to adapt to and integrate into their new home.

In 1982, five-year-old Nicole Nguyen and her family fled their home country of Vietnam by boat, hoping to find refuge from the oppressive rule of the Vietnamese Communist Party. Awoken by her family in the middle of the night, Nguyen recalled being half asleep in her pajamas as her uncle hoisted her onto his back to ensure both speed and stealth as they ran through the dark forest. The young girl held tight to her uncle's neck as she repeatedly asked her family, "Where are we going?" Unable to muster an adequate response she was met only with silence. Soon, the family found themselves in a small boat out to sea, where they prayed they would be rescued by a larger ship. By the end of the five days, rations were scarce, and the fresh water supply depleted. Nguyen remembers drinking salt water from the sea in an attempt to quench her thirst, which only exacerbated her dehydration and sea sickness. Finally, a large naval ship rescued the Nguyen family and transported them to Malaysia, a first asylum country for Vietnamese refugees. Five-year-old Nicole and her family had experienced a traumatic escape from their home in hopes of finding a new country that would provide them with the opportunity to live a life grounded in freedom. The Nguyen family resettled in the United States and began discovering

the challenges of Vietnamese refugees' experience in America.[1]

Only recently have historians begun to delve into the experience of the Vietnamese refugees arriving in the United States after 1975. Previously, efforts by historians to understand Vietnamese resettlement focused almost entirely on United States federal refugee policy and the logistics of resettlement. This resulted in an understanding of Vietnamese refugees in the United States that centered the United States within the historical narrative and situated the refugees on the periphery of the story. One example of this is historian Carl J. Bon Tempo's monograph *Americans at the Gate: The United States and Refugees during the Cold War*, which clearly articulates government refugee policy from a top-down perspective. Less often have historians focused on the historical experiences of refugees themselves. This has led to a limited understanding of the Vietnamese refugee experience, including their traumatic resettlement, efforts at adjustment and community building, and struggles over belonging and identity. This paper seeks to bridge the gap between refugee policy and refugees' experiences by making connections between the implementation of policy and the effects those decisions had on refugees themselves.

Throughout the twentieth century, the majority of immigration historians focused their studies on "one-way European immigration and assimilation," sophisticated community studies examining settlement and the gradual acculturation of European groups. Historian Adam Goodman argues that this reflects notions of American exceptionalism, particularly the idea that the US demonstrates a unique capacity to attract and assimilate immigrants.[2] Historian Mae Ngai argues immigration histories of the mid-twentieth century, most notably Oscar Handlin's 1951 *The Uprooted*, that, "Both academic and popular histories entrenched a nationalist framework, which posited the telos of assimilation as evidence of America's exceptional history and character."[3] Critically, historians implicitly and explicitly advanced the belief that immigration to the United States was an affirmation of American political values, particularly of its claims as a society that offered unassailable freedom and allowed for upward mobility.

However, over the past several decades, immigration historians have worked to dismantle this emphasis on American exceptionalism. Employing a transnational perspective and decentering the United States has broadened the scope of analysis. Historian Mark Wyman argues that immigrants often did not seek citizenship or to assimilate when they migrated to the United States, instead choosing to amass wealth and engage in return migration to their home country.[4] The United States was not necessarily unique in admitting large numbers of immigrants, nor in the opportunities afforded to them. At the same time, a growing interest in non-European migrations to the United States have highlighted the ways in which racial ideologies and politics of dominance left some immigrants outside the margins of assimilation and belonging. These historiographic trends have expanded the field beyond one-way European immigration while providing broader research focuses. At the same time, structural changes in American immigration policy through the twentieth century

1. Nicole Nguyen, interview by Malessa Tem, February 26, 2012, in Yorba Linda, CA, transcript, Viet Stories: Vietnamese American Oral History Project, Irvine, CA.

2. Adam Goodman, "Nation of Migrants, Historians of Migration," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 34, no. 4 (summer 2015), 7.

3. Mae M. Ngai, "Immigration and Ethnic History," in *American History Now*, ed. Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011), 362.

4. Mark Wyman, *Round-Trip to America: The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880 – 1930*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993).

and the growing importance of refugee migrations have invited new approaches to old questions.[5]

The myth of American exceptionalism also influenced popular discourse on immigration. Average Americans have often viewed immigration into the United States through the lens of exceptionalism, with imagined narratives emphasizing the choice to migrate to the United States and the struggle-free assimilation of previous U.S.-bound immigrants. Such visions frame views of contemporary migrants, who are seen as fortunate to be admitted and admonished to assimilate quickly.[6] Consequently, American exceptionalism and the expectation of immigrant assimilation are interconnected.[7]

In light of changing understandings surrounding immigration, resettlement experiences of second wave Vietnamese refugees in the United States during a period of fiscal conservatism and changing racial and ethnic demographics require particular interest. After the fall of Saigon and the end of the Vietnam War, Americans often viewed Vietnamese refugees as rescued allies of a lost war who wanted nothing more than to emigrate to the United States. This grossly distorted the experiences of these refugees, many of whom did feel a strong sense of gratitude toward their new country, but also a deep yearning for a home they fought to not leave. The view of native-born Americans often disregarded the geopolitical context of their migration as well as the experiences and desires of the refugees themselves. While some Vietnamese refugees certainly did prioritize immigration into the United States, others chose other nations for resettlement, including France, Canada, and Australia. Many refugees had no real say in the matter. The luxury of choice precluded by their diaspora.[8] Even while searching for a new country to call home theyyearned for the day they could return. Centering historical inquiry of the "immigrant experience" on the refugee themselves and seeking to understand the resettlement experiences from their perspective reveals that American expectations of a quick assimilation of Vietnamese refugees into American society were simplistic and misguided.

Sociologist Karin Aguilar-San Juan differentiates between immigrants and refugees; immigrants are voluntary migrants often in a financial position to allow for movement, while refugees are forced migrants who move regardless of means and with the added challenge of experienced trauma.[9] To fully understand the refugee experience, it is important to acknowledge the differing attributes between immigrants and refugees. What distinguishes immigrants from refugees and how do these distinctions impact their stories? The United States' Refugee Act of 1980 defines a refugee as "any person who is outside any country of such person's nationality … who is unable or unwilling to return to … that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion."[10] These distinctions are critical because they articulate the desperation of those forced to leave their homes in hopes of finding to find refuge in a foreign land. Moreover, this distinct definition acknowledges the necessity of recognizing human rights as a fundamental compo-

5. Goodman, "Nation of Migrants," 10.

6. Karin Aguilar-San Juan, *Little Saigons: Staying Vietnamese in America* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 95.

7. Aguilar-San Juan, *Little Saigons*, 62.

8. US Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Office of Public Communication, *The Indochinese Refugees: A Status Report*, by Robert B. Oakley (Washington DC, August 1978), 4.

9. Aguilar-San Juan, *Little Saigons*, 40.

10. Refugee Act of 1980, Pub. L. No. 96-212, Washington DC, March 17, 1980, 1.

nent of refugee policy.

Prior to the 1970s, refugee admittance into the United States primarily focused on European refugees escaping communism. The willingness of the federal government to break from the previously racialized refugee policy to allow hundreds of thousands of Southeast Asian refugees to enter the United States showed a belief in "the American duty to defend and protect human rights" in a post-Civil Rights Movement America.[11]

While Americans showed an inclination toward inclusivity in refugee and immigration policy following the 1960s, that did not erase the systemic racism that has continually permeated the United States.[12] The micro and macro level racism of Vietnamese refugee experience formed a fundamental component of their shared experience and enabled their marginalization in American society. The United States has a long and poorly understood relationship with anti-Asian policy, most notably the passage of the Chinese Exclusion in the 1880s, the creation of the Asian barred zone in 1917, and the internment of Japanese-Americans during WWII. By the 1970s, the legacies of such policies conceived of Asian immigrants as outside the norm. Additionally, throughout the American involvement in the Vietnamese anti-colonial war, Americans painted Vietnam as a space of "otherness," distinct and alien when compared to the United States.[13] Most Vietnamese refugees in American garnered some protection from the worst of this racism; at times their anti-communist views sheltered them from harsh conservative backlash.[14] Yet, in a society that maintained a distinct racial hierarchy, Vietnamese refugees were viewed as a group other than white and, therefore, not afforded the protections and privileges that whiteness offered in America. The "otherness" they experienced caused refugees to seek out their own space as they sought to establish their own identity within the United States.

By the mid-1980s, many Vietnamese refugees maintained their Vietnamese ethnicity as their only identifier, shirking any concrete identification with their adopted country, and still clearly constructing a new sense of self within the United States.[15] What were the circumstances in which their new identity developed in America? In what ways did federal, state, and local governments help or hinder their integration into society? And how did native-born Americans respond to the changing demographics of their communities as Vietnamese refugees settled there? In the late-1970s and early-1980s, federal, state, and local governments devoted financial and logistical resources to the efforts of Vietnamese resettlement; yet, the inability to fully fund these government support programs, including welfare, education, and job training, created an atmosphere of exclusion for Vietnamese refugees in American society. By examining the experience of Vietnamese refugees in Orange County, California specifically, it is clear that the nativism and xenophobia felt by native-born Americans exacerbated the marginalization already felt by refugees as a result of these government policies. These two realities – nascent anti-Asian feelings and limited, ineffectual government assistance - made it increasingly challenging for

11. Carl J. Bon Tempo, *Americans at the Gate: The United States and Refugees during the Cold War,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 9.

12. Bon Tempo *Americans*, 5.

13. Aguilar-San Juan, *Little Saigons*, 41.

14. Phuong Tran Nguyen, *Becoming Refugee American: The Politics of Rescue in Little Saigon* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2017), 4.

15. Beth C. Baldwin, Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center, *Patterns of Adjustment: A second look at Indochinese resettlement in Orange County*, July 1984, 6.

Vietnamese refugees to adapt to and integrate into their new home.

By May of 1975, 130,000 Vietnamese and Americans had evacuated from Vietnam as the capital city of Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese People's Army. This marked the end of the Vietnam War and the beginning of America's involvement with refugee resettlement in the United States. Prior to 1975, the United States did not take in displaced Vietnamese. Instead, they provided direct aid in the form of food and clothing to support their allied countries in the region as a symbol of confidence in the war effort.[16] The nature of the war in Vietnam meant that many Vietnamese experienced displacements from their homes at least once, if not more, before May 1975. Many Vietnamese remembered the trauma experienced by the close proximity of the fighting. Anh Quoc Nguyen was eleven years old when the Vietnam War ended. His father was a high-ranking military official, which meant that the war was very much a part of his early life. He remembered, "We would hear loud explosions at night a lot – probably every night. The fighting was close enough that we could hear booming sounds."[17] As fighting ravaged the countryside, Vietnamese men, women, and children found themselves forced to escape from their homes and migrate throughout Vietnam.

The fall of Saigon made the need for resettlement abundantly clear to the US government. It prompted President Gerald Ford approved the evacuation and resettlement of 200,000 Vietnamese into the United States.[18] Refugee policy prior to 1980 did not follow a preformulated and regimented structure; instead, presidents could "parole" any number of refugees that they saw fit. This allowed the executive branch to unilaterally establish and implement refugee policy without the input or approval of Congress which meant that there was not a cohesive forward-thinking strategy in place for refugee resettlement. The lack of strategy caused confusion as policy changed from president to president in the 1970s and into the 1980s. For President Ford, welcoming Vietnamese refugees into the United States was an extension of foreign policy that maintained the United States' commitment to Vietnam. The admission of refugees, therefore, extended to those who worked directly with the United States and South Vietnamese governments during the war.[19] Once President Carter came into office in 1977, human rights concerns guided the ideological foundation of refugee policy. By 1980, 14,000 refugees a month were entering the United States.[20] Ultimately, prior to 1981 and the presidency of Ronald Reagan, both the Democrats and Republicans agreed that admitting Vietnamese refugees was an important policy move for the United States, even if they had conflicting motivations supporting that belief.[21]

The first wave of Vietnamese refugees largely represented those who worked with or for the United States during the war. These refugees tended to be educated with at least rudimentary English skills and a basic understanding of American culture. As a group, they also overwhelmingly hailed from the urban centers of Vietnam with experience in professional careers. These attributes meant that their transition into life in the United States, while certainly difficult, would not be unmanageable. The federal government initially planned to resettle this group of 130,000 "divided

16. Bon Tempo, *Americans*, 145.

17. Anh Quoc Nguyen, interview by Nicole Chang, February 17, 2019, in Fullerton, CA, transcript, Viet Stories: Vietnamese American Oral History Project, Irvine, CA.

18. Bon Tempo, *Americans*, 146.

19. Bon Tempo, *Americans*, 147.

20. Bon Tempo, *Americans*, 151.

21. Bon Tempo, *Americans,* 147.

equitably among all sections of the country" in an attempt to alleviate any American anxiety about the influx of refugees.[22]

There was not widespread support among American citizens for welcoming refugees into the United States at this time. Unlike the federal government that "felt a keen sense of responsibility and guilt" toward the displaced Vietnamese, the general citizenry largely wanted to be done with all remnants of the Vietnam War, including those displaced by it.[23] According to a 1975 nationwide Gallup Poll, 54% of Americans did not think that "evacuated South Vietnamese should be permitted to live in the US."[24] While the reasons for these views were certainly varied, for some, Vietnamese refugees were a tangible reminder of the division and heartache of the last ten years.

Many Americans thought that this initial wave of refugees would be the only Vietnamese refugees to resettle in the United States; however, the quality of life for many Vietnamese deteriorated in their home country as the Vietnamese Communist Party took control. Following the end of the war, the Vietnamese Communist Party quickly placed over 200,000 former South Vietnamese government and military officials into reeducation camps. These camps required prisoners to work all day, often with little water, food, or rest, and then consume communist propaganda in the evenings. It was not uncommon for prisoners of the reeducation camps to die of starvation, disease, or overwork.[25] Reeducation camps were an important tool of intimidation for the Vietnamese Communist Party as the threat of imprisonment in the camps allowed for the control of the general populace through fear. Coupled with reeducation camps, the Vietnamese Communist Party created "New Economic Zones" where the government forcibly moved Vietnamese to work on previously uncultivated land in an attempt to increase agricultural production.[26] This meant that the government now required individuals who might not have previously worked in farming or fishing to engage in new work in new places, disrupting their lives and forcing them into harsh living and working conditions[27].

By 1978, the oppressiveness of the Communist government caused many Vietnamese to believe that escape from Vietnam was the best option for ensuring a life built on freedom and security. Those who had already emigrated out of Vietnam maintained kinship networks with family and friends still inside of the country, which allowed for information to travel into Vietnam about the viability of escape and life in another country. By the middle of 1978, the extreme challenges of life within Vietnam coupled with the promise of a better life outside of Vietnam caused an exodus of refugees and the beginning of the second wave of Vietnamese refugees throughout the world. When compared with first wave refugees, this group tended to be less educated, more rural, and with less of an understanding of the English language and Western culture.[28] The second wave of refugees also comprised multiple ethnic groups from throughout Southeast Asia, including Vietnamese, Hmong,

22. Douglas E. Kneeland, "Wide Hostility Found As First Exiles Arrive," *New York Times*, May 2, 1975.
23. Bon Tempo, *Americans,* 146.
24. Kneeland, "Wide Hostility," May 2, 1975.
25. Phuong Tran Nguyen, *Becoming Refugee*, 59.
26. Gil Loescher and John A. Scanlan, *Calculated Kindness: Refugees and America's Half-Open Door, 1945-present*, (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 121.
27. "The Indochinese Refugees: A Status Report" Washington DC: Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, 1978, by Robert Oakley, 3.
28. Fox Butterfield, "For Many From Vietnam, Life in the U.S. Is Still Hard," *New York Times*, April 17, 1985.

Laotian, and Cambodian.[29] Also, unlike the first wave refugees who escaped Vietnam with the support of the United States government (often on American aircraft or ships) second wave refugees had to escape in secret with no assurance of a final destination. Some planning on escape were able to pay off those in the Vietnamese Communist government to ensure their departure; however, often this resulted in a failure because of deception by government officials. Duc Tri Pham remembered the money his family lost as they attempted to escape Vietnam, "From 1975 to '82, … we lost one-hundred gold bars. One gold bars today is worth about $1,080. Then totally we lost about $100,800."[30] Many second wave refugees exhausted their funds through multiple attempts to escape Vietnam, leaving them with little money to take on their journey.

Second wave refugees overwhelmingly escaped Vietnam by small boats in hopes of reaching a "first asylum country," like Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, or Thailand.[31] This journey was exceptionally difficult. Boats were often extremely overcrowded, and the passengers often faced shortages of food and water. Refugee Alexander Duong recalls how cramped it was to travel on a small fishing boat with hundreds of other refugees when he escaped at ten years old. "We were sitting with our legs hunched together and knees to our chest…. The first time we got off the boat we could barely walk because we were sitting in the same position."[32] While at sea, the Vietnamese refugees were threatened by inclement weather that could result in overturned or destroyed boats and fearsome Thai pirates. Loan Pham Thai escaped Vietnam with her husband and eight children in 1979. She recalls the traumatic experience of her boat being overtaken by pirates. "One more group [of Thai pirates], they come and then by that time at nighttime, they took every woman and the kids. Oh my god, me and all my daughters, stepdaughters, we so scared. My husband and my son stay with the men group over there. Over another boat. Oh my god, they cry they cry. We so scared."[33] Ultimately, the pirates released her family and the rest of the hundreds of refugees on board the boat after taking all of their possessions and money. The greatest and very real fear of refugees during their journey was death. Some historians have estimated that between ten and fifteen percent of second wave refugees died in the escape from Vietnam.[34] For Cuong C. Tran, who escaped from Vietnam in 1978 via fishing boat, his fear was realized when the extreme weight of the boat from overcrowding caused it to begin to break during a storm, forcing many refugees into the ocean. His two younger sisters were two of those refugees. They did not survive.[35]

Survivors eventually traveled to a refugee camp located in a first asylum country. Overcrowding, lack of food and water, and insufficient shelter from the elements

29. These groups had disparate experiences and struggles, which is why this paper will examine only the experiences of Vietnamese refugees.

30. Duc Tri Pham, interview by Michelle Le Pham, February 25, 2012, in Staton, CA, transcript, Viet Stories: Vietnamese American Oral History Project, Irvine, CA.

31. Thuy Võ Dang, Linda Trinh Võ and Tram Le, *Vietnamese In Orange County* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2015), 17.

32. Alexander Linh Van Duong, interview by Sheryll-Ihna Canare Buhain, February 26, 2013, in Westminster, CA, transcript, Viet Stories: Vietnamese American Oral History Project, Irvine, CA.

33. Loan Pham Thai, interview by Christina Tran, May 11, 2012, in Huntington Beach, CA, transcript, Viet Stories: Vietnamese American Oral History Project, Irvine, CA.

34. Linda Trinh Võ, "Managing Survival: Economic Realities for Vietnamese American Women," in *Asian/Pacific Islander American Women: A Historical Anthology*, ed. Shirley Hune and Gail M. Nomura (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 241.

35. Cuong C. Tran, interviewed by Allen Chen, February 27, 2014, in West Covina, CA, transcript, Viet Stories: Vietnamese American Oral History Project, Irvine, CA.

represented just a handful of the issues that plagued these refugee camps.[36] For example, Pulau Bidong, an island off the Malaysian coast, housed over 40,000 Vietnamese refugees on a quarter of a square mile of land with no running water, plumbing or permanent housing structures.[37] Yet, even within these challenging circumstances, refugees utilized their time as best they could in preparation for the final stop on their journey: their new home country. The most important skill that refugees could acquire was a basic understanding of the language of their new country. Since many refugees would immigrate to the United States, Australia, Canada, or Great Britain, the majority of refugees spent their time working on a basic understanding of the English language. Additionally, the refugees spent their time working toward gaining sponsorship from an organization that would allow them to leave the refugee camp and reach their final destination. For some refugees, sponsorship came in just a few weeks, but some spent years in the camps waiting to be matched with a sponsor.[38]

For those refugees that obtained sponsorship in the United States, both their sponsor and a volunteer agency (volag) facilitated their smooth entry into the country. Family members already in the United States and churches were two groups that sponsored Vietnamese refugees in the greatest numbers.[39] Sponsors provided the bridge between the refugee camp and life in the United States. When refugees needed help in America, before they had their own support system, they relied on their sponsor.[40] Yet, sponsors were not always easy to find. In 1979, the Orange Diocese in Southern California put out a call to their parishioners to sponsor refugees. The Reverend William R. Johnson acknowledged the challenges of what he was asking his parishioners to do, but also acknowledged the gravity of their decision. He implored them, "How can we say no to a life-or-death issue?"[41] Volags acted as the other important transitional component to resettlement in the United States. By 1979, the federal government funded fourteen volags to resettle Vietnamese refugees, including both religious and nonreligious organizations like the International Rescue Committee and the Church World Service, to act as the conduit for government aid to refugees.[42] It was through the partnership of public funds and private action that refugees obtained funds to purchase food, clothing, and short-term shelter when they first arrived in the United States. As time progressed, volags also aided in long-term assimilation, including job training, and language assessment and acquisition.[43]

The federal government anticipated that they would disburse refugees evenly throughout the country. By 1979, however, the United States was admitting 14,000 refugees per month and the disbursement policy was largely ineffective.[44] The Carter administration set a high number of admitted refugees for humanitarian reasons, but the lack of concrete federal policy caused a flood of refugees into the country who largely congregated in ten states. Between 1979 and 1982, the United States admitted

36. Jeremy Hein, *From Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia: A Refugee Experience in the United States* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995), 41.

37. Loescher, *Calculated Kindness*, 137.

38. Duong, interview, 26.

39. Elizabeth E. Orr, "Living Along the Fault Line: Community, Suburbia, and Multiethnicity in Garden Grove and Westminster, California, 1900 – 1995," (PhD dissertation, Indiana University, 1999), 187.

40. Paul J.Strand and Woodrow Jones, Jr., *Indochinese Refugees in America: Problems of Adaptation and Assimilation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1985), 40.

41. "Bishop Appeals for Asian Refugee Aid," *Los Angeles Times*, October 13, 1979.

42. US Congress, House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and International Law, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California: An Investigative Trip*, Ninety-seventh Congress, First Session, July 1981, 24.

43. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California*, 24.

44. Loescher, *Calculated Kindness*, 146.

over 268,000 Vietnamese refugees into the country.[45] Of these, the vast majority lived in California, which housed three times as many refugees as the next highest state, Texas.[46] Nestled within Southern California, Orange County experienced the highest number of refugees per capita in the country.[47] First wave refugees initially chose Orange County because of its temperate weather, sponsor connections, and close proximity to Camp Pendleton, their first stop upon reaching the United States in 1975.[48] Once the community was established in the mid-1970s, Vietnamese refugees continued to flock to Orange County in greater and greater numbers.

Prior to 1975, Orange County was a mixture of rural communities and suburbs with a blend of races and ethnicities, including white Americans, Japanese Americans, and Mexican Americans.[49] While there was not institutionalized segregation, different races and ethnicities tended to live and work within their own racial and ethnic groups. Subsequently, white Americans constituted the dominant racial group and culture throughout Orange County. In 1970, the census showed that 97.3% of Orange County considered themselves white; yet, by 1980, that number dropped by 11.3% to just 86% of the county that considered themselves white.[50] Much of this change was attributed to the rise in Asian immigration, particularly the growth of the Southeast Asian refugee population. While Orange County constituted just 1% of the nation's population, it contained 8% of the Southeast Asian population in the country.[51] The racial transformation that occurred in Orange County during the late-1970s and 1980s inspired much of the anxiety felt by white Americans watching their communities change around them. In fact, by 1979, 40% of Americans said they would not welcome Vietnamese refugees into their communities.[52] This racial tension and the challenges of resettlement undergirded the experience of Vietnamese refugees as they sought to create a new life in their adopted home, the United States.

Despite this tension, Orange County community leaders had overwhelming faith that Vietnamese refugees would be able to obtain self-sufficiency within a few years as long as they had necessary social and financial support to do so. The key component of this, however, was that those supports needed adequate funding at local, state, and national levels.[53] As the second wave of refugees entered the United States, it became clear that local governments lacked the necessary funds to enable group integration into society because of a general motivation to cut both taxes and government spending. Starting in the 1970s, the desire to cut state taxes in California was strong, which diminished the available funds for social services and education for both refugees and the poor. In 1981, the Orange County Human Relations Commission wrote, "All this competition for scarce community resources inevitably heightens tensions, in particular the practice of blaming one's economic problems on a particular segment of the population."[54] California government officials recognized the challenges put forth by the lack of adequate funding and the tensions that were building between disparate sections of the populace; however, instead of working to

45. Hein, *From Vietnam,* 55.

46. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California*, 25.

47. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California*, 28.

48. Kathleen Day and David Holley, "Boom on Bolsa: Vietnamese Create Their Own Saigon," *Los Angeles Times*, September 30, 1984.

49. Orr, "Fault Line," 19.

50. Evan Maxwell, "Orange County No Longer 'Lily White,'" *Los Angeles Times*, July 5, 1982.

51. U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, *Children, Youth, and Families in the Southwest*, Ninety-eighth Congress, First Session, December 7, 1983, 54.

52. Bon Tempo, *Americans*, 163.

53. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California*, 28.

54. Leo C. Wolinksy, "Refugees Pose Time Bomb for County, Panel Warns," *Los Angeles Times*, January 15, 1981.

relieve tensions, many government officials fanned the flames of discord. In 1980, Los Angeles supervisor Ed Edelman said, "The better we can handle this problem of refugees – and it is a problem – and free the taxpayer from the burden, then it is in our interest … to do so."[55] By framing the allocation of taxpayer dollars to refugee resettlement as a problem to be solved, government officials created an atmosphere of exclusion for Vietnamese refugees. As refugees began to make their home in Orange County, they became enmeshed in the struggle over the finite nature of government-funded resources and who ultimately deserved access to those resources.

The issues of public health, welfare allotment, job training, and education funding were all exacerbated by the overwhelming numbers of refugees that settled in Orange County through family reunification and secondary migration. In 1981, the Orange County Board of Supervisors requested that the federal government "halt the flow of refugees into the county until those already here can be absorbed into community life."[56] The federal government agreed to limit the number of refugees they resettled in Orange County by about 30%, but they could not stop the flow of secondary migrants to Southern California.[57] These migrants, who initially settled somewhere else in the country, moved to Orange County because of the climate, job availability, and growing Vietnamese refugee community. By 1983, 32% of refugees living in Orange County for less than five years were secondary migrants.[58] This put a significant strain on the social services provided by the government, minimized the efficacy of the federal government's dispersal policy, and increased white anxiety about the changing demographics in their community. The 1981 Human Relations Commission report found that "new arrivals were taxing local services and rekindling deep-seated prejudice among longtime residents."[59] Without the ability to effectively regulate where refugees settled, the federal government's most significant contribution would be in the funding of government services to ensure a smooth transition into the United States.

As early as 1979, President Carter wanted to limit federal spending, including the money assigned to refugee resettlement and aid, as the economy slid into a recession. There was a recognition in Washington that balancing the federal budget and limiting spending would cause local governments to "feel the pinch," according to US Senator Alan Cranston (D-CA).[60] This was certainly true for cuts to federal spending on refugee resettlement that would cause local governments to pay out of their own revenue sources for welfare and other supports. California politicians sounded the alarm in Congress regarding the hardship that this would cause to their local governments because of the disproportionate number of refugees settled in the state; however, this issue was so specific to California that it was nearly impossible to garner support from other state representatives and federal officials. States like Texas, Florida, Oregon, and Minnesota also faced increasing numbers of refugees, but not at the same rate as California. One California official explained it as a "national problem, but a regional experience that doesn't capture the imagination and attention in Washington."[61] Yet, these politicians were also quick to point out that the admittance

55. Patt Morrison, "Refugees: From Crowded Camps to the Unfamiliar," *Los Angeles Times*, January 10, 1980.

56. Doug Brown, "React to Supervisors' Proposal: Congressmen Oppose Ban on Refugees," *Los Angeles Times*, July 1, 1981.

57. Doris A. Byron, "TB No Major Threat Here, Study Finds," *Los Angeles Times*, October 16, 1979.

58. Baldwin, *Patterns of Adjustment*, 19.

59. Leo Wolinsky, "Board Asks Halt in Refugee Flood," *Los Angeles Times*, February 26, 1981.

60. Kenneth F. Bunting, "Cranston Warns of High Refugee Costs," *Los Angeles Times*, January 12, 1979, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Los Angeles Times with Index.

61. "Schools Seek Federal Funds for Refugees," *Los Angeles Times*, October 17, 1979.

of refugees into the country was a federal decision that should be financially supported equitably by all states, not just the states where refugees lived. Orange County supervisor Harriet Wieder argued for federal responsibility in covering resettlement costs, which she believed "should be a burden to all Americans on an equal basis."[62] Employing the same rhetoric that Edleman would use a year later, Weider voiced the divisiveness that many in Orange County felt toward refugees and their specialized needs, as well as the belief that the federal government was financially responsible for the refugees that federal policy admitted into the United States.

Five years after the first Vietnamese refugees entered the United States, Congress created a uniform refugee policy that attempted to rectify many of the problems of resettlement. The Refugee Act of 1980 created channels of funding that provided grants of $500 per refugee to volags, authorized funds for "supportive and social services," and delivered full reimbursement of states' welfare and medical costs for refugees in the United State three years or less.[63] Yet, this three-year delineation created serious backlash from state and local governments, particularly California. The federal government expected refugees to be "self-sufficient" by the time they had lived in the country for three years; yet refugee advocates argued that in some cases three years was not enough time to achieve full independence.[64] Leaving state and local governments to cover the costs of refugees still experiencing dependence on government services like welfare. Lois Wax, the refugee affairs coordinator in Orange County, stated in 1981, "We estimate that when you combine social services with the financial assistance, even with Federal reimbursements, it's costing $30 million a year. It has a fair impact on the county budget."[65] Officials throughout Orange County feared that without full federal government reimbursement beyond the three-year mark, social services would not be able to continue at their current levels.[66] Without social services, not only would poor Americans in Orange County lack the social safety net they needed, but Vietnamese refugees would also continue to struggle to achieve self-sufficiency in their new home.

English language acquisition was a fundamental component of Vietnamese refugees achieving this self-sufficiency. Second-wave Vietnamese refugees generally did not have the English language skills that many refugees in the first wave possessed, which was a significant barrier to employment and integration into the larger society. In an attempt to rectify, a majority of Vietnamese refugees between the ages of twenty-five and fifty-five attended school to learn English in classes that were geared toward adult learners.[67] One Orange County official from the Garden Grove Unified School District estimated that over 90% of adult English as a Second Language (ESL) students were refugees.[68] Many adult refugees recognized the importance of language acquisition in their new country and worked diligently to learn at least basic English.

Refugee support organizations throughout Orange County provided English language classes to refugees free of charge. Father Fletcher Davis of St. Anselm's Immigrant and Refugee Community Center and chairman of the Orange County Refugee

62. Jerry Hicks, "Refugee Aid Hearing Fails to Move Panel," *Los Angeles Times*, April 18, 1981.
63. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California*, 24.
64. Hicks, "Refugee Aid Hearing Fails to Move Panel," April 18, 1981.
65. Robert Lindsey, "Welfare Dependency of Indochinese Refugees Worrying California Officials," *New York Times*, July 7, 1981.
66. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California*, 35.
67. Baldwin, *Patterns of Adjustment*, 55.
68. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Children, Youth, and Families in the Southwest*, 33.

Forum argued that the most important component of self-sufficiency was mastery of the English language. For that reason, St. Anselm's provided nine months of ESL classes for refugees that would provide the training necessary to learn the new language. The federal government funded the $439,000 necessary each year to sustain the ESL classes.[69] However, the supply of ESL classes in Orange County, could not meet the demand. According to the Long Beach Department of Human Resources, there were 2,500 refugees enrolled in ESL classes in Long Beach and another 2,500 on waiting lists to attend.[70] Some refugees had to wait up to a year to begin learning English in an ESL class. Community leaders agreed that language acquisition was incredibly important to attaining self-sufficiency for Vietnamese refugees, yet the government showed a reluctance to fund these classes at the level needed to meet the demand of the hundreds of thousands of refugees the federal government admitted into the country.

While adult refugees looked to ESL classes to learn the English language, Vietnamese refugee youth utilized public schools to help them gain an understanding of the United States and its culture. Unsurprisingly, the number of refugee youth attending local schools skyrocketed. Between 1978 and 1979, even before the heaviest years of refugee migration began, Orange Unified School District saw a 78% increase in refugee students.[71] In 1979, Willmore Elementary School in Westminster, refugee students comprised 33.5% of the student body.[72] This surge in refugee student enrollment was not coupled with an increase in additional federal funding in 1979, even though it cost almost $750 more per year to educate a Vietnamese refugee student than a native-born student.[73] Exacerbating the already difficult task of managing supports for refugee students, California school officials complained of a disjointed and erratic government funding policy that allowed for inconsistent funding amounts and payment schedules.[74] As late as 1981, school districts faced significant uncertainty regarding how they would fund refugee education. In an attempt to rectify this problem, Senator William F. Goodling (R-PA) introduced the Consolidated Refugee Education Assistance Act in 1981 to "stop this business of piecemealing and reacting when the situation hits."[75] The act would have merged the five different reimbursement programs for refugee education funding and created specific structures for refugee education; however, the bill died in congress before it had the chance to receive a vote.[76]

The issue of refugee education funding highlighted the frustration that states felt over what they perceived to be the federal government's abdication of responsibility. As Steve Sauls of the Florida Department of Education questioned, "If refugees are a Federal responsibility, and we think they are, why do we have to keep calling upon the Federal Government to meet its responsibilities?"[77] While the federal government acknowledged their role in admitting refugees into the country, they were unwilling to pay for the services necessary to educate them. Instead, states and school

69. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Children, Youth, and Families in the Southwest*, 28.

70. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Children, Youth, and Families in the Southwest*, 33.

71. David Reyes, "Aid to Educate Asians Expected," *Los Angeles Times*, November 8, 1979.

72. "Schools Seek Federal Funds for Refugees," *Los Angeles Times,* October 17, 1979.

73. Reyes, "Aid," November 8, 1979.

74. US Congress, House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education of the Committee on Education and Labor, *Hearing on the Consolidated Refugee Education Assistance Act*, Ninety-seventh Congress, First Session, April 30, 1981, 9.

75. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Hearing on the Consolidated Refugee Education Assistance Act*, 4.

76. Congress.gov, "H.R. 3076 – Consolidated Refugee Education Assistance Act."

77. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Hearing on the Consolidated Refugee Education Assistance Act*, 17.

districts were left prioritizing the plethora of services students needed on a shoestring budget. Often, school districts felt that they needed to "diminish" native-born students' education to pay for refugee supports.[78] School districts in Orange County faced challenges recruiting teachers to work with refugee students, particularly bilingual teachers and teaching assistants. The federal government failed to show true leadership in recruiting and training Vietnamese teachers, leaving it to individual school districts and the Vietnamese refugee community themselves to find necessary supports for refugee students.[79] Refugee advocates argued for the importance of teacher training for a multicultural classroom, particularly at the elementary school level, to ensure student engagement and minimal tension between different racial and ethnic groups.[80] Administrators' frustrations with the lack of funding caused some to argue that schools needed to be released from the "mandate to educate our citizens" because of the inability to effectively educate due to a lack of consistent and satisfactory government funding.[81] Without the government funds to successfully transition refugee students into American classrooms, schools found that refugee students struggled to integrate and connect with native-born students.

Inadequate school funding to support incoming refugee students was just one part of a much larger funding shortfall to support refugee integration into American society, which caused refugees to feel overwhelmed and ill-prepared for life in America. While native-born residents in Orange County cited traffic and transportation as their primary concern in 1984, refugees saw unemployment as the greatest contributor to their own struggles. By that year, only 33% of Vietnamese refugee adults maintained full-time employment.[82] Promisingly, the likelihood that refugees would gain full-time employment increased over time. This did mean, however, that in 1984, only 5% of adult refugees who had been in the country for less than a year held a full-time job.[83] The consensus among community leaders, employment providers, and the refugees themselves was that refugees certainly had the ability to learn and gain employment; however, they needed vocational training to learn the skills necessary to obtain such employment. Without government funding for this training, many refugees would struggle to find a job. By "front-loading" funding in language acquisition and job training as soon as refugees arrived, community advocates anticipated that refugees would learn self-sufficiency and not need access to government-funded welfare.[84] Employers wanted to hire Vietnamese refugees as many saw them as "industrious, ambitious, reliable, cooperative, and eager to learn."[85] Yet, they also acknowledged that there were language and culture barriers between American employers and employees and Vietnamese refugees that needed to be anticipated and managed effectively. Without clear leadership to help mitigate these barriers, some employers shied away from hiring refugees.[86]

For many refugees, job training services aided them in finding employment during a time when job scarcity was a real problem in Southern California as unemployment numbers increased throughout the late-1970s and early 1980s. Vietnamese refugees took advantage of the resources available to them, even those that traditionally had

78. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Hearing on the Consolidated Refugee Education Assistance Act*, 34.
79. Hope Aldrich, "More Vietnamese-Speaking Teachers Sought," *Education Week* 2, issue 26 (March 23, 1983).
80. Indochina Refugee Action Center, *Assessment on the Needs of Indochinese Youth* (Washington DC, August 1980), 9.
81. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California*, 31.
82. Baldwin, *Patterns of Adjustment,* 17.
83. Baldwin, *Patterns of Adjustment*, 27.
84. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California*, 38.
85. Baldwin, *Patterns of Adjustment*, 38.
86. Baldwin, *Patterns of Adjustment*, 38.

been geared toward Latino immigrants and other non-refugee groups. Organizations like Operation Ser, which began in 1968 to provide job training and placement help to Mexican Americans, were overwhelmed by Vietnamese refugees. In 1980, Southeast Asian refugees made up 67% of those taking the electronics training courses through the organization.[87] The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), a federal program that provided grants to cities and states to conduct job training for those susceptible to welfare, offered important preparation for refugees to gain job skills; however, training positions were in short supply. In 1981, only 1,500 CETA job training positions were available in Long Beach for over 3,500 refugee applicants.[88] Refugees competed for these job training spots with other low-income groups in Orange County, including Latino immigrants, Mexican Americans, and, to a lesser extent, African Americans.[89] The next year, despite the significant demand and growing tension over scarcity, the federal government terminated the program.[90]

The lack of job training and placement assistance from the government contributed to a fear of scarcity among the poor and unemployed. Many within these groups felt frustrated by the competition for the finite government resources and resented Vietnamese refugees' introduction into the job market. According to many company personnel directors, employers now hired refugees in jobs that previously went to Latino immigrants and native-born Americans.[91] There was certainly an awareness of the changing demographic in employment by the general public. By 1986, almost half of all Californians believe that immigrants, including Vietnamese refugees, took away jobs from Americans, especially black Americans. While researchers found that immigrant employment had little effect on black family income, the perception of refugees taking employment opportunities from native-born Americans was both real and damaging to community relations.[92] California politicians did not help ease this tension as job scarcity became a greater reality in 1980s America. As early as 1975, California Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. objected to Vietnamese refugees entering the United States and taking jobs that could theoretically go to native-born Americans. He proposed that Congress pass legislation that would require "jobs for Americans first."[93] This rhetoric was quickly reflected back throughout the general population. As John C. Burdette wrote in a *Los Angeles Times* Letter to the Editor, "Refugees take jobs that rightfully should go to unemployed citizens, or they become welfare burdens to the taxpayers."[94] The fear of unemployment and the lack of ample government supports created a divisive atmosphere between Vietnamese refugees and other groups that utilized those services.

The poverty and joblessness that permeated America in the late-1970s and early 1980s represented a powerful undercurrent of native-born Americans' push for jobs. In 1980, unemployment hovered around 9% as the United States faced an

87. Herman Wong, "Job Program Domination Feared: Asian Refugee Trainees Worry Latinos," *Los Angeles Times* January 26, 1980.

88. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California*, 34.

89. Leo Wolinsky, "The Melting Pot Begins to Simmer," *Los Angeles Times,* January 11, 1981.

90. Sharon Monahan, "Refugee-Aid Effort Troubled," *New York Times*, March 4, 1984.

91. Jane Applegate, "Indochinese Swelling Work Force: Majority of Orange County Refugees Get High-Tech Jobs," *Los Angeles Times*, October 2, 1984.

92. Robert Reinhold, "Flow of Third World Immigrants Alters Weave of U.S. Society," *New York Times*, June 30, 1986.

93. Kneeland, "Wide Hostility," May 2, 1975.

94. John C. Burdette, "Letters to the Times: 'New Untouchables' in Southeast Asia," *Los Angeles Times*, July 12, 1979.

increasingly challenging financial recession.[95] Pockets of poverty dotted the country, including in Orange County. As *Los Angeles Times* reporter Leslie Berkman wrote of the Orange County poor in 1980, "Every day is a battle for survival in which long-term considerations such as medical care and good nutrition are neglected for want of time, money or energy."[96] The economic downturn of the 1980s and the loss of jobs that followed caused an increase in those living in poverty who needed access to welfare and other government social services. In 1980 alone, 183,262 people fell below the state poverty limits in Orange County. That same year, the county saw a 31% increase in the number of welfare recipients.[97] These numbers reflect the desperation that many individuals and families felt in Orange County when the influx of Vietnamese refugees increased and required some of those same government resources.

Vietnamese refugees overwhelmingly relied on welfare as a means of survival as they became acclimated to American society, with over 65% reliant on some form of cash assistance.[98] In fact, in 1981, over half of the refugees stated that they were having a "fairly hard time or very hard time making ends meet."[99] Refugees faced a litany of financial challenges once they migrated to the United States that caused them to need monetary assistance in those first few years. Many refugees left Vietnam without any possessions or money. Particularly for second wave refugees, they had to flee their homes in the dead of night and escape on an overcrowded boat, which did not afford them the room to bring many possessions. They often lost the money they brought with them during their exodus to dishonest Vietnamese soldiers, Thai pirates, or refugee camp thieves. Anh Quoc Nguyen remembered, "We lost pretty much everything – when we came here – so we were pretty poor in the beginning …. So it's very hard to adapt to a new country without the financial security – it's pretty scary."[100]

Many factors compounded the financial precariousness that refugees experienced and increased reliance on welfare. Many second wave refugees came from rural areas of Vietnam without the knowledge and skills necessary to easily transition into an urban environment like Orange County.[101] Additionally, those who did have professional jobs in Vietnam that would easily transfer into an urban setting did not have the right type of accreditation once they reached the United States. A lawyer in Vietnam could not practice law in Orange County without first passing the California bar exam. Many highly educated refugees were forced to find work well below their skill level or rely on government assistance while they attempted to gain the necessary credentials.[102] Finally, the minimal English language skills of refugees were directly tied to less earning potential in employment.[103] These factors, coupled with the high cost of living in Orange County, left Vietnamese refugees susceptible to financial struggles and the need to rely on welfare for survival.

While the vast majority of Vietnamese refugees worked diligently and successfully to acquire the skills necessary to end their welfare dependence, government officials

95. Stacy M. Kula and Susan J. Paik, "A Historical Analysis of Southeast Asian Refugee Communities: Post-war Acculturation and Education in the U.S.," *Journal of Southeast Asian American Education and Advancement* 11, issue 1 (2016), 13.

96. Leslie Berkman, "Portrait of the Smith Family," *Los Angeles Times,* December 21, 1980.

97. Berkman, "Portrait," December 21, 1980.

98. Baldwin, *Patterns of Adjustment*, 17.

99. Baldwin, *Patterns of Adjustment*, 92.

100. Anh Quoc Nguyen, interviewed by Nicole Chang.

101. Applegate, "Indochinese Swelling Work Force: Majority of Orange County Refugees Get High-Tech Jobs."

102. Butterfield, "For Many From Vietnam, Life in the US Is Still Hard," April 17, 1985.

103. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California*, 33.

still feared that refugees would fall into a permanent dependence on the welfare system because of an inability to achieve self-sufficiency.[104] Government officials and refugee aid providers debated the merits of providing refugees with ready access to welfare. While many agreed that refugees had the qualities necessary to eventually live independently of government aid, they worried that access would disincentivize work. As one official stated, "Every effort must be made to minimize the refugees' contact with county welfare offices."[105] They worried that refugees would think that government assistance was a normal way of life, instead of a last resort and that it would "perpetuate, not solve" the issues.[106] This discourse disseminated by government officials and refugee aid providers largely excluded direct input from the refugee community itself. This pattern would continue in the coming years as governments made important decisions about the lives of refugees while simultaneously silencing the voices of refugees in the decision-making process.

Implicit in the discussion of refugee welfare access was the understanding that the amount of government welfare was finite and Vietnamese refugees' use of the funds might negatively affect other economically disadvantaged groups in Orange County. This concern spread beyond government officials and permeated the general public, particularly those who also relied on welfare. Welfare programs marked one of the most significant sources of animosity toward refugees in the community as rumors around preferential treatment for refugees flourished.[107] The most prolific and damaging rumors centered on refugees and money. Many Americans believed that they received better welfare benefits more quickly than other groups. They also thought that the government gave refugees lump sum handouts of $5,000 when they entered the United States.[108] Ruby Epps, founder of the Santa Ana Neighborhood Organization, acknowledged this tension, "There is bitterness. People feel that these [refugees] come in here and get low-interest loans, welfare and medical services while people here who worked a number of years go to get help and get a song and dance."[109] Ultimately, American citizens felt frustrated that they did not have ready access to government services like welfare. Instead of focusing their anger at the government to demand better and more equitable access to services, they scapegoated Vietnamese refugees and blamed them for lack of funds.

Drawing on the discourse of exclusion, Americans considered refugees to be separate from the rest of society, particularly in conjunction with the allocation of government funds. Vicki Mayster, a spokesperson for Evangelists for Social Action, voiced the distinction between the two groups when she said, "The tension came from the fact that these were citizens and they couldn't get [welfare], yet these people who just came here recently can go right through the system."[110] Some American citizens were frustrated by some Vietnamese refugees' perceived ability to achieve financial stability much quicker than others. One young single mother felt aggravated by the success she saw refugees achieve. "I see all these Vietnamese with fancy new cars and credit cards, and I have been here my whole life and I can't get anything."[111] Implicit in this comment was the expectation that success should first come to those

104. Hicks, "Refugee Aid Hearing Fails to Move Panel," April 18, 1981.
105. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California*, 41.
106. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California*, 34.
107. Wolinsky, "Refugees Pose Time Bomb," January 15, 1981.
108. Jerry Hicks, "Myths About Refugees Attacked," *Los Angeles Times*, June 9, 1981.
109. Wolinsky, "Melting Pot," January 11, 1981.
110. Wolinksy, "Melting Pot," January 11, 1981.
111. Berkman, "Portrait," December 21, 1980.

born in America. Even financially stable Americans who did not rely on welfare felt some animosity toward refugees who did rely on welfare. American taxpayers' money went to support the Vietnamese refugees, which could spark feelings of nativism. As Rusty Foy, a carpenter from Los Angeles said of newly arrived refugees, "They can't speak English, and they will be on welfare before they get off the plane. And who pays for that? We do."[112] By creating a clear distinction between American citizens and Vietnamese refugees, these Americans made clear that government services, paid for by Americans, belonged to Americans alone.

The distinction between American citizens and Vietnamese refugees also existed in the realm of health care. When the influx of refugees began in Orange County, local government officials experienced difficulty in managing the health of refugees who largely felt a "cultural reluctance to participate in treatment."[113] Refugees from rural areas of Vietnam were often unaccustomed to the American medical system and struggled to understand preventative health measures' intricacies. They were accustomed to their own "local customs and traditions" concerning their care, which often meant relying on their extended family for support and treatment, and often avoided treatment out of uncertainty and fear.[114] Equally challenging, those who did seek out medical care often found that they faced language barriers with doctors and other health care professionals, which meant that they could not effectively communicate their health concerns. Refugees often struggled to obtain the kind of health care they required, particularly for their mental health needs in light of their trauma during escape and resettlement. In 1985, sociology professor Ruben G. Rumbaut surveyed both native-born Americans and Southeast Asian refugees and their mental health. He found that 74% of Americans were in good mental health, compared with only 23% of refugees.[115] Refugees experienced significant survivors' guilt, often working two or three jobs to have enough money to send back to the family they left behind in Vietnam. In many extreme cases, the trauma refugees felt could manifest itself as "alcoholism, drug abuse, child neglect, spousal abuse, and suicide threats."[116] While the federal government did devote $298,000 to aid refugee health, including mental health, it was not enough to prevent and treat refugee health issues.

The delineation between American citizens and Vietnamese refugees by government officials was perhaps most clear in the arena of public health and the fear of communicable diseases. In 1979, a rumor spread throughout Orange County about an outbreak of tuberculosis, which county officials linked to Vietnamese refugees. Inherent in these rumors was the belief that refugees carried disease and that American citizens needed protection from such infections. These rumors ignored the reality that refugees over the age of fifteen were screened for tuberculosis via chest x-ray before immigrating into the United States.[117] Health officials repeatedly informed the public that health screenings overseas were "adequate" to weed out diseases like tuberculosis; yet, county officials from twenty-four of the twenty-six cities that made up Orange County "urged the Board of Supervisors and the county Health Department to 'take whatever steps necessary' to protect residents against diseases brought

112. Kneeland, "Wide Hostility," May 2, 1975.

113. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California*, 31.

114. Paul J. Strand and Woodrow Jones, Jr., *Indochinese Refugees in America: Problems of Adaptation and Assimilation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1985), 86.

115. Butterfield, "For Many From Vietnam, Life in the US Is Still Hard," April 17, 1985.

116. Ken Gepfert, "County Attacks Cultural Barriers to Refugee Aid: County Moves to Connect Refugees Into Aid Programs," *Los Angeles Times,* October 20, 1979.

117. Doris A. Byron, "U.S. Health Adviser to Probe Rise in TB," *Los Angeles Times,* October 6, 1979.

into the county by Southeast Asian refugees."[118] Local officials later acknowledged that they exaggerated the dangers of the tuberculosis outbreak to catch the federal government's attention and secure more funding for public services. As Santa Ana mayor Jim Ward commented, "If it takes that kind of action to get higher levels of government to realize that they have an obligation, then it's all right."[119] Ultimately, local governments felt so overwhelmed by the influx of Vietnamese refugees that they were willing to potentially heighten the division within their community in exchange for federal government assistance, both financial and institutional.

American parents became fearful of sending their children to school with refugee children who might be spreading tuberculosis.[120] Reverend M. Fletcher Davis, of St. Anselm's Church and refugee resettlement center believed that some in Orange County saw refugees as a "menace to public health."[121] The propagation of this rhetoric helped exclude refugees from the greater community, situating them as a group removed from native-born Americans. The juxtaposition between the uncivilized refugee and the civilized American permeated this discourse and caused a feeling of exclusion among refugees. Yen Do, community leader and Vietnamese newspaper editor, remembered that "there was a panic and public opinion turned against the refugee community."[122] Ultimately, county politicians' fear instigated among the local population by scapegoating refugees worsened the community dynamic between the two groups.

In addition to frustration over competition for government resources and fears over public health, long-time residents also felt threatened by Vietnamese refugees' cultural norms that did not conform to the expectations of white Americans. For many Vietnamese refugees, particularly those who came from a rural background, American culture was quite different from that which they were accustomed. Even something as seemingly innocuous as cooking and eating habits brought increasing "rancor" directed at refugees from the native-born population.[123] At some job sites, white workers would not sit and eat in the cafeteria with Vietnamese workers because of their "unusually pungent dishes."[124] This unwillingness of native-born Americans to engage with refugees caused many to believe that "the Americans they know do not like them."[125] While Vietnamese refugees were focused on adjusting to life in this new country, native-born Americans' attitudes and actions affected their willingness to engage with the outside community.

White Americans in Orange County had maintained cultural dominance in the years before refugee resettlement. As Vietnamese refugees settled in cities like Santa Ana and Long Beach, they introduced their own culture into society. The creation of a multicultural society was most prevalent in Garden Grove and Westminster, where the Vietnamese community truly blossomed in an area aptly named "Little Saigon." By 1982, over one-hundred Vietnamese-owned businesses flourished on Bolsa Avenue in Westminster.[126] These business owners, and the businesses that they built, maintained their Vietnamese identity and did not attempt to Americanize. For

118. "Steps to Control Refugee Disease Urged by 24 Cities," *Los Angeles Times*, October 13, 1979; Bruce Keppel, "Stronger Federal Role on Refugee Health Urged," *Los Angeles Times,* August 11, 1979.

119. Wolinsky, "Melting Pot," January 11, 1981.

120. Orr, "Fault Line," 280.

121. Wolinsky, "Melting Pot," January 11, 1981.

122. Yen Do and Jeffrey Brody, *Yen Do and the Story of Nguoi Viet Daily News* (self-pub., Fullerton, CA, 2003), 42.

123. US Congress, House of Representatives, *Immigration and Refugee Issues in Southern California*, 32.

124. Applegate, "Indochinese Swelling Work Force: Majority of Orange County Refugees Get High-Tech Jobs."

125. Hein, *From Vietnam*, 69.

126. Orr, "Fault Line," 197.

example, Tu Quynh Bookstore sold almost exclusively Vietnamese-language books and music to the burgeoning Vietnamese community in Orange County.[127] By 1981, ninety of these businesses joined the Orange County Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce, choosing to create their own business organization instead of joining the Westminster Chamber of Commerce.[128] Vietnamese refugees considered Little Saigon to be a vital cultural space for their community of forced migrants. As Tony Lam, president of the Orange County Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce, said of Little Saigon, "We can find the atmosphere of home here on Bolsa. It is not only a shopping center, but a center of the past."[129] Little Saigon business owners were not particularly interested in attracting non-Vietnamese clientele. Vietnamese-language signs lined Little Saigon's streets, causing those who did not speak the language to feel their own sense of alienation.[130] Native-born Americans felt threated by this ethnic enclave, particularly its shirking of mainstream white culture and the English language. For long-time residents, the exclusion of white residents in Vietnamese spaces inspired feelings of anger and hurt.

White anxiety about changing demographics in their neighborhoods and cities also caused resentment toward the Vietnamese refugee community. During the early 1980s, discussions about California becoming a minority-white population permeated newspapers and popular discourse.[131] This rhetoric stoked the fears that white Americans felt as they saw their white neighbors move out and Asian neighbors move into their previously homogenous neighborhoods. Westminster residents certainly experienced this in the 1980s as Little Saigon grew, and the white population shrunk. As Jo Porter remembered, "One day I woke up and I went outside and I said, 'Oh my God. Our country has been invaded.'…. I didn't see a familiar face anymore and all of the placed that I went…were no longer recognizable."[132] Interestingly, these residents felt something similar to the refugees who came to the United States. They longed for the familiar. Vietnamese refugees altered their neighborhoods to reflect their culture, which meant that it also altered the neighborhood of those who had previously lived there, largely white Americans. Instead of adapting to this new environment, many long-time residents felt resentment toward the refugees who had transformed their shared space into something they no longer recognized.

For many white residents of Orange County, the animosity they felt toward Vietnamese refugees reflected their own anxieties about the changing world in which they lived; yet, for some residents, nativism and xenophobia marked the primary motivators of their hostilities. Intellectuals like Garrett Hardin, a professor of human ecology at University of California, Santa Barbara, believed that America should close its borders to both refugees and immigrants because of the finite availability of resources that should be reserved for Americans alone. In a 1980 *Los Angeles Times* articles, Hardin furthered the divisive rhetoric of American citizens versus immigrants and refugees. He argued that millions of "desperate" people from around the World "would jump at the chance to leave" and immigrate to the United States. He rhetorically questioned whether there were enough resources available for both those migrants and the American poor. Ultimately, he argued, there were not. He wrote,

127. Duong, interview 42.

128. Editorial, "Melting Pot Recipe: Mix Well, "*Los Angeles Times,"* July 26, 1981.

129. Kathleen Day and David Holley, "Boom on Bolsa: Vietnamese Create Their Own Saigon," *Los Angeles Times,* September 30, 1984.

130. Orr, "Fault Line," 263.

131. Robert Lindsey, "California Becomes Melting Pot of 1980's," *New York Times*, August 23, 1981.

132. Orr, "Fault Line," 256.

"We are a compassionate people. When others knock at our door, we want to share. But at some point, in the escalation of charity, we should think of our children. Do we have the right to give away the resources they will need to live?"[133] Echoing politicians' rhetoric, Hardin engaged in the discourse of exclusion that directly impacted Vietnamese refugees' experience.

In extreme cases, this xenophobia manifested itself in blatant racism and direct attacks. In 1980, a group of white senior citizens submitted a petition with 150 signatures to the Westminster Chamber of Commerce requesting that they stop granting business licenses to Asian business owners.[134] These citizens did not want the city to allow the continued growth of Little Saigon and attempted to work within the bounds of government to stop the Vietnamese community's success. The Letters to the Editor section of the *Los Angeles Times* also revealed the racism that some white citizens of Orange County felt toward Vietnamese refugees. One example of this is William Sheffield of Santa Ana who submitted a letter titled, "Stop the Flood of Asian Refugees." In this letter, he implored his fellow citizens to "plead" with Reagan to end the "mass immigration of itinerant and pauperous refugees" to Orange County through executive order. Sheffield went on to claim that the influx of Vietnamese refugees would turn Orange County into a "Third World country."[135] While Sheffield certainly appeared to disparage the poor, he also focused on the fact that these refugees were Asian throughout his letter to the editor. In so doing, Sheffield linked race, economic class, and cultural threat with Vietnamese refugees, furthering refugees' othering in American society. Florine M. Hase of Santa Ana sent in a bluntly racist letter to the editor in 1981. She wrote, "If our government concentrated as much effort on aid to the elderly as they do in bringing in these Indochinese refugees, something worthwhile might be accomplished."[136] Hase articulated the "us versus them" rhetoric as she asserted that the aid given to Vietnamese refugees was not a valuable use of taxpayer dollars.

Other native-born Americans who felt the most threatened by these refugees chose intimidation and violence as a way to exclude Vietnamese refugees. Annthy Thao Nguyen escaped from Vietnam by boat in 1979 when he was 23 years old and, through secondary migration, eventually moved to Orange County. While his experiences were mostly positive, Nguyen remembered "a supervisor who was such a racist" at his first job in the United States who "always picked on the Asians."[137]

Vietnamese refugees often experienced overt racism as part of the larger Asian American community in the United States. While some white Americans might have wanted to direct their anger specifically at Vietnamese, they often misidentified differing ethnic groups within the Asian American community. It was not uncommon for Korean Americans or Japanese Americans to endure the racist violence intended for Vietnamese refugees.[138] Vandalism of property, including property owned by Korean Americans, was a common form of anti-Asian expression in Orange County

133. Garrett Hardin, "Yes: Our Hearts Must Be Made to Think, Too," *Los Angeles Times,* May 11, 1980.

134. Yen Do and Jeffrey Brody, *Yen Do and the Story of Nguoi Viet Daily News*, 47.

135. William Sheffield, "Letters to the Times: Stop the Flood of Asian Refugees." *Los Angeles Times*, January 11, 1981.

136. Florine M. Hase, "Letters to the Times: More About That 'Flood of Refugees,'" *Los Angeles Times*, January 25, 1981.

137. Annthy Thao Nguyen, interview by Thuy Vo Dang, January 12, 2013, in Westminster, CA, transcript, Viet Stories: Vietnamese American Oral History Project, Irvine, CA, available online at http://ucispace.lib.uci.edu/ bitstream/ handle/10575/9876/vaohp0058_f01_eng.pdf?sequence=3.

138. Orange County Human Relations Commission, *Report on a Public Hearing Notes: Asian and Pacific Islander Concerns* (Santa Ana, CA, 1985), 4.

in the 1980s. The vandalism that occurred at St. Anselm's Immigrant and Refugee Center in Garden Grove, CA is one example of the vandalism that refugee organizations and individuals faced. The perpetrator ransacked the building, emptying all of the desk drawers, and setting off all fire extinguishers and hoses. In an unmistakable message, they also tore down the American flag that hung from the wall and crumpled it into a ball. Reverend Davis of St. Anselm's attributed it to anti-refugee sentiment, "It had all the signs of being done by an American who was angry that this church serves refugees."[139] Anti-Asian slogans, like "No Gooks," could be found scrawled across the walls of Vietnamese-owned businesses in Orange County.[140] This vandalism served as a form of intimidation and as a constant reminder to Vietnamese refugees that all in their new community did not welcome them.

In rare cases, native-born Americans utilized violence as a way to intimidate and exclude Vietnamese refugees. Many government officials acknowledged in the early-1980s that no major incidences of violence had occurred; however, Fred Koch, deputy superintendent of Los Angeles County Schools, articulated the worry that many felt. "It's like a keg of dynamite with a one-inch fuse."[141] Yen Do recalled the violence that occurred in the early-1980s in Little Saigon, including a grenade that went off in the middle of the night near his empty office. Do and other Vietnamese refugees believed that this was violence to intimidate and exclude, not to harm.[142]

Incidences of violence that did occur between native-born Americans and Vietnamese refugees often took place within schools. Mayor of Garden Grove, Elerth Erickson attributed youth violence to the racist rhetoric they heard in their homes.[143] While some concerned parents believed that refugee students would slow down their own children's learning, others allowed racism to influence their attitudes toward refugees.[144] Schools were a microcosm of the tensions and animosities beginning to bubble over in the greater community. Westminster High School was one of the most racially and ethnically diverse schools in Orange County, with over 10% of the student body comprised of refugees.[145] While racially and ethnically motivated fights did occur, the vast majority of tension manifested as white students "spitting on," throwing "angry glances," and using "spiteful words" toward Asian students.[146] As one student remembered, "I definitely remember being called a lot of different names when I was younger. You know, comments about your eyes. I spoke perfect English…. I thought I was doing everything like everyone else, but somehow, I wasn't being treated [the same]. I remember just a lot of racial comments."[147] Native-born students utilized these forms of intimidation to create a feeling of exclusion and marginalization among the Vietnamese refugee students within their school communities, just as their parents did in the broader Orange County community.

By 1982, the schism between native-born Americans and Vietnamese refugees in Orange County, California was pronounced and potentially dangerous. This was also the year that the number of Southeast Asian refugees admitted into the United States began to contract. At its apex in 1980, the United States admitted over

139. Wolinsky, "Melting Pot," January 11, 1981.

140. Wolinksy, "Melting Pot," January 11, 1981.

141. Wayne King, "Asian Immigrants Changing the Character of California's Cities," *New York Times*, September 11, 1981.

142. Do, *Yen Do and the Story of Nguoi Viet Daily News*, 50.

143. King, "Asian Immigrants," September 11, 1981.

144. Orr, "Fault Line," 280.

145. David Reyes, "CARE: It Combats Schoolyard Racism," *Los Angeles Times*, February 14, 1982.

146. Reyes, "CARE," February 14, 1982.

147. Orr, "Fault Line," 211.

166,700 Southeast Asian refugees. By 1982, that number dropped to less than half at 72,100.[148] While the United States would continue to admit Vietnamese refugees in substantial numbers throughout the rest of the decade, they would never again reach the significance of the 1980-1981 years. The diminishing number of refugees admitted to the United States helped the lessen the tensions and urgency felt within the Orange County community, though the pressure never fully subsided throughout the 1980s. Starting in the late 1970s, the lack of leadership displayed by federal, state, and local governments in crafting funding structures to support refugee integration - including welfare, jobs training, and English language classes. This created an atmosphere of marginalization as refugees lacked the skills necessary to connect with their new native-born neighbors and maintain self-sufficiency in their own lives. While Vietnamese refugees experienced a sense of abandonment from those in power, they also experienced racism and xenophobia from some of their neighbors, co-workers, and classmates. These challenges from both above and below caused the marginalization of Vietnamese refugees in American society. Ultimately, these anti-refugee views coupled with inadequate government assistance and funding created an atmosphere of exclusion for Vietnamese refugees in the late-1970s and early 1980s as they sought to construct their new identity as refugees in America.

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148. Hein, *From Vietnam*, 47.

# Weaponized Fear and Societal Exclusion: How the Mexican Repatriation Campaign Achieved Success in the Late 1920s to Early 1930s

## Jordan Lorenz

**Abstract:** From the late nineteen twenties to the early nineteen thirties, Mexican migrants were forcefully repatriated from major cities in the United States. However, many repatriates left voluntarily because fear and societal exclusion became weaponized by both American leaders and the public and, thus, led to a loss of wellbeing and morale among the Mexican-American community. This paper analyzes both how and why fear and exclusion became an effective tool of the Americans during the Mexican repatriation campaign, how this fear was weaponized against Mexicans and Americans, and the psychological and economic effects the campaign had on the repatriated children. I found through multiple primary sources of *Los Angeles Times* articles, congressional records, published pamphlets and past scholarly work that across multiple cities, Mexicans were forcefully removed initially by violence and then open threats because of a decrease in the presence of the Klu Klux Klan, racist and motivated local, state, and federal officials, a massive propaganda network by the *Los Angeles Times,* and for business incentives, mainly by the agricultural industry. Through conducted oral histories by other scholars, a summarization and analysis of the major economic and psychological effects of Mexicans, especially their children, were compiled into this paper too. The significance of these findings illuminates why this campaign was one of repatriation and not deportation, how racist beliefs can fundamentally transform a community, how multiple American institutions of our society can racially profile and target the removal of a community, and how psychologically terrifying events terrify and damage the long-term minds and status of their victims.

The Mexican repatriation campaign of the late nineteen-twenties to the early nineteen-thirties was a campaign that sought the removal of Mexicans from the United States. Much of this removal was voluntary, and there are numerous reasons for this. Fear and exclusion are two of these reasons. The Ku Klux Klan, *Los Angeles Times,* government officials, and even corporations fostered an atmosphere of deep fear and societal exclusion. The prestige, prominence, or power of these institutions brought terror into many Mexican's hearts. Many of these actors did not change most Americans' mindsets because many already held racist, anti-Mexican beliefs themselves. Through these methods, they discovered that they could weaponize fear and create a feeling of exclusion within the Mexican community while avoiding the backlash a targeted deportation campaign would have. Not everyone agreed with this campaign, but parts of the American public came to support it and involved themselves. Many Mexican American children remember the chaos this campaign brought and have suffered numerous consequences because of it to this very day. Fear is a common theme in the perpetrators' intentions and methods to the stories of these children. Therefore, the weaponization of fear and the exclusion of Mexicans from American society coerced many to repatriate voluntarily and experience a loss of wellbeing during the late nineteen twenties to the early nineteen-thirties. The first primary factor that helped shape the anti-Mexican beliefs of many Americans was the Ku Klux Klan.

The Ku Klux Klan shaped the values of many local communities against Mexican Americans during the early nineteen-twenties. The Ku Klux Klan attacked Mexican Americans for two significant reasons. The first reason was that most Mexicans identified as Catholic. The Klan was against Catholicism, and they stated their cause when they wrote, "the Klan is PROTESTANT. […] It is pro-American, and believes in no dual authority, no necessity for outside influence to run our American government."[1] Essentially, the Klan was against Catholicism because a core tenant of Catholicism is the pope's authority. Which is an authority outside of the United States and, therefore, the Klan vehemently stood against it. Since Catholicism is the predominant religion most Mexicans identify with, the Klan views Mexicans as anti-American. This anti-Catholic sentiment did not translate into Boulder County residents' minds, but the Ku Klux Klan's anti-Mexican belief did. The Klan's core white supremacist core argues the superiority and dominion of white Americans over all non-white inhabitants.[2] Mexicans do not fall into a racially white category, so the Klan's racism meant that their existence within America was intolerable. The Klan targeted the Mexican population within the West for these reasons and the lack of a prominent African American population. Marjorie McIntosh illuminated this trend in Boulder County when she wrote, "In Colorado, the Klan directed its activities against immigrants, Latinos, Catholics, and Jews, with secondary attention to the few African Americans living in the state."[3] The preponderance of Mexicans over African Americans in the West contributes to why the Klan targeted them. Thus, these are the Ku Klux Klan values and analysis of Boulder County's history in light of the overt tactics of the Klan illuminate how the 'Klan's tactics of dehumanization are practical tools available later in the repatriation efforts of Mexican Americans.

Boulder County has a deep-rooted history of racism against Hispanics. McIntosh describes how the Klan was able to assert itself within Boulder County because of its deep history of racism against a small number of African American inhabitants and a more significant number of Hispanics.[4] Boulder County has a history of discrimination and violence against ethnic minorities. Mainly through mob violence, in its worst form, lynching. McIntosh notes that "In the five southwestern states between 1880 and 1930, nearly 600 Hispanics were lynched. At least a few Boulder County residents had relatives who were lynched in Northern New Mexico."[5] Boulder County's history of racism and violence made it perfect for the Klan to further incite terror across the West. Thus, the past actions within the Southwest made it a perfect target for the Klan's propaganda, and their transformation to the overt racism of the Klan highlights its success.

The Klan's reign transformed racial conditions in Boulder County. During the nineteen-twenties, they could attack and strongly dehumanize Mexicans and instill these beliefs even after extensive removal. McIntosh notes how the Klan fell from grace in the late nineteen-twenties because the overt nature of their disdain for many Americans did not make the county look good.[6] Racism was highly prevalent during the era, but this racism did not sit well with Mexican Americans. However, many of

1. Ku Klux Klan, *Summary of the Principles of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan*, Carnegie Branch Library for Local History, Boulder, Undated, 1920s.

2..Ku Klux Klan, *Summary of the Principles,* 1920s.

3. Marjorie McIntosh, "Conflict, Racism, and Violence," in *Latinos of Boulder County Colorado 1900-1980 Volume I:* History and Contributions (Palm Springs: Old John Publishing, 2016), 113.

4. McIntosh, "Conflict, Racism, and Violence," 110.

5. McIntosh, "Conflict, Racism, and Violence," 112.

6. McIntosh, "Conflict, Racism, and Violence," 122.

them were powerless to do anything because of mortal fears enhanced by attacks. Emma Gonzalez Martinez stated how white Americans continued the Klan's overt racist tactics of coercion through fear. Captured in Emma's statement that "we understood that the Anglos in the community had decided that the Mexicans were not welcome, and they were escorting them out of the town."[7] Forced expulsion is one tactic of the Klan, but the message that these few overt actions send to the rest of the community is the real power of the Ku Klux Klan's tactics. The other tactic of dehumanization was noted by Alfonso Cardenas when he recalled how his eyes came upon the sign, "No Mexicans or Dogs Allowed."[8] This equation of Mexicans to dogs is a dehumanizing tactic of equating Mexicans as animals. Making non-Europeans seem unhuman is a psychological tactic that the Klan used to incite support among white Americans and fear within anyone else. Being viewed as an animal would make it easier for violence to happen to them, but the traditional violence was more sporadic and not so concentrated against them. The sign by Cardenas and the memory of Mrs. Gonzalez Martinez are vastly different from the mob lynching's. The Klan's presence transformed Boulder County into a more overtly racist community and makes removal campaigns more apparent. Overall, the Klan's eradication did not mean their beliefs or tactics disappeared. Still, the Klan was not the only hostile group towards the Mexican American community, and local governments also played a dominant role in creating an atmosphere of fear.

Local legislation was a tool used by California to target Mexican communities and make them feel disassociated from the rest of the population. During the early nineteen-thirties, the Los Angeles City Board of Education began to debate a bill that would segregate schools within its district. The people of California did not get a candid picture of the bill's purpose because of the elusive diction the LA Times employed. Specifically, the terms were broad to encompass large swaths of people to hide who the real targets for segregation are. One specific term was the "use of the word Indian, [since] a majority of Mexican children having Indian blood in them."[9] Nuance diction hides the bill's intentions from the public's eye because most would not have been affected by the bill. The Mexican American population quickly caught onto what the true intentions of this bill were a veiled attempt at separating Mexicans from the rest of American society. Physical separation coincides with the psychological separation that this bill is proposing. This being, Mexicans are inherently not American or should not be treated as equals to white Americans. Sentiments like these could make anyone feel unwelcomed and want to leave. Ultimately, this is how the local government used its legislation to target the Mexican community. However, the Los Angeles Times reporting further enhanced the fear these discriminatory pieces of legislation exploited.

The *Los Angeles Times* was one of the foremost proponents of the underlying racism within 'California's legislation. Most of the legislation proposed had been unrealistic and had a low probability of passing, but their true purpose lay in their conception. The *Los Angeles Times* made the bold claim that Los Angeles could never enact segregation and that Mexicans are important to the economy.[10] The improbability of this legislation passing embodies the message of exclusion that this

7. Emma Gonzalez Martinez, "Oral History Interview with Emma Gonzalez Martinez," interview by Euvaldo Valdez, *Boulder County Latino History Project*, September 3, 2013.

8. Alfonso Louis Cardenas, "Oral History Interview with Alfonso Louis Cardenas," interview by Dorthy Ciarlo, *Boulder County Latino History Project*, May 27, 2004.

9. "More Mexican Baiting," *Los Angeles Times*, April 4, 1931.

10. "Mexican Migration," *Los Angeles Times*, April 18, 1931.

bill intended to send. By writing multiple articles, they enhanced the psychological terror that bills such as this began. However, the *Los Angeles Times* had racism at the forefront of all their reporting. The *Los Angeles Times* used overt racism in pieces on the "Mexican problem" and then described the Mexican people as "gentle, kindly, hard-working people. They are easily intimidated and are very sensitive to affront."[11] This contradiction supports how an influential newspaper, such as the *Los Angeles Times*, supported overt legislation when it described Mexicans as a problem, calling them sensitive people when they were in distress because of racist reporting. This legislation and reporting would make it difficult for Mexicans to see themselves as wanted within America's borders. If both the state and one of the most influential newspapers of the time define you as an outsider, it is easy to begin to see yourself as one. Briefly, this is one example of how the *Los Angeles Times* used fear as weapon.

The *Los Angeles Times'* open distribution of this information allowed the repatriation campaign to unfold. Their choice of diction, especially in their headlines, exemplifies how they could dehumanize Mexican citizens in the Los Angeles area. Headlines such as "Illegal Immigration Held to Present Menace,"[12] "Mexican Problem,"[13] and "Deportation Urged"[14] are three examples of such insidious headlines. All these headlines negatively portray Mexicans and send insightful messages depending on who reads them. If Americans had read these headlines, they could become fearful of their Mexican neighbors and begin to view them as unequal or unfit within American society possibly. Mexican Americans who read this paper could see portrayal as a threat, and their existence within the United States is no longer safe. The Americans' belief of a Mexican threat combined with Mexicans feeling of overt alienation created both a psychological and physical atmosphere of fear and coercion. The *Los Angeles Times* hid behind the veil of reporting while disseminating numerous articles that purported racial hatred. At the same time, Spanish newspapers had to dispel the fear and misinformation.

Spanish newspapers illuminated how Mexicans viewed California's actions as racist and pushed for voluntary repatriation. The Spanish newspaper *La Opinión* was one of the few Spanish newspapers in existence and read by Mexicans in the Southwestern United States. *La Opinión's* archives highlight the steady progression of how Mexicans began to see themselves as a targeted group in America. One of the most prominent articles that exemplify this claim is an article title "Un Proyecto de Impuesto a Los Mexicanos de California," which translates into "A Tax Project on California Mexicans."[15] This article was about how California passed a bill that made Mexicans pay a dollar per head as a tax to the government.[16] One can quickly see how this bill sent a clear signal to Mexican Americans, mainly that they experienced inequality within America, and more specifically, within California. White Californians, even African American Californians, did not have to pay a tax for residing within the state, but Mexican Americans did. Taxes usually slated to pay for public goods became mechanisms for discrimination. However, the psychological fear of what might come next is the more extraordinary repatriation tool. Reasonably, suppose a government and people feel brave enough to enact a bill to single out a minority group. In that case, it does not become unreasonable for that group to ponder what

11. "Mexican Migration," *Los Angeles Times*, April 18, 1931.
12. "Illegal Immigration Held to Present Menace," *Los Angeles Times*, March 9, 1928.
13. "Mexican Problem," *Los Angeles Times,* October 1, 1930.
14. "Deportation Urged," *Los Angeles Times,* September 14, 1933.
15. Ignacio Lozano, "Un Proyecto de Impuesto a Los Mexicanos de California," *La Opinión,* January 4, 1931.
16. Lozano, "Un Proyecto," 1931.

the majority might pass upon them next. In this mindset, voluntary repatriation becomes a logical conclusion for many Mexicans personal safety and their families. Therefore, the reporting done by Spanish newspapers transcribed the weariness and fear Mexicans felt from California's anti-Mexican legislation. Still, federal legislation further advanced America's overall contempt towards its Mexican population.

Federal legislation that targeted the Mexican population within the United States was how the federal government helped advance and instill fear within their communities. The federal government debated multiple different pieces of legislation that involved the federal government's role in immigration. One of these was the federal government's role in deporting illegal aliens within the United States border. A significant piece of legislation involved in this debate was House Resolution 16850. This bill's purpose was to continue assistance for the immigration authorities through funding and installment of deportation of any immigrants who entered the United States illegally or were deemed undesirable.[17] This policy first appears during the debates and passage of the Immigration Acts of 1917 and 1924 but understanding this bill's true purpose is critical when examining the Mexican repatriation campaign. Mexicans, immigrants, and citizens can fall into both categories for deportation because they illegally entered the country. The building up of racist legislation, sentiments, and beliefs put massive amounts of pressure and fear on the Mexican community. Thus, fear becomes the most effective tool of the campaign. Overall, federal legislation advanced the goal of terrorizing the Mexican American population and became the standard of subtle systemic racism.

Mexicans garnered the unfavorable label because of the racist belief that they are the primary perpetrators of crime. The Wickerman Commission was a federal commission created to investigate and define the cause of the increased crime rates. Specifically, they found that "arrests of Mexicans have averaged 12.4 percent; the proportion of Mexican children enrolled in public and Catholic elementary schools … was 9.4 percent."[18] The message was that the more Mexican children within American society, the higher the crime rate. This committee's finding is monumental in reinforcing American's racist notion that Mexicans are undesirable because they destroy public safety. This sentiment of being undesirable would not have been possible without the help of the federal government. They helped instill fear of the Mexican American community into the consciousness of white Americans. Thus, the more fear the public garnered made all forms of coercion more prevalent and repatriation a safer option for many Mexicans to take. Overall, this belief of unfavourability about the Mexican population made the repatriation campaign more successful.

The constant breaking down of one's psyche through fear is a reason why many Mexicans left the United States during the early nineteen-thirties. An attorney in Southern California, Joseph Scott, was reported by the *Los Angeles Times* that he viewed the atmosphere within California, but more so the United States as a whole, as being an "atmosphere [of] … suspicion and mistrust which has grown out of various affiliated movements to harass California Mexicans and cause them to quit the country."[19] Essentially, the United States embraced an atmosphere that made many Mexicans weary of staying in the nation. Nevertheless, this tense atmosphere against

17. US Congress, Deportation of Aliens Report: to Accompany H.R. 16850, 70th Cong., 2d sess., 1929, H.R. Rep. 2418, pt.2.

18. "Wickerman Finds Aliens Not Crime-Gain Cause," *Los Angeles Times,* August 24, 1931.

19. "Attorney Raps Mexican Scare," *Los Angeles Times,* June 11, 1931.

the Mexican community does not necessarily mean that fear was a primary motivator for those who were still undecided about leaving. However, within the same article, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that groups behind these repatriation campaigns sought to use "psychological strokes" to make individual Mexican voluntarily leave.[20] This central admission clearly defines the tactics behind all of this overt violence against the Mexican communities within the United States. Target a small percentage of the population through the deportation of illegals, crafted discriminatory legislation, and use of overt violence would send a strong enough message to the rest that they are undesirable in American's eyes. Overall, this dissemination of fear throughout America made many Mexicans voluntarily leave, but those with children could no longer suffer the hostile and racist environment that surrounded their children.

The final breaking point for many Mexican families was the precise attacks aimed at their children. After the countless governmental acts and reports that targeted children, California's proposed segregation law, and the Wickerman commission, many Mexicans decided to return home voluntarily regardless of citizenship. The *Los Angeles Times* cited a Doctor Wallace who said, "The Bliss bill is another matter of unfair discrimination aimed at the Mexicans. One cannot blame him for feeling the discrimination when it is aimed at his children."[21] The increasing amount of federal and state legislation that targeted Mexicans and their families shows how overt discrimination contributed to the massive number of Mexicans leaving the United States. Parents want what is best for their children, and it is not okay for anyone, especially a child, to be raised in a society fraught with intentional demonization because of their ethnicity. Even more dangerous is the fear that any Americans in this increasingly hostile environment might take out their rage or hatred on your child. Therefore, the protection of their children from the psychological effects of racism became a primary motivator for many to repatriate. However, the reported number of repatriates truly illuminate how effective weaponized fear can be.

Fear was the primary and most effective weapon used during the repatriation campaign. Mexican officials reported two months earlier that 35,000 Mexicans from Southern California alone returned indefinitely to Mexico, and during the summer, that number would be between 60,000 to 73,000. [22] These staggering numbers highlight how effective fear was because the number of repatriates doubled in such a short amount of time. An atmosphere of continuous unsafety and fear drove many to leave, and those who desired a Mexican-free America had data that showed their campaign of fear was working. However, the data associated with the repatriation campaign allow scholars to determine the numbers of Mexicans who repatriated, but it cannot quantify the number of Mexicans whose prohibition from immigrating to America arose because of fear. This meant that fear not only solved the problem of removing the current Mexican population but prevented the formation of a stronger Mexican American presence in the immediate future too. Overall, the data shows that fear was the most potent weapon in the arsenal of racist Americans, but not all Americans sought to incite fear further within and towards the Mexican American community.

Few Americans went against the fear and began to defend Mexicans from the ongoing racist campaign. The *Los Angeles Times* was one of the prominent distributors of anti-Mexican propaganda, but they also published multiple articles from

20. "Attorney Raps Mexican Scare," *Los Angeles Times,* June 11, 1931.
21. "Great Exodus Taking Place," *Los Angeles Times*, April 12, 1931.
22. "Great Migration Back to Mexico Under Way," *Los Angeles Times,* April 12, 1931.

individuals who sympathized with Mexican Americans. One *Los Angeles Times* article titled "Hands off" sought in its entirety to defend Mexicans from state exclusion. The *Los Angeles Times* published, "They are good citizens. … If the Mexicans are excluded, they can only be replaced by yellow people from the Philippines or negroes from Puerto Rico. These cannot be excluded, and they would make conditions ten times worse."[23] The use of racism to counteract racism illuminates the atmosphere in which Mexicans found themselves. The majority of immigrants faced fervent discrimination but singling out Mexicans made them feel targeted and reasonably put them in greater fear. Accordingly, this was one defense of the Mexican community against character attacks, but other defenses were based less on racism and more against the institutions that targeted them.

Another defense of Mexicans focused on how state legislators in California sought to disrupt Mexican Americans' psychological wellbeing. The *Los Angeles Times* published an article that called out the constant dehumanization and "Mexican baiting" the Mexican community received from the California legislature.[24] The Mexican community received constant harassment from the legislature, and reasonably, the harassment from a government institution against a minority group would make that group fearful for their safety. This fear would continue to grow with the increasing amount of legislation directed at the community. From California legislation focused on segregation to federal legislation denoting undesirables, the Mexican community endeared constant coercion to leave. These overtly racist and aggressive tactics occurred to make deportation unnecessary as the campaign pushed for primarily voluntary repatriation. Fear and disassociation from the public through legislation fostered resolution to these ends. Ultimately, some individuals attempted to alter the false narrative Americans put onto the Mexican American community, but it was futile against the power of corporate-sponsored propaganda seeking to stop Mexican contributions to the labor movement.

The possibility of labor strikes became a common fear among corporate elites. The fear of labor strikes became a very grave threat during the Great Depression because of the need for higher wages. Thus, strikes became a significant threat to corporate leaders, and they became essential in the propaganda machine. Newspapers, such as the *Los Angeles Times*, were willing to help perpetuate the facts, but more commonly, they reported myths about the strikers' ambitions and the identity of the strikers themselves. Corporate profit margins made garnering public opposition to strikes during the Depression essential. These myths and who these employees were are where the Mexican repatriation campaign and the labor disputes connect.

Many American minds feared Mexican's roles in the Depression's labor disputes. The *Los Angeles Times* heavily reported on supposed Mexican activities in labor disputes. The *Los Angeles Times* stated that the federal government sought a committee to "seek the co-operation of the Mexican Consul in threatening deportation for Mexican-born agitators who are found in the ranks of the strikers."[25]Essentially, the American government deported Mexicans involved with the strikes back to Mexico. The publishing of articles like this puts fear into the average American's mind that Mexicans are a strong force within the labor movement and a threat to the severely damaged American economy. Therefore, the American public now viewed the Mexican population as a threat to their livelihoods. Myths about Mexicans involvement in

23. "Hands Off," *Los Angeles Times*, February 18, 1928
24. "Mexican Migration," *Los Angeles Times*, April 18, 1931.
25. "Deportation Urged," *Los Angeles Times*, September 14, 1933.

the problems many businesses experienced because of the Depression made public sentiment against them even more potent. The *Los Angeles Times* purported myths such as "illegal entrants … present the serious problem as they usually are of low mentality, frequently are diseased, and are apt to carry crop pests in their uninspected baggage."[26] Defining Mexican immigrants as one of the contributors to society's problems is nothing new, but a prominent newspaper publishing these fearful myths translates into a more fearful society. From this fear, Americans defined themselves in opposition to Mexicans. Being outcasted from society must have put much anxiety and stress onto Mexican Americans, and repatriation was a way to escape the current economic crisis. Therefore, Mexicans' roles in labor disputes became valuable tools to create fear in Americans involved in the repatriation campaign. However, businesses struggled to balance stopping the labor strikes and protecting their Mexican laborers.

Mexican laborers became unintentional collateral in the corporation's plans to stop the increasing number of labor strikes. The danger of labor strikes made the weaponization of fear possible; however, the realignment of this propaganda towards all Mexicans was unintentional. Many agricultural interests in the southwestern region needed Mexican labor. As the *Los Angeles Times* reported, "interests in California and the Southwest which are opposing strong legislation to keep out Mexicans on the ground, it would take away their only dependable source of common labor."[27] Mexicans were the backbone of the agricultural labor force in the American Southwest, but the federal government's legislative actions sent a message to both these interests and their employees. Attacks against organized labor enhanced anti-Mexican sentiment, heightened by a prolonged and pronounced high in unemployment. For Mexicans, it furthers the belief that they are an isolated group in most Americans' minds. The *Los Angeles Times's* racist reporting was one thing, but statements by their employers are another. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that these interests "asked to conduct a fresh study and recommend some solution of the Mexican problem which may prove acceptable to Congress, but which will stop short of actual exclusion."[28] This statement illuminates the sad fact that corporations were not acting out of kindness or morality towards their Mexican employees but because they needed their labor. The ability to define those Mexicans who were desirable and those who were not would be challenging when the American public has called for removing all Mexicans from their society. Overall, Mexicans' terrorization derived from corporate propaganda enhanced when citizenship status became obsolete.

The repatriation campaign of the nineteen-thirties did not decipher between Mexican migrants and Mexican American citizens. The repatriation campaign instilled fear into all Mexicans, regardless of their citizenship. Mexicans who entered illegally, Mexicans with legal immigration status, and Mexican Americans, both naturalized and native-born, were all equally targeted. The *Los Angeles Times* stated the expansion of this campaign when they wrote, "Formally the deportation campaign was originally directed at aliens here illegally. … In the exodus of Mexicans that followed were many who were born in this country or had been here legally many years."[29] This attack against anyone who identified their ethnicity as Mexican is dangerous because it creates an atmosphere of tension, fear, and racist discrimination. Reasonably, Mex-

26. "Illegal Immigration Held to Present Menace," *Los Angeles Times*, March 9, 1928.
27. "Respite for Southwest," *Los Angeles Times,* March 9, 1929.
28. "Respite for Southwest," *Los Angeles Times,* March 9, 1929.
29. "Attorney Raps Mexican Scare," *Los Angeles Times,* June 11, 1931.

ican people became fearful because messaging made it clear that many did not want them there. The entire anti-Mexican campaign was immoral, but the expansion to Mexican Americans furthers the racist sentiment behind the campaign and the usage of fear against the entire Mexican population. The repatriation of American citizens sent a message to all Mexicans within the United States. Overall, the disregard for citizenship meant that citizenship was not a safeguard; therefore, strengthening the fear within the entire Mexican community strengthened. The effects of repatriation, however, were felt long after the campaign ended.

Repatriation destroyed many generation's livelihoods within the Mexican American community. One of these effects was that many repatriated children had to readjust their accustomed American livelihoods to a Mexican one. One of these readjustments came in education. Many Mexican children attended American schools for years. The sudden change both ended their current studies and increased the difficulty in attaining their education. One of these difficulties was getting to the school itself. Ruben Jimenez was one of these children repatriated. He stated his experience as "we had to walk approximately fifteen to twenty miles to school. I resented the way we were taken from the United States and taken to Mexico, and we had to struggle to live in a place where we had nothing."[30] The coercive removal of Mexicans from the United States impacted multiple generations. As Jimenez's tones hint at, he gained resentment against the United States. Despite his citizenship status, his American identity meant nothing to those who deported him and his family. Psychological fear played a role in removing his family but the damage transformed into distaste for the Americans over the hurt endured from racism.

Another way education was affected was by the abrupt stopping of Mexican children's education. Emilia Castañeda was in her formative schooling years when repatriated with her family. However, she experienced a problem that many Mexican children had to endure because of repatriation. This problem was their lack of understanding Spanish in any form efficiently. Castañeda stated when interviewed, "She taught us how to learn Spanish, and then we started going to schools wherever we were living. We didn't understand Spanish. We didn't know how to read or write it."[31] The opportunity for her to gain some mastery over the Spanish language allowed her to survive, but the psychological trauma or removal is indescribable. Even worse, her ability to advance her position within America was cut short because of her repatriation. Thus, her repatriation made the advancement of her education only possible in Mexico, but the added difficulty of learning Spanish to obtain an education is another barrier she only had to deal with because of repatriation. Briefly, the abrupt stopping of one's education affected many children's ability to obtain an education and led to generations' economic losses.

One cannot ignore the economic impact the loss of education had on Mexican American children. María Ofelia Acosta stated how she could have succeeded much more in America than in Mexico and how "This was a setback for us. I could have gone to school, my family, my brothers and sisters and I had a better life here. I

30. Ruben Jimenez, "Interview of Ruben Jimenez," *Expulsion of U.S. Citizens* (2003), quoted in Christine Valenciana, *Unconstitutional Deportation of Mexican Americans During the 1930s: A Family History & Oral History* (St. Davids, Pennsylvania, Loeb School of Education, 2006), 7.

31. Emilia Castañeda de Valenciana, "Oral History Interview with Emilia Castañeda de Valenciana" (1972), quoted in Christine Valenciana, *Unconstitutional Deportation of Mexican Americans During the 1930s: A Family History & Oral History* (St. Davids, Pennsylvania, Loeb School of Education, 2006), 5.

only went to school for two and a half years."[32] Within America, she would have attained a higher standard of living than in Mexico. The standard of living in Mexico denigrated because of the worldwide impact of the Great Depression, and the economic benefits of living in American cities over rural Mexico are vast and more easily viewable because of the depression.[33] To sum up, education was just one way the repatriation negatively affected repatriated children, but it also negatively affected Mexican Americans in other ways.

Repatriated Mexican Americans also experienced societal disdain in both America and Mexico. The repatriation campaign highlights how elite interests fanned Americans' disdain and prejudices. However, the torment of repatriation did not end there. Many Mexicans were talked to in a derogatory manner by their former or new communities. Ramona Rios described her experience within Mexico and how her family treated her with disdain. Rios stated in her interview, "My grandmother was really nice but my father's sisters… they used to call me pocha."[34] Rios's sense of dread was not uncommon by repatriated Mexican children because their poor relatives in Mexico did not want them during the Great Depression. Terms such as pocha or repatriados were pejorative terms that signify how Americans thought all Mexicans belonged to a country that did not recognize them. Capable of making one feel alone and question why their home nation, neighbors, and parents forced them to leave. They are Americans, and America is their home, but America's lack of wanting led many to feel homesick and an identity crisis. Emilia Castañeda described her experience in terms of how one of the children she lived with treated her. Castañeda stated, "The oldest boy used to call me repatriada. I don't think that I felt that I was a repatriada because I was an American citizen."[35] Her American citizenship did not protect her family from being coercively removed from America. In Mexico, her painful experience was used to torment and degrade her. Castañeda and other repatriated children experienced psychological toil because of their forceful removal from their homes. They are American citizens who left in fear and felt unjust hate because of a decision in which they had no agency. These are some of the stories repatriated children experienced. However, these children held onto one strong emotion that kept them sane through these times.

The hope to return to America was an emotion that drove many children to overcome the hardships they had endured during repatriation. These children never saw Mexico before repatriation, and America was and is the nation they were born in and had grown to love. T. Martinez- Southard described her longing to come how in these words, "I used to miss the states so much! I would cry every night because I was really lonely… I still had hopes of coming to my country."[36] America was all these children knew. All these children wanted was acceptance within their nation and acceptance as equal Americans. At the same time, their parents sought for them a better life. This they did not get but the pain and torment of repatriation. Overall,

32. María Ofelia Acosta, "Oral History Interview with María Ofelia" (2003), quoted in Christine Valenciana, *Unconstitutional Deportation of Mexican Americans During the 1930s: A Family History & Oral History* (St. Davids, Pennsylvania, Loeb School of Education, 2006), 6.

33. Christine Valenciana, "Unconstitutional Deportation of Mexican Americans During the 1930s: A Family History & Oral History," *Multicultural Education* (Spring 2006).

34. Ramona Rios, "Oral History Interview with Ramona Rios (2004), quoted in Chrisitine Valenciana, *Unconstitutional Deportation of Mexican Americans During the 1930s: A Family History & Oral History* (St. Davids, Pennsylvania, Loeb School of Education, 2006), 6.

35. Emilia Castañeda de Valenciana, "Oral History Interview with Emilia Castañeda de Valenciana," 6.

36. T. Martínez-Southard, "Oral History Interview with T. Martinez-Southard" (1971), quoted in Christine Valenciana, *Unconstitutional Deportation of Mexican Americans During the 1930s: A Family History & Oral History* (St. Davids, Pennsylvania, Loeb School of Education, 2006), 6.

these are the experiences and changes in wellbeing that Mexicans and their children had to endure during the repatriation campaign of the late nineteen-twenties to early nineteen-thirties.

Ultimately, the weaponization of fear and a feeling of exclusion were the tools that made Mexican repatriation possible. Many societal elites contributed to the enhancement of anti-Mexican, and in general, racist values within their local region. Examples such as the Ku Klux Klan in Boulder County, the *Los Angeles Times* in Los Angeles, and corporations in the Southwest region were prime contributors to the propaganda and racism that made the campaign possible. Without these actors, the fear that swarmed both the American public and the Mexican American communities would not have been as potent or effective as it was. Local, state, and federal legislation directed fear and hardship at this community. These pieces of legislation attempted to bring the unprecedented idea of segregation in Los Angeles schools, tried to put a head tax on Mexicans, and increase the removal of undesirables. All of this legislation was exclusionary because they targeted the Mexican American community just for their identification as Mexican. Mexicans' fear or exclusion was only enhanced by them being deemed undesirable, but not everyone subjected this community to fear. Some Americans attempted to protect Mexican Americans, but this protection fell on deaf ears. American's fear and hatred of Mexicans made them eventually target all Mexicans, regardless of citizenship. Thus, the use of fear and exclusion drove many Mexicans to repatriate voluntarily back to Mexico, and this campaign's effects traumatized many Mexican American children who had to experience this event firsthand. The true horrors of the repatriation campaign can only be understood when one analyzes how psychological terror was the most effective weapon used against Mexican Americans.

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# A Long History of "Armed" Self-Defense Against White Supremacy: Lynching and Its Legacies

## Gloria Moreno

**Abstract:** How did lynching provoke armed self-defense? During the late 1800s, early twentieth century, and Cold War era, global anti-lynching activists armed themselves with investigative journalism, education, protests, media, and guns in response to the hostile environment that the heightened lynch era in the United States constructed. African American activists like Ida B. Wells and Robert F. Williams pioneered the movements covered in this paper's first and third sections, respectively. The second section discusses how the anti-lynching crusade drew support from unconventional places like the Communist Party and China. Black newspapers, autobiographies, biographies, articles, and documentaries compose much of this project's research. The history of racial violence on African American bodies expanded the definition of armed self-defense, broadened our understanding of the long struggle for civil rights, and illustrated what black activism looked like during the Cold War.

On August 28, 1955, one of the most gruesome cases of racial violence occurred on American soil when a mob murdered fourteen-year-old Emmett Till for allegedly flirting with a white woman. On September 6, 1955, his mother Mamie Till decided to make the unnecessary death of her son meaningful.[1] Publicizing his open-casket funeral throughout the Black press, Mamie made certain her son's murder would long be remembered as a disturbing example of racism against African Americans. Despite her resistance, Mamie – and thousands of other mothers who lost a child to lynching – would not physically see the day the United States federal government denounced the horrendous act of lynching. Seventeen years after Mamie's death, on February 26, 2020, the US government finally passed a federal anti-lynching bill after multiple failed attempts.[2] The time between the first anti-lynching crusade of the 1890s, Emmett's death, and the passing of the federal anti-lynching bill unravels the ways in which African Americans resisted, confronted, and challenged white supremacy.

Activists across the country used Emmett's murder as an example of racial violence against African Americans. While, to white supremacists, Emmett's lynching exemplified the repercussions of threats to white American masculinity, to Black activists, the normalization of lynching in American culture politicized several activists and groups throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In this regard, African American armed self-defense was not limited to the physical actions of groups such as the Black Panthers, but also included awareness spread by the daily acts of resistance by individuals like Mamie. Black activists sought to challenge the foundation of American society by arming themselves with different tools. African American self-defense included ideologies, daily acts of resistance, and the preservation of Black culture and self-defense. Expanding the definition of Black armed self-defense broadens our understanding of what Black activism looked like and the long struggle for Civil Rights.

When examining the history of racial violence and the work of activists who

1. Glenda Dickersun, "Let the People See What I've Seen: In Praise of Mamie Till," *Southern Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (2008): 154.

2. Robert L. Zangrando, *The NAACP Crusade Against Lynching, 1909-1950* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980), 19.

fought for their freedom, a long history of African American oppression is revealed. Lynching, served as the greatest public demonstration of racial superiority and simultaneously undermined the supreme American image of democracy. Some scholars argue the history of lynching dates to the American Revolution.[3] Quaker patriot and head of an informal court in Virginia, Judge Charles Lynch and his officers tied suspected Tories and thieves to trees where they were given thirty lashes each. Deemed "Lynch Law," scholars argued Lynch's court was the first system that condoned this type of brutal punishment. Later, during the1880s, the term lynching did not define a specific type of racial violence; rather, lynching depended on the nature and reasons for using violence. Lynching was racial violence in the name of "justice" committed by individuals classified as lynchers.[4] This meant that lynchings took many forms: hangings, fatal gunshots, tarring and feathering, gang violence, or other uses of physicality and humiliation. As more mob members took the law into their hands, the more modern definition of lynching – white mob violence towards African Americans in the form of extrajudicial public hanging – pervaded the media throughout the first half of the twentieth century.[5]

Beginning in 1880, Black activists used unsettling photographs, graphic reports of lynching, and other depictions of racial violence to expose how white supremacist ideologies had distorted American democracy.[6] Major proponents of these efforts include Ida B. Wells, organizations, such as, the NAACP and CPUSA, and Robert Williams who all exposed racial violence on an international scale. Through their work, activists sought to show how white mob members used lynching to intimidate, degrade, and control Black people from Reconstruction to the mid-twentieth century. In this regard, activists demonstrated how lynching was an American and cultural paradox. [7] Legislative victories towards ending racial discrimination were shaped by global efforts to challenge the US government's false image of liberty. Representative of the long history of the Black freedom struggle, lynching, and resistance to it, uncovers ideologies and political actions that stemmed from international movements and collectively contributed to legislation in the 1960s. In their efforts to criminalize lynching and promote systematic change, African Americans leaders throughout the 1880-1970s formulated rhetoric and actions to mirror that of prior international and domestic efforts that sought to elevate the Black American. Building upon the Ida B. Wells Anti-Lynching Crusade, the NAACP, CPUSA, and Black Panther Party utilized judicial activism, collective organization, and Black nationalism to collectively add to the Black American self-defense arsenal.

To understand African Americans' attempts to confront white supremacy, this paper is sectioned into three time frames: 1880-1900, 1901-1946, and 1947-1970. Part One examines Ida Bell Wells's explicit and successful use of the media – both local and international – to combat lynching, racial violence, and the myth of the Black rapist. Part Two focuses on the legislative battles. These efforts were combatted by the largest transnational organization in the US, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and pervasive local protests by the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA). Part Three explores the development of the Black Power Movement and armed demonstrations against

3. Mia Bay, *To Tell the Truth Freely: The Life of Ida B. Wells* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2009), 97.
4. Bay, *To Tell the Truth*, 96.
5. Zangrando, *NAACP Crusade*, 3.
6. Dora Apel and Shawn Michelle Smith, *Lynching Photographs* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 13.
7. Zangrando, *NAACP Crusade*, 3.

racial violence under the leadership of Robert Williams. Collectively, these three parts reveal how African Americans at different points in time armed themselves with distinct tools to exploit and defy systemic white supremacy.

**1880-1900: Ida B. Wells and International Black Activism**

Ida B. Wells's activism recognized lynching as a gendered and racialized system of violence. Born a slave in 1862 Mississippi, Wells grew up during the Radical Reconstruction era where individuals born into slavery had to emancipate themselves through self-education.[8] She both recognized and understood the systematic and legal racism against Blacks very early in her life.

The lynching of Wells's close friend Thomas Moss inspired her to establish a career in journalism and bring much needed attention to racial violence.[9] In her co-owned Memphis newspaper, *Free Speech and Headlight,* Wells wrote an editorial (printed on pink paper) that emphasized the racialized nature of lynching and explored how mob violence exposed white supremacy as the foundation of American society.[10] After Wells published her article under a pseudonym, white mobs threatened to lynch her as well. Although Black men vowed to protect Wells if she chose to stay in Memphis, she left town immediately without collecting or packing her belongings.[11] Had she returned home before she fled, she would have found white mob members destroying her newspaper offices, printing press, and other writing materials. The attempted lynchers also discovered her real name and further rallied for her lynching. This clearly emphasized that the goal of lynch violence was racial subjugation.[12] Wells reiterated this argument throughout her career.

Wells's powerful words inspired an international anti-lynching crusade and attracted the attention of well-educated and prominent individuals. In 1892, Wells published her first pamphlet, *Southern Horrors*, in T. Thomas Fortune's *New York Age*. In addition to Fortune's recognition and praise, *Southern Horrors* attracted the attention and support of renowned abolitionist leader, Frederick Douglass, who later convened with Wells on local anti-lynching campaigns and speaking tours. Specifically, Wells and Douglass used the lynching of a Texas man named Henry Smith to transition the lynchings debates from a local issue to an international issue. In February of 1893, in Paris, Texas, a manhunt for Smith ensued after the discovery of the mutilated body of four-year-old Myrtle Vance. Reported to have lured Myrtle away from her father's residence with candy, "burly Negro" Smith was the only suspect.[13] Paris law enforcement organized a search party and posted bulletins in several states that offered free public transportation if willing citizens came forward with information or aided in the search. Tracked down in Detroit and captured in Arkansas, officers accompanied Smith on a train ride to return him to "an infuriated mob" in Paris.[14] Upon his arrival to the "torture platform," nearly 10,000 people from several states watched burning hot coals scorch Smith's legs, stomach, face, eyes, and throat only to end his fifty-minute agonizing death in a blazing fire. Wells and Douglass denounced

8. Paula Giddings, *Ida: A Sword Among Lions*, *Ida B. Wells and the Campaign Against Lynching* (New York, Harper Collins, 2008), 10.
9. Bay, *To Tell the Truth*, 45.
10. Giddings, *Ida*, 98.
11. Giddings, *Ida*, 1.
12. Ida B. Wells, *Southern Horrors*, in *On Lynchings,* ed. Norm R. Allen (New York: Humanity Books, 2002), 45.
13. "Another Negro Burned: Henry Smith Dies at the Stake," *The New York Times*, February 2, 1893.
14. "Another Negro Burned."

the Paris lynching, using it as an example of how white Americans in a democratic country used mob "justice" against African Americans.[15]

Inspired by the horrific and racially charged language found in articles published by the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, Wells and Douglass fact-checked the first spectacle lynching. According to Wells, rumor had it that Henry Smith abducted Myrtle for revenge on her father for his cruel treatment of Smith. In addition, the white press "maliciously falsified" the damage – or lack thereof – done to Myrtle's body.[16] Contrary to the white press's depiction that her limbs were torn from her sexually assaulted body, those who recovered her body stated there was no evidence of assault, only a slight abrasion and some discoloration around her neck.[17] While Wells and Douglass understood that it would be impossible to prevent lynchings, they emphasized the exposure and detailed coverage of lynchings in hopes that it would force Americans to question their actions.[18] More so, Wells's and Douglass's work prompted the work of British activists. Douglass's abolitionist supporters from Britain, such as Catherine Impey and Isabelle Fyvie Mayo, extended their anti-lynching sentiments to Wells by inviting her to Britain to share her crusade via speaking tours, newspaper contributions, and other forms of literature. Endorsed by Douglass in 1893, Wells made her first trip to Britain where she spent three months after a warm welcome.

Contrary to the U.S, the British proved more receptive to Wells's research which revealed power retention as the root of lynching. Britain reportedly never practiced lynching, so their understanding derived from American folklore. During the 1890s, Britain understood lynching in America as a form of justice committed by isolated communities that lacked access to the legal system.[19] Wells debunked such myths. During Wells's trips to Britain, she, and fellow activists Impey, and Mayo corrected that understanding through publishing the realities of US race relations in Impey's anti-imperialist monthly, *Anti-Caste*. With financial help, moral support, and ideological conversations with Impey and Mayo, Wells reinvigorated her and Douglass's priority – debunking the Black rapist myth supposedly at the root of almost all nineteenth century lynchings – on an international platform.

In her British speaking tours and published articles, Wells blended American history, statistics, and detailed accounts of lynchings to demonstrate how lynching took away a victim's right to properly defend themself.[20] According to Wells, former white slave owners responded to Emancipation by creating a new system of racial violence, lynching.[21] As slave owners, they had a right to kill their property but rarely did so because that forfeited hundreds of dollars and labor. After Emancipation, however, white men no longer had the legal right to kill Black men, but the "school of practice" remained in the form of lynching. The "high tide" of lynchings began nineteen years later, but that was, in part, due to an increase in recorded lynchings. Wells's research for the year 1892 uncovered that about two-thirds of the 239 recorded lynchings were either never accused of rape or charged with minuscule evidence.[22] According to the *Chicago Tribune*'s 1893 lynching statistics, out of a total of 159 total

15. Bay, *To Tell the Truth*, 134.
16. Ida B. Wells, *A Red Record*, in *On Lynchings,* ed. Norm R. Allen (New York: Humanity Books, 2002), 77.
17. Wells, *A Red Record*, 77.
18. Bay, *To Tell the Truth*, 176.
19. Bay, *To Tell the Truth*, 141.
20. Wells, *A Red Record*, 147.
21. Wells, *A Red Record*, 57.
22. Bay, *To Tell the Truth*, 94, 101.

reported lynchings, only 52 victims were either "charged" or suspected of rape.[23] Wells wrote, "During the year 1894, there were 132 persons executed in the United States by due form of law, while in the same year 197 persons were put to death by mobs who gave the victims no opportunity to make a lawful defense."[24] For Wells and British activists, these numbers disclosed that African Americans were more often murdered by mob violence than given a fair trial by law. As a result, the data led the women to further push for equal access in courts.

During her second Britain trip in March of 1894, Wells toured Liverpool, Manchester, Southport, Newberry, and Bristol where she preached the same message: accusations of Black, male assault on white women were not actually at the core of lynchers' anxieties. In debunking the myth of the Black rapist, Wells demystified other underlying reasoning behind lynch violence. As living proof, Wells appealed to even more British activists after she reframed lynching as a betrayal of American ideals and institutions.[25] In the last month of her second British journey, Wells helped develop the British Anti-Lynching Committee who later sent letters of protest and anti-lynching literature to American Southern governors. "Far more persuasive than Wells, the British Anti-Lynching Committee exerted enough pressure on American state leaders to ensure that the impact of Wells's British anti-lynching campaign outlived her visits there and gave her cause an unprecedented visibility at home."[26] Wells second British crusade fostered Congressional debate and the exploitation of Southern politics, which collectively led to anti-lynching laws in several states and scrutiny throughout the nation. Although Wells was not the first to question faulty rape charges against Black men, she was the first to challenge it publicly with an international audience.

At the close of the nineteenth century, a Chicago newspaper commended Wells as "the most widely known woman of her race in the world."[27] This acclaim led to further hostility towards Wells, but also ignited the largest civil rights organization of the twentieth century. While the British Anti-Lynching Committee pressured state officials, the short-lived Niagara Movement informed the creation of the NAACP in 1909. In the years to follow, the rise of national leaders – and their broad organizations – treaded carefully on political paths influenced by Wells's leadership.[28] Even though Wells inspired and contributed to the formation of groups like the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), the Niagara Movement, and the NAACP, such organizations abandoned her agitative and "uncompromising" personality.[29] The NAACP, however, applied Wells's investigative journalism methods in their national efforts which contested lynching throughout the first few decades of the twentieth century.

### 1901-1946: Conservative vs Communist Legislative Battles

Although Wells brought international attention to lynching, other organizations such as the NAACP and CPUSA localized anti-lynching campaigns with different methods. The more conservative NAACP organized a legal anti-lynching crusade

23. Wells, *A Red Record*, 71.
24. Wells, *A Red Record*, 64.
25. Bay, *To Tell the Truth*, 144-145.
26. Bay, *To Tell the Truth*, 189.
27. *Daily Inter Ocean,* June 28, 1895, quoted in Bay, *To Tell the Truth Freely*, 3.
28. Bay, *To Tell the Truth*, 231.
29. Bay, *To Tell the Truth*, 268; Giddings, *Ida: A Sword Among Lions*, 6-7.

that argued the fight against lynching derived from the fight against Communism.[30] Contrarily, the CPUSA sought to revitalize a multiracial workers' movement through political organization and rallies to dismantle the root of all oppression: racialized capitalism. These two major anti-lynching organizations tackled interorganizational and intraorganizational conflicts differently through opposing perspectives, goals, and tactics.

The "foremost American and race educator" and respected Black elite of the time, Booker T. Washington believed that Black progress could only be reached through strenuous legal battles like overturning the Grandfather Clause and the implementation of industrial education.[31] To Wells and W.E.B. DuBois, Washington's biggest critic, Washington's accommodationism was one of the major problems faced by African Americans.[32] For Wells and DuBois, accommodationism meant accepting that lynchings were understandable reactions to criminal characteristics associated with the Black race. In addition, they argued that Washington's failed to challenge stereotypes that depicted African Americans as beastly, sex-thirsty animals. Avoiding such arguments hindered the success of organizations that sought to challenge everyday repressive conditions they lived in. In response, DuBois and other independent Black leaders assembled the Niagara Movement in 1905 to seek full citizenship rights for African Americans and exploit intraracial and class conflicts found in Washington's Tuskegee machine.[33] While short-lived, the Niagara Movement directly led to the formation of the largest biracial civil rights organization of the twentieth century, the NAACP.[34]

Average Americans began to take notice of lynchings due to the spread of Wells's discourse and the efforts of the Niagara Movement. In 1908, Springfield, Illinois underwent an intense race riot, demonstrating that racial tensions were not only a southern concern.[35] During the riots, angry white mobs convened after two African Americans allegedly sexually assaulted two white women. Russian revolutionaries and muckraking journalists William English Walling and Anna Strunsky publicly critiqued white racial violence using literary techniques reflective of Wells's works in their liberal magazine *The Independent*. Drawn to Walling's call-to-action, other white activists wrote to Walling and demanded he create a national organization to track all accounts of racial violence. Walling and Strunsky strategically utilized Wells's wording to propose "Lynching, Our National Crime."[36] White reformers and the Niagara Movement activists (including DuBois) borrowed Wells's ideology and organization tactics, in its early years and the NAACP contested lynching. By 1910, Washington and DuBois gained fame through working closely with prominent white leaders.

In its earliest stages, the NAACP renovated Wells's anti-lynching template in their legislative battles. In the 1910s, the NAACP's membership grew to over 9,000 by distributing anti-lynching pamphlets.[37] The Association's approach blended onsite investigations, prosecution efforts, fund-raising, protest meetings, and news releases.[38] In 1912, NAACP leaders published a sixteen-page pamphlet, *Notes of Lynchings in the United States*, where they argued that lynching created an atmosphere that further

30. "Lynchings Food for Soviets," *Chicago Defender*, October 4, 1930.
31. "World Weeps for Washington: 35,000 People Present at Burial," *Chicago Defender*, November 20, 1915.
32. Bay, *To Tell the Truth*, 257.
33. Bay, *To Tell the Truth*, 262.
34. Zangrando, *NAACP Crusade*, 22.
35. Bay, *To Tell the Truth*, 265.
36. Bay, *To Tell the Truth*, 268.
37. Zangrando, *NAACP Crusade*, 31.
38. Zangrando, *NAACP Crusade*, 26-27.

encouraged crime. This pamphlet, among others, provided evidence which contradicted the arguments of white officials and eventually grew enough attention for endorsement.

The Association's chief weapon was an all-too-familiar exposé.[39] In 1916, the NAACP's white secretary Roy Nash wrote a thirty-five-page anti-lynching strategy that outlined the history of lynching, lynching statistics, and anti-lynching legislation in response to Boston philanthropist Philip G. Peabody's $10,000 offer for a viable anti-lynching strategy.[40] The NAACP mimicked Wells's international and local campaigns that had succeeded in implementing anti-lynching laws in Texas, Virginia, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, and Maryland. Moreover, the NAACP had no new ideas on how to combat lynching. Instead, their agenda centered on the same three ideas: information gathering, investigation, and influencing southern business and political leaders to denounce lynching.[41] Although disclosing information about lynchings to the public was the initial goal, philanthropists such as Peabody incentivized the distribution of pamphlets to fuel more widespread efforts.

With a larger, more concentrated platform than previous activists, the NAACP expanded the anti-lynching discourse, further helping to debunk the myth of the Black rapist. As defined by the NAACP in 1917, lynching was "not only the illegal killing of an accused person, but also the killing of an unaccused person by mob violence."[42] They also published other articles that listed the number of lynching victims, their gender, and reported reason for their lynching.[43] According to that article, less than 33 percent of reported lynchings in 1915 resulted from rape, alleged rape, or attempted rape. Furthermore, the article connected lynching to white supremacy and posed moral questions about the crimes: "How long are such mobs allowed to drag the nation's good name in the dust?"[44] The explicit language attracted the attention of Representatives and Senators.

By the 1920s, the NAACP strengthened their "arm" in the long history of African American self-defense. Working from an anti-lynching fund of roughly $10,000, the NAACP subsidized their plea to US government officials. Meanwhile, Leonidas Dyer (R-Missouri) reached out to the NAACP for support in sponsoring a bill to classify lynching as a federal crime. The 1922 Dyer Bill defined lynching as an "assemblage composed of three or more persons acting in concert for the purpose of depriving any person of his life without authority of law."[45] While the Dyer Bill encapsulated what the NAACP had been working towards, others, such as the *New York Times* refuted the premise of the bill and the act of lynching itself. According to one reporter, "lynchings in the South do not usually occur to 'prevent the commission of some actual or supposed public offense.' They follow, rather, some offense – or there would be no reason for lynching."[46] Some white Americans saw lynchings as justified punishments for Black criminals or as preventative measures for Black criminal behavior. However, the House of Representatives disagreed.

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, NAACP leaders and their allies amplified their legislative battles with little immediate reward. The Association's main goal empha-

39. Zangrando, *NAACP Crusade*, 31.
40. Giddings, *Ida*, 558.
41. Giddings, *Ida*, 558.
42. Zangrando, *NAACP Crusade*, 42.
43. "Rape is not the Reason," *Crisis*.
44. "Rape is not the Reason."
45. Ernest Harvier, "Political Effect of the Dyer Bill: Delay in Enacting Anti-Lynching Law Diverted Thousands of Negro Votes," *New York Times*, July 9, 1922.
46. Harvier, "Political Effect of the Dyer Bill."

sized, in court, that the federal government, not the states, should handle murder charges. On January 26, 1922, the Dyer Bill passed in the House 231 votes to 119. Shortly after, the NAACP proclaimed that the House passage was "one of the most significant steps ever taken in the history of America," but that "the fight is not yet over."[47] The Senate's eventual filibuster in July validated their hesitation to celebrate.

In 1935, inspired by their attempt, New York Senators Edward Costigan and Robert Wagner proposed their version of a federal anti-lynching bill. With a different approach, Costigan and Wagner argued that lynching was "responsible for the loss of American prestige abroad."[48] Additionally, the NAACP proposed amended versions of the Dyer Bill again in 1937 and 1940. Ultimately, House passage did not outweigh the power of the Senate filibuster (or the threat of one) in all four attempts.[49] Although the NAACP's legislative battle was not entirely successful, the Association "had taken a civil rights measure farther through the legislative process than ever before."[50]

Amid multiple developing anti-capitalist movements, the CPUSA established its own Left-Wing movement in 1919 to combat racial inequality. Former Socialist Party members like Benjamin Gitlow and John Reed founded the CPUSA after disputes over the "Negro question." In his book, Gitlow referenced one instance that introduced racial discrimination as the dividing piece for members. In 1919, a Black cigar maker in New York refused to strike with his local chapter because they did not allow African American workers to join their union.[51] For Gitlow, racial discrimination was another layer of oppression that capitalism forced on American workers. Conflicting members demanded Gitlow's expulsion for "defending scabbing."[52] The refusal of the Socialist Party to recognize racial discrimination as an extension of capitalism frustrated Gitlow. As a result, he argued that, for workers to succeed, the agenda of the Communist Party must address the issues the Socialist Party had failed to recognize.[53] In this way, Gitlow and Reed provided another outlet for Black workers to advocate their frustrations with the underlying racist sentiments built into the capitalist system.

In the context of the Black freedom struggle, the CPUSA supplied African Americans with an activist organization that exposed both class and racial divisions in their anti-lynching crusade. During the 1920s and 1930s, the CPUSA challenged the NAACP's upper-class favoritism and its attempts to work within the broken system. To the CPUSA, "legislatures and courts were simply the faulty mechanisms of a corrupt, capitalist system, and were to be used as forums to discredit that system."[54] CPUSA activists believed that, to generate meaningful change and success, they had to first disrupt the status quo of capitalism. Moreover, they believed that the NAACP's gradual legislative battle to pass a federal anti-lynching bill supported the upper class and sustained a racist, classist system. The most significant point of difference between the Association and the Party was that the CPUSA's ideology countered the capitalist system entirely. The Party held anti-capitalist, anti-racist,

47. "Negroes Here Hail Victory: Call Passage of Dyer Bill One of the Biggest Events in Our History," *New York Times*, January 27, 1922.

48. "Lynch Evil Worse than Communism, Senate Told," *Chicago Defender*, February 23, 1935.

49. Zangrando, *NAACP Crusade,* 19.

50. Zangrando, *NAACP Crusade,* 71.

51. Benjamin Gitlow, *I Confess: The Truth About American Communism* (New York, E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1939), 14-15.

52. Gitlow, *I Confess*, 15.

53. Gitlow, *I Confess*, 13.

54. Zangrando, *NAACP Crusade,* 94.

and anti-classist sentiments that promoted a multiracial workers' movement and demanded immediate redress. The party used rallies, demonstrations, and telegrams to effectively disseminate their inclusive message.

Grounded in Marxist ideology, the "comrades all" CPUSA exercised a double purpose: dismantle capitalism and expose delusive contributing factors to racism.[55] The CPUSA established the American Negro Labor Congress (ANLC) in 1925, which published a pamphlet, *Lynch Justice at Work*, that depicted the NAACP as the "misleaders of the Negro masses" and challenged their true biracial identity.[56] According to historian Robert L. Zangrando, "[i]n 1928, the CP-USA, pursuing a strategy charted in Moscow, turned to the creation of dual organizations to intimidate, immobilize, or displace the NAACP, the Urban League, and other agencies that the party could neither capture not control."[57] While the Party believed that an effective organization should pursue both a legislative defense team and on-the-ground protests, the impact of the Red Scare imposed serious obstacles. As early as 1928, the Black press revealed that some Americans and government officials charged American Communists with fake allegations while they distributed anti-lynching flyers in Texas.[58] Due to the Party's "foreign-language ideology" and its recognition of discrimination based on race *and* class, the CPUSA's explicit attacks on other civil rights organizations increasingly caught attention from the government.[59]

The CPUSA worked tirelessly to build a coalition that corrected the NAACP's shortcomings. In the same year as the ANLC, the Party developed their legal union, the International Labor Defense (ILD) as the legal backdrop to local protests throughout the US. In response to the NAACP's investigative journalism interrogations, the ILD conducted their own investigations of lynching to defend the victims of mob violence.[60] In this way, the CPUSA started a justice movement that placed the working class at the center of their struggle to expose and condemn both American democracy and capitalism.

Reflective of the Party's message, the Black press interpreted the CPUSA as a social movement for the common person. In July of 1928, the CPUSA denounced lynchings as they comprised the "true nature" of American society.[61] In their statement, the Party acknowledged those who attended public lynchings were often businessmen, city officials, physicians, lawyers, school heads, and church leaders. In doing so, the CPUSA revealed how lynchings and other forms of mob violence were common practices of the "extra-legal counterpart" of the American judicial system.[62] More importantly, the CPUSA argued that lynching "purposely maintained by wealthy rulers of America," which divided and exploited the working class.[63] The Party's anti-imperialist and anti-classist approach appealed to a wider audience, the multi-racial working class. The next decade experienced a wide array of public demonstrations with underlying communist-affiliated principles.

In the 1930s, the CPUSA organized several anti-lynching demonstrations, two of

55. Gitlow, *I Confess,* 215.

56. Zangrando, *NAACP Crusade,* 94.

57. Zangrando, *NAACP Crusade,* 94.

58. "Fine Communists for 'Justice Activities," *Pittsburgh Courier*, November 17, 1928.

59. John Reed and Benjamin Gitlow, "Letter of John Reed and Ben Gitlow in New York to the Labor Committee of the Left Wing National Conference, August 13, 1919," *Comintern Archive*. https://www.marxists.org/archive/reed/1919/leftwing.htm.

60. "Decry Lynching of Pullman Porter," *New York Amsterdam News*, April 16, 1930.

61. "U.S. Communist Party Denounces Lynchings," *Pittsburgh Courier*, July 28, 1928.

62. "U.S. Communist Party Denounces Lynchings."

63. "U.S. Communist Party Denounces Lynchings."

which highlighted law enforcement's fear of multiracial organizing. In New York in May of 1930, the CPUSA organized over 300,000 white, Black, Japanese, Chinese, and Indian workers to march against imperialism, unemployment, lynching, police brutality, and wage cuts.[64] The *Pittsburgh Courier* reported armed policemen formed a wall to prevent additional participants and apprehended protestors on their way to find refreshments or restrooms.[65] This demonstration unraveled police brutality and hostility towards Communists and, more generally, protestors. The CPUSA also reported a twofold increase in reported lynchings from 1929 to 1930. This astounding increase instigated the construction of the Livingstone Memorial Hospital, dedicated to treating African American victims of racial violence.[66] The Party responded by inviting more members to join in their efforts for united resistance. Utilizing the agency of its members, he ANLC pledged "to do all in its power" to mobilize workers to combat lynching and racial discrimination.[67] To CPUSA members, large public protests evoked state acknowledgement, while a cumulative effect of daily acts of self-determination restructured power relations at the local level.[68]

Although other organizations held different perspectives on how to approach lynching, many reprimanded the judicial system and supported the CPUSA's call to restructure the capitalist system. In 1931, the Tuskegee Institute created a map and chart that illustrated reported lynchings by state and counties from 1900-1931. Although the majority of reported lynchings occurred in southern states like Georgia, Mississippi, and Louisiana, local protests across the nation iterated that lynchings were not only a regional issue.[69] Ohio, for example, was not located in the South, yet the *Cleveland Call and Post* reported lynch victims and protests. Another organization not directly affiliated with the CPUSA, the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, issued a case study of lynches from 1931-1936 which illustrated that most lynch victims were accused of minor crimes or were completely innocent.[70] The Commission demanded more adequate police reports, stronger jails, trials, and a removal of community involvement in determining punishment for cases. Together, the respectable Tuskegee Institute and the Commission on Interracial Cooperation inadvertently supported the anti-capitalist nature of the CPUSA. Although part of their goal was to demolish the capitalist system, which included the criminal justice system, the Party's biggest success derived from their judicial presence.

The CPUSA's actions in the Scottsboro court case best represented the Party's philosophy and perceptions. The Scottsboro boys were nine African Americans, aged between 13 and 19, accused of raping two white women on a train in Alabama in March of 1931. For the legal divisions of the NAACP and the CPUSA, the Scottsboro boys' cases exemplified mob atmosphere, denial of counsel, and exclusion of Black participation in their juries.[71] However, the ILD was the first of the two to take on the case. It was not until the Scottsboro boys and their parents paid tribute to the ILD's defense that the NAACP appointed Stephen Roddy as their lead defense attorney. Although "no Negro organization in America had the power, ability, and

64. "Millions March Against Imperialism," *Pittsburgh Courier*, May 10, 1930.

65. "Millions March Against Imperialism."

66. "Communists Here Score Lynching," *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 23, 1930.

67. "Communists Here Score Lynching."

68. Robin Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 8.

69. *Lynchings by States and Counties in the United States: 1900-1931*. Map. New York: American Map Company, 1931. From Library of Congress, Map Collections. https://www.loc.gov/item/2006636636/.

70. "Interracial Commission Issues Lynching Report," *Pittsburgh Courier*, March 21, 1936.

71. Hugh T. Murray Jr. "The NAACP versus the Communist Party: The Scottsboro Rape Cases, 1931-1932," *Phylon* 28, no. 3 (1967): 286.

respectability of the NAACP," most of the Scottsboro parents favored the ILD's defense, which caused the NAACP to withdraw in January of 1932.[72] This became a significant victory for the CPUSA at a point where most people, including the NAACP, claimed that the ILD "sought to sacrifice the young Negroes to martyrdom for the cause of communist propaganda."[73] Characteristic of their methods, the CPUSA, like the NAACP, believed in providing a concrete defense in the courtroom, but unlike the NAACP, the ILD also believed that rallies, demonstrations, and telegrams were equally essential to the long-term effects of changing the capitalist system.[74] In the end, the US Supreme Court ruled the defendants had been denied due process of law. While it is nearly impossible to determine implicit intentions of the ILD, their involvement with the Scottsboro cases saved the lives of nine young boys, opened new avenues of protest, and ignited mass action on behalf of Black civil rights.[75]

Building off the Scottsboro platform, CPUSA members outlined their ideology in pamphlets and articles. In their pamphlet, Harry Haywood and Milton Howard argued white members of the ruling class lynched Black workers to prevent opposition to their blatant exploitation of African Americans. According to Haywood and Howard, the state and federal governments protected these hideous crimes, ruling class propaganda perpetuated the environment in which they took place, and NAACP "race leaders" nurtured lynchings since their organization did not confront the system head-on.[76] Haywood and Howard also denied faith in anti-lynching laws because states that adopted them did not enforce them. While Georgia, for example, had passed an anti-lynching law in 1893, reports found at least 600 lynchings since its instigation.[77] ILD lawyer, Albert Goldman, echoed their empty faith in anti-lynching bills. He argued that, in addition to lack of enforcement, Northern Democrats had only introduced the 1935 Wagner-Costigan bill to secure the Black vote.[78] For Goldman, the bill's failure to punish mob members suggested as much. Three-time Vice Presidential candidate and CPUSA member, James Ford reiterated Haywood, Howard, and Goldman's sentiments, but offered the Party as an outlet for activism. He stated the CPUSA "organizes active struggles to change the daily life of the Negro people. It bases its policy on a program of unity of white and Negro people, and indeed, by white workers standing at the head of the struggle for equal rights for Negroes, for complete equality, and against lynching and oppression."[79] In his appeal for a different kind of democracy, "a democracy of the masses of the people," Ford foreshadowed an even larger movement in the late 1930s based on both the groundwork of the NAACP and CPUSA.[80]

As Cold War politics intensified, Black activists changed their organizations' dynamics. During the Cold War, the US imposed their liberating democratic image on other countries that sought world superiority with Communist systems, like China and the Soviet Union. In doing so, the US created both an international platform

72. Murray, "The NAACP versus the CP," 279.

73. Murray, "The NAACP versus the CP," 276.

74. Murray, "The NAACP versus the CP," 282.

75. Murray, "The NAACP versus the CP," 287.

76. Harry Haywood and Milton Howard "Lynching: A Weapon of National Oppression," *International Pamphlets* no. 25, (1932): 9-10.

77. Haywood and Howard, "Lynching," 12.

78. Albert Goldman, "Anti-Lynch Bill: A Speech I Did Not Deliver in the United States Senate," *Socialist Appeal* 2, no. 8 (February 1938): 4. https://www.marxists.org/history/etol/writers/goldman/1938/02/lynching.htm.

79. Ford, James. W., "Only A Complete Change of System Can Help Race in This Country, Says Ford," *The Chicago Defender* (1935): 9.

80. Ford, "Only A Complete Change," 9.

that supported democracy and incited a war on propaganda used by Black activists to exploit US race relations.[81] In 1937, the Council on African Affairs (CAA) led by Paul Robeson, Alphaeus Hunton Jr., and W.E.B. DuBois, represented the transformation of Black nationalism to Black *inter*nationalism. The CAA confirmed that as early as the 1930s, African Americans linked local Jim Crow manifestations to a global struggle by highlighting components of racist shared history of oppressed peoples everywhere: slavery, colonialism, and imperialism.[82] Black internationalists posed lynching as the largest contradiction to American democracy. The greatest threat, however, was the pervading anti-communist movement.

In response to the Red Scare, the CPUSA attempted to reassure the American people with hopes of retaining a large level of support throughout the war. By 1947, journalists, government officials, and other activists attacked the CPUSA daily. The CPUSA declared, again, that the real target was the faulty version US officials portrayed of communism, not the institution itself.[83] Never advocating for the use of violence or force, the Party's demands entailed a "higher standard of living for the people."[84] Party members' highest loyalty rested on the working class and *all* people of America. In fact, they addressed that 15,200 American Communists served in all branches of the US military, which, to Party members, signaled their commitment to their homeland. Even though the CPUSA directly stated their intentions, the US image transcended a global anti-communist movement that halted most Black internationalist organizations and activists. Ultimately, the NAACP and the CPUSA carried out different agendas with similar, insufficient results. Nevertheless, they inspired future transnational activists in the years to follow.

**1947-1970: Black Activism and Cold War Ideology**

During the Cold War, the military and political relations between the US and Soviet Union harassed many activist voices as "politics were likened to communism and activists were harassed into silence."[85] Despite this, a handful of Black internationalists managed new ways to broadcast the global anti-racist and anti-colonialist message. Inspired by his long family history of activism, Robert Franklin Williams exposed white supremacy as detrimental to the image of American democracy. Robert grew up in a family that practiced "long-standing traditions of resistance to white supremacy."[86] The Williams family prepared him for necessary forms of everyday acts of resistance: a grandfather who organized and wrote for a Black activist newspaper that advocated for the importance of Black registered voters, a grandmother who ingrained the importance of reading current events, which he claimed, politicized him, a WWI veteran uncle who instilled the belief that American democracy did not benefit Blacks, and a passive aggressive father who walked the "race line" while self-armed.[87] Very early in his life Robert identified various measures and structures,

81. Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image in American Democracy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000), 48.

82. Penny Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 22.

83. "Communists Answer Critics," *Washington Post*, January 21, 1947.

84. "Communists Answer Critics."

85. Denise Lynn, "Confronting Reactionaries: Black Support for the Progressive Party During the Cold War," *Black Perspectives*. African American Intellectual History Society. Accessed May 5, 2020. https://www.aaihs.org/the-progressive-party-multiracial-coalitions-and-progressive-politics/.

86. Timothy Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 9.

87. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie*, 26-29, 51-53.

like legal lynchings and democracy, that tried to take away his Black "sense of self."[88] More importantly, Robert identified ways to combat oppressive institutions.

Born and raised in Monroe, North Carolina, Robert was one of many Black activists of the 1950s and 1960s who grew up listening to family stories of the so-called heyday lynching era. Lessons from his astute family, his service in the Marine Corps, and the legacies of racial violence inherently influenced the formation of his political ideology. Robert experienced the intense American racism as a solider in the segregated military, a supposedly honorable veteran who returned to hostile conditions, and as a citizen who stumbled upon race riots. In addition, lynch mobs in North Carolina, like the Ku Klux Klan, murdered more than sixty Blacks from 1900-1943. After he returned from the Marine Corps in 1945, Robert joined the NAACP where he questioned who American democracy chose to liberate. Robert's own activism, however, truly began after the Montgomery Bus Boycott Ruling.[89]

The 1956 Supreme Court ruling of *Browder v Gayle*, a product of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, symbolized the most significant legislative victory of non-violent practice. After the court ruled segregation on buses unconstitutional, Robert realized "it would take more than court decisions to change their condition."[90] Despite years of activism and legal victories, Robert – among many African Americans – no longer embraced electoral politics as his weapon of choice in their seemingly endless battles against racial injustice.[91] Due to his status within the Monroe chapter of the NAACP, members elected Robert as president in 1956. Very quickly, Robert recruited militant former soldiers with the hope to combat the 7,500 Klan supporters out of 12,000 Monroe residents.[92] Adding to Robert's indignation, the local court acquitted a white man for beating and attempting to rape a pregnant Black woman, which meant according to Mabel, Robert's wife and fellow activist, the law had "declared open season on [B]lack women;" this event thrusted Robert to a fully-fledged armed self-defense movement.[93] By 1957, the National Rifle Association granted Robert and his newly founded rifle club, the Black Armed Guard, a charter.[94] Through the Black Armed Guard, Robert and other leaders armed and trained Monroe residents in self-defense or to be "on call" in case trouble ensued in their communities. The Black Armed Guard, however, did not have the appropriate weapons to defend two boys charged with rape in October 1958.

Robert's "one-man press office" in the "Kissing Case" revealed his multidimensional activism and ideological rift from the NAACP.[95] In 1958, the Monroe police department charged David Simpson and Hanover Thompson (aged seven and nine respectively) for raping two white girls of similar ages. Robert could not fathom that two prepubescent boys had intentions to rape. After speaking to the boys, Robert concluded the alleged rape was a harmless game of "Cowboys and Indians" with the girls.[96] One of the girls, Sissy Sutton, recognized Thompson, as he was her old playmate, and kissed him. Despite other NAACP members who refused to defend

88. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* 29.

89. Robert F. Williams, *Negroes with Guns* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1973), 49.

90. John Henrik Clark's introduction quoted in Williams's *Negroes with Guns*, 1.

91. Tomiko Brown-Nagin, *Courage to Dissent: Atlanta and the Long History of the Civil Rights Movement* (Oxford, University of Oxford Press, 2011), 53.

92. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*, 54.

93. Mabel Williams interview recorded in *Negroes with Guns: Rob Williams and Black Power*, directed by Sandra Dickson and Churchill Roberts, 2004. Documentary film. California Newsreel, 2005.

94. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*, 57.

95. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* 92.

96. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*, 58.

the "Kissing Case" boys, or how they called it, a "sex case," Robert sought to free the boys from jail and bring them home.[97] After a picture of the boys leaked and captured global attention, American media pressured the NAACP to intervene in December. Global outrage, particularly from 15,000 students who signed a petition in Rotterdam, Holland, pressured President Eisenhower to release the children on February 13, 1959.[98] The media consistently accused Robert of being a Communist and failed to report the overwhelming injustices the case unraveled, which hardened Robert's and Mabel's distrust in the American media. Although Robert showed the importance of both armed self-defense and legislative battles to the Black freedom struggle, uninformed articles convinced him that one of Black Americans' most immediate needs was "better communication within the race."[99]

Robert's split with the NAACP coincided with his strengthened armed self-defense movement. After the "Kissing Case," in 1958, Robert stated: "[T]he Negro in the South cannot expect justice in the courts. He must convict his attackers on the spot. He must meet violence with violence, lynching with lynching."[100] Once national newspapers reprinted this statement, the NAACP suspended Robert from office. In response, Robert and Mabel co-founded *The Crusader* a newspaper that examined oppression and racism from a global perspective. The first issue of *The Crusader* came off the press on June 26, 1959. To Mabel and Robert, the "mainstream [B]lack media failed to connect U.S. [B]lack resistance to anticolonial and anti-imperialist efforts abroad."[101] In the heightened Cold War era, "overt white supremacy became an increasingly unaffordable embarrassment for the federal government."[102] *The Crusader* attracted the attention of politicians including Attorney General Robert Kennedy who placed blame on Monroe residents for damaging perceptions of US democracy.[103] To local officials, *The Crusader* infiltrated political influence and the primary conspirator had to be removed.

During their eight-year self-exile, Robert and Mabel promoted Black culture and reinforced a global struggle against white supremacy through their independent media. According to Robert, the night before they left the country, a riot took place on his neighborhood block. His neighbors spotted a white couple, the husband a known Klansman, driving with a banner around their car that read, "Open Season on Coons."[104] The banner indicated it was lynch "season," which infuriated the entire community. The next day, on August 27, 1961, NAACP and Black Armed Guard members who manned the defense line around Robert's house brought the white couple into Robert's backyard, intending to kill them. Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Stegall followed Robert into his house wherein Williams received death threats from the local police department and other anonymous white mob members who accused him of kidnapping the couple.[105] That day, Robert, Mabel, and their two sons self-exiled to Canada, Cuba, China, and finally Tanzania.

Throughout their exile, Robert and Mabel identified "mutual experiences with

97. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*, 59; Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie*, 92.
98. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*, 61.
99. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*, 66.
100. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*, 63-65.
101. Robeson Frazier, *The East is Black: Cold War China in the Black Radical Imagination* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 122-123.
102. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* 88.
103. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*, 73.
104. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*, 85.
105. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*, 86-88.

global white supremacy."[106] Robert stated, "we will further identify our struggle for liberation with the struggle of our brothers in Africa, and the struggle of the oppressed of Asia and Latin America."[107] To Robert, anti-Black violence was not exclusively a Monroe problem or an American problem; Robert understood that there were other oppressed groups across the globe who also contested colonialism, imperialism, and racism. Robert's media aimed to attract such an audience. In addition to publishing *The Crusader*, Robert and Mabel developed a free radio station, *Radio Free Dixie*, which broadcasted music, literature, and commentary that "no other American media dared broadcast."[108]Attentive to reporting racial violence everywhere, *The Crusader* and *Radio Free Dixie* compared the ugliness of Jim Crow politics to the synthetic image of American democracy. "The Achilles' heel of the U.S. Cold War strategy of global power was Jim Crow segregation and anti-Black violence in the United States."[109] Robert's media opened a new gateway that highlighted the flaws in American democracy. The Black Panther Party (BPP) wanted the same.

Inspired by the Robert's activism and ideology in the late-1960s, some Black activists turned to China and Maoist teachings for political refuge. While on their visit to China, former NAACP leader W.E.B. Du Bois and his wife Shirley Du Bois experienced the rise of the Chinese Communist Revolution. They asserted this revolution "was an extension of a long history of anticapitalist and antiracist struggles," which seemed all too familiar to the couple as lynchings and mob violence devastated African Americans every day.[110] As racial violence amplified the inadequate of treatment of Black Americans, journalist William Worthy also turned to China to understand a foreign paradigm that did not depend on the subjugation of Blacks. His interview of three Black prisoners of the Korean War instilled the notion that China provided a safer place for Blacks to live, educate themselves, and exercise political autonomy. Moreover, Worthy illustrated US globalism after he praised China and exposed the US travel ban's limitations on free thought.[111] In a different light, American teacher Vicki Garvin developed a Maoist pedagogy that instilled Chinese communism in Chinese classrooms and everyday practices for Chinese youth. Garvin exemplified an American educator who constructed Maoist teachings in an accessible manner. The Du Boises, Worthy, and Garvin represented Black internationalist Americans who turned to China's example in their struggle against the failures of American democracy.

The Williamses, the Du Boises, and Worthy's trips to China resonated with founding members of the BPP. For Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, removing capitalism from the center of American life was the unifying measure between Black radicals and Chinese leadership. In its premature Black Panther Party for Self-Defense stages, Newton and Seale orchestrated heavily armed public protests wearing easily identifiable uniforms to captivate a wide audience and recruit members.[112] The BPP's flashy guns were simply a recruitment tactic to attract members towards their more important foundation, their anti-capitalist ideologies based on Robert's 1962 book, *Negroes with Guns*, Franz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, and Mao Zedong's speech-

106. Frazier, *The East is Black,* 89.
107. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*, 109.
108. *Negroes with Guns.*
109. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* 31.
110. Frazier, *The East is Black*, 40.
111. Frazier, *The East is Black*, 106-107.
112. Sean Malloy, *Out of Oakland: Black Panther Party Internationalism During the Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017), 23-24.

es in his "Little Red Book."[113] Anti-colonialism was as equally important as guns or Black berets to the BPP's identity.[114] In the context of the Black freedom movement during the Cold War era, the BPP expanded Robert's ideas and organized anti-poverty campaigns. Although Stokely Carmichael and Willie Ricks started chants of "Black Power" in 1966, most elements were already in place and "woven into the very fabric of African American culture in the South."[115]

Black internationalists in the mid-twentieth century established a global anti-racist and anti-capitalist movement, but US policy in the 1970s halted progress. In 1969, Robert returned to the US without a prominent leader of the Black Power movement he set in motion.[116] In the 1970s, Black radicals and US policy distanced themselves from China. While the world turned anti-Communist, China turned anti-capitalist, which ended China's anti-racist solidarity that attracted so many Black radicals in years prior.[117] By 1970, Black internationalists faced even more difficulties. Most organizations who continued their fight localized their efforts. Although the Cold War politics of the 1970s overshadowed Black resistance, it is still significant to listen to Black voices. According to Robert's biographer, Timothy Tyson, both Williams's "victories and his defeats reveal the central importance of the Cold War to the African American freedom movement, giving Black Southerners leverage to redeem or repudiate American democracy in the eyes of the world."[118] Robert's ideological reaction to American complacency with lynching and mob violence made him one of the most prominent figures of the Black Power movement.

## Conclusion

The origins of anti-lynching protests connect a long history of African Americans who challenged white supremacy with different tools of armed self-defense. Organizations built upon the work of earlier activists to improve, reimagine, and enhance their demands for economic and racial equality. Through investigative journalism, Ida B. Wells first brought attention to the horrors of lynching to both a domestic and international audience. Inspired by Wells's attempts, the NAACP pursued steady legislative attacks and the CPUSA organized diverse workers for rallies and protests in large numbers. While their agendas differed, both organizations sought to transform the root causes of Black oppression. Yet, when these legislative efforts failed, Robert F. Williams advocated for armed self-defense and the adoption of communist- influenced ideology as a solution to systematic racism.

As a whole, the lynching epidemic influenced the ideologies of activist, essentially making them anti-lynching activists. Yet, the collective work of anti-lynching activists forced all Americans, whether they protested, kept quiet, or participated in lynchings, to realize that lynching was a "recurring phenomenon [that] jeopardized everything that Americans professed to honor – individualism, fair play, justice, law and order, the Judeo-Christian ethic, the right of personal security, democracy itself."[119] In order to demolish the institution that sustained mob violence, Black activists turned to organizations with different approaches. According to Williams, "People want to be

113. *Negroes with Guns.*
114. Malloy, *Out of Oakland*, 9.
115. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie*, 225.
116. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie*, 9.
117. Frazier, *The East is Black,* 209.
118. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* 9.
119. Zangrando, *NAACP Crusade,* 210.

liberated when they are oppressed. No matter where the leadership comes from."[120] While US policy practiced democracy, since the 1880s, Black activists from various organizations and methodologies questioned how truly liberating American democracy was for *all* people on local, national, and global scales.

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120. Williams, *Negroes with Guns,* 118.

# "Smash the Status Quo": Punk and Cultural Revolution In Cold War Los Angeles

## Antonio Flores

**Abstract:** In the late 1970s, a new alliteration of punk flooded the streets of Los Angeles and quickly spread into Southern California's conservative suburbs. LA punk's disdain of Cold War social norms shocked suburban communities that had a generation earlier become a major core of the ascendant New Right. However, until recently, the Los Angeles punk scene has been treated as an offshoot of the New York and London punk scenes. Upon closer examination, the scene had its own genesis rooted in Cold War Los Angeles's dynamic culture. This paper seeks to historicize the movement by comparing song lyrics, band interviews, and fanzine editorials with the sociocultural reality that produced one of the most segregated regions in America. Surprisingly, their antiauthoritarian backlash was more than generational rebellion. Young LA punks internalized the libertarianism of Southern California's suburbs and forged an identity committed to self-reliance and expression, and in the process, created a space in Los Angeles where young Californians could freely express themselves.

I'm not anti-society, society's anti-me
I'm not anti-religion, religion is anti-me
I'm not anti-tradition, tradition is anti-me
I'm not anti-anything, I just wanna be free
Fascist state, no freedom
Unless you control yourself
Use self-expression, lose your freedom
You're undesirable, you go straight to jail.[1] - Suicidal Tendencies

On Hollywood Boulevard, before city revitalization efforts and media campaigns transformed the run-down sidewalks between the Walk of Fame and Chinese Theater into a tourist destination, a run-down nightclub beneath the Pussycat Theater became a welcome space for Angelinos looking to escape the doldrums of 1970s America.[2] Inside Brendan Mullen's dilapidated Club Masque, in the shadow of a culturally schizophrenic Hollywood, young individuals indulged in an array of hedonistic activity. As a religious conservative movement propelled former California Governor Ronald Reagan to the presidency, an underground punk scene proliferated in Los Angeles that reverberated throughout America and forced Los Angeles authorities to take notice.

Following the collapse of the antiwar and civil rights movements, critical and exploratory music eroded into simple, homogenized music that prioritized monetary success over musical expression.[3] Although there were exceptions, the southern rock sound of the band Muscle Shoals dominated rock radio. For energetic suburban punks, the popularity of bands like the Eagles represented a gimmicky corporate takeover of rock. Young punks were correct; popular music in the 1970s emulated

1. Suicidal Tendencies, "Two Sided Politics," track 2 on *Suicidal Tendencies*, Frontier Records, 1983.

2. "The Masque: The Remains of LA's First Punk Club," *Atlas Obscura*, accessed March 15, 2020, https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/the-masque-los-angeles-california.

3. Brendan Mullen and Marc Spitz, *We Got the Neutron Bomb: The Untold Story of L.A. Punk: Trouble at the Riot House* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2001), 5.

the Christian conservative antiliberal reaction that followed the Vietnam War. American conservativism was expressed in music as feel good soft rock and pop ballads. For example, the biggest hit in the 1970s was Debby Boone's pop ballad "You Light up my Life" followed by Rod Stewart's "Tonight's the Night" and the Bee Gee's "Night Fever."[4] However, in late 1970s Los Angeles, an anti-corporate reactionary wave arrived wearing ripped blue jeans and drinking malt liquor.

Initially, music critics celebrated punk's energy and originality but as the culture wars continued, conservative critics focused their attention on the misogyny and violence associated with punk and hardcore. Following the Reagan presidency and the rise of identity politics, cultural critics began revisiting punk. Deconstructionists like Greil Marcus took a generic approach that avoided any historical analysis, leading to a shallow understanding of punk. By marginalizing punks they neglected critical voices and misrepresented antiauthoritarian bands like the Dead Kennedys by comparing them to neo-Nazis like the band Skrewdriver.[5]

In 2001, Brendan Mullen set out to clarify some of the misnomers about punk. With the help of music journalist Marc Spitz, *We Got the Neutron Bomb: The Untold Story of L.A. Punk* attempted to capture the scene by letting those involved tell their stories. Their stories reveal a narrative that contradicts the critical literature. Rather than a scene committed to nihilism and hedonism, punks in Los Angeles created a safe space for individuals to express themselves. It was hardly the skinhead utopia conservative critics wrote about but as Mullen and Spitz confessed, their oral history was incomplete.[6] More recently, scholars began reassessing punk's political and cultural contributions. Daniel Traber's "L.A.'s 'White Minority': Punk and the Contradictions of Self-Marginalization," examined punk's sociopolitical contributions in Southern California. By considering the self-marginalized identity most punks *chose* to live, Traber highlights the privilege and contradiction of shedding their middle-class identity. However, like Marcus, Traber problematizes punks. While acknowledging the political power of rejecting middle-class expectations, punks focus on individuality indicates a reluctance to shed their suburban ideology.[7] Traber concludes that the Los Angeles punk scene, rather than being the cultural revolution Mullen claims it to have been, was a regional phenomenon marked by suburban transplants unwilling to shed their suburban conservative culture. Unfortunately, Traber's and Marcus's conclusions have remained dominant. By acknowledging the culture that punks reacted to and the political discourse of the period, Traber introduced critical historical questions about the Los Angeles scene. Furthermore, by incorporating a spatial lens, Traber acknowledged what musicologists have long known, geographic space impacts musical syntax.[8]

Responding to Traber's evaluation, Sean Cullen's analysis of Black Flag's lyrics illuminates the influence Southern California's politics had on the band's lyrics. More importantly, his work marks a turning point. While Cullen agrees that elements of punk's conservative parent culture, namely attitudes toward "race, gender, and sexual identity" remained, by acknowledging the historical context of 1970s Southern

4. Fred Bronson, *The Billboard Book of Number One Hits* (New York: Billboard Book, 2003), 939.

5. Greil Marcus, "Crimes Against Nature," in *White Riot: Punk Rock and the Politics of Race*, ed. Stephen Duncombe and Tremblay Maxwell (New York: Verso, 2011), 81.

6. Mullen and Spitz, *Neutron Bomb*, xvi.

7. Daniel S. Traber, "L.A.'s 'White Minority': Punk and the Contradictions of Self-Marginalization," *Cultural Critique*, number 48 (Spring 2001).

8. See Andrew L. Cope, *Black Sabbath and the Rise of Heavy Metal Music* (Surrey En: Ashgate, 2010), for a discussion on space and musical syntax (36).

California, it becomes evident that punks challenged existing social norms.[9] While his study is foundational in punk's reassessment, the focus on musical syntax does not adequately explain how punks carved out a space in Los Angeles where young individuals could explore and express themselves sexually, intellectually, and politically.

In the shadow of Los Angeles's conservative corporate entertainment industry, surrounded by a growing Christian conservative movement, ethnically diverse and politically conscious bands challenged the conservative status quo. The need to express their dissatisfaction with American society exploded onto the Los Angeles underground as a new alliteration of punk emerged. While it shared the anti-patriarchal musical structure and appearance of the London and New York scenes, Los Angeles has its "own energy" influenced by Southern California's sociocultural reality.[10] As an early Black Flag roadie named Mugger remembers, the scene represented a "full on . . . suburbanite rebellion. People were saying 'fuck you' not only to these people that were trying to tell us what to do but to the establishment in general."[11] They were also influenced by a growing L.A. culture that explored dark themes and excess.

> And here we are in LA
> City Hall's falling down
> There is no escape
> When a class war comes to town
> Class War, Class war, Class war
> This war, that war, class war, last war.[12] - The Dils

Following the tumultuous 1960s, Hollywood studios] began exploring non-traditional narratives. Writers and directors began exploring broken characters, sexuality, and violence. If America disagreed with irreverent humor, gratuitous violence, and hedonism, it certainly did not show from their viewing habits.[13] As profits trickled down to the actors and writers, the Hollywood hills came alive with rumors of drug-fueled, sexually explicit parties. For example, Iggy Pop and Jack Nicholson pushed the limits of what was considered excessive. Although those parties were more myth than reality, while the profits continued, Los Angeles society tolerated musicians, writers, and artists to explore and indulge in formerly taboo behavior.[14] Young Southern Californians began revealing an undercurrent of resentment and anger towards the apparent hypocrisy within American society.

Coming of age in the 1970s, punks witnessed culture wars, political corruption, stagflation, deindustrialization, and a home-grown tax revolt that threatened to exacerbate California's already unequal public-school system. When the band, Dils sang "Class war's gonna be the last war" in 1977, they were fully conscious that the ongoing tax and supply-side debates were the culmination of a class war formulated

9. Shaun Cullen, "White Skin, Black Flag: Hardcore Punk, Racialization, and the Politics of Sound in Southern California," *Criticism* Vol. 58 no. 1 (Winter 2016), 60 - 63.

10. Stacy Russo, *We Were Going to Change the World: Interviews with Women from the 1970s and 1980s Southern California Punk Scene* (Solana Beach, CA: Santa Monica Press, 2017), 129.

11. Mullen and Spitz, *Neutron Bomb*, 193.

12. The Dils, "Class War," track 1 on *198 Seconds of The Dils*, Dangerhouse Records, 1977.

13. David A. Loehwing, "It's the Reel Thing: Motion Picture Producers are Making a Solid Comeback," *Barron's National Business and Financial Weekly,* January 24, 1972.

14. "Decade of Decadence: Nicholson, Polanski and Hollywood in the Seventies," *Independent*, October 2, 2009, accessed March 7, 2020, https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/features/decade-of-decadence-nicholson-polanski-and-hollywood-in-the-seventies-1796029.html; While sexual norms and obscenity laws came crashing down in the 1970s, the stories of extravagant, sex-filled parties, while true, have been greatly exaggerated.

during the New Deal.[15]

> In the end the good will go to heaven up above
> The bad will perish in the depths of hell.
> How can hell be any worse when life alone is such a curse?
> Fuck Armageddon, this is hell.[16] - Bad Religion

As the world settled into what historian Odd Arne Westad describes as a global system determined by an absolutist belief in a capitalist v. communist binary, Americans increasingly committed to a cultural identity defined by the Cold War.[17] Preachers and politicians, out of sincerity and cynicism, applied Cold War ideology to their sermons and rhetoric. To protect against this omnipresent threat, preachers waged a "spiritual war," while politicians systematically targeted any American they considered vulnerable to communist influence.[18] Their modern inquisition led to a mid-century Christian revival. By presenting Christianity and capitalism as requisites of American identity religious conservatives and politicians contributed to the religious patriotism that took hold during the Cold War. [19] Maybe nowhere was the commitment to God and country more evident than Southern California.

Religious patriotism flourished in the Southern California suburbs, as politicians, ministers, and community leaders preached middle-class conformity and the paradoxical need to protect America's liberal tradition by limiting American's freedom of expression. Yet, the same region that launched the Nixon and Reagan presidencies became the source of Southern Californian punk's anger. The dogmatic commitment to conformity led to a backlash.[20] But beyond being critical of the suburban life, punks also revealed a strong commitment to individualism and freedoms of speech and expression which were foundational ideals among conservatives. When Dez Cadena sang "I'm tied to a clock, and I can't get loose, I did this to myself, puts my brain right in a noose," he was targeting the monotonous existence of suburban life and work. He also revealed the internalized classical liberalism of the conservative suburbs.[21] Like suburban conservatives, punks believed that individual merit, not society, dictated success regardless of how much pressure world-historic moments placed on them.

Their belief in individual liberty, expression, and authenticity, often resulted in ridicule and violence.[22] Greg Graffin of Bad Religion remembers challenging social norms "was a huge threat to them...Maybe they believed it was a communist plot or Nazis returning — who knows."[23] Whether it was fear of subversion, or simply anger directed outwardly, the violence led to tribal behavior as punks increasingly saw themselves as othered. Punks embraced that role. As they understood, "jealous cow-

15. The Dils, "Class War," 1977; William Safire, "Republican Proxy War: Essay," *New York Times,* April 10, 1978.

16. Bad Religion, "Fuck Armageddon, This is Hell," track 5 on *How Could Hell be any Worse*, Epitaph Records, 1982.

17. Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War: A World History* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 2.

18. David Aikman, "How Billy Graham Killed Communism with Kindness," *Christianity Today*, accessed March 5, 2020, https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2018/billy-graham/.

19. US Congress, House of Representatives, To Reaffirm the Reference to One Nation Under God in the Pledge of Allegiance, 107th Congress, 2d session, 2002, H. Rept. 107-659, *Congress.Gov*, https://www.congress.gov/ congressional-report/107th-congress/house-report/659/1; "History of 'In God We Trust'," U.S. Department of the Treasury, https://www.treasury.gov/about/education/Pages/in-god-we-trust.aspx.

20. Keith Morris, interview by Brenden Mullen, *Neutron Bomb*, 194.

21. Black Flag, "Clocked In (Dez Cadena Version)," track 10 on *The First Four Years*, SST Records, 1983.

22. Steven Blush, *American Hardcore: A Tribal History*, 2nd ed. (Port Townsend WA: Feral House, 2010), 27.

23. Blush, *American Hardcore*, 26.

ards try to control" and as a result, attracting conflict became a sign of authenticity.[24]

She had to leave
Los Angeles
All her toys wore out in black and her boys had too
She started to hate every nigger and Jew
Every Mexican that gave her lotta shit
Every homosexual and the idle rich.[25] - X

In 1977, record producer and band manager Kim Fowley, famous for putting together The Runaways, a teenage girl group that he confessed fulfilled men's desire for an underage fantasy, expressed revulsion with the nascent punk scene in Los Angeles. The "suburban refugee…fuckboys" as he called them, had overrun Los Angeles with their "urine-stained, safety-pin-wearing" culture.[26] Mr. Fowley's vulgar opinions aside, Los Angeles did experience a dramatic demographic shift during the period. Between 1960 and 1980, Los Angeles's white population decreased by twenty-four percent. Racial tensions caused by the violent 1965 Watts Riots and inflated stories of Mexican "wetbacks" taking jobs, convinced many white families to seek shelter in the safety of the suburbs.[27] The white suburban migration out of the city resulted in higher taxes and anti-government resentment culminating with 1978 Proposition 13, decreasing property tax revenue by sixty percent.[28] The loss of tax revenue left many of Los Angeles's public institutions scrambling for money, while the loss of industry left infrastructure crumbling. The lack of conservative compassion convinced punks that mid-century conservatism's focus on classical liberalism and Christianity were covers for the possessive individualism and racist animosity of the conservative suburbs.[29]

It's about time, it's about space
It's about some people in the strangest places.[30] - X

Luckily for the emerging punk scene, white flight and deindustrialization coincided with a cultural revolution in Los Angeles, creating a refuge where young musicians could express their frustrations with society. In 1977, while looking for an affordable place to live and rehearse without police interference, Brendan Mullen stumbled into the abandoned basement of Cecil B. de Mille's former Hollywood headquarters. Eventually known as The Masque, Mullen's underground club became a refuge for musicians and artists looking to indulge in a bit of Hollywood hedonism.[31] Seven months after its opening, the city forced Mullen to close The Masque for lying on his permit application and code violations. However, in that short time, The Masque served as a transitory place where bands like X and Germs began shaping the Los

24. Black Flag, "Rise Above," track 1 on *Damaged*, SST Records, 1981.

25. X, "Los Angeles," track 6 on *Los Angeles*, Slash Records, 1980.

26. For a full account of Kim Fowley's behavior, see "Queens of Noise: The Rise of the Runaways," in Mullen and Spitz, *We Got the Neutron Bomb.*

27. Charles Hillinger, "Nearly 16,000 Illegal Aliens Deported in '67: Mexican Visitors Take L.A. County Jobs that could be Filled by U.S. Citizens," *Los Angeles Times*, February 4, 1968.

28. "Common Claims About Proposition 13," Legislative Analyst's Office Report, https://lao.ca.gov/ Publications/ Report/3497.

29. By midcentury, consumerism led to a political philosophy that resembled Lockean liberty but without the social obligation. C.B MacPherson termed this selfish form of liberalism, "possessive individualism."

30. X, "I Must Not Think Bad Thoughts," track 7 on *More Fun in the New* World, Elektra Records, 1983.

31. Mullen and Spitz, *Neutron Bomb*, 123-124.

Angeles punk scene.[32] The rise of punk was a direct rejection of corporate America.

During the 1970s, rock musicians, at least according to young punks, willingly gave up their personal agency to accommodate corporate label demands that emphasized mimicking established bands or prior hits. Corporate mergers allowed large labels to buy out small independent labels.[33] The oligopoly within the industry gave record labels extraordinary control over what bands get produced. The corporate obsession with profits further convinced punks that American ideals only served to maintain power. Billy Zoom of X remembers hating Peter Frampton, and Joey Ramone loathed the Eagles. Not because they were not talented, but because both Frampton and the Eagles succumbed to corporate demands.[34] However, musically, the 1970s were revolutionary. Musicians played with androgyny, challenged race and gender norms, and explored sexuality. East LA native Alice Bags experienced an epiphany listening to Elton John and David Bowie. Raised in a traditional Mexican working-class family, Bowie and John opened questions about her sexuality.[35] Furthermore, because Los Angeles was a major hub of glam rock, political and personal expression became common themes among the punk population. And therein lies the importance of the scene. It was more than teenage anger or hedonistic induced catharsis as many remember it. LA punk provided a space where individuals, regardless of musical talent, committed to an identity not rooted in class, race, gender, or political ideology but on individual liberty and freedom of expression.[36] In response to punk marginalization by corporate America punks became community oriented.

Punk's self-marginalized anti-bourgeois identity, what Daniel Traber defines as "sub-urban," was rejected by music labels and venues. Unable to perform punks experienced hunger and homelessness not known in the suburbs.[37] However, punks began exhibiting major tenets of conservative values. Self-reliance and a belief in individual freedom were hallmarks of the scene. They created mutual aid networks and anarchic communes throughout the LA region. They converted restaurants, empty houses, and in East LA, a self-help community center owned by the Los Angeles Archdiocese, into music venues.[38] The Hollywood-based band X and Chicano Plugs played at East LA's club Vex until the hardcore band Black Flag closed it down.[39] In Chinatown, at Madam Wong's and Hong Kong Café, fans could listen to East LA's Brats, the cult-like Germs, or Fear.[40] In the South Bay, an abandoned Baptist church famously depicted in Penelope Spheeris's controversial documentary *The Decline of Western Civilization,* now a posh eatery selling a punk culture experience while serving hundred-dollar glasses of wine, housed the homeless and an artist/musician studio that became home to Black Flag and drew suburban adolescent burnouts and refu-

32. "Concerts Set to Benefit the Masque Punk-Rock Theater," *Los Angeles Times,* February 06, 1978.

33. Harold Vogel, *Entertainment Industry Economics: A Guide for Financial Analysis,* 7th ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 230.

34. Mullen and Spitz, *Neutron Bomb*, 58 and 96.

35. Alice Bag, *Violence Girl: East L.A. Rage to Hollywood Stage: A Chicana Punk Story* (Port Townsend WA: Feral House, 2011), 80-81.

36. Julia Alsop and Isabela Raygoza, "Alice Bag: The Chicana Punk Who Rioted Before Riot Grrrl, "*Latino USA*," October 13, 2017, https://www.latinousa.org/2017/10/13/alice-bag-chicana-punk-rioted-riot-grrrl/.

37. Traber, "L.A.'s 'White Minority,'" 30-31.

38. Mullen and Spitz, *Neutron Bomb*, 246.

39. Nicholas Pell, "The Vex and Chicano Punk: A Very Brief History," *LA Weekly*, March 13, 2012, accessed March 20, 2020, https://www.laweekly.com/the-vex-and-chicano-punk-a-very-brief-history/; Mullen, "We Got the Neutron Bomb," 246-247.

40. "New Year's Eve in Chinatown," Plugz number 8, Archive, Madam Wong's, Los Angeles Area Hardcore and Punk Archive, https://lapunkandhardcore.wordpress.com/category/madame-wongs/; "Photos: Chinatown Wars, Madame Wong's And Hong Kong Café," *KCET*, June 30, 2010, https://www.kcet.org/shows/departures/photos-chinatown-wars-madame-wongs-and-hong-kong-café.

gees into the culture.[41]

> Bodies wasted in the street
> People dying on the streets
> But the suburban scumbags they don't care
> They just get fat and dye their hair
> I love living in the city.[42] - Fear

Locked out of traditional musical avenues forced punks to get creative. Led by their belief in freedom of expression and an entrepreneurial spirit inherited from years of conservative suburban life, punks created their own space within Los Angeles's entertainment industry. In 1977, the same year Mullen opened the Masque, the fanzine *Slash* began covering local shows and punk culture. "Born out of curiosity and out of hope," their antipatriarchal narratives appealed to young, disenchanted readers and spread the anti-authoritarian gospel of punk across the southland.[43] With an increased demand for content, musicians evaded corporate label conformist demands by printing their records independently.[44] A year after *Slash* began publishing, they began producing records. What might seem like an inconsequential move, labels like Slash, SST, and Dangerhouse broke the corporate stranglehold on music in Los Angeles.

With no corporate oversite, the Los Angeles scene flourished. Within their isolated underground community, punks drew on a never-ending source of material to cover Songs like "Los Angeles" and "White Minority" deconstructed and mocked cultural and libertarian arguments that rationalized white flight and white victimhood.[45] Others like "Gluttony" and "Moral Majority" attacked societies imposing standards of beauty and belief.[46] With simple songs, punks provided a mirror reflecting society's flaws. More importantly, they created a safe space, an atmosphere Greg Ginn described an environment where people could "think for themselves rather than just accept what they've been told."[47]

The extreme honesty, authenticity, and popularity of the LA punk scene shocked communities and city officials. Tattered clothes, safety pins, and colored hair became a uniform. Public intoxication and violence became common. Punk women challenged societal beauty standards by flashing sexuality that was both seductive and powerful.[48] By 1978, the city began targeting punks. Brendan Mullen's Masque was

41. Megan Koester, "You Can Eat Brunch in Black Flag's Old Practice Space (If You're Terrible)," *Vice*, December 24, 2013, accessed April 2, 2020, https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/exmn9e/you-can-eat-brunch-in-black-flags-old-practice-space-if-youre-terrible; Sam Gnerre, "The Church," *South Bay History*, November 10, 2010, http://blogs.dailybreeze.com /history/2010/11/10/the-church/?doing_wp_cron=1589066035.3943591117858886718750; *The Decline of Western Civilization*, directed by Penelope Spheeris (Spheeris Films, 1981). Punk musicians and Brendan Mullen objected to Spheeris' portrayal of punk culture. While Spheeris did focus on the destructive side of punk, it is was nonetheless part of the scene.

42. Fear, "I Love Living in the City," track 9 on *The Record*, Slash Records, 1982, originally recorded but unreleased in 1978.

43. "Editorial: So this is War Eh?," *Slash*, May 1977, 3, Circulation Zero Digital Archive, https://www.circulationzero.com/.

44. *American Hardcore: The History of American Punk Rock, 1980-1986*, directed by Paul Rachman (Sony Pictures, 2006).

45. X, "Los Angeles," 1980; Black Flag, "White Minority," track 3 on *Jealous Again*, SST Records, 1980.

46. The Bags, "Gluttony," track 13 on *The Decline of Western Civilization*, Slash Records, 1981; Circle Jerks, "Moral Majority," track 11 on *Wild in the Streets*, Step Forward Records, 1982.

47. Robert Hilburn, "Black Flag's Greg Ginn: Music for Inspiration," *Los Angeles Times*, June 16, 1981.

48. Kristine McKenna, "Female Rockers--A New Breed: Spotlighting Female Rockers," *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 1978, "Sound and Vision: Alice Bag," interview by Allison McCabe, *The Rumpus*, June 29, 2016, https://therumpus.net/2016/06/sound-vision-22-alice-bag/.

forced to close. Police harassment became constant. Greg Ginn accused the police of illegally tapping his phones.[49] On March 17, 1979, during a benefit concert to reopen the Masque, Los Angeles Police Department's infamous Rampart Division responded to a "life and death situation" at the MacArthur Park Elks Lodge.[50] After the Zeros and Go-Gos finished their sets, police in riot gear burst through the crowd kicking and hitting concertgoers. *Flipside* magazine claims that the police practiced riot control at punk shows by panicking concertgoers and beating them as they ran.[51] Due to their ethos of bearing witness, punks incorporated police violence into their lyrics. A decade before N.W.A's "Fuck the Police" exposed LAPD's racism to the MTV generation, Black Flag's "Police Story" captured the tribalism within the police force.[52]

By 1979 the constant police presence signaled the end of the early scene. Having introduced levels of violence despised by the punk crowd, the police pressured bands to look outside of the city for new venues. However soon a confrontational crowd became to the core of LA punks fanbase. These new "hardcore" fans remained committed to libertarian ideals and were willing to use violence, even against the police, to protect them.[53] While hardcore brought an end to the earlier punk scene, their resourcefulness and a commitment to freedom of expression and social commentary formed a connection between both communities. While the Los Angeles scene lamented the loss of their niche, printing their media and producing their music provided a blueprint for finding success outside of the music industry's demanding corporate structure. By the early 1980s, hardcore music had taken over the LA punk scene and spread across the US. However, the early, diverse community that had supported the LA scene was mostly gone.

> Well, things seem so much different now
> The scene died away
> I haven't got a steady job
> And I've still got no place to stay.[54] - Agent Orange

While punk music experienced a revival in the post-grunge era, the culture had gone mainstream. Music conglomerates made billions producing anti-authoritarian and anti-capitalist music and clothing. As Brendan Mullen points out, the commercialization of punk should not minimize its impact. After all, the original intention of the Los Angeles scene was to provide a space where individuals could express themselves with no care of society's behavioral standards.[55] Although the sound has changed, punk never set out to create a genre imprisoned by tradition, as DeeDee Ramone said of punk, "because it's not that civilized an art form. Punk rock comes

49. Michael Azerrad, *Our Band Could Be Your Life: Scenes from the Underground Indie Culture, 1981-1991* (New York: Back Bay Books, 2001), 21.

50. Robert Hilburn, "Police and Fans Disagree on Raid at Rock show: Concertgoers Outraged but LAPD Defends Tactics," *Los Angeles Times*, March 20, 1979, "Correspondence recounting a police invasion into a packed show at the Elks Lodge in 1979, known informally as the 'Elks Lodge Massacre,'" LSC Punk Archive. UCLA Library Special Collections. University of California, Los Angeles. https://www.library.ucla.edu/special-collections/discover-collections/collecting-areas/lsc-punk-archive.

51. Steven Blush, *American Hardcore: A Tribal History* (Port Townsend WA: Feral House, 2010), 41.

52. Black Flag, "Police Story," track 7 on *Damaged*, SST Records, 1981.

53. Bags, *Violence Girl*, 308.

54. Agent Orange, "Bloodstains," track 7 on *Living in Darkness,* Posh Boy Records, 1981.

55. Mullen and Spitz, *Neutron Bomb*, 164.

from angry kids who feel like being creative."[56] That attitude endures; it is found in fusion and hip hop and in outsider galleries across America that refuse to adhere to patriarchal forms of art.

Sadly, the anti-uthoritarian ethos of Los Angeles punk led many to self-destructive behavior that was interpreted as the manifestation of a lost generation unable to adhere to societal norms. However, by listening to their music their commitment to self-expression and freedom of speech provided a safe space for individuals fleeing repressive suburbs is evident.[57] Like Gorilla Rose said, "you could either be an asshole and stay Beach Boys…or you can start exploring alternative ideas. Start taking drugs. Start experimenting sexually."[58] Although musicians lamented the loss of their space they challenged an increasingly conservative America and provided like-minded individuals with a blueprint that should not be forgotten. After all, as Brendan Mullen pointed out, across America, punk, its style and attitude, has become acceptable, widespread, and commoditized.

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56. Mikal Gilmore, "The Curse of the Ramones: 40 Years Later: The Feuds Failures and Breakdowns of the Band that Launched Punk Rock," *Rolling Stone*, May 19, 2016, https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/the-curse-of-the-ramones-165741/.

57. Mullen and Spitz, *Neutron Bomb*, 164, 174.

58. Mullen and Spitz, *Neutron Bomb*, 164.

# The Mischief of Witchdoctors: Ritualists, Resistance, and Rebellion in Colonial Kenya 1932 – 1960

## Tim Anderson

**Abstract:** From 1952 to 1960 Kenya was embroiled in a revolutionary conflict pitting the British colonists against Kenya's largest ethnic group, the Kikuyu. During the Mau Mau Emergency drastic steps were undertaken and an estimated 1.5 million black Kenyans, approximately the entirety of the Kikuyu population plus some allies were incarcerated in concentration camps. This article traces the roots of the colonial reaction to 1932 and the exile of the Talai clan of witchdoctors using documents from the colonial government. Magic practitioners were subjected to laws defaming them as charlatans, thieves, and even foreigners through repurposed British laws to curtail their influence within the Kalenjin ethnic group. With their connections within the community, a revolutionary past, and contacts that linked them to massive operations that laundered cattle throughout the country and beyond, it was feared that if the witchdoctors chose to align with Mau Mau the war could get away from the British.

On October 9, 1952, Senior Chief Waruhiu wa Kungu's car was stopped by three men wearing British colonial police uniforms. One of the men leaned into the car and after confirming the Senior Chief's identity pulled out a pistol and shot him four times. The Senior Chief benefitted directly from his involvement with the colonial government, gaining access to land and labor that was most often reserved for whites. Waruhiu moved in the exclusive social circles of the Kenyan elite and had close ties to the archaeologist Louis Leaky and his family. As one of the most powerful Kikuyu elders, Waruhiu controlled vast swathes of formerly Kikuyu common land. He had recently been evicting Kikuyu squatters who had outlived their usefulness as mechanization made the need for laborers less necessary. Waruhiu acted as a conservative check on his community within colonial politics, opposing populist calls for land and labor reforms from radical and moderate Kikuyu voices.

The assassination of Senior Chief Waruhiu was a decisive factor in the Mau Mau Emergency of British colonial Kenya, one of the longest and bloodiest colonial revolutions in the history of Africa. The emergency lasted from 1952 to 1960 and pitted the British Empire against the Kikuyu, one of the largest ethnic groups in Kenya. According to estimates made by the historian Caroline Elkins, by the end of the Emergency the British had imprisoned up to 1.5 million people in various prisons, work, and "rehabilitation" camps, nearly the entire Kikuyu population.[1] The government sought to break the spirit of Mau Mau and make an example of the Kikuyu revolutionaries.

The Mau Mau Emergency was noted for its oathing ceremonies in which people would swear to protect the Kikuyu and their land from colonizers and their agents, such as Senior Chief Waruhiu wa Kungu. The oaths taken were believed to have the power of the Kikuyu creator god, Ngai behind them, with the power to kill any oath-breaker, whether they took the oath willingly or under coercion.[2] The inclusion of a spiritual element is not a rare occurrence among these movements having also been at the center of the Maji Maji Rebellion in German East Africa (modern day

1. Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005), xii – xv.
2. Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning,* 26-7.

Tanzania) and the Chimurenga wars in Southern Africa from 1896 to 1897 and 1966 to 1979. The spiritual beliefs of the Kikuyu were intertwined with their politics. The oaths taken by Mau Mau were a burgeoning nationalistic response to the continued political and legal erosion of their power by the British and collaborators such as Waruhiu. The oaths were a reaffirmation of faith and a rejection of the various denominations of Christianity forced on the Kikuyu by European missionaries.

The oathing ceremonies posed a direct political and cultural challenge to British hegemony. Most British believed in the supernatural only as far as it pertained to their Christian beliefs, anything else was atavistic and an impediment to the civilizing mission. With the rise of Mau Mau, the colonial government took stock of other sources of the supernatural that had been used to challenge their temporal hold on Kenya. In the decades previous, a group labeled as "witchdoctors" in western Kenya had also resisted British incursion, fomented rebellion, and chipped away at British hegemony. As the fighting with Mau Mau spread, government officials struggled to locate and monitor these witchdoctors who had been exiled to concentration camps far from others in the hopes of keeping them subdued.

There are many parallels and precedents that can be drawn between the Mau Mau Emergency and the imprisonment of Talai clan by German imperialists in 1934. Links to Nazi imprisonment of Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, and others can be made within Kenya, but legal and cultural precedents can be found more directly in the exile of witchdoctors serving the Kalenjin ethnic group. The British first used technocratic methods to maintain their hegemonic hold over the Kikuyu people, enacting laws and that criminalized witchcraft. Through these laws the colonizers sought to turn the public opinion of the Kalenjin against their spiritual leaders through collective punishments. The criminalizing of the Talai as well as Mau Mau created a legal and a corporal route for colonial administrators to deal with superstition and the supernatural as simple fraud. Colonial officials either created a "delinquent" class of spiritual criminals in the case of the Talai or allowed themselves to become further debased in their rejection of the civilizing mission in the case of Mau Mau.

Before beginning the analysis of Kikuyu witchdoctors and their roles in the Maua Mau Emergency language appearing in this paper must be defined. Early anthropologists and administrators were often cavalier in their understanding and use of "native" names and terms. The Kalenjin ethnic group occupies a swath of land bordering Lake Victoria in western Kenya that stretches north into south-eastern Uganda. It is composed of seven sub-groups of Nandi speaking peoples, the most important of which for this study are the Nandi and Kipsigis, also referred to as Lumbwa. These groups were primarily herds-people who also engaged in some small-scale subsistence farming. As the British conquered these groups in the early 20th century their traditional grazing lands were confiscated and sold to British settlers and the Kalenjin peoples moved onto nearby reservations. Following World Wars One and Two, these reservations were further cut up and sold or gifted to white veterans of those wars. The Talai clan was spread among these groups but maintained the most power among the Nandi and Kipsigis and furnished the Kalenjin with spiritualists, often referred to as witchdoctors in colonial discourse as the Orkoiik in plural or Orkoiyot in the singular. Further, confusion arises from the colonial archives as many anthropologists, legalists, and officials have conflated the term Orkoiik with the Maasai Laibon who served a similar role in that society. While G.W.B. Huntingford did make a case that there may be a distant relationship, this article will keep to the term

used by the Kalenjin.[3]

The Orkoiik were the spiritual leaders of Kalenjin society. They were diviners, rainmakers, cleansed bad witchcraft, as well as created and sold charms and talismans.[4] Their magical abilities were hereditary extending through the males of the bloodline however the son of an Orkoiyot may not be a favored heir without demonstrating an aptitude in those areas of magical importance. Lineage within the Talai clan is also a requirement, this meant that while there were other witches and witchdoctors operating within the Kalenjin society, they did not have the same level of importance as that of the Orkoiik of the Talai.

Arguably, the most important function of the Orkoiik, and what also distinguished them from other spiritualists in the community, was overseeing age-grade transitions, moving people into adulthood and other phases of life. Males about to enter the murran warrior age-set were expected to begin building a bride wealth of cattle. Whether this herd was gifted, loaned from family, or stolen from outsiders made little difference, but the Orkoiyot overseeing that age-set was expected to advise as to the best time and direct any cattle raiding that needed to take place. In return, they were given an offering of the spoils, adding to their own wealth and prestige in the process. The Orkoiik were thus an integral piece of the Kalenjin, keeping them safe from famine and drought and ushering its people through the rituals that bonded the society together.

## A History of Resistance

The history between the Kalenjin and the British is marked by several instances of organized resistance. Colonial anthropologist, G.W.B. Huntingford notes that the Orkoiyot Koitalel led the Nandi resistance efforts to the British between the years of 1896 and 1905, when Koitalel was likely assassinated during a peaceful meeting with British soldiers that turned violent. Huntingford's writings refer to the Nandi Orkoiik as "kings" and that the Nandi are under "witchdoctor-rule," representing the colonial misunderstanding of the place of the Orkoiik in Kalenjin society.[5] Assuming the Orkoiik were the leaders of Kalenjin, the British appointed them as local chiefs, a position they were purposely separated from normally. David Anderson suggests that Huntingford's source, an early ethnography of the Nandi written by Alfred Claude Hollis, was himself informed by the Orkoiik and brother of the deceased Koitalel, Kipchomber arap Koileke.[6] The expansion of their power in society led several of these newly appointed Orkoiik chiefs to abuse their power to enrich themselves and their families, it was only after orders from the colonial government continued to be ignored that the British realized they had made a mistake.[7]

The Orkoiik were again at the center of Nandi resistance following World War One. The Soldier Settlement scheme led to further land alienation, new settlers, and pressure for farm labor by the colonial government. One-hundred acres of land totaling about a seventh of the Nandi reserve was set aside for white veterans of the

3. G. W. B Huntingford, "24. The Genealogy of the Orkoiik of Nandi," *Man* 35. (1935): 22, doi:10.2307/2791270.

4. David M. Anderson, "Black Mischief: Crime, Protest and Resistance in Colonial Kenya," *The Historical Journal* 36, no. 4 (1993): 855.

5. Huntingford, "The Genealogy," 22–23. David M. Anderson discusses the details of Koitalel's death in "Black Mischief," 858.

6. David Anderson and Douglas H. Johnson, *Revealing Prophets: Prophecy in Eastern African History (*London: James Curry, 1995), 175-176.

7. Anderson, "Black Mischief," 858-860.

war and many Nandi were forced to relocate as the government pushed them onto a smaller parcel of land. New taxes as well were imposed by the colonial state on most indigenous communities, driving them into the wage labor force in greater numbers, often on land that had until very recently been theirs.[8]

It was in this environment of disaffection that the Nandi Orkoiyot Barserion arap Kimanye entered. Barserion, as Koitalel's youngest son, had the proper pedigree and had proven his skills as an Orkoiyot. In 1923 colonial officials and Nandi local chiefs tasked Kimanye with conducting a particularly large age initiation ceremony. The ritual had been rejected several times in the years following the assassination of Koitalel, leading to an abnormally large group of initiates. As the initiation approached, cattle thefts increased, alarming white settlers. Almost equally as alarming was the loss of labor as Nandi left their employer's lands, with or without permission; unaccounted for and potentially belligerent Africans represented an especially disturbing threat to whites. Ahead of the initiation, rumors spread that the ceremony was to be a signal for an uprising among the Nandi and that the warrior set had hidden weapons caches they were planning to unearth. Colonial officials took the rumors seriously and arrested Barserion along with other Orkoiik who were involved with ceremony. Barserion was subsequently exiled to Kikuyu lands.[9]

After a long drought in 1929, a rash of fires later determined to be arson broke out on Kipsigis land. The fires were later determined to be part of an ongoing feud between Kipsigis elders and local Orkoiik. These elders were known to be working closely with colonial officials in undermining the Orkoiik. Many of these elders would publicly denounce the Orkoiik to authorities and a report filed by District Commissioner Brumage following an investigation suggested a criminal network led by eight prominent Orkoiik who were dubbed the "Big Eight".[10] Upon arrest, many of these Orkoiik were found with stolen rifles and ammunition stashed away. Over a dozen Orkoiyot would eventually be given prison terms for their roles in the arsons as well as with other cattle thefts. A year later, a new case involving the burglary and murder of a settler shocked whites in Kenya.[11] The "Kinangop Outrage," the subsequent conviction of seven Kipsigis, and the involvement of an Orkoiyot who had a year earlier been implicated in the arson and cattle thefts, further cemented the idea among colonists and the British government that the Orkoiik were a threat to the civilizing mission through their influence over the Kalenjin.

While separated by two decades, these events helped to shape British views of the Orkoiik and their perceived hold on the Nandi in particular. According to the Nandi and the Orkoiik, the witchdoctors were fully within their rights as ritualists and seers to mount resistance against the British. Among the duties of the Orkoiik were healing sickness brought about by witchcraft and bringing prosperity to the Nandi; they were attempting to cure the land of the British.[12] For the British however the Orkoiyot became an embodiment of the "primitiveness" that engendered the pagan beliefs of Africans and delayed the civilizing mission. Worse still, the Orkoiik in their spiritual roles did facilitate cattle thievery and often had sophisticated connections that facilitated the movement of stolen cattle to essentially launder them. The British believed that Orkoiik themselves were taking advantage of their own people by

8. Diana Ellis, "The Nandi Protest of 1923 in the Context of African Resistance to Colonial Rule in Kenya," *The Journal of African History* 17, no. 4 (1976): 555-575.

9. Anderson, "Black Mischief," 862-864.

10. Anderson, "Black Mischief," 866-868.

11. Anderson, "Black Mischief," 870.

12. Ellis, "The Nandi Protest," 571.

playing off superstitions and holding the Kalenjin in fear of witchcraft as well as planning cattle raids. The arms and ammunition found among the "Big Eight" reinforced British belief that the only thing magical about the Orkoiik was their ability to mobilize the murran within Kalenjin society and turn a large swath of Kenyans against British rule. British interest in witchcraft was not born of a supernatural fear but to break the power of Orkoiik resistance and criminality, both of which threatened British hegemony. By casting the Orkoiik as a class of criminal delinquents and enemies of the state, the British made it possible for an example to be made of all Nandi Laibon.

## Criminal Delinquents

The criminalization of the Orkoiik followed the exile of Barserion arap Manye for allegedly attempting to foment a revolution in 1923. A flurry of briefs filed by various colonial agents and petitions signed by Nandi elders led to passage of a bill authored to relieve the Nandi of their Laibon burden. Through this bill, the British attempted to exercise total control over Orkoiik power, sequestering the Talai clan on the very edges of Lake Victoria and exiling a few who were identified as especially dangerous to the uninhabited and barely habitable islands off the eastern shore. This section details the colonial efforts to withdraw power from the Orkoiik through technocratic means, in the process creating a Laibon-Other whom became potentially dangerous liabilities during the Mau Mau Emergency.

In 1909 the British passed the first effort to bring witchcraft under colonial control in Kenya under the Witchcraft Ordinance and saw revisions in 1918 and in 1925.[13] The bill itself revealed contemporary British thought on witchcraft which as legal analyst of the day put it, "The European official attitude regards magic as merely a form of fraud, by means of which various kinds of cheat victimize or terrorize their dupes for their own nefarious purposes."[14]

This view permeates British law on witchcraft. Ronald Hutton, in one of the only works on modern European pagan practices, details the practices of several "cunning folk" who lived in 18th, 19th, and 20th century England. These individuals performed many of the same functions that the Orkoiik and other practitioners did in Kalenjin society namely divinations, making charms and talismans, and healing. Additionally, there were similar instances of abuse by some of these practitioners who would threaten and demand tributes from their neighbors and towns under the auspices that they would lay a curse on whatever unfortunate they were trying to bully.[15] The British government passed the "Witchcraft Act" in 1736 and later updated it with the Vagrancy Act in 1824 to address these abusive individuals. The laws created a legal framework that made it both illegal to accuse someone of being a witch as well as practicing any, "subtle craft, means and device…designed to deceive and impose."[16] By treating spiritual leaders as simple frauds and grifters, the legal system at once created a corporal method of addressing witches and witchcraft as well as relegated them to a criminal, delinquent rung of society. The British carried over this technocratic legalese into the colonies as part of the civilizing mission.

13. Richard D. Waller, "Witchcraft and Colonial Law in Kenya," *Past & Present*, no. 180. (2003): 241–275.

14. J. Orde Browne, "Witchcraft and British Colonial Law," *Africa* 8, 04 (1935): 481–487.

15. Ronald Hutton, *The Triumph of the Moon: A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 86-90.

16. Hutton, *The Triumph of the Moon*, 107.

Katherine Luongo notes that these laws really could do little to address the use of magic systems. Instead, it made it clear that within the bounds of British law those practicing magic were operating under false pretenses and were guilty of fraud. This opened the way for other laws - such as the Vagrancy laws - to be applied to offenders, making their crimes temporal in nature and thus subject to British law and punishment.[17] The burden of proof for witchcraft became exceedingly difficult as physical evidence, such as charms or other accoutrements, could usually be written off as harmless baubles. It placed the onus of reporting witchcraft activities on chiefs and headmen by making it compulsory for them to report any incidents of witchcraft conveyed to them in their district.[18] This put African officials in a difficult position, forcing them to either reduce all witchcraft in their districts into a single "bad" form, regardless of the intention and criminalizing many who had no ill will, or disobey the law and potentially face prosecution for aiding and abetting. These chiefs were protected through the law from prosecution for witchcraft, creating another division among Africans. By investing power in chosen agents in this manner the British could assert their own control over the intangible to exercise more control over the hearts and minds of Africans.

Returning to the Orkoiik, colonial briefs from 1928 onward utilized language that referred to them in legalese as well as the vernacular suggesting that they were a criminal class. Assistant District Commissioner G. Beresford Stooke wrote in 1928, "The Laibon [Orkoiik] thus continue to utilize the elements as a money-making proposition. Be there drought, the Laibon say it is because it has not been made worth their while to bring rain. […] When rain comes, the Laibon say that unless they receive some material consideration, they will stop it again. And so on ad inifinitum."[19] To reiterate, the function of the Orkoiik was that of a ritualist. Rainmaking, cleansing bad witchcraft, and prophecy were among their chief duties and they were expected to undertake them. Moreover, because many Orkoiyot were made chiefs and headmen by the British following the early resistance, they were protected from the law for their own practice of witchcraft.

Rather than continue to try to isolate the Orkoiik as witches, colonial authorities labeled them foreigners among the Kalenjin peoples. Government documents and petitions referring to the Orkoiik cast the entire Talai clan as a foreign influence who had taken advantage of the Kalenjin people. Further, it painted the Kalenjin as helpless to rid themselves of this influence, making any effort at enacting change politically the work of the malign influences of the Orkoiik. One settler, Ian Q. Orchardson, stated in 1934 as part of written depositions taken regarding the criminal influence of the Orkoiik of the South Lumbwa district,

> These Laibons are a small clan of foreign origin derived from Kichomber […] who was expelled from Nandi in the eighties of last century. His family originated in Maasai where they were Laibons […] Until the arrival of this man, Arap Koylegen, there was no such thing as a "Laibon" amongst the Kipsigis, witch-doctors had no power and were not part of the government

17. Katherine Luongo, *Witchcraft and Colonial Rule in Kenya, 1900-1955* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 91.

18. Luongo, *Witchcraft*, 92.

19. Kenyan National Archives HB/2, "The Laibon of Belgut," Report by Assistant District Commissioner George Beresford Stooke, c. 1928, 2.

of the country.[20]

Such characterization of Orkoiik as foreign parties looking to fleece other Africans demonized them as criminals, opening them up to be saddled with many of the ills facing the Kalenjin peoples. Affidavits petitioning the government to remove the foreign influence of the Orkoiik put together by A.D.C. Stooke suggest internal divisions within the Kalenjin community regarding the Orkoiik. It is unclear exactly what the reasoning is for these elders to sign petitions condemning the Orkoiik, but many signed documents that lay the blame for stock theft squarely on their influence as well as for directly opposing government and ethnic authorities. One such petition reads,

> The Laibon are bad people. They cheat the Kipsigis and take property from them. If a laibon sees a handsome girl, he takes her for his wife and if anybody objects the laibon does not listen. The people are frightened of the laibon. The laibon instigate the Kipsigis to steal stock. It was the laibon who were responsible for the theft of Maasai stock at Jamji last year. The laibon refuse to help the tribal authorities. They oppose the tribal authority set up by the Government. The laibon ought to be removed completely, and then we shall have peace in our country.[21]

Several other petitions signed by Kalenjin and settlers were submitted along with this example, all use similar language excoriating the Orkoiik as scourges to the peace of settlers and Kalenjin also blaming them for most of the crime on the reserves and surrounding areas. Revealingly, most are signed by elders or contain language suggesting that the person giving testimony may be an elder. Based on the evidence then it seems likely that Nandi elders were attempting to oust the Orkoiik and reclaim their positions of leadership. Common use of phrasing describing the Orkoiik as working in opposition to the government would support this as well, arguing that they are unfit for leadership. Historian Diana Ellis, referencing the exile of Barserion and the feared uprising in 1923, also comes to this conclusion. He argues that the actions of the Orkoiik and their control over the murran posed a threat to the patronage and influence that Kalenjin elders and educated elites enjoyed from the colonial government.[22] Further, the actions of the Orkoiik still engaging in cattle theft put the Kalenjin communities in danger of blanket reprisal by the government.

The threat of collective punishments for a community harboring or abetting criminals placed the chiefs of those communities in a particularly difficult situation. To begin curbing stock theft and turning African public opinion against thieves and the Orkoiik, British officials passed two ordinances: The Collective Punishment Ordinance (1909) and the Stock and Produce Theft Ordinance (1913). The government intended for the first Ordinance to act as a legal tool targeting communities that continued to resist, levying fines and imprisonment on the leaders for not tamping down or informing on possible rebelliousness. The second Ordinance however directly targeted communities that engaged in cattle raiding by levying harsher fines and terms of imprisonment not only on chiefs but entire communities in an attempt,

20. Kenyan National Archives HB/2. 14/2/2 "Lawlessness Amongst Lumbwa Tribe – Lumbwa Laibons" Testimony by Ian Quiller Orchardson, May 4, 1934, 1.

21. KNA HB/2. 14/2/2 "Lawlessness Amongst Lumbwa," 4.

22. Ellis, "The Nandi Protest of 1923," 574-575.

as David Anderson argues, to turn public opinion against acts of cattle thievery. [23]

With the existential crisis of the British hanging over Kalenjin communities, some Orkoiik and murran adapted, creating a clandestine enterprise that operated outside of the bounds of the reservations. This system, developed as a response to land alienation, taxation, and quarantine laws, involved a complex network of handlers who would forge brands to move cattle through the forests as well as within the stock of squatters and settlers on different farms to keep them hidden. The Kalenjin played a major role in this ring as the Okiek sub-group resided in these forests and oversaw much of their movement and care through them, however the ring also included Maasi, Kikuyu, Luo, and others, stretching from southern Kenya, north into southern Uganda, and into eastern Kenya.[24] Creating more difficultly for authorities, Nandi and Kipsigis Kalenjin could easily pass as Okiek making it nearly impossible for authorities to gauge the numbers of the sub-group that should be in forest in order to regulate it. This sophisticated ring of disparate criminal gangs operated from the 1920s into the 1950s, laundering their wealth of cattle and moving it into markets where the most money could be made from their sale with the Orkoiik playing a major role for the Nandi and Kipsigis.[25] As will be shown later, the Orkoiik's continued role in these rings after 1934 was both an extraordinary embarrassment to, and a feat of resistance against colonial power. By moving the cattle raiding off the reserves however, the Orkoiik and their families were opened to the machinations of chiefs who no longer had to fear government reprisals impacting the whole of the community.

September 23, 1934, the day after the convictions were handed down from the "Kinangop Outrage" trial, King George passed the Laibons Removal Ordinance. While The bill itself had been authored a few years previous, liberal white settlers and members of British Parliament derided it as too drastic of a step. Appropriately, the bill first made provisions for the removal and relocation for the entire Talai clan (which was estimated at about 700 people),[26] citing their foreign influence and responsibility for recent unrest as the chief reasons for their relocation.[27] Designating a to-be-named area (eventually determined to be the Gwassi reserve on the eastern shores of Lake Victoria) it became illegal for anyone of Talai clan to leave the reservation, which was created as a wall-less prison with hard-labor terms and fines as punishment for leaving. All members of the clan were subject to the full weight of British law regardless of status and disobedience was an offense against the state. There were to be no trials by jury, Native Council, or even a meeting with a magistrate beyond sentencing.[28] Later letters between District Commissioners made it clear that the Orkoiik stigma was passable to others, as the commissioner of Kericho stated, "In my opinion all persons, male and female, who are connected in anyway including marriage with a Laibon, should themselves be regarded as Laibons."[29] This very effectively cut off many young people from marriage to others outside Gwassi. Marriage into the Talai clan would have meant subjecting oneself and possibly extended family to exile, further secluding the clan by making anyone attached a poten-

23. David Anderson, "Stock Theft and Moral Economy in Colonial Kenya," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 56, no. 4 (1986): 399-416, 405.

24. KNA HB/2, "The Laibon of Belgut," 8-9.

25. KNA HB/2, "The Laibon of Belgut," 409-410.

26. Anderson, "Black Mischief," 870.

27. KNA HB/2, "Laibons Removal Ordinance" Colonial Legislation, September 25, 1934, 1.

28. KNA HB/2, "Laibons Removal Ordinance," 7.

29. KNA HB/2, L&O.17/12/SECRET, "Laibon" Letter from District Commissioner, Kericho to District Commissioner, South Nyanza, June 15, 1951, 1.

tial criminal and enemy of the state. Simultaneously, it may also have been an attempt to weaken the reasons for cattle raiding as young Talai men would have become less desirable as suitors.

## Life in the Gwassi Reservation

Submitted alongside the updated Laibons Removal Ordinance on the 4th of May 1934 was a letter from the Governor of Kenya, Brigadier-General Joseph Byrne addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Major Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister. A continuation of a previous report, Gov. Byrne updated the Secretary on investigations and prosecutions on the Kalenjin reserves including a "daring raid" conducted by twenty individuals identified as Lumbwa on an Indian trading post, the confiscation of stolen cattle, cash, firearms, and ammunition as well as any resulting prosecutions.[30] Up to and after the passage of the Ordinance, British officials continued to advance the idea of the criminality of the Orkoiik and their kin.

The British government believed that with the passage of the Laibons Removal Ordinance, their authority had become absolute and unquestionable. The Gwassi Reservation, a 40-square-mile area set aside for the Talai clan on the Eastern shore of Lake Victoria was to be a fully self-sustained community to the west of the town of Kisii. The government intended the reserve and the township within it to be a prison: passes were required to enter or exit with strict prison terms and fines levied on any who transgressed, and fingerprints of every family member were taken and kept on file.[31] Additionally, families and individuals were required to muster if summoned with no excuses, arms were strictly forbidden, and all public meetings had to be cleared with the administrator.[32] While further provisions were stipulated for the building of schools, administrative buildings, and markets the Talai were sequestered well away from others in concentration camps.

As early as 1937 it became clear to government officials that relocating 700 people to Gwassi would be more difficult than originally thought. Government funds were running low on the resettlement scheme and additional funds were requested for removal of tse-tse flies, dam construction, and brush clearing.[33] While no mention is made of the state of construction within the reservation the Provincial Commissioner made it clear that, "A slackening in the process of removing the Laibons would be interpreted as weakness and be very harmful."[34] Additionally, debt claims by Talai men slowed the process, as their claims had to be overseen by courts and adjudicated.

Two separate government excursions to view the Gwassi Reservation expressed concern over the deteriorating conditions. The first report filed in 1944 by the Provincial Commissioner of Nyanza noted that of the estimated 3,000 head of cattle originally documented, approximately 1,150 remained.[35] For a herding culture, this represented a significant loss of wealth and prestige. The second report filed in 1951 by the Acting Provincial Commissioner of Nyanza, C.H. Williams confirmed that no headway was made in addressing the issue as an estimated 80% of the original herd

30. KNA HB/2, NO. 66, Confidential letter from the Governor of Kenya, Joseph Byrne to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister. May 3, 1934, 1-2.

31. KNA HB/2, "Laibons Removal Ordinance," 2-3.

32. KNA HB/2, "Laibons Removal Ordinance," 5.

33. KNA HB/2, HO.L.&.O.6/P, "Estimates – 1937 – Removal of Laibon," Confidential memo from the Provincial Commissioner, Nyanza to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, William Ormsby-Gore, September 11, 1936, 2.

34. KNA HB/2, HO.L.&.O.6/P, "Estimates," 1.

35. KNA HB/2, L&O 4/1/2/176, "Lumbwa Laibon – Talai," Confidential memo from the Provincial Commissioner, Nyanza to the Chief Secretary, Nairobi, July 12, 1944, 2.

had died due to Trypanosomiasis contracted by the fly.[36] While the government made some efforts to address the tse-tse fly problem on the reservation it was clearly still a significant threat to the herd and what little livelihood the Talai had left.

Unsurprisingly, the concentration camps offered few opportunities for juveniles and children. Recognizing that the murran could become a problem if left with no options, both reports make suggestions on how to address the juveniles through schooling. The 1944 report ventures to resettle a small number of male students near Kericho (within easy surveillance of the government) and begin offering them schooling in different trades. The author further proposes allowing those juveniles to seek marriage partners outside of Gwassi as an incentive towards good behavior with the additional caveat that, "When we have drawn off most of the progeny and if the parents have behaved themselves meanwhile in Gwassi, they should eventually be allowed to return to Kipsigis" as well as letting an Orkoiik whom had been co-operative with the government oversee the children.[37] This loosening of the stigma heaped upon the children of the Orkoiik offered the government an avenue to turn the younger generations away from the older.

While the author of the 1937 report does offer up that the Talai had learned a "hard lesson" through the extensive loss of herd and the dismal living conditions, the removal and indoctrination of children represented a worrying threat to Talai society. Colonial governments would often allow mission schools to take over the task of "civilizing" children from the surrounding areas. Since mission schools were typically funded by either the Catholic church or sponsorships and donations from wealthy individuals and/or foreign churches of the same denomination, this offered the government a method of saving money on education. Utilizing the term "epistimicide," historian Mhoze Chikowero argues that cultural genocide was part and parcel of the civilizing mission. One of the primary goals of any mission school was to turn children against the "atavistic" beliefs of their parents and alienate them from their own culture, often equating indigenous songs and instruments as being the tools of Satan.[38] In turn, the children would shame their parents, either pushing them away or bringing them further into the orbit of colonial power through the church. It is clear that the British intended this outcome.

Interestingly, the 1951 report suggests placing more children in the mission schools rather than specially built reservation schools because it may give the Talai an, "inflated idea of their importance."[39] Even given the conditions on the reservation, the exile of the Talai was a testament to their continued resistance against the government. The British worried that the continued challenge to their hegemony might give other groups ideas, it was therefore necessary to be especially firm with the Talai and the Orkoiik. However, the Talai were not the only groups who were angry over land alienation, labor requirements, and taxes.

## "Maximum Control"

With approximately 700 individuals of the Talai clan spread across 40-square-miles and several small islands it would not be an understatement to describe the

36. KNA HB/2, L&O 4/1/2/321, "Lumbwa Laibon," 2.

37. KNA HB/2, L&O 4/1/2/176, 2.

38. Mhoze Chikowero, *African Music, Power, and Being in Colonial Zimbabwe* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005). 1.

39. KNA HB/2, L&O 4/1/2/321, 2.

borders of the Gwassi Reserve as "porous." The British became more relaxed as both Talai men and women were allowed passes to work as squatters on nearby settler farms and children could attend schools outside the reservation. With the rise of Kikuyu nationalism around Nairobi and through Kikuyu lands the government grew worried about its prisoners in the Gwassi Reserve.

A confidential report filed in May of 1951 found that Gwassi was indeed leaking. The Provincial Commissioner of Kericho had several different reports of individuals from Gwassi being caught in his district.[40] Most were of little consequence, women and children who had left without passes to find work. However, the Commissioner details a new smuggling ring being orchestrated by Orkoiik from within Gwassi. This new ring used women traveling into Kericho for work to ferry charms into the hands of cattle thieves and others.

Additional memos between Kericho and Nyanza districts show that from the file noted above into 1955 a concerted effort was made to find Talai who had left the reservations illegally. One report cites that within Gwassi only seventy-two males remained and 162 lived off reservation.[41] Officials were particularly alarmed as more than two-dozen individuals were working as police or in prisons, should one of these Talai give in to their "traditional tendencies" and begin practicing as an Orkoiik it may create more outbreaks of resistance as, "Mau Mau shows clearly this is psychologically possible."[42] One memo ends by suggesting the creation of a "short list" of *orkoiik* elders who are deemed to be the most dangerous and kept under surveillance permanently.

Allowing the Orkoiik to continue to skirt the law, even in the face of the desperation encountered on the reservation, represented a loss of power to the British and elevated the reputation of the Orkoiik during a dangerous period. For this reason, District Commissioner P.G. Tait wrote,

> The old Laibon are all potential danger as they prophesied in 1935 when they were deported that they would eventually return to Kericho. For this reason their prestige would be enhanced if they were ever allowed to return. I consider no good purpose is served by keeping them on Mfungano but must insist that all the old Laibon die in Gwassi. Their influence is waning and I do not want any sudden boost.[43]

While the Talai and the Orkoiik were small in numbers, the British recognized them as almost as large a threat as Mau Mau, especially the elders. Moreover, like Mau Mau, their communities still supported and relied on them. It was this space in which the Orkoiik, Mau Mau, and other mantics resided.

The Mau Mau oaths were believed to be a magical pact with the creator god of the Kikuyu and were not broken lightly. Katherine Luongo argues that oathing was a serious ritualistic endeavor that confounded the British who attributed their power to simple superstitions foisted onto their fellow Africans.[44] It is in this same ritual space

40. KNA HB/2, 0.17/12, "Laibon" Letter from District Commissioner, Kericho to District Commissioner, South 1 Nyanza, May 9, 1951.

41. KNA HB/2, "Report on a Visit to Gwassi, South Nyanza District to Enquire into the Present State of the Laibons," Report by M.J. Roberts, M.C. and E.N. Scott, District Officers of Kisii and Kericho, C. January 5, 1954, 1-2.

42. KNA HB/2, "Report on a Visit," 2.

43. KNA HB/2, I&O 17/12/2A/10, "Talai: South Nyanza" Letter from District Commissioner, Kericho, P.G. Tait to District Commissioner, South Nyanza, Kisii, March 5, 1955.

44. Katherine Luongo, "If You Can't Beat Them, Join Them: Government Cleansings of Witches and Mau Mau in 1950s Kenya," *History in Africa* 33 (2006), 453.

that both Mau Mau and the Orkoiik operated. While the British didn't understand, they still recognized the power it represented to those that did believe. By attempting to wrest control away and place it in the hands of their own agents the merely drove it underground and further away from their purview, making it a nexus point for revolutionary action.

Recognizing the danger, the British attempted to more firmly control the Talai, attempting to implement "maximum control."[45] As this paper has shown, the British were aware of the abysmal conditions on the Gwassi Reserve and many officials were at least somewhat sympathetic to the non-Orkoiik Talai. At the same time, the borders were such that anyone could move in or out and women were known to be smuggling out charms to sell to another Kalenjin. Flurries of memos passed between districts attempting to account for all outstanding Talai, not just Orkoiik on the short list, representing a significant expenditure of resources at the height of the Mau Mau Emergency. Often, individual Talai would be found and given a slap on the wrist but given the need for labor they were issued work permits.[46] Those on the short list such as Kibinoit arap Rongoi were hunted for months before being deported back to Gwassi.[47] Other figures such as Barserion arap Manye, a veteran of the 1923 resistance and long ago exiled to Kikuyu lands, were stockpiling weapons and "really business-like barbed arrows."[48] These men continued to represent a threat to the British specifically because of their potential to raise new resistances in an already dangerous time. The Orkoiik had strong connections through their roles as spiritualists and through the networks of organized cattle thieves. This last point is especially notable given that most Mau Mau resistance fighters used the forests to launch attacks on white farms and collaborators.

## Conclusion

The Mau Mau Emergency struck a deadly blow to British imperialism in Kenya. The British, though they had won the war, would be forced to give Kenya its freedom just a few years later. While the Orkoiik were never directly connected with the Mau Mau movement it represented the same type of threat to British power, a nationalistic and politically charged force more appropriately labeled as competition. For over sixty years, the British attempted to erode the power of the Orkoiik through war, legislation, and exile yet the Orkoiik adapted and continued to serve their community and resist the bad witchcraft of colonialism. Mau Mau operated in a similar way, offering the Kikuyu framework through which to fight back against their own oppression.

While the Gwassi Reservation was an improvement over work camps and prisons, the documents suggest it was still a place of confinement. The criminalization of swathes of people and creation of delinquent classes was a direct effort to maintain a control that was ephemeral at best. Today, references to important Orkoiik such as Koitalel and Manye can be found in Kenyan cultural discourse, having taken on

45. KNA HB/2, L&O 17/12/11/8, "Laibon Control" Letter from District Commissioner, Kericho to District Commissioner, Nyanza Province, January 30, 1954.

46. KNA HB/2 Ref No.P.518/14, "Kipsigis Laibons" Letter from S.M. Wallace, Asst. Supdt of Police, Special Branch, Nakuru to Special Branch Division, Nakuru, May 8, 1957.

47. KNA HB/2, L&O:17/12/11/54, "Kibinot Arap Rongoi", Report from District Commissioner, Kisii to District Commissioner, Kericho, November 19, 1954.

48. KNA HB/2 L&O.17/12/11/101, "Laibon Activity" Secret correspondence from District Commissioner, Laikipia to District Commissioner, Kericho, April 10, 1957.

the mantle of resistance fighters alongside other important national figures such as Jomo Kenyatta.

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# Memory War: How Conflicting Collective Memories Impact Holocaust Remembrance in Babyn Yar

**David Keenan**

**Abstract:** This paper argues that that a conflict of collective memories, including those of Ukrainian nationalists, the Soviet Union, alleged perpetrators, and victims, resulted in a "memory war," caused the proliferation of memorials on the Babyn Yar site, and blocked the creation of a meaningful Jewish site of memory. It is important to ask, decades after the Babyn Yar massacre, why no physical memorial (other than a small granite menorah) that specifically addresses the majority of the victims, who were Jewish, exists? Research was conducted by the use of primary and secondary sources on the Babyn Yar events and subsequent memorials that dot the site. The research reveals that a war of memory exists. An examination of past attempts at a creating a unified memorial and the political conflict over a proposed Jewish-centric Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial Center also reveals that a physical memorial is unlikely given the entrenched conflict over collective memory and nationalism. However, it is possible to examine and characterize a Babyn Yar memorial in a different and unique manner. Drawing on the theories of Nora, Winters, and Young, it is argued that the conflict over competing memories has become the memorialization, or the counter-monument, of the Jewish and Ukrainian experiences of Babyn Yar.

The Holocaust was not a singular event. It occurred over a period of time and was experienced in different ways by the perpetrators, collaborators, victims, and bystanders of many nations. As a result, competing collective memories have influenced how societies remember and memorialize the Holocaust. One such conflict is the memorialization of Jewish victims of the massacre at Babyn Yar.[1] This paper is an analysis of how the competing claims of memory of the massacre site impacts the memorialization of the Jewish experience.

Attempts to memorialize the Babyn Yar massacre as a central event in the Holocaust in the East has resulted in a conflict of competing collective memories. This conflict of collective memories, including those of Ukrainian nationalists, the Soviet Union, alleged perpetrators, and victims, has resulted in a "memory war," led to the proliferation of memorials on the site, and blocked the creation of a meaningful Jewish site of memory. Jewish memory conflicts with Soviet and Ukrainian memories over what occurred at Babyn Yar and how the events should be memorialized and represented. This results in no unified site of memory, rather, over eleven significant memorials commemorating diverse groups and individuals dot the site.

What constitutes a site of memory? Pierre Nora, in his groundbreaking research, argues that history and memory are two separate concepts.[2] History attaches to events, and when history crystallizes into a fixed memory a site of memory may be created. But what is memory and how is it created? Memory consists of several types, including an individual's memory, which is formed by their experiences and influenced by historical events and interactions with others of their group.[3] There is also a collective memory which, according to Maurice Halbwachs' theory, "represents

1. Babi Yar and Babyn Yar and Kiev and Kyiv will be used throughout this paper depending on the source cited.

2. Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memorie," *Representations* 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory (Spring 1989): 8.

3. Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, trans. Mary Douglas (New York: Harper Row, 1980), 50.

currents of thought and experience within which we recover our past."[4] Halbwachs notes that a "remembrance is a reconstruction of the past borrowed from data from the present."[5] A group's collective memory is formed by the dominant discourse of their era, which is reliant on narratives from the present. Remembrances, which form the discourse which creates a collective memory, are subject to change and evolution.[6] As a collective memory is formed through remembrances of past events and a dominant discourse is created for the past, a site of memory may be constructed that memorializes the event, or memory, for the group. However, as Jay Winter notes, remembrances which form a collective memory are formed by a collision of history and memory and are contested "as a result of whose memory is being used."[7] This dynamic results in what is remembered, how a site of memory is created, and what occurs as a result of collective memories being produced within the public sphere where public opinion is formed.[8] Nancy Fraser argues that public spheres also have subordinate, or subaltern counter-publics, that are not fully recognized in the dominant public discourse.[9] Therefore, the dynamics of collective memory in a public sphere with competing memories of subordinate publics leads to conflicts in the creation of monuments and memorials to past events. Simply put, one group's collective memory competes with another's for a representation of events in history and creates memory conflicts.

The massacre of Kyiv's Jews and the subsequent killings of Roma, Soviet prisoners of war, communists, and Ukrainians over a period of two years created a complex intertwining of competing collective memories.[10] As the German army moved east, in their wake came the Nazi Schutzstaffel (SS) Einsatzgruppen, murderous operational units whose activities and selection of victims grew over 1941-1942 to encompass "the murder of every person seen by the Germans to pose a potential threat."[11] The most infamous moment in the history of Babyn Yar occurred on September 29-30, 1941, when 33,771 Jewish residents of Kyiv were shot, murdered, and disposed of in the ravine.[12] The SS Einsatzgruppen 4A, along with several units of the Sicherheitsdienst (Security Service) and SS Order police, perpetrated the mass murder.[13] Ukrainian police detachments associated with the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) collaborated with the Nazi murderers.[14] It is estimated that the total number of victims murdered at the site was between 70,000 and 130,000 over

4. Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, 64.

5. Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, 69.

6. Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, 72.

7. Jay Winter, "Sites of Memory," in *Memory*, ed. Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 314.

8. Jurgen Habermas, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article," *New German Critique*, no. 3 (Autumn, 1974): 49-55.

9. Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," *The Phantom Public Sphere*, ed. Bruce Robbins (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 13-18; see also Michael Warner, "Publics and Counterpublics," *Public Culture* 14, no. 1 (Winter 2002): 49-89, for a critique of Fraser's subordinate counter-publics.

10. The Roma are often referred to as "Gypsies." However, the Roma community views the term as a pejorative and as such I use the more proper term. For additional information see: https://sfi.usc.edu/education/roma-sinti/en/conosciamo-i-roma-e-i-sinti/chi-sono/da-dove-vengono-il-nome/il-nome-rom-sinto-zingaro.php.

11. Dieter Pohl, "The Murder of Ukraine's Jews under German Military Administration and in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine," in *The Shoah in Ukraine: History, Testimony and Memorialization*, ed. Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2010), 27.

12. Anthony Read, *The Devil's Disciples: Hitler's Inner Circle* (New York: Norton and Company, 2003), 724.

13. Pohl, "The Murder," 32-35, 55, 301.

14. Karel Berkhoff, "Dina Pronicheva's Story of Surviving the Babi Yar Massacre: German, Jewish, Soviet, Russian and Ukrainian Records," *Shoah*, 303.

two years.[15] In 1943 the Nazis exhumed the massive ravine gravesite and burned the bodies to cover up the massacre.[16]

The memorialization of the events of Babyn Yar is a battlefield of competing collective memories. The first formal recognition of Babyn Yar as a site of memory occurred in March 1945 when the Soviet-Ukrainian government adopted a decree "on the construction of a memorial on the territory of "Babyn Yar." However, the Soviet Union ultimately blocked the proposed memorial as result of growing anti-Semitism in the USSR.[17] Soviet poet Yevgeney Yetushshenko published his poem "Babi Yar" in 1961, and the first lines read "no monument stands over Babi Yar. A steep cliff only, like the rudest headstone."[18] Arguably this poem may be considered a site of memory for Babyn Yar even though it is not a physical structure.[19] Soviet composer Dimitry Shostakovich, inspired by Yevtushenko, composed his Symphony no.13, which used Yevtushenko's poem in its choral sections. It was first performed in December 1962, then banned after its third performance.[20] Shortly thereafter, in 1967, A. Anatoli Kuznetsov published Babi Yar, A Document in the Form of a Novel, which is a memoir of the author's life in Kiev with a focus on the events in Babyn Yar. It includes the eyewitness testimony of Dina Pronicheva, one of the few survivors of the Jewish massacre.[21]

The Soviet government, using the Soviet monumental style of statuary art, built the first formal monument on the site in 1976. It was placed in an open field, with a concrete base upon which is depicted several figures in struggle, holding up several other smaller figures, including a child. One is a woman, holding her head in anguish, another is what appears to be a man in a Soviet sailor cap. There is a bronze plaque which states "To the Soviet Citizens and Prisoners of War and Officers of the Soviet Army shot by the Nazis at Babyn Yar".[22] It was not until September 29, 1991 that a monument to the Jews massacred on the site was erected.[23] It remains today and is a menorah placed on the site of the Kyrylivske Orthodox cemetery.[24] The menorah is six-feet tall on a pedestal of seven steps and made of granite, albeit charred from being fire-bombed in 2016.[25] There is a path paved with tiles named the "Road of Woe" which connects the menorah to the former Jewish cemetery. In 1992 successors of the OUN erected a simple six-foot wooden cross to memorialize the 1941-1943 murders of OUN members by Nazis.[26] Interested parties have also erected several other memorials. They include an Orthodox oak cross on a granite pedestal to memorialize the murder of two Ukrainian Orthodox priests.[27] In 2005 a monument dedicated to forced laborers engraved "Ostarbeiters and prisoners of the nearby Syrets" was es-

15. Tamar Pileggi, "75 Years after Babi Yar Massacre, Ukraine reexamines its Dark History," *The Times of Israel*, October 3, 2016, 2.

16. Yuri Radchenko, "Babyn Yar: A Site of Massacres, (Dis)remembrance and Instrumentalisation," *New Eastern Europe*, October 11, 2016, 5.

17. Radchenko, "Babyn Yar," 5.

18. Yevgeny Yevtushenko, *The Collected Poems 1952-1990*, ed. Albert C. Todd (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1991), 102-104.

19. Nora, "Between Memory and History," 21-23.

20. Orlando Figes, *Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2002), 584.

21. A. Anatoli Kuznetsov, *Babi Yar: A Document in the Form of a Novel* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1970), 99-119.

22. Radchenko, "Babyn Yar," 5.

23. Radchenko, "Babyn Yar," 5.

24. Radchenko, "Babyn Yar," 5.

25. Canaan Lipshiz, "Locals Revive Plans to Memorialize Jewish Victims," Jewish Telegraph Agency, March 22, 2016, https://www.jta.org/2016/03/22/global/at-babi-yar-locals-revive-plans-to-memorialize-jewish-victims, 1.

26. "Commemoration of the Victims of Babi Yar," Yad Vashem World Holocaust Remembrance Center, https://www.yadvashem.org/education/educationalmaterials/learning-environment/babi-yar/historical-background4.html, 9.

27. "Commemoration," Yad Vashem, 9.

tablished.[28] In 2017 the Ukrainian government erected a monument to OUN activist Olena Teliha consisting of a life-size figure against two granite walls.[29] However, despite continued efforts by the Jewish community to place a substantial memorial of the Jewish massacre on the site only the menorah has been erected.

The Soviet Union repressed Jewish memory with a post-war Soviet discourse that victims of Nazi murders in the East were "Soviet citizens." Jews killed at Babyn Yar were subsumed under this category. This discourse originated during the Great Patriotic War. As Nazis perpetrated atrocities in the East after the invasion of the Soviet Union, the State Extraordinary Commission for the Determination and Investigation of Nazis and their Collaborator's Atrocities in the USSR (ChGK) initially created a report in December 1943 in which they referred to those murdered on September 29-30, 1941 as "Jews." The report was subsequently edited in the final version to read "Soviet Citizens."[30] In addition, wartime Soviet reports and literature regarding mass atrocities in Ukraine "instead of covering the specific fate of Jewish communities at the hands of the German invaders…sought to demonstrate that the entire Soviet population was the target of this inhuman German onslaught."[31] The Soviet Union's postwar discourse asserted that it suffered as no other country had. Recognizing the centrality of the Holocaust would create a Jewish victim class inconsistent with the creation of a Soviet memory with the Soviet citizenry as both the greatest victims and the ultimate victors. Acknowledgement of the Jewish Holocaust in the East would also raise the issue of Lithuanian and Ukrainian collaboration with the Nazis. As a result, the Soviet myth and memory of the Great Patriotic War had to be Soviet-centric.

The first Jewish attempt to memorialize Babyn Yar as the site of a Jewish massacre occurred after the liberation of Kyiv in November 1943, as Jewish returnees' attempts to create a memorial were blocked by Soviet authorities.[32] Jewish memory of the site continued to be subordinate to the dominant Soviet discourse, which led to the Jewish-centric non-physical "sites of memory" created by Yevtushenko and Shostakovich. Jewish memory continued its struggle with Soviet memory into the 1960s as Jewish dissidents and members of the Soviet Intelligentsia met at Babyn Yar every September 29 to hold unofficial memorial ceremonies.[33] The first physical site of memory memorializing the Jewish massacre was erected on the site in 1991, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.[34]

The Roma experience of the site is also illustrative of Soviet repression and the competing memory interests in the post-Soviet space. While the exact number of Roma deaths is unknown it is acknowledged that hundreds were murdered at the site.[35] Soviet discourse subsumed the memory of the Roma into the "Soviet citizen" narrative. The Roma erected a monument on the site on September 23, 2016,

28. "Commemoration," Yad Vashem, 9.

29. "A Monument to OUN activist and Poet Olena Teliza was Unveiled in Babyn Yar in Kyiv," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, February 25, 2017, https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news/28332116.html.

30. Nathalie Moine and John Angell, "War Crimes Against Humanity in the Soviet Union: Nazi Arson of Soviet Villages and the Soviet Narrative on Jewish and non-Jewish Soviet War Victims," *Cahiers du Monde russe* 52, no. 2/3 (April-September 2001): 449; see also www.yadvashem.org, p. 3 for a copy of the change made to the report in Russian.

31. Moine and Angell, "War Crimes," 445.

32. "Commemoration," Yad Vashem, 4.

33. "Commemoration," Yad Vashem, 5.

34. "Commemoration," Yad Vashem, 8.

35. Andrej Kotljarchuk, "Representing Genocide: The Nazi Massacre in Soviet and Ukrainian History Culture," BalticWorlds.com, May 28, 2015, http://balticworlds.com/the-nazi-massacre-of-roma-in-babi-yar-in-soviet-and-ukrainian-historical-culture/.

albeit not without significant conflict.[36] Sculptor Anatoly Ignashchenkco designed the monument in 1996; it consists of a "gypsy wagon" made of wrought iron, with photograph frames attached to the tent in which visitors could insert photos of murdered relatives.[37] However, Kyiv city architect Serhij Babushkin forbid its installation in 1996, amid the objections of "a part of the Jewish community in Kyiv."[38] The monument was transported to Kamyanets-Podilsky in Western Ukraine where it remained until the Ukrainian government's Babyn Yar Organizing Committee for the 75th Anniversary approved its installation in Babyn Yar in 2016.[39]

The collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in an end to the dominant unified Soviet narrative. Subordinate memories rose to the surface and the memory war continued as Ukraine became an independent country. Ukrainians were free to memorialize the events of Babyn Yar and did so with their formerly subordinated memories. Ukrainians have their own conflicting memories of World War II, and efforts to memorialize Ukrainian memories are in direct conflict with Jewish attempts to place the massacre of Jews as the central event of Babyn Yar. The post-Soviet Ukrainian collective memory regarding the Holocaust in the East is complicated due to Ukrainian independence. This is problematic due to OUN and Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) collaboration with the Nazis. When Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union invaded Poland in 1939, Soviet troops moved into Galicia, which for years had been populated by a mix of Polish, Ruthenian, Ukrainian and Jewish people with boundaries in constant flux.[40] During the Soviet occupation Ukrainian nationalists viewed Jewish intellectuals as communist collaborators and as "Moscow's agents."[41]

OUN initially sought the creation of a Ukrainian state after Germany launched Operation Barbarossa. The OUN collaborated with Nazis in committing atrocities against the Jewish population, particularly in Galicia.[42] Ukrainian police forces were used as guards, escorted Jews to killing fields, cleared ghettos and were "also deployed in mass shootings and often committed individual acts of murder on their own initiative, especially in villages and ghettos."[43] Some Ukrainian police were trained at the SS camp in Trawniki to become extermination camp guards.[44] The Ukrainian SS Galicia Division also fought against Russia on the Eastern front.[45] The controversial Ukrainian nationalist Stepan Bandera led a faction of the UPA and was responsible for the deaths of thousands of Jews in pogroms during 1941.[46] Bandera was arrested by the Nazis in July 1941 for agitating for an independent Ukraine. After the war he continued to advocate for an independent Ukraine and remains an icon of Ukrainian

36. "Opening of Roma Kibitka Monument in Babi Yar," Council of National Communities of Ukraine, September 24, 2016, http://www.radaspilnot.org.ua/vidkrittya-monumenta-romska-kibitka-u-babinomu-yaru/.

37. Kotljarchuk, "Representing Genocide."

38. Kotljarchuk, "Representing Genocide."

39. "Meeting of the Organizing Committee for the Preparation of Memorial Events Dedicated to the 75th Anniversary of Babyn Yar," Babyn Yar National Historical Memorial Preserve, May 11, 2016, http://babynyar.gov.ua/en/meeting-organizing-committee-preparation-memorial-events-dedicated-75th-anniversary-babyn-yar.

40. For information on this dynamic see Omar Bartov, *Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 2018), 265-88.

41. Frank Golczewski, "Shades of Grey: Reflections on Jewish-Ukrainian and German-Ukrainian Relations in Galicia," in *Shoah*,128-131; There is a plethora of literature about Eastern European anti-Semitism and collaboration with Nazi atrocities during the war and into the post-war era. For example, see Eliach, Once There Was a World: A 900-year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshok (New York: Little Brown, 1998), 657-69; and, Anna Bikont, *The Crime of Silence: Confronting the Massacre of Jews in Wartime Jedwabne* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015), 513-24.

42. Golczewski, "Shades of Grey," 131.

43. Golczewski, "Shades of Grey," 139.

44. Golczewski, "Shades of Grey," 139.

45. Golczewski, "Shades of Grey," 139; see also Michael Logusz, *Galicia Division: The Waffen SS 14th Grenadier Division 1943-1945* (Atglen, Pennsylvania: Schiffer Publishing, 1997).

46. Omar Bartov, "White Spaces and Black Holes: Eastern Galicia's Past and Present," in Shoah, 327.

nationalism.

"Can the dead really belong to anyone?" Timothy Snyder, in his conclusion of Bloodlands, poses this question, and it is emblematic of the conflict of memories of Babyn Yar.[47] What does it mean for a Jew, a Pole, or a Ukrainian to die in Ukraine, particularly in Galicia which was a multicultural area that changed hands between nations many times? Can Ukraine, which was once part of the Soviet Union ever shed its Soviet past and the role of Ukrainians in the Holocaust? How does Ukraine separate its independence myth, honoring an anti-Semite such as Bandera, from its desire to form a liberal democracy aligned with the European Community? These issues run headlong into the Jewish community's desire to create a comprehensive memorial of Jewish memory at Babyn Yar. The Jewish memory is that 33,771 Jews were brutally murdered by the Nazis with the assistance of their Ukrainian collaborators. Those same collaborators participated in pogroms prior to the Nazi invasion of Russia, were extermination camp guards, and participated in the struggle for Ukrainian independence.

A major effort to create a Jewish-centric Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial Center (BYHMC) on the killing field was launched in 2016. Mikhail Fridman, German Khan, Pavel Fuks and Victor Pinchuk, well-funded Jewish-Ukrainian philanthropists, proposed a museum designed to be the only one in the post-Soviet space "specifically dedicated to the unique way in which the Holocaust unfolded in the Soviet territories."[48] Factions of the Ukrainian government support the proposal.[49] Several milestones were achieved in 2019 when the Kyiv municipal government provided land; an architectural design was selected in September 2019, and a historical narrative was completed.[50]

The proposal was wracked by controversy in 2019 when Fridman approved the selection of controversial film director Ilya Khrzhanovskiy as the museum's creative director. Khrzhanovskiy is notable for his DAU film series in which amateur actors were placed in an environment simulating a totalitarian Soviet state and filmed over a period of three years. He was subsequently accused of "human and labor rights violations, humiliation, and sexual harassment during the filming process."[51] His hire resulted in the departure of the vast majority of the BYHMC's core team, including Executive Director Yana Barinova, who had shepherded the project through several project milestones.[52] At issue is whether the memorial should be based "primarily on research principles" as advocated by Barinova or take the visitor on a "shocking emotional journey with ethical choices at its core," as proposed by Khrzhanovskiy. In the latter scenario visitors would be "placed in the roles of victims, collaborators, Nazis, and prisoners of war who had to burn corpses."[53] The former head of the project's core exhibition development group decried Khrzhanovskiy's approach as

47. Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), 339-41, 407.

48. Izabella Tabarovsky, "Is Ukraine's Holocaust Memorial at Babi Yar in Trouble?" *Tablet Magazine*, January 24, 2018, 1.

49. Tabarovsky, "Ukraine's Holocaust," 4.

50. Tabarovsky, "Ukraine's Holocaust," 4; for information on the design see Sam Sokol, "Austrian Firm Chosen to Design Babi Yar Holocaust Memorial," *Times of Israel*, September 11, 2019, https://www.timesofisrael.com/austrian-firm-chosen-to-design-babi-yar-holocaust-memorial/; and for the narrative see Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial Center, http://babynyar.org/en/narrative.

51. Artur Korniienko, "Russian Filmmaker's Overhaul of Babyn Yar Memorial Provokes Scandal," Kyiv Post, May 1, 2020, https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/russian-filmmakers-overhaul-of-babyn-yar-memorial-provokes-scandal.html.

52. Korniienko, "Russian Filmmaker's Overhaul."

53. Korniienko, "Russian Filmmaker's Overhaul."

an attempt to create a Holocaust "Disney".[54] The opening of the museum has been moved from 2022 to 2026.

The conflict between historical and collective memories of non-Jewish Ukrainians and the Jewish sponsors of the BYHMC project also exists. In March 2017, a group of historians associated with Ukraine's top universities published a letter decrying the attempt to "…associate Babyn Yar only with the history of the Holocaust while ignoring other victims and other dramatic moments of its history. This approach would only exacerbate the war of memories [emphasis added] that has for many years been going on in the territory of Babyn Yar."[55] These historians note that it is incorrect to build a Holocaust memorial in Babyn Yar at all because Babyn Yar belongs to all of Ukrainian society and it is unacceptable to build it on the site of the old Jewish cemetery. They argue that the creation of the museum would create an artificial divide between the "Holocaust by Bullets" in the East from the general Holocaust in Europe.[56] The historians call for the establishment of two museums with the first presenting the whole history of the Holocaust. The second would be a "museum of the History of the Holocaust in Ukraine." The latter would present the massacre "in the context of the history of the Second World War and the Holocaust in Europe, which will contribute to the comprehensive incorporation of this issue into the new historical memory of the Ukrainian people [emphasis added]."[57] What this new historical memory is and who would write it has been at the core of the war of memory in Babyn Yar for the past eighty years.

The new proposals continue the war of memories in Babyn Yar. With Ukraine's independence at stake in its war with Russia a historical memory which paints Bandera and other Ukrainian heroes of independence movements as anti-Semites and/or Nazi collaborators is intolerable for Ukrainian nationalists. For example, the Ukrainian Institute for National Remembrance (UNIP), a government agency, argues that "Ukraine needs nationalist heroes as symbols to foster patriotism, strengthen national identity, and build national unity." [58] Josef Zissells, a Ukrainian Jew and former anti-Soviet dissident proposes a museum of the history of Babyn Yar, and it would be, as the historians suggest, a museum in which the murder of the Jews would merely be a part of a larger narrative of Babyn Yar.[59] While Zissells' proposal has very little funding and is only in the conceptual stage with a draft narrative in Ukrainian, he remains a vocal critic of the BYHMC. In February 2019 Zissells asked, in reference to the four financial backers of the BYHMC, "why are big Russian businessmen…[who] have large fortunes in Russia, where everything is controlled by Putin and his milieu, building a memorial in Ukraine, a country against whom Russia is waging a war?"[60]

Historian Jay Winter notes that memory becomes contested as a result of whose memories are being used.[61] In Ukraine the conflict over the memory of Babyn Yar remains one between advocates of a Jewish-centric memory that memorializes the

54. Korniienko, "Russian Filmmaker's Overhaul."

55. Gennady Boryak, "Babyn Yar Museum: A Warning Letter of Ukrainian Historians," Istorichna Pravda (IstPravda.com), March 28, 2017, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/articles/2017/03/28/149652/; see also Tabarovsky, "Ukraine's Holocaust," 2.

56. Gennady Boryak, "Babyn Yar Museum."

57. Gennady Boryak, "Babyn Yar Museum."

58. Tabarovsky, "Ukraine's Holocaust," 3.

59. Tabarovsky, "Ukraine's Holocaust," 4.

60. Iryna Slavinska, "Josef Zissels Ponders What the Babyn Yar Museum Should be Like," *Ukrainian Jewish Encounter*, February 11, 2019, https://ukrainianjewishencounter.org/en/josef-zissels-ponders-what-the-babyn-yar-museum-should-be-like/.

61. Winter, "Sites of Memory," 314.

slaughter of Jews at Babyn Yar within the context of the Holocaust in the East and a history of Ukrainian nationalism necessary to Ukraine as it fights a Russian-enabled separatist war in its eastern oblasts. The Soviet Union's post-war discourse blocked a Jewish-centric memorial and has been replaced by Ukrainian discourse and collective memory.

What does this mean for the Jewish memory of Babyn Yar and a memorial or monument to that memory? The answer can be found in historian James Young's concept of "counter-monuments." Specifically, in "Germany's Memorial Question: Memory, Counter-Memory, and the End of the Monument," Young examines how memory can create a monument that does not need a physical space to exist.[62] For example, the disappearing "Monument Against Fascism" in Harburg-Hamburg was there; yet it disappeared over time, leaving the "space" it once existed in to be filled with the memory of those who remember. Similarly, a monument in Saarbrucken, Germany, in which cobblestones were pulled up and their undersides engraved with the names of lost Jewish cemeteries and then replaced with the name facing downward, exists; however, the "space" it exists in makes it unseen to its public. The public knows it exists and once again fills the space with memory.

It therefore may be argued that the intense debate and conflict over monuments as to placement, design, and which memories are to be memorialized, represents, in and of itself, the memorialization of the events that occurred at Babyn Yar. Essentially, the on-going conflict of memories and subsequent debate, which has lasted over eighty years, becomes the memorial itself. The proliferation of monuments represents the lack of consensus on what memory is to be memorialized in Babyn Yar. Neither party is satisfied; however, dissatisfaction is the best memorial in a land that has seen the level of conflict over the years that Ukraine has experienced. The conflict over competing memories has become the memorialization, or the counter-monument, of the Jewish and Ukrainian experiences of Babyn Yar. As such, it is fitting, as the events of Babyn Yar are indescribable in their horror and atrocity and occurred in a place that has a history of brutal conflict and disputes over memory.

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62. James E. Young, "Germany's Memorial Question: Memory, Counter-Memory, and the End of the Monument," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 96, no. 4 (Fall 1997): 854-880.

# American Gun Culture: Understanding the National Relationship to the Second Amendment

**Preston S. Moore**

**Abstract:** Arms are at the center of the American identity; stories of settler colonialism, revolution, the frontier, and the wild West are synonymous with the proliferation and use of arms. Even today, much of the country assigns a symbol of independence and self-reliance to owning and using firearms. A more in-depth examination of the History reveals how beliefs surrounding an individual's right to keep and bear arms in self-defense began as a populist notion that still slowly matured into the D.C. v Heller Case in 2008. Times of uncertainty see Americans continue to proliferate their right to "keep and bear arms," finding solace in this potent symbol of American exceptionalism. Few other nations have such a relationship with arms and the historical imprint of their use. Therefore, American Gun Culture studies offer lasting links with the contemporary political climate contentiously constructed by bipartisan meddling in a genuine understanding of a unique history. "A History of American Gun Culture" engages the second amendment through traditional archival sources and popular discourse driving newspapers and media in search of a road map to understanding the complexities and the importance of the subject in fostering a foundational understanding of past and the present discourse, across race, gender, and class struggle to achieve the most basic of American promises.

"Freedom is something that dies unless used."-- Hunter S. Thompson

"A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed."[1] It is both the shortest and the most controversial Amendment in the Bill of Rights. Many today argue the militia is an unnecessary, outdated, and disproven institution because, as Antonin Scalia stated, "our standing army is the pride of our Nation," and "well-trained police forces provide personal security."[2] The mention of militias conjures something closer to what Revolutionary Virginia defined as "gentlemen freeholders and other free men."[3] The militia consisted of subjects or citizens called upon in times of extreme need to assist in policing, putting down a rebellion, and protecting local communities. At least, that is what the American gun culture's rhetoric would lead us to believe— examining the more complicated and assorted history of the militia and the collective memories of bearing arms reveal a deep linking between arms and the American cultural mind across class, race, and gender.

2020 will remain a turbulent and consequential Annis horribilis for the people who endured the year. The SAR CoV-2 Coronavirus's Outbreak caused massive lockdowns, economic interruptions, unprecedented unemployment, and civil unrest. Election politics already primed the powder keg, as the police killings of unarmed black men escalated, protesters took to the streets across the nation. By day peaceful, protests turned to violent clashes with police officers at night, and rapidly full-scale rioting and looting replaced constructive protest across the United States. With the national guard deployed across towns, big and small national gun sales increased by

1. Amendment II, US Constitution.

2. Antonin Scalia, District of Columbia et al. v. Heller (Supreme Court of the United States June 26, 2008), 64.

3. George Mason, "Fairfax County Militia Plan 'For Embodying the People,'" [Feb 6, 1775], https://www.consource.org/document/fairfax-county-militia-plan-for-embodying-the-people-1775-2-6/.

staggering amounts.[4] Adjusted numbers place the annual average increase at 60%, a shocking number considering many of these sales are not first-time buyers and people who might have otherwise passed on purchasing a firearm. Price sky-rocketed and ammunition stock disappeared from shelves everywhere, much like what took place after the Sandy Hook Shooting. Lines formed outside of gun shops, and people waited hours to buy guns or ammunition. Gun sales passed the number for the entire year of 2016 by July 2020, and the all-time high for a single year by September.

Wayne LaPierre, President of the National Rifle Association in the months following Sandy Hook, infamously declared, "the only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun."[5] Charlton Heston announced his retirement before him, holding a Kentucky Long Rifle Pattern Musket, emphatically declaring, "from my cold dead hands!"[6] In the middle of the Civil War, famous Copperhead Clement Vallandigham told a thrall of supporters if the federal government wanted to enforce their wartime ban on militias, "then we will return the Spartan cry, 'Come and take them.'"[7] The Lexingtonians and Concordians mustered the militia when the British Army attempted to seize the powder stores. From the first settlers to the present day, Americans have kept their arms close. Interwoven into the national identity, they provide recreation, sustenance, security, insecurity, and are many Americans' constant companions. The United States is far and away the most saturated civilian arms market in the world. The idea of bearing arms has been so instrumental in the country's past it appears second in the Bill of Rights out of numerous original amendments. Debates about gun rights and gun control still rage in the United States today, especially following the Supreme Court decisions in D.C. v. Heller and McDonald v. Chicago.[8] The two cases codified the individual's right to keep and bear arms and incorporated that right to states, respectively. As strange as it may sound, the legal world of the second Amendment and the cultural world has long remained divergent from one another. For 217 years, the courts rarely spoke on the Amendment, often relegating it to passive mention. However, throughout American history, there has been a constant affair with keeping and bearing arms.

The U.S. is one of the most armed countries globally. There are more guns in America than people, with approximately one hundred and twenty firearms per one hundred people.[9] Militias have always played a part in American society; however, regional differences have resulted from settlement patterns, local situations, and the West's ever-expansive borderlands. In the East, the colonial militias reflected the social hierarchy and class divisions, ready to respond to threats against their local communities. On the eve of the Revolution, some states like Massachusetts had strong militia cohesion and coordinated with other regional forces. Whereas New York's militia lacked social cohesion and the necessary men, they had to call on neighboring communities for help when crisis arose.[10] In the South, militia members were often the wealthier society members who could take time to participate and gained value

4. National Shooting Sports Foundation, National Adjusted NICS Checks: Month of October 21-Year History November 2020.

5. NRA: 'Only Way To Stop A Bad Guy With A Gun Is With A Good Guy With A Gun,'" CBS. Washington, DC. December 21, 2012.

6. "Heston to Step down as NRA President," *The Nation*, April 25, 2003.

7. *Democrat and Sentinel*, 10, no. 23, May 13, 1863.

8. Antonin Scalia, District of Columbia et al. v. Heller (Supreme Court of the United States June 26, 2008); Alito, Samuel. McDonald v. Chicago, No. 561 U.S. 742 (2010) (Supreme Court of the United States June 28, 2010).

9. Guy Smith, *Guns and Control: A Nonpartisan Guide to Understanding Mass Public Shootings, Gun Accidents, Crime, Public Carry, Suicides, Defensive Use and More*, Gun Facts Project, (Delaware and New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2020), 15.

10. John W. Shy, "A New Look at Colonial Militia," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 20, no. 2 (1963): 176-85.

from the organization's opportunities for social advancement. Additionally, in the South, militias projected power and patrolled to keep the enslaved population from forming effective militant resistance. Later, these same structures would transform into slave patrols and later be foundational in the Confederate Army's organizational structure. Along the western colonial frontier, militias-maintained control over land and protected valuable trade with Native Americans.

Settling West of the Mississippi was a tremendous and challenging undertaking. Many areas relied on the U.S. Army to patrol borders with Indigenous Peoples. As the rule of law began to overcome wild west frontier justice, the posse system began to form as a means of supplementing officers when they faced bandits' bands. In the years following the discovery of gold, companies would employ armed groups of guards to prevent workers from organizing and to put down unrest. Many of these groups consisted of veterans of the frontiers Indian Wars and the Civil War, who found a living using the skills they gained in government service. Due to the violent nature of moving West, guns were a critical cultural component, and many associated with being righteous and necessary.[11] A famous marketing phrase from a company that got started as a supplier for the Texas Rangers, "God created men equally, Colonel Colt made them equal," encapsulates how many people perceived their firearms' role.[12]

During the Civil War, the structure and purpose behind militia's adapted to the new locations and needs, in some places even taking on a role like the regular Army's on its mission to rid the frontier of hostile natives.[13] Through the California Gold Rush, bandits and highway robberies and murders were the norm, helping to build a strong relationship between Americans and their guns. Firearms became associated with the ability to prevent violent acts against individuals and property, even if the reality of it played out differently. Arguably the most significant contribution of the militia was the quick actions at Lexington and Concord. In April 1775, upon hearing the British Army embarked on seizing the powder stores from the New England towns, the regional militia assembled and exacted withering fire on the regulars. The opening of hostilities galvanized support for Independence in the colonies.[14] At nearly the same time, Lord Dunmore of Virginia sought to remove the firelocks from the armory at Williamsburg, along with the powder, causing the Virginia militia to assemble to prevent it. In response, Lord Dunmore raised the discontent in Virginia to outright hostility when he issued a proclamation offering freedom to all "slaves, servants, and others" who would leave their masters and join crown forces.[15] Threats to the social fabric and colonial militia arms brought Virginia from passive support into active participation.[16]

In the Southwest, the militia became an absolute necessity, due to the Comanche and Apache's intense resistance. Unable to contain the growing problem of raids and kidnappings further weakened the northern Mexican governments hold and hastened the Mexican Government's downfall. Additionally, the tribes continually

11. "Stage Robbery," *Mountain Democrat*, 11, no. 27, July 2, 1864.

12. Kat Escher, "On This Day in 1847, a Texas Ranger Walked Into Samuel Colt's Shop and Said, Make Me a Six-Shooter," *Smithsonian Magazine*. January 4, 2017.

13. Brendan C Lindsay, *Murder State: California's Native American Genocide, 1846-1873* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012).

14. Robert A Gross, *The Minutemen and Their World* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001).

15. Virginia, *By his Excellency the Right Honourable John Earl of Dunmore, his Majesty's Lieutenant and Governour-General of the Colony and Dominion of Virginia, and Vice-admiral of the same. A proclamation Declaring martial law and to cause the same to be.* Norfolk, 1775.

16. Woody Holton, *Forced Founders* (Williamsburg, Virginia: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 206.

challenged the US Army throughout the nineteenth century.[17] Along the borderlands, racial conflict became common and normalized — Southwestern tribal raiding aimed at destroying settlements and securing resources. [18] A style of warfare seen before on earlier eastern colonial frontiers took on more brutal shades in the southwest as resources dwindled.

The fundamental practices of a militia was born out of English traditions that came to the colonies early on. Because of the distance and necessity of living on the Imperial frontier, it grew into a practical and romantic institution that has shaped the course of U.S. culture, social movements, and law. Militias have often transformed throughout American history in the ugly insurrectionary ways one might imagine as a logical result from a group of armed individuals joining in quasi militant actions. Militias have assembled to prevent slights from government, hostile natives, private industry, and vigilante gangs such as the Ku Klux Klan following the Civil War. They have both maintained legitimate government control, which led to new regimes and vehicles of liberty and tyranny. The history of the militia in the United States, when examined alongside the transformative legal history of the right to bear arms and popular perception evidenced through newspaper reporting, the specific use of language and advertisements paints an undeniable picture. Simultaneously, the legal position of an individual right to arms has only solidified in the twenty-first century.[19] The idea shares a long reinforced by the minutemen's mythos, the quintessential American underdog rhetoric of farmers, settlers, and shopkeepers who threw off tremendous odds to form a new nation of liberty. Examining the complicated and assorted history of the militia and the collective memory of bearing arms reveals a deep link between arms and the American cultural mind, cultivated by an expansionist government which permeated all levels of American society.

## Early America: Resistance and Expansion

In 1636, the Massachusetts Bay Colony mustered ten militia companies comprised of over 1500 men.[20] With a total colonial population in North America of approximately four thousand in 1630 and twenty thousand by 1640, 1500 members in 1636 is a sizeable portion of the population. Further, every male member of the earliest Puritan expeditions into the wilderness had to bring full armor, twenty pounds of powder, and sixty pounds of lead shot.[21] Rough calculations reveal this is approximately 670 shots worth of powder and shot. Bearing arms was a critical component for the expedition into the New World. The same Mayflower records reveal several accidents involving powder and fires.[22] Weapons were a part of their daily lives. Whether it was fear of the natives or other Europeans, the first tasks upon landing in Plymouth revolve around getting cannons and militia parties to shore. There is little doubt bearing arms in an organized and communal fashion was of

17. Brian DeLay and William P. Clements Center for Southwest Studies, *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War* (New Haven: Yale University Press; 2010).

18. S. C, Gwynne, *Empire of the Summer Moon: Quanah Parker and the Rise and Fall of the Comanches, the Most Powerful Indian Tribe in American History* (New York: Scribner, 2010), 40-45; 193-4.

19. Antonin Scalia, District of Columbia et al. v. Heller (Supreme Court of the United States June 26, 2008).

20. Anzel Ames and Ed David Wagner, *The Mayflower and her Log,* 1620-21, The Gutenberg Project.

21. In this source there is provided the caliber information as well as the number of people in the early militia. The rest of the math comes from being required to have sixty pounds of power and 20 pounds of shot makes it apparent that the charge was not more than thirty percent of the bullet weight. Unknown, "The First American Musket," Newtown Musket.

22. Azel, *The Mayflower.*

chief concern to the earliest settlers.

Studying gun culture yields an understanding that constitutional beliefs and legal interpretation changes follow courses of cultural understanding and interpretation. Article VII of the English Declaration of Rights declared English men had the right "to hold and bear arms" the legality of the militia and keeping arms for the common defense, except for Catholic individuals. Historians and legal scholars continue to debate the reasoning behind the wording of the Second Amendment. Some argue the addition of the first clause was an attempt to clarify the right's purpose with the actual protection being incorporated by the second clause. Specifically, they argue it limits the meaning of arms bearing to militias only and does not protect individual citizens' rights.[23] The original wording of the Amendment did contain the "right of the people clause" first and was changed later. It is not the right to bear arms that drives America's gun culture, nor is it a belief pushed by marketing in the wake of the Civil War. Rather, America's relationship with firearms traces its lineage to settlement patterns, the Revolution, continuous struggles frontier struggles, and assertions of rights by the multitudes of people who were not given them. While the founders' original intention behind adoption is important to certain legal arguments, common cultural beliefs and interpretations have built a stronger link to Americans' cultural understanding than the courts. A thorough exploration of early militias and how early Americans employed them in war and domestic rebellion will provide insight into their pervasive role in American gun culture development.

Ample evidence that the frontier plays a vital role in Americans' political and social character exists. Fredrick Jackson Turner postulated the frontier experience of risk, struggle, and perseverance shaped the nation's unique nature and divergence from the European societies that sent settlers across the ocean and shaped the American values of individuality and determination.[24] While the Frontier Thesis has lost traction under academic review, forever complicated by the experience of marginalized people whose land, labor, and lives crumbled before continental expansion. Right up to the present, there remains a stunning urban, rural divide evident in regional cultures, language, politics, and even beliefs about government. A cursory glance at an electoral map in even the most Democratic strongholds reveals a sharply divided line between the rural and urban lifestyles. Jefferson's ideal of yeoman farmers remains, continuing to prop up the underlying mythos of self-reliance that shapes political cultures.[25] The frontier was always a porous moving demarcation that marched gradually westward, dismantling, amalgamating, building, and erasing along the journey. The frontier is a story of violence, triumph, and genocide of an enormous magnitude.

When looking at the past's actions, particularly the long and shameful history of Native Americans, it is essential to see them in their time. The experiences of their lives and struggles are different from ours. The events of the past do not change in our time, and remembrance requires an astute understanding that all involved are human beings. Natives and settlers alike fought for what they held dear and took their actions under the auspices of necessity to preserve something they cared for deeply, to the point of a willingness to die. However violent or cruel, their efforts were

23. Lois G. Schwoerer, "To Hold and Bear Arms: The English Perspective," *Chi.-Kent L. Rev.* 27 (2000), 1-8; 55-60.

24. Fredrick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1921, Project Gutenberg.

25. Friedrich Götz, Stefan Stieger, Samuel Gosling, Jeff Potter, and Peter Rentfrow, "Physical Topography is Associated with Human Personality," *Nature Human Behavior* (2020): 4. 1-10.

sincere products of their time, and their humanity is lost in pursuit of condemnation. Perhaps the most valuable lesson of the twentieth century is the perpetrators of the most heinous crimes were not alien psychopathic apparitions, but rather they were the human the same as everyone else throughout history. Fierce competition for finite resources is one of the most atavistic of human behaviors. While the atrocities of what took place across the expanding western borderlands should be recognized and reconciled wherever possible, passions should not stand in the way of examining interpersonal, cultural, and racial decisions with a critical eye. Brian DeLay's book, *The War of a Thousand Deserts*, explains the extreme levels of violence demonstrated by the Comanches against Mexicans, Texans, and other tribes do not minimize their humanity; instead, it deepens it.[26] Violence is a readily available trait in human beings, and it is one behavior that precedes cultural intelligence. Indeed, these individuals fought for their livelihoods, their families, homes, and their lives. Modernity provides a false sense of distance from nature; however, it remains hard-wired into our species. Standing vigilant for moments the veneer of civilization is gets stripped away.

Many times, wars broke out between settlers and natives and bound them in struggles for the means to survive. The prospect of starvation led early inhabitants of Jamestown to steal when they could no longer barter and burn what they were unable to take.[27] As tobacco cultivation required expansion of croplands and conversion of native peoples justified the Virginia Company's business, the early Virginians and natives were increasingly in conflict, each trying to annihilate the other.[28] A similar fate awaited the settlers in New England; fueled by their religious conviction to spread the gospel, Puritan settlers and their native neighbors endured conflicts such as King Phillips War. The resulting display of Philip harkens back to something more akin to medieval stories than the early modern period, with his body drawn and quartered and his head condemned to display throughout the Plymouth Colony. What began as a raid descended into a colony wide fracas marked by brutality and retaliation.[29] Until that point there was a spirit of conversion among the colonials and cooperative trade from the natives. The war had a transformative effect on colonial and native relations going forward, and violence was increasingly normalized. The fear of, and participation in, conflict, especially on the frontiers, preserved the intimate relationship of colonials and arms.

The idea of bearing arms is at its heart a right to retain the tools necessary to engage in violence. It is critical to understand this worldview if you want to understand the nature of gun culture and American rights. Often it is easy to look back at the founding of the nation as a time of high-minded political philosophy.[30] History is rarely cut and dry, and the realities of life in the eighteenth century are

26. Brian DeLay, *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008) 83-89.

27. The Virginia Company's Instructions to Sir Thomas Gates Concerning the Natives, May, 1609, *The Records of the Virginia Company of London*, edited by Susan M Kingsbury (Washington: Govt. Print. Off., to 1935), 1906; John Smith and Jay I, Kislak Reference Collection, *The General Historie of Virginia, New England & the Summer Isles: Together with the True Travels, Adventures and Observations, and a Sea Grammar* (Glasgow: J. MacLehose; New York: Macmillan, 1907); Peter Force, *Tracts and Other Papers Relating Principally to the Origin, Settlement, and Progress of the Colonies in North America from the Discovery of the Country to the Year* (Washington: P. Force, 1836).

28. "Converting Indians to Christianity Justifies English Colonization," (1610). *Tracts and Other Papers Relating principally to the Origin, Settlement, and Progress of the Colonies in North America from the Discovery of the Country to the Year*, Washington, Printed by P. Force, -46, 1836; A Relation of the Barbarous Massacre, 1622, *The Records of the Virginia Company of London*, edited by Kingsbury, Susan M Washington: Govt. Print. Off., to 1935, 1906.

29. Jack Newlon et al., "King Phillip's War," u-s-history.com. Online Highways: Florence OR. https://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h578.html.

30. Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books 1993); Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press), 2017.

very different than today. Early Americans contended with European empires, the elements, native nations to the West, and the threat of general uprising amongst the enslaved and disenfranchised.[31] Many of the founding generations fought in multiple brutal civil and imperial wars; they faced rebellion and insurrection in their daily lives. There is little reason to believe that they did not understand the deadly gravity of the situation around them. Having just successfully separated from the British Crown, the young confederation faced continual uprisings that the federal government was powerless to stop. Curiously, the founders created a strong centralized government and adopted an amendment believed to guarantee the right to bear arms in defense of themselves and their communities.

Other historians have argued the pervasive gun culture in the United States is just a result of arms manufacturers and imaginative advertising campaigns.[32] While there is no arguing arms manufacturing has always been a critical business in North America, the boom-and-bust industry lacked the centralization and stability to maintain a pervasive social belief. Historian Thomas H. Breen argues the American identity solidified through consumer culture and individuals' ability to inflate their social standing through consumption patterns.[33] Perhaps there is a valuable thread of commonality between the desire to elevate one's social standing and the self-actualized power of bearing arms. Firearms of all types are tools; they serve the purpose of the bearer without reservation. For colonists and later Americans, firearms have been intimately linked to the formation and by that, preservation of their self-styled societies. Caught between two burgeoning nations and the steady contraction of the Spanish Empire, the lore of the first Republic of, and later state of Texas is linked to martial force. Conflict between nomadic tribes, Mexican, and American settlers fostered the acquisition of the western United States and the longest series of wars in American history.

In the early days of the colonies, guns meant defending small settlements from much larger groups of potentially hostile people. Colonists also lived with a constant, albeit distant, fear of other European powers. Those with arms wielded a great deal of economic and military power. For natives, the acquisition of arms meant tremendous advantage over rival tribes and increasing efficiency in harvesting the natural resources necessary to increase trade. Simultaneously breaking connections with traditional warfare to detrimental effect. Forming a militia meant the ability to wage offensive and defensive conflict. They are tools as much as they represent an idea of sovereignty, at minimum, the ability to assert autonomy over one's decision. There is an astute understanding in American culture that firearms have always been a keystone of American experiments' founding and success. "A whole people in arms" captures a frequent political sentiment that equates the possession of arms as having granted America Independence.[34] Frequent references display the mere presence of arms as an equalizing force, and one that would be readily employed by

31. Colin Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Woody Holton, *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, and Slaves & the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia* (Williamsburg Virginia: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Alan Taylor, *American Revolutions: A Continental History, 1750-1804* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2016); *American Colonies: The Settling Of North America* The Penguin History Of The United States, (New York: Penguin Books, 2002).

32. Michael A Bellesiles, *Arming America: The Origins of a National Gun Culture* (New York: New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000).

33. Timothy Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), XIV-XV.

34. "The Populist Slogan," *The Independent. [XVI No. 12]* (Lincoln, Neb.), August 11, 1904.

common men and women when necessary.[35]

The settlers to the Northeast coast left their native lands behind for scores of reasons, chief among them being religious persecution the opportunity to achieve a higher level of economic wealth than possible at home. Settlement parties came with royal charters, ships of supplies, seeds, and livestock. Another commonality amongst all settler's colonial parties was military-grade weaponry and requirements to train regularly.[36] The earliest settlers had to manage their militias and training, with the first quasi-governmental organization coming as part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1636. The colony adopted the English system and required all men between the ages of sixteen and sixty were required to keep rifles, powder, and shot while also being required to report to muster.[37] While the militia structure was originally a medieval construction in Europe, it began to see a resurgence in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It likely played a critical role in the development of the civically engaged populace. Classicist Victor Davis Hanson explains *Civic Militarism* as a crucial component in the formation of western politics and military successes.[38] While the full connection between the colonies' militia structures and American political identity formation is only a piece of a broader economic and ideological puzzle debated by historians, there is little doubt that the militia forms the origin thinking around the belief that an armed populace can preserve liberty.

Unlike national armies, all soldiers in a militia are from the local community and likely have extensive social and economic ties with other members. New England's militias were often extended kin networks.[39] Immediately after settling, colonists faced starvation and disease. Along the Chesapeake, English colonists struggled to gain a meaningful foothold in the swampy marshland. With illness and starvation looming, the colonists relied on trade with natives for survival. Strained in lean times, discontent between settlers and natives led to a diminished willingness to subsidize the English. Simultaneously, Jamestown colonists stole foodstuffs from the natives raiding fields for corn, squash, and beans. In 1622, Virginia natives raided colonists in Eastern Virginia, which came to be known as the Jamestown Massacre. The event sparked war and transformed colonial policy towards native people from suspicious friendship to an opponent. The ill feelings justified the forced theft of native lands and resources. Anglo-Native Wars did not follow the European warfare patterns; fraught with wanton violence carrying out against the civilian population instead of isolated incidents with military-aged males.

The Anglos and the Natives' means of making war bore many resemblances. Both fought with groups of warriors taken from their communities. Both fought to secure the means of providing for families and community members, and both often saw the other as an existential threat. Many of the wars bordered on complete destruction, and as historian Thomas Kidd points out, "Indians were not the only ones who took scalps."[40] Historian Jorge Canizares-Esguerra points out the Puritan communities bore many resemblances to the Spanish Conquistadors who sought to cultivate the New World's wilds for God and the monarchy. Esguerra points out that

35. Mountain Democrat [XL No. 27] (July 2nd, 1864), Placerville, CA.

36. Azel, *The Mayflower*.

37. Cpt. Robert K Wright, "Massachusetts Militia Roots: A Bibliographic Study," Virginia: 116th Military History Detachment, Virginia National Guard. GB-85-179A, April 1989. (U.S. Government Printing Office), 1990.

38. Victor Davis Hanson, *Carnage and Culture: Landmark Battles in the Rise of Western Power* (New York: Doubleday, 2001).

39. Michael McDonnell, *The Politics of War: Race & Class in Revolutionary Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 2007).

40. Thomas Kidd, *God of Liberty: A Religious History of the American Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), 20.

the 1654 History of the New England Colonies by Puritan Edward Johnson called on colonists to "store your selves with all sorts of weapons for war, furbish up your Swords, Rapiers, and all other piercing weapons."[41] The Puritans had a trade-based relationship with the natives that also wanted to "[pull] down the Kingdome of Antichrist."[42] American opinions of Native Americans and willingness to respect their territorial boundaries waned following wars. The Pequot Wars consisted of three bloody war stents across multiple decades that turned natives from potential converts into mortal holy enemies. Virginia and the middle colonies followed similar paths that began amicably and quickly pivoted to exploitation and distrust. Confrontation with Native Americans transformed the colonial landscape in various ways; it allowed the growing colony to expand towards the West and reinforced the religious notion of God's will.

By the eighteenth century, several wars bolstered the colonists' ideas of the militia, making the institution something familiar and associated with survival both physically and ideologically. In the middle of the eighteenth century, on July 4, a young Captain Washington would make a blunder and cause a high-ranking French officer dead. The incident leads the world's superpowers into open hostilities over who would remain primary in North America. Following the 1759 Annus mirabilis, wherein Britain turned the war around and put France into a general defense, the English retook control of the seas and several of the most productive sugar islands. The Seven Years War, known by the French and Indian War moniker, solidified Britain's position as the supreme colonial power in the America's. The war developed a rift that had begun to form between colonists because of the long period of benign neglect that ended with the war and saw Parliament increasingly seeking to assert itself politically and regain some of the cost lost securing the continent. As the British American colonists began to formulate uniquely American identities, the philosophical and economic rift would boil over. The Proclamation Line of 1763 helped pushed the colonists further from Britain and stirred resentments over financial limitation. The line forbade colonists from settlement west of the line, with the hope of avoiding another costly war along the colonial frontiers. Settlers and speculators found themselves facing an uncertain financial future despite having prevailed in a war that was fought in the same hinterlands royal decree barred colonists from settling in.[43] The controversy resembles the later Versailles Treaty ending The Great War. However, the victor's roles are switched. In much the same way that Germany never lost German soil in their war, the colonists had been victorious and lived somewhat insular lives increasingly different politically than London.

Regionally, militia structures and combat efficacy differed. Historian Timothy Breen argues it is impossible to understand the regional differences between New England areas with a strong militia tradition tied to church services and burgeoning town squares and others in the middle colonies like Virginia that struggled to find the necessary manpower.[44] The militia remained a critical component in the Revolutionary War, although the militia's efficacy is often at odds with the lore. Due to the British Army's misconduct, it was a primary concern of both Federalists and

41. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550-1700*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006, 9.

42. Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors,* 9.

43. Holton, *Forced Founders*; and, Gross, *The Minutemen and Their World.*

44. Breen, T. H, "English Origins and New World Development: The Case of the Covenanted Militia in Seventeenth-Century Massachusetts." *Past & Present*, no. 57 (1972): 74-96; and, Shy, John W. "A New Look at Colonial Militia." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 20, no. 2 (1963): 176-85. doi:10.2307/1919295. Pp 179-80.

Anti-Federalists. It is common knowledge that the state governments' inadequacies to deal with the national problems of debt was created by the economic destruction of the Revolution. Uprisings like Shays Rebellion gathered disgruntled farmers, unable to secure their farms from crippling debt by seizing Massachusetts' courts to prevent foreclosure. The rebellion increased momentum for a Constitutional convention to strengthen the federal government and grant it enough power to stabilize the young country and have the necessary authority to respond to rebellions.[45] Standing against the federal government has often been the trope of militias, a trend that has waxed and waned throughout the United States' history.

Following the Constitution's ratification, the work to immediately ratify it and attach a Bill of Rights began. While many founders, including the principal author James Madison, thought the codification of rights was unnecessary, many antifederalist veterans of the Revolution demanded restraints on the new federal government. The Amendment was originally the fourth in the list of proposals and contained an extra sentence protecting those religiously opposed to bearing arms. The most interesting of the differences was that the "right of the people" appeared before the now preceding clause about the "militia being necessary to the security of the free state." However, the version ratified is the shortest and most contentious part of the Bill of Rights. While the Constitution codified the militia's role in the American citizenry's minds, but practice left a glaring gap.[46]

Compelling citizens to fulfill their service in the militia remained a challenge across the continent. The Virginia legislature's early convention required colonists to keep their weapons on them while working in their fields and required that they appear for church with those weapons or pay a penalty of two pounds of tobacco for violation.[47] By the middle of the eighteenth century, the legislature went so far as to prescribe the accouterments and required all free males, including African and Native Americans, to turn up for service; however, it required they were unarmed.[48] Despite the ideological opposition to standing armies that appear across state constitutions, there was a continual shortage of citizens willing to engage in warfare as part of the militia. While the eastern states upheld a tradition of regulating the militia as settlers moved west, the well-regulated remained as elusive as ever. However, connections between the local and federal governments changed in the face of the same types of struggles in an area that was predominantly federal land. The gradually punctuated movements to the West saw a transformation of militia structures and the administration of justice. Whereas the Eastern U.S. and the South had a solid footing in the British Empire by the time the Revolution came along, the West was ever encroaching international boundaries.

## The Young Republic Moving West

During the Gold Rush, citizens formed militias seeking to check on the vigilantes and marauding gangs. In the West, possess and vigilance committees convened in response to widespread lawlessness in the mining camps and numerous conflicts

45. Parker, Rachel R, "Shays' Rebellion: An Episode in American State-Making." *Sociological Perspectives* 34, no. 1 (1991): 95-113. Accessed December 5, 2020. doi:10.2307/1389145.

46. McDonnell, *Politics of War*, 40.

47. "1632 Va. Acts 178, Acts of September 4th, 1632, Act XLV," Frassetto, Mark. *Firearms and Weapons Legislation up to the Early 20th Century* (Everytown or Gun Safety, 2013), 68.

48. "An Act for better Regulation of the Militia," (November 1738), Fassetto, Mark. *Firearms and Weapons Legislation up to the Early 20th Century* (Everytown or Gun Safety, 2013), 69.

with outlaws and Indians. Everyone knows the American West's stereotypical stories, the Gold Rush, and the myths of lawless towns and gun-slinging outlaws. History can provide a path to where myth meets reality. The truth is, there was as much violence as the myths imply, but not necessarily the type commonly depicted. The sheer size of the state formed quickly after discovering gold in Coloma, California in January 1848, and left policing to small numbers of U.S. Army troops and scores of sheriffs possess. Some of San Diego and El Dorado Counties' earliest acts were the formations of militia groups led by the sheriff to drive the resistant natives into submission.[49] Militia volunteers did expeditions in California; however, the state sought reimbursement for supplying troops with the necessary arms and accouterments to "pursue such energetic measures to punish the Indians, bring them to terms, and protect the emigrants on their way to California."[50] The expeditions created a form of sanctioning by the U.S. government for acts that ruthlessly pursued the extermination of the California Natives.[51]

Following the annexation of Alta California and the discovery of gold in the Sierra Nevada, San Francisco boomed from a tiny backwater to a bustling center of trade, migration, and the gold trade. The enormous influx of people into Northern California, a mostly unoccupied expanse of wilderness. Spanish colonization and the spread of disease reduced the numbers of California Natives generations before the arrival of Anglo fortune seekers. Regardless of the sparse population, clashes were commonplace, and the government support of arming settlers of the West was more in-depth than generally suspected. Archeological explorations of the former Hoff Store in San Francisco, destroyed in an 1850s fire, revealed plenty of weapons covering older eighteenth century technologies right up to modern breech-loading percussion fired arms for sale in the height of the Gold Rush.

Additionally, newspaper advertisements in many gateway towns sold surplus arms following the Mexican American War to settlers heading to the West. Emigrants were able to arm themselves for the trek through Indian country.[52] While not officially government agents, they indeed served the government's wishes and gave the Army the necessary pretext to remove seek removal to reservations. The pattern emerges when understanding that the confrontations between the Kiowa, Camanche, and Apache in the Texas borderlands helped form the basis for Mexico's invasion. The transfer of surplus arms to the settlers heading into California how American gun culture was synonymous with the settler colonial mission.[53]

Further normalizing violence was the pervasive dissemination of stories about violence against natives, often taking a heroic tone. Stories of old struggles with Native warriors in Virginia found their way into California newspapers. One account tells of a farmer who supposedly fought off six warriors with a single charge in his gun. The descriptions throughout portray the weapon as if it too were a character

49. Peter H. Burnett, *"Governor's Annual Message to the Legislature, January 7, 1851,"* in Journals of the Senate and Assembly of the State of California, at the Second Session of the Legislature, 1851-1852 (San Francisco: G.K. Fitch & Co., and V.E. Geiger & Co., State Printers, 1852), 18.

50. California State Research Bureau. Dodds, Kimberly, "The California Militia and "Expeditions Against the Indians," 1850 – 1859" (Sacramento California) 2002; and, Peter H. Burnett, *"Governor's Annual Message to the Legislature, January 7, 1851,"* in Journals of the Senate and Assembly of the State of California, at the Second Session of the Legislature, 1851-1852, (San Francisco: G.K. Fitch & Co., and V.E. Geiger & Co., State Printers, 1852),16-17.

51. Brendan C. Lindsay, *Murder State: California's Native American Genocide, 1846-1873* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012).

52. Louis A. Garvalgia, Charles G. Worman, *Firearms of the American West, 1803-1865* (Albequerue: University of New Mexico Press, 1984), 235.

53. Brian DeLay, *War of a Thousand Deserts*, (The Lamar Series in Western History New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

in the story. As unbelievable as the story may sound, with one musket falling five warriors, it represents the mythology of fighting against the odds that became engrained in the American psyche.[54] Depictions of valiant attempts to resist in the face of overwhelming odds following an uprising in San Diego County that would spread through most of Southern California faster than a small army could react.[55] Across the state, the California Volunteers would repeatedly quarrel with the natives. The Owen's River Indian War shows how armed violence was directed into natives, and afterwards, armed groups protected mines and settled disputes extra-judicially in towns such as Bodie Ca.[56] It is not a stretch to think that many of the same individuals fulfilled these rolls.

At the same time in the Southwest, Texans fought to secure their land claims against the Kiowa, Comanche, and Apache Indians. Sensationalization in the press reinforced the need to view personal arms as key components in the settler's identity. Conflicts generally ended through governmental actions, with the cavalry called in to protect the settlers' lives by destroying the means of making war amongst the natives. Countless newspapers across the plains, Rockies, Southwest, and California tell stories of volunteer groups and army detachments searching and destroy style conflict akin to the Vietnam War's warfighting policy. Readers might recognize the idea that the American Civil War, particularly in Georgia, was the first total war carried against the civilian and military populations. The wars against native Americans had taken on this form for centuries.

## The Profound Trauma: Civil War and Reconstruction

No examination of American cultural development can neglect to explore the Civil War and its consequences. Historian Shelby Foote in the opening episode of the Ken Burns, *The Civil War,* explained, "it is very necessary if you're going to understand the American character in the 20th century, to learn about this enormous catastrophe in the mid-nineteenth century. It was the crossroads of our being, and it was a hell of a crossroads."[57] The Civil War is often seen as the first total war, and stories of the southerner's abilities with arms as a result of rural living persist into the present, further evidence of the colonial settlement patterns that continue to shape the American political field. The conflict began before the establishment of the United States. After fourscore and five years, the question over the peculiar institution and the ideological foundation of a country "conceived in liberty" came a calamitous head.[58] The Civil War is the paradigm moment in American history. 1861-1865 saw an unprecedented change and violent transformation, but the fighting began in the decade before the hostilities' opening. The Sectional Crisis began over questions about the expansion of slavery. Some saw fit to contain the institution and let it wither away through innovation. In contrast, others saw this policy as a direct threat to the southern states' sociopolitical autonomy. In the preceding years cases such as Dred Scott v Sanford and the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, the nation's eyes turned to Kansas. Newspapers at the time recognized the gravity of

54. A Virginia Settler, "A Hair Bredth's Escape," *Mountain Democrat,* no. 40, (Placerville California), December 18, 1858.

55. "Important From The South," *The Nevada Journal.* (Nevada City, Calif.), December 6, 1851.

56. Roger D McGrath, *Gunfighters, Highwaymen, & Vigilantes: Violence on the Frontier* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1984), 184-224.

57. Shelby Foote, "Remembering Civil War Historian Sheby Foote," PBS.org. June 25, 2005.

58. Abraham Lincoln, "The Gettysburg Address," Gettysburg Pennsylvania, November 19, 1863.

the unfolding violence in Kansas. Referring to The Civil War, the southern states believed the nation had already begun a violent schism.[59] Regardless, dramatically increased the supply of weapons in the United States and the number of companies producing them.

Some historians have argued American gun culture comes from the boom of weapons and military experience during the Civil War.[60] But it is easy to see the legal right was a concept before the war and remained afterward. The interpretation of the right to bear arms transformed before, during, and after the war. The first time the right to bear arms appears in national jurisprudence is in the infamous Dred Scott v. Stanford case. In declaring that Mr. Scott was not subject to the Constitution's protections, Chief Justice Roger Taney cited citizens' right to bear arms as one of the many rights guaranteed citizens that was not protected for African Americans.[61] The Supreme Court does not often take cases on the second Amendment, despite it being one four original amendments recognizing preexisting right. The right to bear arms began as part of the English Bill of Rights, which guaranteed the rights of Englishmen to keep suitable arms so long as they were Protestant.[62] To summarize, right of self-defense and the bearing arms is intimately linked. The Glorious Revolution limited the monarchy's power and increased the Parliament's ability to act independently without the monarch's interference. The Glorious Revolution was a foundational moment in the Enlightenment. One that carried over its values and aspirations through the Revolution and became romanticized in liberty-minded individuals.[63]

No less than five colonies limited the rights of slaves, free persons of color, and mixed-race "mullatoes."[64] The proportion of the South's population left whites as the minority. In contrast, in New England, where slavery was much less useful economically, the opposite was true.[65] Early Virginia Company law encapsulated both the state's desire to encourage firearms ownership and African Americans' restriction. The 1639 Virginia law reads, "[a]ll persons except negroes to be provided with arms and ammunition or be fined at pleasure of the governor and Council."[66] The law aims at individuals and provides a glimpse at the idea of bearing arms as an aligned political right. Even very early on, there were still laws to prevent those believed to be social inferiors from being armed.

Disenfranchised groups are nothing new the United States. Over time these groups transformed as new groups asserted themselves, and others have come to reside within the umbrella of American. Delaware at first considered creating provisions to arm freedmen with the consent of the courts. The law would have been progressive for its time because it prohibited "any warlike instruments whatsoever, provided however that if upon application of any such free negro or free mulatto to one of the justices of the peace. The state legislature's next session reversed its course[67]

59. "Kanzas," *Dallas Herald.* (Dallas, Tex.), September 27, 1856.

60. Bellesiles, *Arming America*.

61. Roger Taney, Dred Scott v. Sandford (Supreme Court of the United States March 6th, 1857), 186.

62. English bill of rights, § 6; 1 William and Mary, c. 6; 5 Corbett, Parl. Hist. 110; 1 Bl. Comm. 143, 144.

63. Bailyn, *Ideological Origins*, 2017.

64. Mark Frasetto, 8 Del. Laws 208, An Act To Prevent The Use Of Firearms By Free Negroes And Free Mulattoes, And For Other Purposes chap. 176, and 9 Del. Laws 552 (1843), 85.

65. Kathryn MacKay, "Statistics on Slavery," Native American Literature, https://faculty.weber.edu/kmackay/statistics_on_slavery.htm.

66. Frasseto, 1639 Va. Acts 224, Acts of January 6th, 1639, Act X, 84.

67. Frasseto, 1639 Va. Acts 224, Acts of January 6th, 1639, Act X, 83-84.

> Any free negro or free mulatto offending against the provisions of this section shall be fined ten dollars by any justice of the peace before whom complaint shall be made, and upon failure to pay the fine and cost he or she shall be committed to prison, and after the expiration of twenty days, if the fine and cost shall not be paid, he or she shall be sold to pay the fine and cost, for any period not exceeding seven years[68]

A free man could be made a slave over failure to pay the debt if he did not have the necessary sum of ten dollars, and those opposed to universal rights of self-defense had legally protected avenues to seize property. Before the war and Reconstruction, the gun culture remained a class right to militancy; however, afterward and throughout Reconstruction, the racial violence morphed into something more individual.

The Dred Scott decision codified the antebellum inequality of citizenship and expressed the court's agreement that the second Amendment carried its protections outside of those times when acting as part of the militia. Justice Taney's opinion in Dred Scott v. Sanford case summed up the unequal application of the bill of rights when he stated, "it would give them the full liberty […] to hold public meetings upon political affairs and to keep and carry arms wherever they went."[69] Mandates that white men keep arms in both the northern and southern states signify the government's effort to secure order without a standing army. The Ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment in late 1865 created a second wave of legislation that would affect the next century's firearms and militia laws. Mississippi's code regulating firearms ownership worked by following the long-time practice of requiring permission from the local government. The statute read, "that no freedman, free Negro, or mulatto not in the military service of the United States government, and not licensed so to do by the board of police […] shall keep or carry firearms of any kind, or any ammunition, […] shall be punished by fine, not exceeding ten dollars." Southern states fostered incentive for vigilantism effectively incentivizing the white citizens of the [70] to assist in systematic disarmament actively, "all such arms or ammunition shall be forfeited to the informer." The actions of former Confederate soldiers who sought to disenfranchise blacks became a topic in Congress. "A."[71] Many members of Congress considered the Second Amendment as being a guarantee of arms for self-defense.

Amidst attempts at political participation, local former white Confederate soldiers often formed armed groups to prevent previously enslaved peoples from participating in the Constitutional Convention. Tensions festered around the Louisiana Constitutional convention, soon mistaken as a riot. however, the letter to Gen. Grant soon clarified, "it was no riot; it was an absolute massacre, […] murder which the mayor and police of the city perpetrated without the shadow of necessity."[72] The Civil War was over, slavery abolished, and African Americans recognized citizens, but the former Confederate States still managed to terrify and suppress African Americans across the nation. It was amidst the climate of racialized violence that ratification of the 14th Amendment attempted to prevent states from subverting African Americans' voting rights. While the purpose of the Amendment

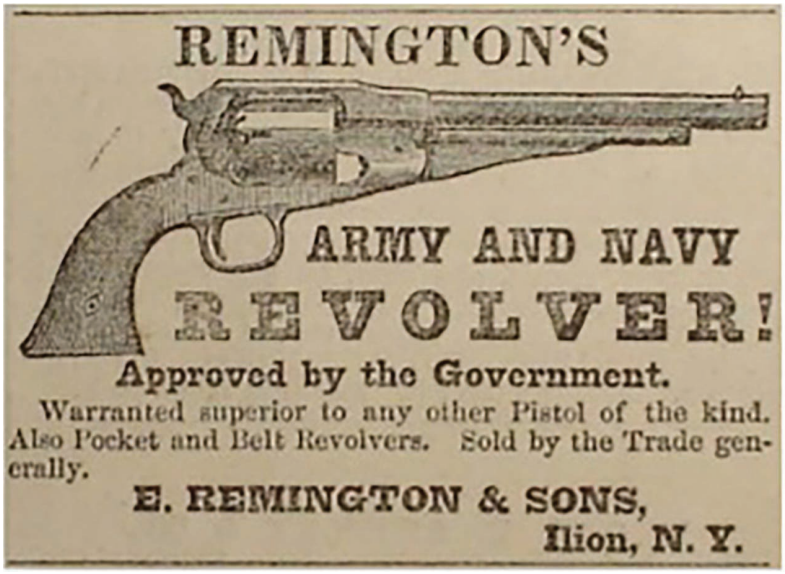
68. Frasseto, 1639 Va. Acts 224, Acts of January 6th, 1639, Act X, 85.

69. Robert Taney, Dred Scott v. Sandford," 60 U.S. 393, 416-17, 449-51 (1857).

70. *Laws of the State of Mississippi, Passed at a Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature, Held in Jackson, October, November and December, 1965, Jackson, 1866,* pp. 82-93, 165-167.

71. Antonin Scalia, District of Columbia et al. v. Heller (Supreme Court of the United States June 26, 2008

72. *The Ebensburg Alleghanian* (Ebensburg, Pa.), September 6, 1866.




Advertisement in *Harpers Weekly*, December 31, 1864.

was to prevent the former Confederacy's states from creating de jure discrimination, the jurisprudence unfolded differently. A critical legal challenge came when the City of New Orleans allowed a single company to monopolize the city's slaughterhouse industry. The Slaughterhouse cases largely gutted the Fourteenth Amendment through the destruction of the privileges and immunities clause, thereby making the actions of the state separate from the federal Constitution. In short, states could infringe on rights because they found that the Constitution only protected narrow federal rights.[73]

When African American men asserted their right to vote, a chapter of the Ku Klux Klan attacked them and were subsequently convicted of murder. The Klansmen challenged the convictions to the Supreme Court in U.S. v. Cruikshank.[74] The case alleged that the Klansmen were depriving the African Americans of their right to free speech and to keep and bear arms. Though convicted by a lower court, the Supreme Court used a technicality to overrule the lower court decision. The court found that because the prosecution had failed to allege the crime on racial grounds, under the Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments, the court could not rule on racial backgrounds. Leaving responsibility for civil rights protections on the states creating de facto Klan protection from consequences of their terror campaigns.[75]

In many ways, Cruikshank marks the end of radical Reconstruction. Union troops no longer occupying the South, and responsibility of protecting civil rights left to the states of the former confederacy, the racialized scars of the Civil War would remain even after the passage of The Civil Rights Act in the mid-twentieth century. The idea of militias began to fade in the East following the Civil War. The closing of the frontier and the Transcontinental Railroad installation meant that struggles moved further into segregated city neighborhoods and the western periphery of

73. Samuel F. Miller, Slaughter-House Cases, No. 83 U.S. (16 Wall.) 36 (1873) (Supreme Court of the United States April 14, 1873).

74. Waite Morrison, United States v. Cruikshank, No. 92 U.S. 542 (Supreme Court of the United States 1876).

75. Pamela Brandwein, *Rethinking the Judicial Settlement of Reconstruction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 112-124.

the American continental empire. In response to a dwindling relationship with shooting and changing attitudes surrounding race, the 1903 Militia Act sought to institutionalize the National Guard and legislate the situations where federalization was appropriate. Further, the act divided the militia into two separate groups. The first contingent would be the incorporated militia, which would become the National Guard. And second, the unincorporated militia which encompassed all able-bodied males between seventeen and forty-five.[76] The act gives us an understanding that militia service was transforming, realizing that protections of an individual's ability to assemble into them remained a principle in U.S. law. Under the legal understanding of the time, militia service was paramount to individuals, and court decisions reflected this collective right over the individual. Writing in 1908, Mr. Wright noticed an effort to shape public opinion against African Americans. This sort of tension was what not only fed into the numerous race riots; it also assigned blame on all people of color for the actions of individuals. A 1921 riot in Tulsa, Oklahoma, was coined as a "race riot" by the press. Part of the article reads, "practically every home in the city has its share of arms and ammunition, the authorities said, 'no attempt will be made to search homes for firearms, except in the Negro district where martial law has been declared.'" The same article also explained, Tulsa "is a white man's town tonight" after describing the white mobs that chased African Americans from the city while ten blocks of the black neighborhood burned. The National Guard had to quell the violence and disarm that sector. While the papers imply the aggressive group in the riot, they also seek to ensure the city's white people remain armed.[77]

By no means was this minimization of arms a phenomenon of the South and Midwest. States which had never experienced chattel slavery, such as California, share in the same racialized historical legacy. The California constitution is one of the six throughout the entire union that does not explicitly guarantee the right to bear arms. Californians argued there was no need for the state to redundantly restate the right because the Constitution already guaranteed an individual's right to bear arms. For example, "Delegate Sherwood argued that denying an individual the right to bear arms 'would be null and void, since it would be in opposition to the Constitution of the United States,' and then quoted the Second Amendment."[78] A strong belief in the Second Amendment may have been present. Still, there were almost immediate efforts by the state government and county officials to remove Native Americans from the state and disarming them.

The first gun control law California passed prohibited Native Americans from owning any firearms or ammunition and was similar to some laws of the South. The penalty fines were, in part, given to the reporting party.[79] California's militia was identical to other states in that it restricted those eligible to white men between the ages of sixteen and forty-five. On several occasions before the laws passing, large-scale militias subdued hostile inhabitants of the California foothills in El Dorado County.[80] After such operations, there were also attempts to congregate with the natives from the surrounding areas. The histories show that violence was

76. U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, "The Civilian Marksmanship Program." 97-716, July 18, 1997.

77. *Cavalier County Farmers Press,* (Langdon, N.D.), June 9, 1921.

78. Clayton E. Cramer, and Joseph Edward Olson, "The Racist Origins of California's Concealed Weapon Permit Law" (April 27, 2015).

79. Jason Davis, "California's First Gun Control Law: The Racist Roots and Evolution of the Gun Control Movement." Calguns Foundation. April 3, 2013. https://www.calgunsfoundation.org/californias-first-gun-control-law-the-racist-roots-and-evolution-of-the-gun-control-movement.

80. Paolo Sioli, *Historical Souvenir of El Dorado County, California* (Cedar Ridge Pub, 1883).

really relatively minimal and that peaceful interactions also occurred on a large scale. However, there were still those who saw it necessary to disarm the native people of California altogether. The law would not be repealed until 1913, though it would not be the only exclusionary gun law of the time.

Court cases in the first half of the twentieth century reflect the same movement away from militia centrality. World War One produced such an expansion of government that transformed the publics' ideas of what the government could do.[81] By 1921, new calls for gun legislation emerged, with some efforts resembling a concerted effort by media companies.[82] Rising crime rates following Prohibition led to increased calls for arms control. At the time, it was entirely normal for private citizens to order sub-machine guns such as the Thompson or "anti-bandit gun" with high rates of fire and large drum magazines. As we can see in the images, there is a depiction of a single person taking on multiple assailants in their home and ads that harken back to the origins of the gun in World War I. These weapons became the favorite enforcement tool of organized crime. Additionally, the Great Depression and the bitter feelings towards banks furthered their use amongst bank robbers such as Bonnie and Clyde. These events, coupled with greater media coverage and increasing crime nationwide, led to the first federal gun control legislation passage.[83]

The NFA also restricted the ownership of machine guns, suppressors, short-barreled rifles, and shotguns, all of which were readily available in hardware stores and mail-order catalogs. The government required that owners of the weapons people pay a $200 tax stamp and register the guns with the federal government. At the time of passing, the tax stamp was a serious sum of money that limited regular citizens' ability to access certain types of weapons. The law is the first to restrict weapons by style rather than blanketing bans against large groups based on their racial background. However, given the socio-economic situation of many minorities, the law's effects achieved a similar outcome. They seek to restrict certain classes of arms instead of blanket bans. The next significant case to hit the Supreme Court was US v. Miller, a challenge to the National Firearms Act's constitutionality. The first federal gun law passed amidst concern over rapidly rising violent crime during Prohibition. The case alleged that Miller's conviction for possessing a short-barreled shotgun violated his second amendment rights. However, the court held that the Second Amendment only protected firearms connected to service in a militia.[84]

In summary, a short-barreled rifle or shotgun was a niche weapon not useful on the battlefield. While states took a multitude of approaches, minimal restriction on the types of arms individuals could own. Instead, states continued to regulate the time, place, and manner of arms with an eye towards racial exclusion. It was not until 1968 that the federal government would again speak on the matter. Following President Kennedy's assassination, the Gun Control Act would restrict citizens' ability to purchase weapons with assistance from the National Rifle Association. The GCA banned the sale of firearms to felons, those adjudicated mentally ill, and mail-order weapons. Later, the federal government would limit citizens' ability to

81. Kathryn S. Olmsted, *Real Enemies: Conspiracy Theories and American Democracy, World War I To 9/11* (New York: New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

82. "The Right to Carry Arms," *The Ocala Evening Star*. Vol. 27. No. 28 (Ocala, Fla.), February 3, 1921; *The Lake County Times*. (Hammond, Ind.), February 4, 1921; *The Evening Star*, no. 19 (Washington, D.C.), November 24, 1914.

83. National Firearm Act. 26 U.S.C.: Internal Revenue Code. I.R.C. ch. 53 § 5801 et seq.

84. James E. McReynolds, United States v. Jack Miler et al. 307 U.S. 174. (Supreme Court of the United States: 15 May, 1939).

manufacture new machine guns during the Reagan administration.[85] The passing of the Brady Act required all dealers to conduct background checks through the FBI National Instant Check (NICS) system.[86] The 1994 assault weapons ban on military-style weapons and magazines containing more than ten rounds of ammunition. The ban had a 2004 sunset provision, and its mere mention continues to galvanize both sides of isles. Proponents often employ statistics demonstrate that the law did not affect crime rates or gun deaths, while gun control proponents argue it was too lackadaisical and impermanent.[87]

Overall, the twentieth century saw a general tightening on the right to keep and bear arms. As often happens, the pendulum soon swings the other way. At the same time, there were challenges to the firearms acts of the 1990s. However, despite these laws' profoundly consequential nature in the public's eyes, the Supreme Court either failed to take the cases or ruled on the merits and not the right. In 2008, the Supreme Court case, D.C. v. Heller, SCOTUS, ruled that all United States citizens possessed the right to keep arms disconnected with service in the militia. Subsequently, McDonald v. Chicago incorporated the states' right to expand the Heller ruling that the privileges and immunities clause prevents the states from enacting any complete bans.[88]

## Lasting Effects of Governmental Policy Encouraging Arms Bearing

Examining the word "militia" in U.S. newspaper archives reveals interesting trends in the national conversation. Mainly, terms associated with militias and the right to bear arms rise and fall around national crises.[89] Adjusted numbers in graph B of the index reveal the number of times that "militia" appears corresponding with the number of publications. Someone might look at Index D and wonder why the numbers drop off. While the number of publications' adjustment reveals similar loosely affiliated trends surrounding times with increased violence and the perception of impending unrest, the number of independent newspapers falls rapidly in the twentieth century, punctuated by the stock market crash. The total number of mentions may be a better indicator of the prevalence of the "militia" in the national conversation. More indicative of the national gun culture, "the right of the people to keep and bear arms" follows a more interesting trend. As the militia's idea went down, mentioning keeping and bearing arms rises even throughout the period where media diversity is shrinking. Having demonstrated that the concept of the people's right is extant throughout American history, the importance of militia in the collective memory, it is important to view how firearms depictions have evolved since the Civil War.

The Civil War is where gun culture's rhetoric and the mythos of protecting individual rights begin to form something recognizable. There was more discussion of the right to bear arms that coincides with the Sectional Crisis, The Civil War, and Reconstruction.[90] There is also a likelihood that some increase significantly in the

85. H.R.4332 - Firearms Owners' Protection Act. 18 U.S.C. ch. 44 § 921 et seq. 1986.

86. The Brady Act, Pub.L. 103–159, 107 Stat. 1536. 1993

87. C.S. Koper, J.A.Roth, "The Impact of the 1994 Federal Assault Weapons Ban on Gun Markets: An Assessment of Short-Term Primary and Secondary Market Effects," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 18 (2002): 239–266.

88. Antonin Scalia, District of Columbia et al. v. Heller (Supreme Court of the United States: June 26, 2008); and, Alito, Samuel. McDonald v. Chicago, No. 561 U.S. 742 (2010) (Supreme Court of the United States June 28, 2010).

89. Due to the limitations of the archive, and known issues with Optical Character Recognition the ability to search is imperfect. Despite the limitations the searches are able to reveal broad trends within the lexicography. States like California are digitized by the University of California and efforts are ongoing, so the available data is constantly growing, and at the same time there are states who are mostly absent from the Library of Congress records.

90. See Appendix C.

1850s comes from the Gold Rush in California. Arms were available in the West, modern civilian market innovative weapons and tried and true surplus arms.[91] The nineteenth century wars destroyed the illusion of the government being able to field an army on privately held arms and simultaneously created surpluses of weapons to be sold after the war. Just as military arms ended up on the California frontier, the Civil War arms dispersed into the civilian. However, the link between military imagery and civilian arms purchasing remained firmly in place. Looking at an 1864 Remington advertisement in image four, it is possible to see that companies like Remington and Colt used military approval as a central selling point even during the Civil War.[92] Colt Firearms ads from the early 1920s harken to the military quality of certain arms and propositions following the government's example. Throughout the nation's post-Civil-War era, the use of military imagery demonstrates how a mental attachment to the militia has persisted throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

While a far cry from the requirement that males keep arms and powder, the government still found ways to encourage arms by establishing the Civilian Marksmanship Program. The program required members to be involved in some shooting-related activity to access low price surplus weapons. Additionally, the Army would host national matches and promote firearms safety. While the program has since separated from the Army, they still operate in the same way that they always have. While the government has continually encouraged arms ownership and regular use, there has been a persistent myth that by some paradigm shift or malicious intervention, the right to keep and bear arms will disappear. Sponsoring the dispossession of lands and the disarming of natives and immigrants reveals the complicated picture of how arms ownership has mythologized resistance to a tyrannical government and been the vehicle of it.[93]

Additionally, there was a noticeable shift in how the presses mentioned keeping and bearing arms — beginning in the South, the practice of demonizing communities spread throughout the country. Crime and its punishments take hold of the public conversation. News outlets regularly report sensational stories about African American crime. The murmurings surrounding bearing arms began to quiet in the 1880 and part of the 1890s; however, it would start to see resurgence amidst labor disputes and the frontier's closing.[94] During industrialization, unionized workers were regular occurrences to gather their arms to stand up to the corporations. Newspaper discussions highlight how the right is employed to assert rights and stand up to persecution.[95] Disputes over individual rights with large corporations began to spill into the public conversation. During Reconstruction, it was a central argument as newly freed African Americans worked to carve out their piece of the society surrounded by violence. When workers wanted to unionize, there were often violent clashes. These patterns of resisting oppression through violence remain and have become highly politicized as the world has been facing increasing unrest and concern over physical and economic wellbeing.

The 1970s were a critical turning point in American gun culture. The backlash

91. A. G. Pastron, and E. M. Hattori, (eds.) (1990), The Hoff Store Site and Gold Rush Merchandise from San Francisco, California, Special Publication No. 7, Society for Historical Archaeology, California, Pennsylvania.

92. Robert Henning and Terrence Witkowski, "The advertising of E. Remington & Sons: the creation of an iconic brand, 1854-1888," *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* (2012).

93. Lindsay; Sioli, 158-161, 206-208; Davis.

94. Appendix A.

95. The Socialist and Labor Star. Volume II, Issue 47 (Huntington, W. Va.), May 8, 1914.

from the 1960s counterculture movements combined with profound evidence of government corruption, excess, and economic troubles left Americans amid an identity crisis. The National Rifle Association began in 1871 to promote rifle shooting and improve the population's marksmanship. Throughout the first two-thirds of the twentieth century, the organization helped craft federal legislation like the National Firearms Act and the 1968 Gun Control Act. However, in the late 1970s, the organization would abruptly shift towards protecting the right to keep and bear arms. That movement and the calls for increased gun control amidst the crime wave and drug epidemics in the 1980s and 1990s have left the nation in a polarized state when it comes to guns. The organization still works tirelessly to promote marksmanship and safety. The more recent sector, The Institute for Legislative Action, has sought to change the laws surrounding firearms, concealed carry aggressively, and lobbied to protect guns' availability.[96] The organization wields a great deal of political power, a power that comes from the politically vocal and active members who are often known as single-issue voters. Avoidance of opining on the politics of the modern gun debate requires a statement about its complex history as a historical inquiry by itself.

The 1990s saw a massive boom of militias as did the 2000s following the election of Barack Obama. Proponents of these militias claimed this as the end of the Second Amendment by the gun lobby amidst a climate of economic fear. While this is now the standard trope of the NRA and other vocal rights groups, it remains within the living memory as we move into a period of unprecedented expansion of firearms ownership.[97] Militia groups have risen around the country again. Between a pandemic, stay at home orders, shuttering of vast portions of the economy, racial tensions over-policing, and a divisive election, it is no surprise that groups of armed and frightened citizens have taken to brandishing arms to protect businesses and attempt to avoid violence.[98] At the same time, the number of weapons in circulation continues to rise at historical rates. While these groups are not often in the public eye, they represent a closer resemblance to the colonial era militias of the past in the same way the Black Panther's march on the California Capital resembled their Reconstruction-era ancestors.[99]

There is a great deal of misunderstanding and misinformation surrounding the gun debate. The largest is the lack of reliable information from all sides. In an era of soundbites and video clips, it is hard to grasp the broader picture. It is easy to misunderstand terminology just as it is easy to mistake the actions and concerns of those in favor of limiting the right as controlling. Additionally, the conversation's domination by sound bites and patchwork of research due to federal money not being used for gun control research leads to insulated opinions and an inability to see both sides' issues. The truth is that all involved are trying to enact what they see as best and most likely to protect lives and ensure security. Perhaps it is the nation's relative youth or the long relationship with normalized violence, but the United

96. *The Week*. "The Surprising History of the NRA." March 18, 2018. https://theweek.com/articles/761135/surprising-history-nra.

97. Robert H. Churchill, *To Shake their Guns in the Tyrant's Face: Libertarian Political Violence and the Origins of the Militia Movement* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2012); Mark Memmot, "Report: 'Explosive' Growth Of 'Patriot Movement' And Militias Continues." National Public Radio. March 8, 2012.

98. Vice News, "One of America's Most Notorious Militias," YouTube Video, 22:02. November, 2 2012; Vice News, "Inside America's Largest Right Wing Militia," YouTube Video. 23:53; Vice News, "Inside the Michigan Militia. YouTube Video. 21:50.

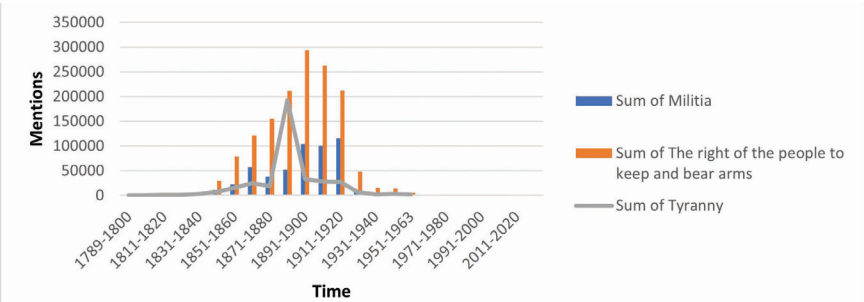
99. The Center for Sacramento History, "The Black Panthers Protest the California Assembly, 1967," YouTube May 11, 2020. 21:28.

States has always been quick to threaten the use of arms. Considering recent unrest, Americans have again turned back to their Second Amendment. Surely the next few years will meet with renewed calls for gun control and gun rights.

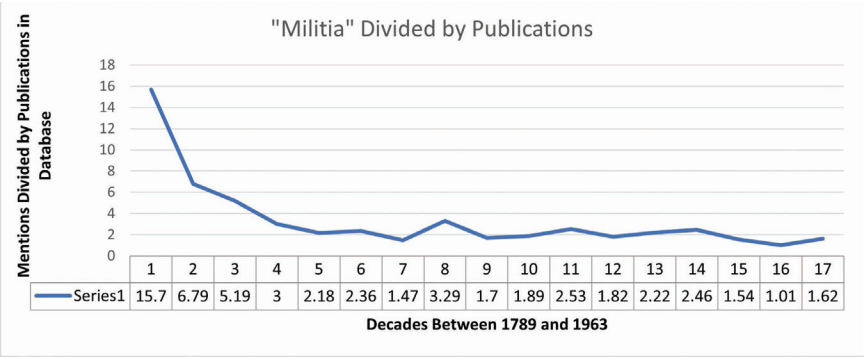
We have all encountered the argument the Second Amendment is outdated. Law enforcement and the military have long since filled in the role of defense and policing, but people still all back on their sense of self-reliance in times of anxiety. Physical, socio-economic, and biological safety have all played a role in arms proliferation. In other words, the Second Amendment remains an integral part of the American identity, regardless of the changes in our society over the past two-hundred and forty-five years. The history of the Second Amendment is something of benign neglect. The government which once encouraged it now must find ways to control within the confines of the Constitution and interpretations that have finally caught up with the popular belief systems. Taking politics out of the equation does not simplify the overall issue. It is so deeply ingrained in the American psyche and the only practical realization is that American gun culture is part of the American experiment. It is a building block of American identity. It is part of the historical memory and is part of the calculus encapsulating the consent of the governed.

**Author biography**: Preston S. Moore is a Master's Candidate at California State University Sacramento. Coming to CSUS from the University of California Davis, he specializes in early American History. Preston studies how the frontier borderlands haped the social, political, and settlement patterns into distinct regional American identities. Further, he seeks to understand how these experience-born identities influence public discourse into what becomes a distinctly American identity in our present, with the hope of fostering a deeper understanding of the nuances of a shared past to promote critical engagement with the American systems of governance. Preston is preparing to craft a thesis and plans to teach History at California Community Colleges part-time.

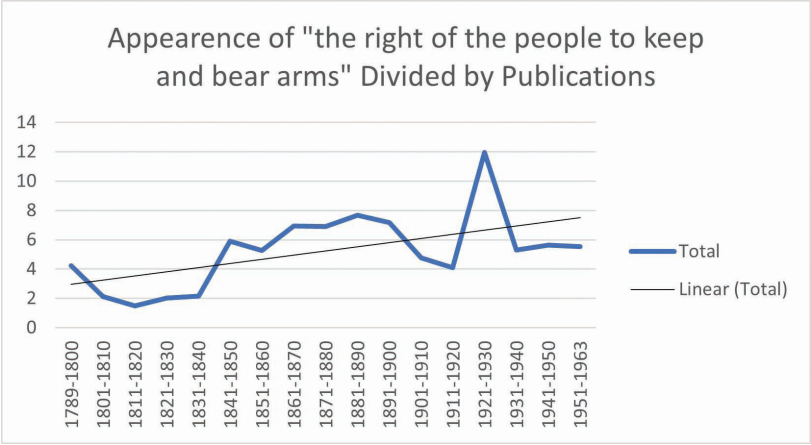
## Appendix



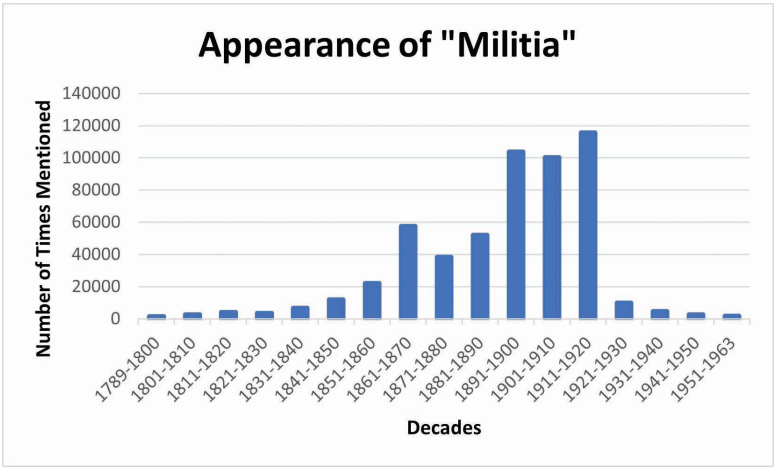

Appendix A: Total number of times each phrase appeared in the Library of Congress Chronicling America database.




Appendix B: Line represents how often the word showed up divided by the total number of publications in each decade.




Appendix C: This chart shows the comparison between militia and "right of the people" in order to illustrate the phrases inverse rise.




Appendix D: Raw number of mentions of the word "militia."

# "A Leaf Torn from the Magyar Tree": Influences on the Formation of Hungarian-American Identity, 1851-1945

John Fedorko

**Abstract**: Contrary to popular opinion, new immigrants of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries did not always emigrate to the United States in order to settle, assimilate, and enthusiastically join the ranks of patriotic American citizens. They sought industrial jobs in the United States that offered wages many times higher than those offered in Europe; yet, half of those who emigrated to the United States planned to return to their home countries within a few years. Immigrants from Hungary were among those most likely to return. Hungarian immigrants in the United States held varied, and often conflicting, notions of what it meant to be Hungarian-American. Although Hungarians came to the United States under many diverse sets of economic, political, social, and familial conditions, they struggled in common to forge identities in their new country. Drawing on newspapers, government reports, personal accounts, letters, and treatises on immigration, this study reveals that material and economic conditions in the United States, as well as the Hungarian Government's intrusive efforts to influence the emigrants, decisively affected the development of Hungarian-American identity.

Of the archetypal Hungarian immigrant of the early twentieth century—referred to by immigration scholars as the *new immigrant*—historian Steven Bélá Várdy has written, "his past deeds were obscured by the remoteness of his homeland, his present was overshadowed by the uncertainty of his situation, and his future was dominated by his persistent desire to free himself from the insecurity of immigrant existence."[1] Remoteness, uncertainty, and insecurity—these states of being aptly characterize the experience of Hungarian men and women who labored in American cities and mining towns during the early twentieth century. Hungarian immigrants in the United States held varied and often conflicting notions of what it meant to be Hungarian-American. Although Hungarians came to the United States under diverse sets of economic, political, social, and familial conditions, they struggled in common to forge identities in their new country.

Contrary to popular opinion, many immigrants of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries did not emigrate to the United States to settle, assimilate, and enthusiastically join the ranks of patriotic American citizens. Most Hungarian migrants sought industrial employment in the mills, mines, and factories of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio. These industries offered unskilled laborers wages many times higher than those attainable in Europe, which enabled them to save money and return to their villages with surplus wealth. Hungarians returned to their homeland in great numbers; between 1880 and 1930, 46.5 percent of Hungarians in the United States returned to Hungary.[2] By the 1920s circumstances in Hungary and the United States ended this wave of return migration and compelled many Hungarians to settle in America permanently, attain citizenship, and assimilate. Material and economic conditions in the United States, as well as the Hungarian Government's intrusive efforts to influence emigrants, decisively affected

1. Steven Bélá Várdy, "Image and Self-Image Among Hungarian-Americans Since the Mid-Nineteenth Century," *East European Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (September 2001): 315.

2. Mark Wyman, *Round-Trip to America: The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880-1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 10.

the development of Hungarian-American identity.

Hungary was an obscure country in the minds of early nineteenth-century Americans. Whether Hungary was considered part of western civilization or the "Orient" depended on individual points of view. Although Hungarians were predominantly Roman Catholic, the country was under Turkish rule for a century and a half. the language (Magyar) incorporated Turkish words, which caused many westerners to characterize Hungary as existing somewhere in between the East and West. The Hungarian struggle for independence from Habsburg rule in 1848-49 provided the opportunity for Americans to form new ideas about the Hungarian nation and people.[3]

Lajos Kossuth, the leading Hungarian nationalist of the failed revolt against Habsburg rule, captivated Americans and altered their views of the Hungarian nation when he toured the United States in 1851. Kossuth had escaped capture by the Russians and Austrians in August of 1849 by the grace of the Ottoman Sublime Porte, who granted Kossuth and 1,500 Hungarians asylum. The Porte permitted Kossuth to leave Ottoman territory, whereupon he traveled to Britain and on to the United States. While touring the country he sought support—diplomatic, financial, and material—for the continued Hungarian struggle against Habsburg rule. Historian Tim Roberts argues that Kossuth's "magnetism" helped move Hungary politically and culturally "westward" in the American imagination.[4]

Kossuth encountered skepticism on the part of American historians and writers. In 1850 Francis Bowen, a linguist and historian, composed a highly critical article for the *North American Review* in which he claimed that Hungarians were not truly committed to liberal republicanism. Bowen argued (presciently) that the Magyars of Hungary had no intention of granting the many ethnic minorities of Hungary an equal share in the country's governance upon attaining independence from Austria. He also claimed that an independent Hungary would suffer at the hands of an aggressive Ottoman empire. This type of arrogance was kindled by American disdain for the Ottomans and the East, rather than a sense of Anglo-Saxon superiority, which would affect American views of Hungarians as well as other Europeans near the end of the nineteenth century.[5]

Kossuth did not attempt to argue for the firm placement of Hungary as a western nation in the minds of Americans; he did not avoid the notion that Hungary was an oriental nation. Instead, he portrayed Hungary and the Ottoman Empire as political states struggling against European absolutism and imperialism. Although individuals such as Francis Bowen exaggerated the power of the Ottomans and displayed Turkophobic attitudes, the United States at midcentury enjoyed better diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire than with Britain, Russia, and Austria. Kossuth exploited these circumstances and appealed to Americans' republican values, religious tolerance, and aversion to European (especially British) hegemony.[6]

Kossuth received vibrant welcomes in the American cities he toured. He gave speeches and met with prominent statesmen. Though he championed Hungarian freedom from Habsburg rule, he tactfully did not condemn American slavery. In New York, Kossuth was given a lavish banquet at the Astor House on December

3. Tim Roberts, "Lajos Kossuth and the Permeable American Orient of the Mid-Nineteenth Century," *Diplomatic History* 39, no. 5 (2015): 793-795.

4. Roberts, "Lajos Kossuth," 793-794, 796.

5. Roberts, "Lajos Kossuth," 799, 802.

6. Roberts, "Lajos Kossuth," 800, 802.

16, 1851. The saloon abounded in symbolism ranging from "table ornaments" that included painted figures of Liberty, Kossuth, Washington, and La Fayette, as well as Hungarian colors and national imagery interwoven with that of the United States. George Bancroft, whose toast began with references to the "oppression of Hungary" and ended with the lofty sentiment that "the American Press…is responsible for the liberties of mankind," was one of the principal speakers. The *New York Times* provided ample coverage of the event in an article that featured letters of solidarity composed by those individuals who were not in attendance, toasts given at the event, and the "glorious speech of the Magyar!"[7] In a similarly ostentatious fashion, Bostonians held a parade that ended at the Massachusetts State House; a banner at this location read "Washington and Kossuth—the Occident and the Orient."[8] Though the designers of this banner honored Kossuth with the juxtaposition of his revolutionary status with that of Washington, the concept of two men of European ancestry—one as Occident and the other as Orient—is indeed a curious formulation.

Though he failed to secure significant American contributions to the Hungarian cause, Kossuth managed to alter Americans' collective perception of Hungary. The cross-civilizational attributes of the East and West that many Americans continued to harbor of Hungarians were ambiguous, but Kossuth had infused this image with the spirit of western, liberal self-determination. As a Lutheran Protestant, Kossuth captivated Americans more effectively than his Roman Catholic compatriots.[9] Kossuth was not the only Hungarian in the United States during the 1850s; there were many more like him. Historian Stephen Bélá Várdy claims that during the years prior to the Civil War, Americans viewed Hungary as a "noble nation."[10] In Várdy's assessment, Americans construed Hungary as a noble nation for two reasons: they believed that Hungarians had fought their Revolution of 1848-1849 for the ideals of freedom and equality, and most Hungarians who came to the United States were of the gentry class. These *Forty-Eighters*, so called because of their connection to the Revolution of 1848, enchanted Americans with their airs of "Old World nobility."[11] In spite of their efforts to gather meaningful support in the United States, Kossuth and the Forty-Eighters watched apprehensively as Hungary and Austria worked together during the 1860s to reach an accord. In 1867 the two countries orchestrated the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, which officially reunited Hungary with the Habsburg Monarchy.[12]

In the wake of the political stability that emerged after the inauguration of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, Hungary experienced a demographic boom between 1870 and 1910; the population increased from 13.6 million to 18.3 million.[13] This created an unprecedented number of young people in search of employment and led to the rapid division of landholdings into smaller plots. Within the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, agriculture supplied the livelihood of 80 to 85 percent of the population of Hungary.[14] The country's small industrial sector of iron, machine, and food production facilities failed to provide employment for the surplus agricultural workers who made up this new mobile and unskilled workforce.

7. "Banquet of the Press to Louis Kossuth," *New York Times*, December 16, 1851.
8. Roberts, "Lajos Kossuth," 803.
9. Roberts, "Lajos Kossuth," 805-806, 809.
10. Vardy, "Image and Self-Image," 309.
11. Vardy, "Image and Self-Image," 311-313.
12. Roberts, "Lajos Kossuth," 810.
13. Julianna Puskás, *Ties That Bind, Ties That Divide: 100 Years of Hungarian Experience in the United States*, translated by Zora Ludwig (New York: Holmes and Maier, 2000), 5.
14. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 6.

For Hungarian peasants, life was exceptionally difficult. High taxes, the unavailability of credit, high living costs, and land entailment hindered peasant efforts at getting ahead. During the 1880s, agrarian wages were very low and the cost of living was prohibitively high. This means that that in the less agriculturally productive regions a poor harvest sometimes led to starvation for many peasants.[15]

A multitude of socio-economic developments occurred during the period of the Dual Monarchy that inspired and prompted the Hungarian peasantry into action. The construction of railroads and expansion of communication technologies, the proliferation of reading associations and newspapers, and increased elementary education due to Hungary's Magyarization process all contributed to the rise of a new alternative to peasant life—emigration to the United States.[16] However, steamship companies and their ticket agents had the greatest effects on the emigration of the Hungarian peasantry. Ubiquitous, cunning, and manipulative, the agents plied Hungary to sell tickets for the passenger shipping lines. But these agents (who were paid on commission) did much more. They provided credit, loaned funds to the travelers for passage and documentation fees, assisted with the sale of property, provided clothing, and often promised to connect the emigrant to specific sites of employment. Many emigrants expressed satisfaction with their experiences with the agents. Nevertheless, some agents were outright frauds.[17] this system was a result of the expansion of global capitalism that occurred during the last decades of the nineteenth century.

Hungarians who emigrated often came from the peripheral, mountainous areas of northeast Hungary. Far from Budapest, lacking the amount of fertile land found on the Hungarian Plain, and having a tradition of seasonal migration, the counties—many of which are part of Slovakia today— Borsod, Szepes, Ung, Zemplén, Abauj, Szatmár, Sáros, and Szabolcs provided 31 percent of the nation's emigrants between 1899 and 1913.[18] This was also an area of ethnic diversity; Slovaks emigrated in the largest numbers, followed by Magyars and Ruthenians. Though historians have put forth the Magyarization of Hungary's ethnic minorities as a primary motive for their emigration, there are many facts that dispute this finding. According to historian Julianna Puskás, Slovaks in the west of the country, where the nationality movement was strongest, did not emigrate as frequently as they did in the east. Many also returned to their villages even though no political changes had occurred. Germans, who typically experienced less discrimination than Romanians, emigrated in far greater numbers than Romanians did.[19]

Hungarian immigrants came from varying social backgrounds. During the early phases of immigration, men constituted the majority of Hungarians in America; however, by the first decade of the twentieth century, women made up a significant proportion of the Hungarian immigrants. Between 1899 and 1913, 33.9 percent of the migrants were women.[20] Although they often emigrated to join male family members, a number of young single women sought employment in the tobacco and textile industries of the United States. The rate of single female immigrants was slightly higher than that for men. Most were between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one. The majority of Hungarian immigrants were agricultural day laborers; yet, less than

15. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 6-10.
16. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 15-16.
17. Wyman, *Round-Trip to America*, 25-32.
18. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 32.
19. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 33-34.
20. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 25-26.

one percent went into the farming industry in the United States.[21] According to Consul Black, who submitted a report from Budapest to his American supervisors in September of 1888, Hungarian emigrants came from five distinct social groups. The first consisted of the rural population, both landless and smallholders, who Black viewed as frugal in all matters except the purchase of alcohol. The men of this group often left their villages for two years at a time, worked in American industries, and returned with their wages to purchase land or pay off debts. Black considered the second group the most respectable and intelligent of the lot. These were merchants, bookkeepers, and clerks who emigrated to the United States for better living conditions and usually became US citizens. The third group were members of the gentry and speculators who had either fallen on hard times or squandered inheritances and became fortune-seekers in the United States. Men who evaded military service constituted the fourth group. Defaulters, forgers, and criminals made up the last and most derided group.[22] Although historians have revised Black's 1888 assessment, his views provided a characteristic example of how American officials initially perceived Hungarian migrants.

During the summer of 1907 a team of United States Congressmen travelled to Europe to study emigration to the United States. This project is known as the Dillingham Commission, named for the Senator who headed it. Upon arriving in Europe, the members formed subcommittees and travelled to Italy, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Greece. Commissioners Dillingham and Wheeler investigated conditions in Austria-Hungary.[23] Coincidentally, 1907 was the year that immigration to the United States from Austria-Hungary peaked at 338,452 persons (for the years 1820-1910).[24] The Reports of the Immigration Commission provide extensive insight into the economic conditions in Austria-Hungary, the country's laws prohibiting emigration for certain individuals, and the efforts of the Hungarian Government to control emigration through the Cunard Steamship Company.[25] The Commission determined that the Hungarian Government found emigration "distasteful" and made all efforts "to prevent a continuation of the enormous exodus of the masses."[26] this conclusion resulted from the Commission's focus on the economic rather than political aspects of Hungarian emigration.

Austro-Hungarian officials also held a generally disdainful view of the peasant emigrants. This should come as no surprise as the state's bureaucratic positions were occupied by ethnic Germans and Magyars, and many of the emigrants came from the ethnic minority groups—Slovaks and Ruthenians in particular. In 1902 Hungarian Under Secretary of State Count Kuno Klebelsberg informed Prime Minister Kálmán Széll of his belief in the benefit of emigration. He clearly expressed a belief in continued Magyar supremacy in Austria-Hungary. He wrote:

For the institution of national statehood it is absolutely necessary that the ruling race—which has been called to uphold the national state and populate it—increase accordingly and thus after a while become the majority of the population. This increase can be brought about artificially, via assimilation. Nevertheless, as the smaller ethnic groups have recently been awakening to an ever increasing national conscious-

21. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 26, 113.

22. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 27-28.

23. U.S. Congress, Senate, Reports of the Immigration Commission, *Emigration Conditions in Europe*, presented by William P. Dillingham, 61st Congress, 3rd session, Washington, DC: GPO, 1911, S. Doc. 748, 3-5.

24. U.S. Congress, *Emigration Conditions*, 351.

25. U.S. Congress, *Emigration Conditions*, 357-359.

26. U.S. Congress, *Emigration Conditions*, 360.

ness, it is hardly possible to count any further on more extensive assimilation.

Providence, however, at the same time that the natural increase of the Hungarian people has diminished has granted another population factor which has significantly raised the proportion of the Hungarian element at the expense of the nationalities between 1890 and 1900 from 48.53 percent to 51.36 percent. This important new factor is the mass emigration of the non-Hungarian population.[27]

Behind closed doors Klebelsberg and other officials supported the emigration of the Slovaks, Ruthenians, and other non-Magyar ethnic groups, but publicly, they enacted token restrictions to appease the wealthiest Magyar owners of large estates who feared the loss of their traditional, cheap labor supply.[28]

Despite the mild Austro-Hungarian restrictions on emigration, Hungarians, Slovaks, Croatians, and Ruthenians departed for the United States. The majority went to Cleveland, Pittsburgh, New York, Detroit, and Chicago. They encountered what immigration historian John Bodnar described as "divergent paths into the capitalist economy."[29] Some received work assignments through the steamship line ticket agents, but most relied on family members and friends who were already established in the United States. Though Bodnar argued that immigrants had limited opportunities in industrial America, he also admitted that their social trajectory was overwhelmingly upward.[30] Hungarians, as well as other European immigrants, benefitted from the recent transformation of the American labor structure; there existed an abundance of entry-level jobs that required no specialized skills.[31] This enabled immigrants to easily attain employment that paid high wages, save the surplus earnings, and within a few years return to their countries of origin with significantly improved economic and social prospects.

Although the immigrants sought financial success in the United States, sometimes these hopes did not come to fruition. Many immigrants tended to exaggerate their success in the letters they wrote to family and friends back home. A satirical Hungarian-American poem by István Jovicza titled "Amerika" claims:

> If he writes home
> What does he tell his wife?
> Boastful and self-satisfied
> He tells of his good life.
>
> If he picks turnips for a farmer
> He'll write he's bought a farm.
> Hundred and sixty acre's yield
> Will soon fill his barn.
>
> Or if he is a laborer
> He's sure to be in foreman's rank.
> He gives his orders in the bar
> But neither at work nor at the bank.[32]

27. U.S. Congress, *Emigration Conditions*, 90.
28. U.S. Congress, *Emigration Conditions*, 90-91.
29. John Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), xx.
30. Bodnar, *The Transplanted*, 209, 170.
31. Bodnar, *The Transplanted*, 65-66.
32. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 86.

Immigrants often used the distance from their homelands to forge (and exaggerate) new identities for themselves. If a man failed to attain his economic goals, he had the option of keeping it to himself. Likewise, he possessed the ability to raise himself in the eyes of his family and social circle in the village by using distance to manipulate their perceptions of his self-worth.

For many Hungarian immigrants, success did not involve settling in the United States upon finding employment there. Official Hungarian statistics reveal that 32.9 percent of emigrants returned to Hungary.[33] Emigration was not unidirectional and many migrants made several trips between two or more countries. Puskás believes the true percentage is likely between forty and fifty when all factors and incomplete data are assessed.[34] The difficulty of interpreting the data lies in the lack of information on the ethnicity of all emigrants in the records; it often occurred that Slovaks were listed as Magyars. This economically driven international migration occurred in waves, often linked to the boom-and-bust cycles of the American economy. For most, emigration to America was an emergency measure to solve problems at home and to make money in order to buy land in Hungary.[35] One historian has called this "emigration in order to."[36]

Following the massive wave of immigration from Hungary—as well as Poland and other countries of Eastern Europe—the *hunky* image came to dominate American perceptions of Hungarians. This term developed out of American references to the many "unwashed and peasant immigrants" from Eastern and Southeastern Europe who arrived on the shores of the United States during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.[37] As a portion of the wave of new immigrants who came to the United States during this period, Hungarians collectively lost their social status as a noble nation in the eyes of Americans to this hunky characterization. This image came to encompass those Hungarians who remained within the domains of the Dual Monarchy as well.[38] Prior to the twentieth century, men made up eighty-five percent of this wave of hunkys who came to the United States to work in the coal mining and steel industries for a few years, live cheaply, save money, and return to Hungary. This was the reason why many did not attempt to make a living in the industry they had most first-hand experience with (farming)—the American steel and coal industries paid the most.[39] Many Americans resented what they viewed as Hungarian exploitation of the economic opportunities offered by the American economy. Regarding the manner in which the Hungarian immigrants reacted to the negative image of them held by native-born Americans, Puskás wrote "fortunately, most of them were still so tied to the old country, lived their lives so much within their own ethnic groups, that little came through to them from the opinions formed about them, and if some of it did, the effect was mitigated by its having come from a foreign source."[40]

Major newspapers in the United States such as the *New York Times* often portrayed immigrants from Hungary in a negative light. On July 6, 1906 the paper ran a scathing editorial titled "Hungarian Immigration" in which Hungarian immigrants were

33. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 22.
34. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 23.
35. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 23-24.
36. Wyman, *Round-Trip to America*, 17.
37. Várdy, "Image and Self-Image," 309.
38. Várdy, "Image and Self-Image," 318.
39. Várdy, "Image and Self-Image," 319.
40. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 103.

categorized as one of the "less desirable races."[41] The editor lamented the fact that in 1905 "Hungarians displaced Italians as the greatest contributors to the dilution of the Anglo-Saxon race."[42] He went on, stating

> The arrival of Austro-Hungarians at the head of the list is unwelcome for several reasons. Their illiteracy and disregard of law are high, and they are among the races which settle in the East, only one-fourth going West.[43]

In reality, literacy rates among immigrants were ten percent higher than among those who remained in Hungary. 88.6 percent of Hungarian immigrants were literate.[44] Hungarians' disinterest in settling in the American West in favor of the eastern suburbs also angered many native-born Americans. The editor continued on

They are not skilled workers, contributing hardly anything but crude muscle to the country of their adoption. And worse yet, they do not assimilate any more than the Chinese. Part of this is due to their alienage being in higher degree than that of the arrivals from Western Europe, but more of it is due to a settled policy encouraged from home. Only last month an incident occurred in the Hungarian delegation which assumes added interest in connection with these figures. "Premier Wekerle," the dispatches say, "assured the delegates that the efforts of Count Goluchowski, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, to induce Magyar emigrants in America to maintain their Hungarian citizenship are meeting with considerable success."[45]

The editor was essentially correct in his formulation that Hungarians had little interest in assimilation; however, he neglected to state that American industries thrived on Hungarian and East European labor. He closed with this warning:

There is but cool welcome here for those who emphasize their differences from us, and hold themselves aloof from our assimilating influences. The year's figures emphasize the necessity of persisting at the next session of Congress with the bill which was burked at the session just ended.[46]

This assessment of Hungarian immigrants drew criticism from many quarters. Marcus Braun, former United States Immigration Inspector, replied that poor immigrants from Hungary should not have been blamed for the "foolhardiness of his government."[47] Instead, Braun blamed "those grand seigneurs and magnates of Austria-Hungary who have not the brains nor the will to create economic conditions in their country which would enable the laboring population to make a half-way decent living, and who find it more convenient to regard this country as a safety valve of theirs, and use it as a good cow to be milked for all she is worth…"[48] He then lamented the failure of the United States to "give a hint with the 'big stick' to certain European countries to keep their hands off and not meddle with the social and political life of their former subjects," in spite of having possessed evidence of Hungarian intererence for the past two years.[49] Interestingly enough, it was Braun who had reported his findings of the Hungarian authorities' involvement with the Hungarian

41. "Hungarian Immigration," *New York Times*, July 6, 1906.
42. "Hungarian Immigration."
43. "Hungarian Immigration."
44. Várdy, "Image and Self-Image," 320.
45. "Hungarian Immigration."
46. "Hungarian Immigration."
47. Marcus Braun, "Hungarian Immigration. The Home Governments, and Not the People, Cause Trouble," *New York Times*, July 6, 1906.
48. Braun, "Hungarian Immigration."
49. Braun, "Hungarian Immigration."

émigré community; he claimed that foreign governments and other interested parties had forced his resignation. In his final criticism of the editor, Braun claimed that of the 22,000 citizens of Greater New York who had been born in Hungary, it was they who had first demanded "that the Government of their native land should not bother with them nor with any of the new-comers from that country."[50]

Some Hungarian-Americans agreed with the editor. After pointing out that the "Hungarian emigrants" previously referred to were only ten percent Magyar, and comprised mostly of "Slavs, Bohemians, Croatian, Jews, &c," an anonymous individual listed as Caveat Patria complained of the Hungarians' object of attaining "starvation sufficient money" by hard labor, simply in order to return home with the profits.[51] This individual took further offense at the observation that "the more intelligent class of Hungarians" did not adopt American citizenship and often would "invariably ridicule and deride America and anything American."[52]

Hungarian-Americans not only defended their reputations in response to attacks on their collective character, but also argued for their desirability on economic terms. In response to claims that Hungarians (along with Italians and Russian Jews) formed a criminal element that should have been excluded by the implementation of an educational test, Simon Lorincz chided Congressman Watson of Indiana for the inaccuracy of his opinions. Having cited statistics and invited Watson to visit the various Hungarian settlements of the region, Lorincz ended his defense with the claim that Hungarian-Americans, "who by their thrift and industry not only take care of themselves, but help to increase the wealth and prosperity of this great Republic of ours."[53] And finally, although he had aptly defended Hungarian immigrants, he ironically advised Watson that instead of amending American immigration laws, it was better to simply divert the new immigrants to "the vast tracts of land in the Southern and Western sections of our country" so they could found their own agricultural, commercial, and industrial centers there![54]

The *Los Angeles Times* reported far less on Hungarian immigration than the *New York Times*; however, the former seems to have produced more diverse opinions. "Immigration Alarming" reported the findings of Marcus Braun's mission to Europe, embarked on to "ascertain the causes of the alarming influx of foreigners."[55] He reported that the steamship companies had flooded Europe with literature that the *Times* considered "criminally misleading" and "gaudy."[56] Those employed by the steamship companies had successfully "fired pauper hearts with the desire to reach a land where riches were to be gained for a ride across the Atlantic."[57] The *Times* clearly viewed the steamship companies, instead of the immigrants, as responsible for the influx of foreigners. "The Call of the Job" provided an even more sympathetic viewpoint. In reference to Hungarians and other European immigrants the column stated that they had been departing from joblessness and inadequate pay to achieve a better standard of living and higher wages. It framed immigration in a positive by iterating the nation's economic need for manual laborers. The author quoted John Foster Carr, who wrote that immigrants "are never anarchists. They are never

50. Braun, "Hungarian Immigration."

51. Caveat Patria, "Hungarian Immigrants. One of Their Own Race Points Out Their Shortcomings," *New York Times*, July 9, 1906.

52. Caveat Patria, "Hungarian Immigrants."

53. Simon Lorincz, "Hungarians As Citizens," *New York Times*, May 22, 1902.

54. Lorincz, "Hungarians As Citizens."

55. "Immigration Alarming," *Los Angeles Times*, June 27, 1903.

56. "Immigration Alarming."

57. "Immigration Alarming."

counterfeiters. They are guiltless of black-hand letters. There are found among them none of the most dangerous forms of foreign criminals."[58] The *Los Angeles Times* also produced many colorful, if not trivial, stories. "Bar Hungarian Duelist" reported that Emil Zerkowitz, a Budapest banker, had exchanged shots in a duel with Julius Piernitzer. Though neither sustained injuries, a Federal Board of Special Inquiry at Ellis Island ruled that having fought a duel in Hungary, which constituted a felony there, rendered Zerkowitz ineligible for admission to the United States. The Board ordered his deportation.[59] The Board's ruling might have also been affected by the notion that Hungary—even during the twentieth century—was a feudal society. Dueling may have been viewed by those on the Board as medieval and uncivilized.

The *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times*—the former from a city that received Hungarian immigrants in great numbers and the latter from one that did not—provide contrasts in the reception of the newcomers. New Yorkers likely felt much more economically, if not culturally, threatened by the influx of Hungarians and others from eastern Europe. Los Angeles had only a small community of Hungarian immigrants whose contributions to the local economy were welcomed and viewed as imperative. The distance from centers of Hungarian immigrants, such as Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Detroit, and New York could also account for the less impassioned, non-polemical tone of the *Los Angeles Times*.

The Hungarian government decisively influenced affected emigration to the United States during the first decade of the twentieth century. The above-mentioned Marcus Braun, a Hungarian-born US citizen, served as Special Agent of the Immigration Bureau of the Department of Commerce and Labor.[60] He published his experiences in a booklet titled *Immigration Abuses: Glimpses of Hungary and Hungarians* in 1906. As the title implies, Braun portrayed the Hungarian administration of István Tisza as corrupt, exploitative, and abusive toward Hungarian non-elites who composed the majority of the country's emigrants. Braun extolled the virtues of the ordinary Hungarian, and he spent dozens of pages portraying Hungary as a modern society. Yet, his writing teems with scathing references to "modern Magyar corruption."[61]

The centerpiece of Braun's polemic was the emigration scandal that involved what he referred to as the "Cunard-Adria-Central Ticket Office triumvirate" engineered by Prime Minister István Tisza.[62] In his capacity as Special Agent of the Immigration Bureau, Braun found that Tisza and the Cunard Line had reached an agreement by which the Central Ticket Office and their agents supplied Cunard with thirty thousand emigrants annually. This step was deemed necessary for Cunard to compete with German steamship companies that offered shorter voyages from German ports to the United States. Cunard operated out of the Hungarian port of Fiume on the Adriatic, which made the ocean voyage significantly longer. Braun also chastised the Tisza government for its failure to provide lodging for emigrants in Fiume; many waited days between their arrival by rail and departure aboard the steamships.[63]

Braun had strong opinions about Hungarian immigrants. A central theme in Braun's writing was immigrant assimilation. He believed that America was strengthened by variations in race, or stock, that rapidly diversified the population of the

58. "The Call Of The Job," *Los Angeles Times*, March 13, 1912.

59. "Bar Hungarian Duelist," *Los Angeles Times*, December 29, 1913.

60. Marcus Braun, *Immigration Abuses: Glimpses of Hungary and Hungarians* (New York: The Pearson Advertising Co., 1906), 105.

61. Braun, *Immigration Abuses*, 7.

62. Braun, *Immigration Abuses*, 85.

63. Braun, *Immigration Abuses*, 83-86.

nation. Although he considered Hungarians "a noble, progressive race," he believed the majority wanted to become Americans after migrating to the United States.[64] According to Braun, an individual of the Hungarian race became a member of the American race after thorough exposure to the social, cultural, and political climate of the United States.[65] He argued that immigrants should embrace complete assimilation in order "to become American citizens of the highest order."[66] Braun criticized those who worked in the United States only to return to Hungary to invest their earnings there. He claimed that the Hungarian government bore great responsibility in this regard by both inducing emigrants to return and feeding the Cunard Line a steady stream of migrants to transport back and forth across the Atlantic.[67] Braun blamed return migration and the Hungarian government for hindering the thorough assimilation of Hungarian immigrants in the United States.

The Hungarian government played a limited, yet invasive, role in shaping Hungarian-American identity. By 1902 the Hungarian Royal Prime Ministry had learned that ethnic Magyars comprised 33 percent of those emigrating.[68] This decline of the Magyar population greatly hindered the "tenuous majority" held by Magyars in the multiethnic Kingdom of Hungary.[69] Beginning in 1903 the Prime Ministry created a program of "American Action," which attempted to induce the emigrants to return to Hungary. Paula Benkart informs us that "a study of the files for the years 1903 through 1917 shows that the government's connection with many religious congregations in America was intimate and intended to encompass almost every detail of their operation, though that connection was rarely discovered or denounced in the United States."[70] The program focused on the religious, journalistic, and educational affairs of Magyars in America. Benkart claims that national and political objectives were at the core of the effort. A confidential pamphlet of the program of 1906 stated: "the American Action has no other aim than to protect our emigrants from unscrupulous political agents and to keep awake their attachments to the homeland."[71]

The American Action program functioned through two denominational branches: the Reformed and Catholic. In 1904 the program facilitated the unification of six Hungarian-American congregations with the General Conventus of the Reformed Church in Hungary. The Conventus sent László Bede, a theologian, to the United States in 1906 with eight pages of confidential instructions. Bede reminded American Magyar Reformed pastors of the need to join the homeland church in order to receive pension benefits and places for their wives and children in the Hungarian widows' and orphans' homes. He was also given the task of organizing parish elementary schools. As Bede and his successors recruited more churches to join the American Magyar Reformed classis—under the Reformed branch of the American Action program—the yearly salary budget increased from $7,435 in 1906 to $11,835 by 1908.[72] The Hungarian General Credit Bank also refinanced many American church mortgages. By 1910, 23 American Magyar Protestant congregations, some

64. Braun, *Immigration Abuses*, 4.
65. Braun, *Immigration Abuses*, 72-73.
66. Braun, *Immigration Abuses*, 111.
67. Braun, *Immigration Abuses*, 131-134.
68. Paula K. Benkart, "The Hungarian Government, the American Magyar Churches, and Immigrant Ties to the Homeland, 1903-1917," *Church History* 52, no. 3 (September 1983): 313.
69. Benkart, "The Hungarian Government."
70. Benkart, "The Hungarian Government."
71. Benkart, "The Hungarian Government," 314.
72. Benkart, "The Hungarian Government," 316.

of which were Lutheran, had been overhauled by the General Conventus.[73] The American Action program similarly influenced the Hungarian Catholic churches in the United States, but reorganization proved more challenging.

The Action also focused on parish educational programs. The Conventus required each church to hold classes on Saturday, Sunday, and public school holidays. Pastors who exhibited the greatest success were rewarded with monetary bonuses from the Conventus. However, they had to strictly follow the guidelines proscribed by the authorities, chiefly, rules intended to preserve the Hungarian cultural heritage. The Detroit Magyar Reformed Church was refused financial aid in 1912 after the Conventus learned that they had been conducting kindergarten classes in English.[74]

The Hungarian-American secular press came under the influence of American Action as well. In 1905 the Foreign Ministry had compiled a list of prominent, widely-read American Magyar papers, along with their circulation statistics and ideological platforms. By 1907 three secular and one Catholic publication had received $5,200 in funding. Yet, by October of 1908, only one received the $4,000 renewal.[75]

Although the American Action program affected Hungarian-American institutions by forcing pastors, educators, and editors to adopt a degree of Magyar nationalism in return for funding, the program declined during World War I. The war drastically reduced the return migration that the program sought to increase. Benkart writes "the ultimate demise of the Action always had been inevitable; for the more quickly it succeeded in helping Magyar sojourners fulfill their goal of returning home, the more rapidly it hastened the development of an immigrant community dominated by those who decided to stay."[76] Essentially, American Action failed to create ties to the homeland significant enough to induce immigrants to return to Hungary in great numbers. Yet, it did slow the assimilation of the second generation of Hungarian-Americans with its emphasis on the preservation of the Magyar language.

Material conditions in the United States played a major role in shaping Hungarian-American identities. Folklorist Andrew Vázsonyi has uncovered a unique connection between the exigencies of the industrial landscape and the development of local customs among Hungarians who worked in the Calumet region of Indiana. Because many workers intended to live frugally in order to take as much money back to Hungary as possible, many lived transient lives in boardinghouses. These boardinghouses were cramped and crowded. Two men—who worked different shifts—often shared a single bed. Most boarders were young, unmarried men who did not learn English. The term *burdosház* is a corrupted Hungarian variant of boardinghouse and it carried an additional layer of meaning.[77]

The customs that evolved out of the burdosház system revolved around domestic roles. These establishments were operated by a *burdosgazdag* and *burdosasszony*, or landlord and landlady. They kept one room of the home for themselves and rented out the other two or three. The role of the burdosgazdag was minimal, since he was often employed by the same industries as the boarders. He simply granted lodging to the boarders. A burdosasszony, however, toiled from dawn until dusk. She prepared meals, packed them for the workers, washed and ironed their clothing, kept expense records, maintained the outhouse, and sometimes bathed workers after their shifts.

73. Benkart, "The Hungarian Government," 317.
74. Benkart, "The Hungarian Government," 318.
75. Benkart, "The Hungarian Government," 319.
76. Benkart, "The Hungarian Government," 321.
77. Andrew Vázsonyi, "The Cicisbeo and the Magnificent Cuckold Boardinghouse Life and Lore in Immigrant Communities," *The Journal of American Folklore* 91, no. 360 (June 1978): 642-643.

Vázsonyi also discovered references to a *föburdos*, which means star-boarder or chief boarder. According to travel books, song collections, oral testimonies, and dictionaries of American and Hungarian slang terms, the föburdos was a favored, privileged boarder. He was also the lover of the burdosasszony.[78]

Although it did not occur in every boardinghouse, the sexual relationship between the burdosasszony and föburdos was prevalent in the oral testimonies that Vázsonyi collected, and it was explicitly referenced in the dictionaries. Through his interviews with former boardinghouse dwellers conducted in East Chicago and Indiana's Calumet region, Vázsonyi found a body of similar details surrounding the relationship between the trio of landlord, landlady, and star-boarder.[79] The föburdos had a bizarre, though artistic, method of attracting the attention of the burdosasszony. He carved symbols into her kitchen door or door post. A common symbol was that of a sun with emanating rays; this expressed his sexual interest to the burdosasszony.[80] Interestingly, these carvings were not out of the burdosgazdag's view and cases of his rage and violent use of knives or axes were not common, as they were in a Hungarian village. According to most recollections, the burdosgazdag either attempted to win back his wife peacefully or he accepted the new situation as inevitable, and even beneficial to himself (the rationale was that he could not financially afford the loss of his wife and her labor if she were to run off, and the föburdos provided a degree of security at home while the burdosgazdag was at work—an ally to ward off other men in a situation in which women were rare).[81]

The living conditions within boardinghouses had a noteworthy effect on the image, or reputation, of Hungarian immigrants. Whether the tales of star-boarders, adulterous landladies, and their masochistic husbands are exaggerations or not, they nonetheless reflect an environment that many Americans viewed as immoral and sinful. Half of the couples of the Calumet region refused to keep boarders because of the social stigma attached to the practice.[82] Prostitution, gambling, and heavy drinking that led to violence were staples of these boardinghouse environments.

The influence of folklore in the construction of identity was not limited to the sexual relationships that developed in the burdosház. Folklore emerged during the Romantic period in Hungary as a result of the movement for national recognition and independence from Habsburg rule. Linda Dégh has charted the identities created by the Hungarian "folk and their creative products," identities that carried great weight as expressions of their national aspirations.[83] Folksong played a prominent role in generating this patriotic culture. Song collectors and publishers constructed the peasantry as the "natural custodians of ancestral values."[84] Folk form, style, and dialect influenced the academic arts. These academics and collectors often dressed up and altered the folk material to suit middle-class taste, thus presenting abstract, idealized manifestations of unspoiled national spirit. By 1900, professional architects, composers, and designers had become adept at appropriating stylistic elements from peasant houses, folksongs, and folk art. The middle class adopted many elements derived from folk culture, including: embroidered clothing and boots with

78. Vázsonyi, "The Cicisbeo," 643-645.
79. Vázsonyi, "The Cicisbeo," 645.
80. Vázsonyi, "The Cicisbeo," 647.
81. Vázsonyi, "The Cicisbeo," 648, 653, 655.
82. Vázsonyi, "The Cicisbeo," 651.
83. Linda Dégh, "Uses of Folklore as Expressions of Identity by Hungarians in the Old and New Country," *Journal of Folklore Research* 21, no. 2/3 (May-December 1984): 187.
84. Dégh, "Uses of Folklore," 190.

spurs, handlebar mustaches, and peasant textiles and pottery for their home décor. The millennial celebration of the birth of the Hungarian nation, which took place in 1896, included an ethnographic display of furnished peasant homes representing the stylistic variations of the regions of Hungary.[85]

The millennium celebration inspired the development of a new folk-based art music by composers Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály. Both believed that urban music performed by Gypsy orchestras—dressed up in the concert music of Franz Liszt and Johannes Brahms—was unrepresentative of authentic Hungarian peasant music. Bartók and Kodály were pioneering ethnomusicologists who traveled to remote villages, coaxed peasants into singing or performing (many were reluctant to do so and met these urban intellectuals with skepticism), and recorded the music for transcription back in Budapest. Ironically, the peasant music, art, décor, and dress helped forge a popular Hungarian national identity, yet the peasants in Hungarian society occupied the lowest social status and were often abused and mistreated by the other classes. The middle and upper classes treated the peasantry to both public worship and private derision.[86]

The Hungarian-American diaspora communities experienced a similar growth of identity consciousness. Immigrants in the United States clung to the romantic, patriotic, folk image of the late nineteenth century because this was what the urban elites promoted for the purpose of creating group cohesion in America. This model—constructed around the identity symbols and traditions of wine harvest festivals, Gypsy music, folk costumes, stuffed cabbage, dancing the csárdás, and chicken paprikás—became the standard form of ethnic expression for Hungarian-Americans. However, it was not the new immigrants who crafted this identity. Many were indifferent to notions of ethnic identity because they believed their stay in the United States was temporary. It was only after many had decided to permanently settle in their ethnic neighborhoods that these manifestations of a common Hungarian identity arose.[87]

An interesting aspect of cultural exchange that occurred between Hungarian villages and Hungarian-American communities can be discerned in folksongs, particularly those from the northeast of Hungary. Hungarian collectors have found a multitude of folksongs that reference America and the experiences of those who migrated between the two countries. A song from Sárospatak in the Zemplén Mountains expresses one's frustration with American women:

> Oh you undulating soil of America,
> How many lads have called down curses upon you!
> America, ihajja!
> There you find the English girls
> But, alas, how difficult to kiss them![88]

Discontent with America can be detected as often as feelings of satisfaction with and praise for the opportunities offered by emigration to the United States. Another folksong intoned:

85. Dégh, "Uses of Folklore," 190-191.
86. Dégh, "Uses of Folklore," 191-192.
87. Dégh, "Uses of Folklore," 194-196.
88. Béla Gunda, "America in Hungarian Folk Tradition," *Journal of American Folklore* 83, no. 330 (October-December 1970): 409.

God save America forever,
I shall never leave her.
I prefer to dig in the mine
Rather than to be at home,
The hired man of the Jew.[89]

The folksongs of northeast Hungary reveal a myriad of feelings, viewpoints, and sentiments on the value of emigration and remigration. But just as often as the creators of folksongs expressed clearly positive or negative ideas about emigration, many expressed uncertainty. It was not always an easy task to find one's place in the world.

As the following personal accounts demonstrate, Hungarians sometimes felt the push and pull of migration at times that were inconvenient. Julianna Puskás is a historian who focuses on Hungarian émigré communities. As a Hungarian scholar and economist she developed an early desire "to understand the immigrant fate."[90] Born in the Szatmár County village of Szamosszeg, she experienced the departures and returns of numerous friends, neighbors, acquaintances, and family members. Most were migrating to and from New Brunswick, New Jersey. Prior to World War II her father emigrated to the United States. He lost contact with the family during the war years, but returned to Szamosszeg in 1948. Before departing once again, Julianna pleaded to accompany him to America. He refused and told her that if she went to New Brunswick, she would most likely become a worker in the cigar factory or a housemaid. She remained in Hungary, attended the tuition-free People's College in Budapest, and enjoyed a steady supply of American clothes purchased by her itinerant father.[91]

The Puskás story provides an example of the doubts and apprehensions felt by many Hungarians about emigrating to the United States. During the 1970s and 1980s, Puskás heard oral testimonies revealing that numerous immigrants had doubts about American life shortly after their arrival in the country. The story of Árpád Kósa is one such example, and it provides insight regarding return migration and assimilation. Born in the village Szamosszeg and raised working on the family farm, he stole away to Budapest in 1912 without his parents' permission. He was seventeen. From there he emigrated to New Brunswick, New Jersey where a colony of Hungarians from Szamosszeg thrived. Árpád worked as a streetcar conductor in New Brunswick, a miner in West Virgina, and worked in Texas in a capacity not recalled by the interviewees. In 1917 he married a Hungarian-speaking Slovak woman (The name of Árpád's wife is not present in the oral testimony, which may indicate his parents' disapproval of her as a marriage partner for their son). The couple moved to McKeesport, and then to Duquesne, Pennsylvania where they had a daughter, Irén. Árpád supported the family as an ironworker. The sooty, polluted air of the Pittsburgh area proved too noxious and undesirable for Árpád's wife, so the couple returned to New Brunswick and purchased a house and property there. In 1925 the family sold their property and migrated to Szamosszeg. However, the challenges posed by Hungarian village life and tensions with Árpád's family compelled the couple and their daughter to move back to New Brunswick once again. They settled permanently there after

89. Gunda, "America," 411.
90. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, iv.
91. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, xi-xii.

purchasing another home.[92] In many ways, the Kósa's itinerant lifestyle suggests they may have felt lost between two irreconcilable worlds. As an afterthought—and one may detect a sense of nostalgia and regret in her tone—Puskás writes: "The daughter, Irén, converted to Catholicism as a child. She finished high school and married a Hungarian who had been born in America. Their two daughters, both college graduates, do not speak Hungarian; their husbands are not of Hungarian ancestry and they have moved away from New Brunswick."[93]

By 1990 those in the United States who identified as Hungarian-American numbered 1.6 million, despite the fact that many came from mixed marriages and just ten percent spoke Hungarian.[94] Whether this reveals a strong sense of identity or not, one cannot doubt that Hungarian-Americans struggled to forge identities in the United States. The assimilationist ideas of Oscar Handlin and the Melting Pot Theory—both of which presented immigrants as having existed in a state of alienation until they had been fully assimilated—have received criticism from later historians of immigration, and rightly so.[95] The new social historians of the 1970s challenged the notion that immigrants had experienced complete assimilation and put forth chain migration and familial connections as primary components in their interpretations of immigrants' motives. But this interpretation is incomplete as well. Hungarians of the early twentieth century often underwent total assimilation, just as Handlin asserted. Today, there are many Americans of Hungarian descent in the United States who have no sense of Hungarian identity whatsoever. Yet, some persisted in maintaining their sense of Hungarian identity. Perhaps Margit Mikes, a feminist poet who emigrated from Budapest to New York in the mid-twentieth century, aptly intoned the ambiguity of the immigrant experience in her poem, *Ki vagyok én?*

> Without my mother tongue and my country,
> Without my familiar community,
> what good is my nationality?
> I don't know, but still
> O guard it with fierce loyalty…
> I am a leaf torn from the Magyar tree,
> Blown here by the storm…96

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92. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 43-44.
93. Puskás, *Ties That Bind*, 44.
94. Várdy, "Image and Self-Image," 319.
95. Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted.* 2nd ed. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979), 4.
96. Adam Makkai, ed., *In Quest of the 'Miracle Stag': The Poetry of Hungary* (Chicago: Atlantis-Centaur, 1996),

# Queering Popular Culture: Gay Men in Film from the 1970s to the 1990s

## Alexzandria Simon

**Abstract:** Media outlets, such as television and film, have a lengthy and complicated history of presenting characters that represent American citizenry. The portrayal of queer people in media significantly misrepresents how queer people define themselves personally, socially, and publicly. Film and television sexualize and distinguish queer characters in ways that contradict or oversimplify the reality of being queer. I will use nine films from the 1970s to the 1990s to analyze queer character's roles through media perceptions. I will argue that the reality that movies present create specific ideologies that construct definitions of gay and lesbian identity and gender. I explore the ideas and opinions behind the films address who creates these stories and why. By tracing the history of queer characters in media, I understand the disconnect between media and the real identity of queer people. I also trace the inclusivity of queer actors and characters and how this shaped media's role in popular culture. Through an intersectional approach, I present a more inclusive understanding of queer life. Through deconstructing film, queering these histories will begin to end the LGBTQ+ community's historical alienation.

In the 1999 film *Boys Don't Cry,* the main character Brandon, a transgender man, is sitting in the chief of police officer's office crying, covered in bruises and cuts, barely holding himself up. Brandon explains how two men grabbed him, beat him, and raped him because they found out he is transgender and still has female body parts. The police officer asks questions about Brandon's physical anatomy and asks whether he enjoyed it or not. Brandon explains how he is having an identity crisis and cries as he shares how the two men touched him on his vagina and breasts. The police officer, clearly uncomfortable, uninterested, and not understanding, tells Brandon they will take care of it and dismisses him from his office. Only days later, Brandon is shot and killed by the men who beat and raped him.[1] This film tells the haunting and horrifying story of Brandon Teena, a transgender man, and his experiences with the police, homophobia, and sexual/mental/physical abuse. While a piece of fiction, the film showcases social and political attitudes queer people face. The negligence and violence of the police, the constant fear of being outed, and the struggles transgender people deal with are prevalent in the film. There is an ongoing debate in scholarship on how and when historians should use film as a tool for reflection, analysis, and historical understanding. Often because of their fictionality, films exhibit an array of obstacles when presented before a scholar. The meaning and importance of films are subjective and susceptible to personal bias, and race, gender, class, and sexuality influence how Americans perceive film. Therefore, the question still to be determined is, how will historians deconstruct and interpret film for scholarship, and how can films help historians understand the past? Cultural historian Warren S. Susman claims that, "if historians asked of them [films] the right questions -always treating them seriously, if not literally- they might find that they had raised a curtain on the past enabling them to reconstruct, not simply a parade of famous men, significant events, and major institutions, but the very way

1. *Boys Don't Cry,* directed by Kimberly Peirce (1999; Fox Searchlight Pictures).

of life, the very "style" of an entire society."[2] Films are a parallel of time and they showcase society at a specific period and place. They display trends, lifestyles, language, and the political landscape. Filmmakers reinforce narratives and stereotypes, advocate for marginalized groups, and create stories about family, friendship, and love grounded in particular historical contexts.

The film industry, specifically the Association of Motion Picture and Television Production, held absolute power in shaping discourses that dictated what was acceptable in America. In permitting specific topics while banning others, the Association of Motion Picture and Television Production contorted mainstream cinema. In the past, topics such as family values, masculine men, and whiteness dominated the television screen. These topics reinforced what elites regarded as normative American values and broadcasted to audiences what it meant to be American. The industry banned topics on sex, homosexuality, and drugs. These topics had no room in film, and therefore, audiences never saw stories and experiences about the queer community, drug abuse, or sex. Even when the film industry began to expand and relax their rules, films struggled with representation. People crave and appreciate seeing their identities and experiences on film, and if done ethically, media can present characters that inform, educate, and share personal and truthful narratives of all different kinds of lives.

This paper takes on the role of examining homosexuality in film during a time when society and politics repressed, marginalized, and stigmatized gay men. By the late 20th century, media outlets had a lengthy and complicated history of presenting characters that represented American citizenry. The limited portrayal of queer people in media significantly misrepresented how gay men defined themselves personally, socially, and publicly. Films sexualized and distinguished gay male characters in ways that contradicted or oversimplified the reality of being queer, and cinema often reinforced stereotypes or made ill of same-sex relationships. This study analyzes the queer characters' roles in nine films of the late 20th century, arguing that the perceptions movies created established specific ideologies and tropes that constructed definitions of gay men's identity and gender.

Queering the history of film will help the LGBTQ+ community's alienation, bringing to the forefront the struggles and atrocities queer people faced in popular culture. Historians such as Christina B. Handhardt and Michael Bronski have begun to revolutionize American history by including queer experiences and lives. They treat queer history as American history and offer fresh perspectives by including stories that have been excluded from common narratives. Historians Vito Russo and Jeffrey Nelson tackle homosexuality in films and call for a breakdown of popular culture. The intersections of media and scholarship has led to new theoretical and methodological approaches to queer history. Christina B. Hanhardt states that queer history draws on "insights and frameworks from within and beyond the disciple of history and [seeks] to approach gender and sexuality in tandem with racialization and the political economy."[3] Interdisciplinary scholarship plays an imperative role in the telling of queer history through film.

Language in film scripts plays a significant factor when analyzing the history of queer people in film. Michele Foucault argues Language carries meaning in society,

2. Warren I. Susman, "Film and History: Artifact and Experience," in *Hollywood and the Historical Film,* ed. J.E. Smyth (New York: Palgrave MacMillian, 2012), 2.

3. Christina B. Hanhardt, "The Radical Potential of Queer Political History," *GLQ* 25, no. 1 (2019): 2, https://muse-jhu-edu.proxy.lib.csus.edu/article/712688.

and words and ideas shape disciplines, which further shapes how historians write about and perceive history. Films that include queer characters center around derogatory language, stereotypes, or typical tropes. Pulling from French-philosopher Michel Foucault's methodology, analyzing language helps historians work in deciphering and understanding institutions as social constructs. This method will allow scholars to understand humans' realities better and create truthful histories. Through deconstructing film, I hope to expand queer histories and establish a more rigorous cinema scholarship. When gay men become visible in film and history, they become real.

**The 1970s**

For queer people, the 1970s promised new progressive politics and more vigorous forms of community resistance. After the Stonewall Riots, gay men gathered in larger communities, praised their gayness, and fought to change the public's understanding of what it meant to be gay. New social norms argued that people had complete control over their bodies, which included engaging in consensual sexual behavior with whom you desired. Gay manifesto documents spoke about freeing the homosexual and called for gays to come out of the closet.[4] In December of 1973, the American Psychiatric Association dropped homosexuality from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.[5] The gay community made strides, and yet at the same time, homosexuality still threatened heterosexual marriages and family values. Conservative communities and politics continued to establish sodomy laws and turn over gay rights bills. In the 1970s, film reflected different avenues of gayness, often using humor or derogatory words when dealing with gay characters. Filmmakers used stereotypical tropes, and most plots ended in tragedy. Groups, such as the Gay Activists Alliance, advocated for better representation in film. They stressed how imperative it was for motion pictures to stop portraying homosexuality as an illness, have various themes when telling gay stories, and push for the inclusion of gay men in the industry.[6]

The 1970 film *The Boys in the Band* became one of the most famous Hollywood films dealing with the subject of male homosexuality.[7] Directed by William Friedkin, the film follows the friendship of six gay men celebrating a birthday. Filmed in an apartment on the Upper East Side of New York, spanning one night, the film permits the audience to see different gay characters, both stereotypical and not, a diverse cast, and the internal struggles gay men faced. The film explored the closet, job loss, internalized homophobia, and cities' gay culture.

The main character, Michael, is throwing his friend Donald a birthday party and invites all of their closest friends. While planning for the evening, Michael receives a telephone call from his college friend Alan. Alan is distressed and anxious while telling Michael he needs to come over and talk to him about something important. Michael tells Alan to come over and urges his friends to act straight, stating that Alan does not know he is gay. When Alan arrives, he soon finds out everyone at the party is gay, and a fist fight ensues between Alan and Emory (a friend at the party). Michael suggests they all play a game called "Telephone" where they must take turns calling the one person they have truly loved and tell that person their feelings. Alan, who is

4. Michael Bronski, *A Queer History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2011), 208.
5. Bronski, *A Queer History*, 218.
6. Vito Russo, *The Celluloid Closet: Homosexuality in the Movies* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1985), 221.
7. Russo, *Celluloid Closet*, 174.

dealing with marriage problems, calls his wife and tells her that she is his one true love. More conflict occurs between the gay men, and then the film ends. There is no apparent unsatisfactory ending, yet the film leaves a feeling of hopelessness and dread for homosexuals.[8]

There are significant aspects of the film that leave lasting impressions on queer and heterosexual audiences. There is an argument that occurs between Michael and his friend Donald, where Donald expresses, in a dramatic speech, Michael's inability to deal with his homosexuality:

> You are a sad and pathetic man, Michael. You are a homosexual, and you don't want to be, but there's nothing you can do to change it. Not all your prayers to your God. Not all the analysis your money can buy in the years you have left to live. You may one day be able to know a heterosexual life. If you want it desperately enough. If you pursue it with the fervor with which you annihilate. But you will always be homosexual as well, Michael. Until the day you die.[9]

This speech showcases the self-hatred and internal struggle gay men face. Even though the gay movement was on the rise in a period of relative liberation, there were still gay men in the closet. It addressed the societal perception that if a man is gay, he needs to seek medical help, in this case, therapy because there must be something wrong mentally or physically. This dramatic representation eludes straight people to think that homosexuals live a tragic life, one where they do not want to be gay, and that a gay person will do whatever they can to try and be straight: even if that means pretending to live a heterosexual life. This speech also shows the relationship between gayness and religious faith. After everyone leaves the party, Michael is seen walking into a Catholic church to pray as he grapples with his sexual identity.

Two characters in the film, Hank and Larry, are dealing with infidelity and monogamy in their relationship. Hank is divorcing his wife, and despite being in a relationship with Hank, Larry sleeps with other men. When Alan arrives at the party, he meets Hank, who seems to be just like him: married, a businessman, and straight. When Hank tells Alan that he is leaving his wife to be with Larry, Alan calls him disgusting and says it is not normal.[10] Compared to other characters in the film, Hank and Larry present to the audience the reality of two non-stereotypical gay men being in a successful and serious relationship. They are not the "flamboyant, feminine, sissy" gays that old movies showed. Their characters and relationship challenge the perception of queer lovers.

Towards the end of the film, Michael is still struggling with the fact that he is a gay man. After the party, he falls to the ground and cries into his friend's shoulder as he states, "You show me a happy homosexual, and I'll show you a gay corpse."[11] Living life as a gay man meant living a life of constant struggles and obstacles. Internal hatred of oneself stemmed from the backlash of American society. *The Boys in the Band* illuminated the fear and ignorance that surrounded queerness in America.[12] During the 1970s, American citizens did not understand what it meant to be gay. Politics and medicine had their definitions, but gay men defined themselves independently of

8. *The Boys in the Band*, directed by William Friedkin (1970; National General Pictures).
9. *Boys in the Band,* Friedkin, 1970.
10. *Boys in the Band*, Friedkin, 1970.
11. *Boys in the Band*, Friedkin, 1970.
12. Harry M. Benshoff and Sean Griffin, *Queer Images: A History of Gay and Lesbian Film in America* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 137.

these labels. *The Boys in the Band* presents those definitions in a multitude of forms. Michael, who is dealing with internalized homophobia, Emory who is feminine and extravagantly self-aware, and Hank who is the typical average man coming to terms with his sexuality.

The horror and camp genre of film catered to queer identities in the 1970s. Some horror films cast gay characters to play the villain, and camp films created a space for extravagance or the grotesque.[13] The 1975 musical film *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* fit perfectly into these categories. *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* follows Brad and Janet, a heterosexual couple that get a flat tire while driving home at night. They remember passing a castle up the street, and they decide to walk and ask the homeowner if they can borrow their phone to call for help. Upon arrival, they realize they have stumbled upon a party of, as Janet calls them, foreigners. They meet Dr. Frank N. Furter, the scientist who identifies as a "sweet transvestite from Transexual Transylvania." While his gender identity is unclear, there is an element of drag in his makeup and clothing. Dr. Frank N. Furter explains how he is hosting a party to celebrate his creation. He created a man named Rocky, with blonde hair and a tan, who will provide sexual services. Brad and Janet are fearful of every person in the castle, and yet they soon fall under the seduction of Dr. Frank N. Furter and his fellow friends. At the end of the film, Dr. Frank N. Furter's maid and butler reveal themselves as aliens and claim he has failed his mission on earth, and now he must die. Dr. Frank N Furter and his human creation die in each other's arms, and Brad and Janet are left in the mud as the castle shoots back up into space and the film ends.[14]

Filled with colorful costumes, erotic dances, and poetic lyrics, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* encapsulated American fear and ignorance of queerness. When Janet and Brad arrive at the castle and meet everyone, Janet claims she is scared and believes this place to be unhealthy. The couple use language such as "weirdos, foreigners, and others" to describe Dr. Frank N. Furter and his friends. The first half of the film deals with how straight society encounters "deviant" sexuality.[15] The opening scene of the film present Brad singing to Janet about how he is ready to marry her and reinforces the heterosexual romance and white patriarchal normality. Film professors Harry Benshoff and Sean Griffin address how "the film then brings forward the queerness inherent in the horror film via Frank N. Furter and his assorted queer accomplices, figuring Frank's queerness as the force opposing the musical's celebration of heterosexual courtship."[16] The film's trajectory is directly opposite from the conventional classic Hollywood musical that celebrates heteronormativity. Dr. Frank N. Furter's performance of "Sweet Transvestite" is a song of sexual arousal, and he professes his need to have his tensions relieved by Rocky.[17] The overtly sexualized lifestyle represented in the "*Rocky Horror"* caused fear in many heteronormative Americans.

Despite the filmmaker's attempts to celebrate queerness, Dr. Frank N. Furter is the villain of the film. A common form of characterization, filmmakers vilify the gay characters and have them defeated by the end of the film. In the case of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show,* one supporting character claims Dr. Frank N. Furter must

13. Al LaValley, "The Great Escape," in *Out in Culture: Gay, Lesbian, and Queer Essays on Popular Culture,* ed. Corey Creekmur and Alexander Doty (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1995), 63.

14. *The Rocky Horror Picture Show,* directed by Jim Sharman (1975: Michael White Productions).

15. Russo, *Celluloid Closet,* 52.

16. Benshoff and Griffin, *Queer Images,* 147.; *Rocky Horror,* Sharman, 1975.

17. *Rocky Horror*, Sharman, 1975.

be killed for the greater good.[18] There is no place for a cross-dressing, androgenous, bisexual person in the film or in reality. If there is a person like Dr. Frank N. Furter, he can only exist in a faraway castle living with others like himself. The film shows the continuing fear of otherness. The final number, "Don't Dream It, Be It," calls for a hopeful future where queer people can live in harmony and as themselves. The same message was being preached across the country in the 1970s as gay liberation movements expanded in the wake of the Stonewall Riots.

The 1976 film *Norman, Is That You?* tackled homosexuality through the viewpoint of parents. The plot follows Ben, Norman's father, as he travels to Hollywood to visit his son. When he arrives, Norman is surprised and realizes he must ask his boyfriend, Garson, to leave because his father does not know he is gay. When Norman leaves for work, Garson returns and outs Norman to his father. Learning that his son is gay, Ben grows angry and plans to fix the situation. When Norman returns from work, he finds that his father hired a prostitute to sleep with him and make him straight. Norman argues and pleads with his father, asking him if he could please be happy that his son is in a loving relationship. Ben fights with Norman, stressing how he did everything right when he raised Norman, and questions how he could be gay. Ben leaves the house and goes to the bookstore to learn more about homosexuality and realizes there is nothing he can do to "fix" the situation.[19]

Garson comes back to the apartment and tries to explain their relationship with Ben. He confesses how amazing Norman is, and he expresses how much he loves Norman. Ben does not listen, and he jumps up and grabs Garson by his throat and threatens to kill him. Norman's mother, Beatrice, shows up, and Ben tells her the news. Beatrice explains how there is a sexual revolution going on and that people are coming out of the closet these days, but that this does not accord with their values. Norman's parents share that they will never be okay with Norman being gay, that they do not understand why Norman is gay, and that they will not try to. Norman tries to stand up for himself and defend his sexuality, and his father claims he will not stand for it.[20]

*Norman, Is That You* deals with homophobia and ignorance Ben uses derogatory and threatening language throughout the film. He calls gay men "sissies, tinkerbells, and faggots." This language intentionally reinforces harmful stereotypes of gay men through the use of derogatory monikers. He threatens to kill Garson multiple times, and he claims he can beat the gay out of his son. The gay community has faced brutal violence from both their families and society. Ben claims he did manly things with him as a child, and therefore, he should not be gay. He speculates that if he had a manlier name, he would not be gay. These claims reinforce gender norms per sexuality. Specifically, the idea that a man cannot be both masculine and gay. Ben tells Norman that if he sleeps with a woman, just once, he will be fixed. This again is establishing gender norms that if a man sleeps with women, this is what makes him a man. The film ignores the differences between gender, sexuality, and gender expression, helping to reinforce the straight/gay binary. There is no room in the film, or reality, for fluidity.[21]

This film grapples with the struggle parents faced when they found out their child is gay. Dramatic at times, the parents face confusion and fear. They use comedy and

18. *Rocky Horror*, Sharman, 1975.
19. *Norman, Is That You?,* directed by George Schlatter (1976: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer).
20. *Norman,* Schlatter, 1976.
21. *Norman,* Schlatter, 1976.

jokes to deal with homosexuality. They make light of Norman's relationships and brush off his defenses. This film does not recognize gay relationships. The characters in this film do not recognize gay relationships. While the parents come to terms with their son being gay, there is never any outright acceptance. This mirrors the attitude of 1970s America. Queer people existed but were not recognized or appreciated. A *Los Angeles Times* article, "Gays' Parents Face It Together," offered a space for parents of gay children to meet and organize.[22] Started by two gay women, the group offered help, advice, and education around having gay children. One of the founders stated that "parents are really resistant, I think they are ashamed, afraid of something they don't know about."[23] Norman's parents have no idea how to handle or address the fact that their son is gay.

Throughout the 1970s society and policy continued to shape laws and institutions around the exclusion of gay men. While films included, and even showcased gay characters, many of their plots relied on depicting queer characters as social outcasts. These gaps in social equity were even further compounded if the person of color was also gay.

**The 1980s**

The gay community faced new and ongoing challenges in the 1980s: campaigns on getting gay teachers out of the classroom, the continuing fight for equal rights, and the AIDS epidemic. Gays migrated in large numbers to metropolitan cities and established strong cultural institutions.[24] Established in the early 20th century, gay clubs and bars created a safe space for gay men. This arena allowed for gay men to meet, talk, have sex, and discuss politics. Men learned skills that allowed them to live double lives: one side that participated in the gay social world and the other that became "straight" for the workday. Historian George Chauncey discusses the mentors that introduced newcomers into the gay world by teaching them gay slang, folklore, dress, and how to survive in a world that wanted to erase them.[25]

In the 1980s, films devoted more screen time to gay relationships and sexuality. Films portrayed loving relationships between same-sex couples and same-sex friendships. However, historian Vito Russo explains that the increased visibility of gay men is tenuous and occurred mainly in independent films.[26] Hollywood had been content with easy laughs and stereotypes of homosexuals, and filmmakers used queer lives to shock and sell rather than educate or inform. After almost twenty years of gay liberation, American's understanding of sexuality shifted. Although homophobia, secrecy, and the closet still dominated popular culture, filmmakers found more ways to express gayness through the media.[27]

The 1980 film *Cruising* broke down barriers on homosexuality, sex, and film ratings. Featuring popular actor Al Pacino, the film follows a serial killer who targets and murders gay men. Officer Steve Burns, played by Al Pacino, is hired as a detective for the case and goes undercover into the dark, leather, sadomasochism (S&M) bar scene. Because of Steve's resemblance to the murdered, he hopes he will lure out the killer and make an arrest. Steve makes friends with his neighbor, who happens to be

22. Claudia Luther, "Gays' Parents Face It Together." *The Los Angeles Times*, June 21, 1974.
23. Luther, "Gays' Parents."
24. Bronski, *A Queer History*, 416.
25. George Chauncey, *Gay New York* (New York: Basic Books, 1994), 277.
26. Russo, *The Celluloid Closet,* 248.
27. Benshoff and Griffin, *Queer Images,* 178.

gay, and he discovers the bar scene and the fears homosexuals face. His neighbor explains how someone is always trying to kill gay men, and he claims the police are of no help. Later in the film, Steve makes his way into a secret club, and the S&M bar scene is revealed. Men, dressed in leather, are kissing and having sex in every corner of the bar. Men are doing drugs, drinking, and dancing erotically with each other. Obviously overwhelmed, Steve leaves the bar early because he is uncomfortable and unsure how to act.[28]

At one point, Steve believes he has caught the killer, and the man is arrested and brought in for questioning before the police. The police question and brutally beat the man before learning that he is innocent. With the killer still loose, Steve dives further into the gay bar scene and tracks another man he believes to be the killer. After investigating his lead, Steve realizes he has identified the serial killer. With the promise of sex, he lures the killer into the park. When Steve begins to undress, the killer lunges to stab him, and Steve grabs him and defends himself. The killer ends up in the hospital, barely alive, with the police explaining how he is under arrest. As the case comes to an end, the police are called to the apartment complex Steve lived in, and they find his gay neighbor murdered in the bathroom. Steve goes home to his long-term girlfriend and stares at himself in the mirror, looking troubled and upset, and the film ends.[29]

With an R rating, *Cruising* featured an advisory that stated, "due to the intense and sensitive subject matter, discretion is urged for younger audiences."[30] Dozens of scenes throughout *Cruising* show erotic sexual encounters, S&M situations, drugs, murder, and anal penetration between gay men. The film is graphic and hides nothing of the reality of the underground bar community. The movie projects a dark and uncomfortable reality of gay life. The scenes make the gay bars look unwelcoming, murderous, and threatening. The erotic gay sex scenes threaten the virtues and values of middle-class Americans. Following the opening of *Cruising*, gay communities flocked to the streets to protest the film. They marched, shouted, and held up signs that read "LESBIANS AND GAYS FIGHT BACK AGAINST BIGOTRY" and "STOP THE MOVIE CRUISING."[31] Demonstrations claimed the film reinforced violence and brutality towards the gay community. The murder scenes show the killer penetrating men with his penis and with a knife. The murder of gay men heightened a sense of homophobia, and gay men became fearful for their life.

Audiences speculated about the ending of the film. When Steve's gay neighbor is found murdered, Steve is at home staring in the mirror, looking troubled and confused. Some audiences claimed that Steve murdered his neighbor because he was dealing with his internal struggles of homosexuality. Some thought the ending scene proved the never-ending violence towards the queer community. The film director, William Friedkin (the same director of *The Boys in the Band*), claimed the movie had nothing to do with homosexuality and that the ending was open to interpretation.[32] The director claimed that a film about the brutal murders of gay men had nothing to do with their sexuality while society was preoccupied with the persecution of queer people. Contrary to the controversy, gay communities celebrated the film. The film

28. *Cruising,* directed by William Friedkin (1980: United Artists).

29. *Cruising,* Friedkin, 1980.

30. Harold Pickett, "'Cruising' Film Greeted by Demos; Bad Reviews," *New York's Gay News Magazine,* February 20, 1980.

31. Pickett, "Cruising' Film," 1980.

32. Russo, *The Celluloid Closet,* 238.

showcased an aspect of gay sex that is often closeted.[33] The movie broke boundaries in the form of entertainment, while maintaining a perspective of homosexuality that heteronormative definitions failed to address. At the same time, audiences were provided another troubling ending for the gay characters.

Media depictions took a positive turn with the 1982 film *Making Love*. The drama follows Zack, an oncologist, who is married to his wife, Claire, of eight years. Shortly after buying a new house together, Zack begins to doubt his relationship with Claire. He drives through downtown areas picking up gay men, and he spends his lunch hours in gay bars. Then, Bart arrives at Zack's practice as a patient. Bart is a handsome, young gay man who quickly becomes Zack's love interest. Zack begins coming home late from work because he is spending his evenings with Bart. When Claire goes to New York for a work trip, Zack spends the entire week with Bart. During this week, Zack and Bart engage in a romantic love scene. The men kiss and caress each other's faces, and they slowly undress each other and fall into bed together. Through a reflection in the mirror, audiences see the men's naked legs become tangled and see the sheets ruffle as the couple make love. [34]

After months of having a secret relationship, Zack tells his wife they need to talk. At this time, Bart and Zack are no longer together. He sits her down and expresses how he has been repressing a desire for men his entire life. Claire starts to cry as she punches Zack. She asks him if their entire relationship has been a lie and if Zack ever loved her. Zack promises that she has been and will always be his best friend, and he has and will always love her. Claire expresses how she trusts Zack, and she agrees to get a divorce. Zack moves to New York City, gets a new job, and meets a new man. The two marry, and they live a happy and fulfilled life.[35]

Produced by the prominent 20th Century Fox production company, *Making Love* centered its plot on homosexuality by having two of the three main characters identify as gay. Screenwriter Barry Sandler claimed the film is supposed to be "the first mainstream Hollywood film to deal with the subject of homosexuality in a positive way, offering positive role models."[36] The film does not shy from same-sex intimacy; instead, it celebrates the sexual relationship between Zack and Bart. Sandler's film shows that gay men can be more than the common troupe of deviants, villains, or degenerates. Historian Jeffrey Nelson argues that homosexual characters and heterosexual characters' likeliness helped the film's popularity for gay and straight communities.[37] He states how gays and lesbians fuse well with mainstream America. Directors used all white casts and had characters in middle-class job positions to help make straight audiences become comfortable. *Making Love* reassured audiences that gay men were not threatening or offensive.

The film is also revolutionary for the portrayal of gay men because the ending is cheerful. Zack marries a man and continues to be friends with his ex-wife Claire. There is no death nor impending doom on the horizon. The film proves that a gay man can live in the mainstream community. The positive attributes in *Making Love* assign a new discourse around the gay community. Film professor Al LaValley argues that *Making Love* excerpts the "Natural Man" discourse. The film presents homosex-

33. Benshoff and Griffin, *Queer Images,* 183.

34. *Making Love,* directed by Arthur Hiller (1982: 20th Century Fox).

35. *Making Love*, Hiller, 1982.

36. Benshoff and Griffin, *Queer Images,* 186.

37. Jeffrey Nelson, "Homosexuality in Hollywood Films: A Contemporary Paradox," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 5, no. 1 (1985): 54-64.

uality as healthy and good, and it stresses natural male bonding.[38] Zack is not dealing with an internalized hatred, instead he comes to terms with his sexuality and speaks openly about himself and his identity.

The emergence of AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) in the 1980s heavily impacted the lives of the queer community. In 1981, the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly* newsletter, from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, published a piece on five homosexuals who had an unusual case of pneumonia. All five patients, whose doctors deemed to be previously healthy, developed rare and fast-moving infections that led to the death of two of the patients.[39] Following the medical journal report, the *New York Times* published an article titled "Rare Cancer Seen in 41 Homosexuals: Outbreak Occurs Among Men in New York and California." This column discussed how the cause of this "cancer" is unknown, and it called for doctors working with large homosexual communities to be careful. One doctor in the article stated, "the best evidence against contagion is that no cases have been reported to fate outside the homosexual community."[40] First coined as GRID, Gay-Related Immune Deficiency, AIDS impacted every aspect of the gay community's life. The unknown causes and shifting definitions around the disease stimulated fear in doctors and the straight community's understanding of gay identity. Information escalated about how the disease spread through gay male intercourse, however the exact nature of the transmission was unclear. Society deemed homosexual men as diseased and deadly contagions, and these sentiments lingered even when education campaigns published detailed and correct information about AIDS.[41] Medicine, politics, and religion attacked gay sexuality and their intimate relationships.

There were few films surrounding the topic of AIDS, and when films did showcase a storyline about AIDS, the ending was, more often than not, sad. One film from 1985, *Buddies,* tells the story of David Bennett, a gay man, who volunteers to be part of a "buddy" program run by the local gay center. One of the first features about AIDS, the film dealt with topics of gay friendship, romance, and politics.[42] David is placed as a "buddy" for Robert Willow, a man diagnosed with AIDS. As Robert loses his battle with the disease, David spends afternoons visiting, chatting, and listening to Robert's life stories. Robert shares his experiences as an activist, and he talks pointedly about how the government does not care about the gay community and how it cares even less about the hundreds of gay men dying from AIDS. When David asks Robert what he would do if he had one healthy day left, Robert claims he would go stand in front of the white house, and he would hold up a sign that reads, "America, AIDS is not a gay illness. It's everybody's problem. Release all the money for research and care."[43] The film ends with Robert dying, and Steve cries as he sits on Robert's hospital bed. Before heading home for the day, Steve goes to the white house and fulfills Robert's dying wish of holding up a sign and making a statement.

Audiences not only see AIDS on television, but also the mental and physical implications of being sick. Before meeting David, Robert is entirely alone. He has no lover, no friends, and no family who can sit with him in the hospital. Prior to being sick, Robert tells David about his experiences as an activist. He shares how he always

38. Al LaValley, "The Great Escape," 67.

39. "Pneumocystis Pneumonia - Los Angeles," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 30, no. 21 (June 1981): 250 - 251, https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/1261.

40. Altman Lawrence, "Rare Cancer Seen In 41 Homosexuals." *New York Times*, July 3, 1981.

41. Benshoff and Griffin, *Queer Images,* 206.

42. Russo, *The Celluloid Closet,* 274.

43. *Buddies,* Arthur J. Bressan (1985: Arthur J. Bressan).

marched through the streets holding a sign. David, who is a writer, shares pieces from an anthology that he developed about the lives of gay men. Robert reads one specific piece titled "AIDS Is Nature's Awful Retribution Against Homosexuality." The piece argues that AIDS is God punishing the unnaturalness of homosexuality. It states, "Sad and regretful, homosexuals are at last rethinking their audacious and confrontation ways - perhaps in all the tears there will be some genuine repentance. God's mercy and forgiveness await them - they need only turn from sin and embrace His everlasting love and fellowship."[44] Upon reading this, Robert shouts at how ignorant Americans can be. David cries as he tells Robert that circulating this kind of information can cause serious damage. This aspect of the film indicates the stressful connection between sexuality and religion. While a work of fiction, the film reflects the religious homophobia apparent in American society. In a *New York Times* article, Joseph Berger discusses how members of the clergy struggled with the conflict between homosexuality and religion.[45] As homosexual-rights groups become more prominent, churches found themselves dealing with the implications of gay identity and behavior. The church urged homosexuals to practice celibacy if they felt inclined to act on their gayness.[46] Films throughout the 1980s displayed diverse topics. Audiences viewed portrayals of loving gay relationships, AIDS, and homophobia. The gay community continued to fight on the streets and in political spheres for their rights. Endings ranged from cheerful to sad, and directors took leadership in showcasing realities of gay men to educate, inform, and sell.

**The 1990s**

Historian John Loughery explains that at the end of the 20th century, gay life appeared to exist through paradoxes. Regarding advancement, gay men had access to circles of power, visibility on television, and hearings before judges. However, equality was a public symbol rather than a reality for day-to-day gay men.[47] Visibility on film still relied on stereotypes and tragic endings. American society valued heterosexual couples more than homosexual relationships, and homophobia flourished in politics. The disconnect between the white, Black and LatinX gay communities led to challenges in creating a unified front for liberation.[48] America continued to find new ways of dealing with homosexuality. The Clinton administration mandated the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policies to keep homosexual servicemembers closeted, amplifying harassment, and continuing the decades long trend of negatively discharging gay soldiers from military service.[49] Americans continued to deal with the AIDS epidemic. Relief to AIDS only became relevant when white middle-class men died in large numbers. Little funding went towards the care of AIDS patients, and President Reagan refused to address AIDS until 1987, after the disease had already killed 20,000 people.[50] Gay men became synonymous with the fatal illness, and numerous laws discriminated against people with AIDS.

Most historiography of queer films ends in the late 1980s. Scholars continue to

44. *Buddies*, Bressan, 1985.
45. Joseph Berger, "Religion Confronts the Issue of Homosexuality," *New York Times,* March 2, 1987.
46. Berger, "Religion Confronts."
47. John Loughery, *The Other Side of Silence: Men's Lives and Gay Identities: A Twentieth Century History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1998), 438.
48. Loughery, *The Other Side of Silence*, 444.
49. Benshoff and Griffin, *Queer Images,* 248.
50. Loughery, *The Other Side of Silence*, 421.

research and understand Hollywood's role at the end of the 20th century. Films, and now television shows, added more queer characters to their plot lines. However, while films featured more queer characters, the actors themselves were not gay. Production companies hired well-known actors and actresses to appeal to broader audiences, and to make more money. Films in the 1990s addressed controversial topics such as gay teachers, AIDS, and homophobia, all while winning awards for showing realistic narratives. Using emotion and empathy as tools, filmmakers reeled in more heterosexual audiences. However, the film industry still relied on stereotypes, humor, and trauma when telling gay narratives.

In 1993, *Philadelphia* captured the story of a gay man living with AIDS. The main character, Andrew, is a gay man working as a lawyer in New York City. Played by Tom Hanks, Andrew lands a major case at his law firm. As the case proceeds, Andrew's AIDS gets worse. He starts to show more symptoms, and sores appear on his face, neck, and body. One afternoon, Andrew is called into work, and his bosses fire him. They claim he is incompetent because he misplaced a file. Andrew seeks legal advice from a prominent black attorney, Joe Miller. Andrew explains to Joe that he was fired because he has AIDS. He expresses how he concealed his illness, served his clients with excellence, and never faced any prior issues. Miller dismisses him and apologizes for not taking his case. Following their meeting, Miller goes to his doctor to get tested for AIDS because he and Andrew shook hands.[51]

A few weeks later, Miller runs into Andrew at the library. He watches as the librarian asks Andrew to use a private room to make everyone feel more comfortable. At this point, Andrew looks sick and has multiple sores on his face. Miller steps in and offers his services to Andrew, regardless of his personal beliefs about gay people. Miller helps Andrew sue his old law firm for discrimination, and the case goes to trial. During the trial, Andrew's homosexuality is placed under a microscope, and the defense criminalizes and demoralizes Andrew's personal life. As the case endures, Andrews' sickness gets worse. On the final day of the trial, Andrew collapses and is rushed to the hospital while Miller wins the case. Shortly after Miller congratulates Andrew, Andrew dies.[52]

This film deals with discrimination in the workplace, homophobia, and AIDS. Joe Miller, the black attorney who takes on his case, is the most prominent homophobic character in the film. After meeting with Andrew for the first time, he goes home and complains to his wife how "disgusting" and "unnatural" gay men are. He claims it is all right for women to be gay but not men. He remarks throughout the entirety of the film how he hates gays and is uncomfortable being around gay men. One specific scene shows Miller is in a convenience store, and a young man comes up and asks him out on a date. Miller replies, asking if he looks like a "faggot."[53]

However, the film sends a message about tolerance, justice, and discrimination.[54] The director, Jonathan Demme, hoped that people would understand the realities of AIDS. Demme also recognizes the money the film will bring in because of the use of high ranked actors: Tom Hanks and Denzel Washington.[55] Filmmakers use queer experiences for income and popularity. Films like *Philadelphia* are created for straight audiences. They pull on the emotions of straight people and stimulate empathetic

51. *Philadelphia,* directed by Jonathan Deeme (1993: TriStar Pictures).
52. *Philedelphia*, Deeme, 1993.
53. *Philedelphia*, Deeme, 1993.
54. Benshoff and Griffin, *Queer Images,* 254.
55. Bruce Bawer, "Why Can't Hollywood Get Gay Life Right?" *New York Times,* March 10, 1996.

feelings for the gay community. The question then is, who is the intended audience for this film? The film could educate, inform, and provide insights into the lives of people with AIDS.

One film that approached the LGBTQ+ narrative differently was the 1999 film, *Boys Don't Cry*. The films portrayal of Brandon, a transgender man who moves to Falls City, Nebraska because he was outed at his previous home. Upon arriving in Falls City, he meets John, Tom, Candace, and Lana. While befriending them, he never addresses his gender or sexuality. His relationship with Lana becomes serious, and they become intimate with each other. However, Brandon never takes off his clothes, and he never lets Lana touch him intimately. One evening, Brandon's roommate Candace looks through Brandon's personal belongings and finds "troubling" objects and reading materials. Candace finds a box of tampons, a silicon penis, and an educational pamphlet on identity crises. Upon finding these materials, she reaches out to Tom and John, and she shares this information. Tom and John go to Lana's house, where they find Brandon, and push him into the bathroom. Once they have Brandon in the bathroom, they force his pants down and shirt up to expose his body parts. When it is revealed that Brandon has breasts and a vagina, John and Tom beat him and scream obscenities at him.[56]

Brandon leaves the house, and John and Tom follow after him. They catch him and drive him out to a secluded area. Once Brandon's hands are tied, they take turns raping and beating Brandon. Brandon is laid across the front of the car, and he cries as the men abuse him. When Tom and John finish, they leave Brandon in the dirt and drive off. Brandon goes home and receives a phone call from the men. They tell Brandon to stay silent or they will kill him. Brandon goes to the police, regardless of Tom and John's threats. A few days later, Tom and John shoot and kill Brandon. Lana holds him as he dies, and the film ends.[57]

This film is an exposé on the horrifying realities queer and trans people face. The film is a discussion on the uneducated and misinformed community of Americans. Producer Christine Vachon stated, "It's not just about two stupid thugs who killed somebody, it's about these guys whose world is so tenuous and so fragile that they can't stand to have any of their beliefs shattered."[58] The film does well to show a realistic portrayal of day-to-day situations trans men face. Brandon has to deal with buying tampons, and he spends time wrapping his breasts to make his chest flat. He is constantly worried about being outed and is obviously uncomfortable with his body. There is discussion around police homophobia and ideas about trans people and the connection to mental illnesses. Criminal negligence is evident because of the police's little role in helping and protecting Brandon. The film helped to raise awareness of the transgender population in the Midwest, and awarded Hillary Swank the 1999 Oscar for best actress for her role as a transgender man.[59] For audiences and history, this film showcases the attitudes society held towards transgender people.

The 1990s offered more in terms of cinema and television. Independent production companies grew and targeted specific audiences. Filmmakers and screenwriters included more queer characters and discussed significant topics that related to gay men. However, the ongoing stereotypes influencing the depictions of homosexuality

56. *Boys Don't Cry,* directed by Kimberly Peirce (1999: Searchlight Pictures).

57. *Boys Don't Cry,* Peirce, 1999.

58. Janet Maslin, "Sometimes Accepting an Identity Means Accepting a Fate, Too," *The New York Times,* October 1, 1999.

59. Benshoff and Griffin, *Queer Images,* 281.

still persist. Despite the many gains in political and popular culture institutions, many are reluctant to openness and equality. Films like *Boys Don't Cry* show audiences that heteronormativity is still prevalent. Historians can view the gay men in films as a byproduct of the time, and as another form of understanding American's ideologies around sexuality

## Conclusion

There are ongoing debates and tension between historical reality and its portrayal in media. Films are open to interpretation and audiences will subjectively understand points of the movie. Films are forms of entertainment, tools of education, and projections of personal beliefs. Historians have to decipher these complexities to utilize film in an academic and useful way. Historian Warren I. Susman believes films can be seen as a product of history.[60] Films are a function of a particular time and a particular place, and therefore films are a powerful source of sound and image that relay important information.

The history of queer representation in film present scholars and historians with different perspectives surrounding the gay community. Films with gay men expose discourses, and scholars can analyze and interpret films to find clues about cultural systems, patterns of belief, and realities that define society's essence. Films with gay men represent relationships between filmmakers and society, and they present examples of how gay people loved and lived in a world that misunderstood or ignored them. Cinema teaches a particular viewpoint and engages with audiences through revealing cultural beliefs and societal norms. As queer people took up space in private and political spheres, popular culture played a significant role in shaping perceptions and ideas around the queer community. At the same time, films challenged American standards and proved that gays could live peacefully in society.

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60. Warren I. Susman, "Film and History: Artifact and Experience," 2.

# A Catalyst for Change: The Moscow Helsinki Watch Group and the Final Years of the USSR

**Kerida Moates**

**Abstract:** What were the causes of the dissolution of the Soviet Union? This paper takes two often siloed topics, human rights abuses within the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the respective state and connects them. The Moscow Helsinki Watch Group contributed to the dissolution of the USSR by highlighting human rights abuses for domestic and international audiences. Leaders from Khrushchev forward purported human rights abuses died with Stalin. The Moscow Helsinki Watch Group was key in publicly highlighting the gap between official rhetoric and lived experience. This paper is organized chronologically and opens with discussions on two highly influential pieces of *samizdat* literature, *Everything Flows* by Vasily Grossman and *The Gulag Archipelago* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. These discussions frame the reverence for Lenin that Watch Group activists will reject in the Gorbachev years and provide context for human rights abuses before Khrushchev. They also signify the importance of *samizdat* literature in the creation of a community of dissidents. I argue that the Watch Group is a public extension of the underground community created by *samizdat*. The Group shared reports domestically and internationally which created pressure for the USSR to comply with human rights norms. *Glasnost* further illuminated the gap between government claims of tolerance and Watch Group reports of abuse. International pressure and domestic awareness contributed to the chaos that catalyzed the disintegration of a once powerful union.

In 1975 the Soviet Union and thirty-three other countries signed on to the Helsinki Accords. There were three different focuses or "baskets" encompassed in the Accords. These three baskets stated that the borders of all European countries are inviolable, promoted the sharing of information pertaining to technology and trade, and included an agreement to respect human rights, such as freedom of speech and freedom of movement across Europe.[1] In May of 1976, the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group launched as a non-governmental organization designed to monitor the Soviet Union's compliance with the third basket of the Helsinki Accords, the human rights agreement.[2] The work of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group elevated and fundamentally changed the conversation around human rights in the Soviet Union. The underground exchange of prohibited literature, known as *samizdat*, created networks for dissidents to share ideas after Khrushchev's thaw in 1956. The Group leveraged the third basket of the Helsinki Accords to insist on government accountability and promoted liberal notions of freedom into the public. When *glasnost* was implemented more dramatically than Gorbachev intended, actors in the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group added to this momentum, and thus contributed to the eventual dissolution of the Soviet Union.

The Watch Group relied on messengers to investigate human rights abuses. These messengers were ordinary people who traveled to Moscow from various parts of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) to inform the Group of human rights abuses. These messengers sometimes represented just themselves or a

1. "Helsinki Agreement," *Royal Air Force Museum,* 2013, http://www.nationalcoldwarexhibition.org/schools-colleges/national-curriculum/detente/helsinki-agreement.aspx.

2. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Basket I-Implementation of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Findings Eleven Years After Helsinki," (Report to US Congress, Washington DC, November 1986), 4.

friend, or they could represent large groups such as the Pentecostals, or even entire ethnic groups such as the Crimean Tatars.[3] After thoroughly investigating reported abuses, the group sent letters detailing the abuses to Soviet officials, and every member of the Group would sign the letters. The reports were also sent abroad through journalists and foreign embassy staff and circulated through underground networks throughout the Soviet Union.[4] Their signatures publicly revealed them as dissidents and removed any chance of removing culpability when documents led to criminal charges, as most did. When the dissidents performed these brave actions, it showed other Soviet citizens that the fight for human rights outweighed the deterrent of criminal proceedings and encouraged other citizens to speak up about abuses they had witnessed.

After 1976, the Group was inundated with reports of human rights abuses. Due to limited resources, the group focused on "the persecution of ethnic activists, restrictions on free emigration, the denial of religious freedom, interference with postal and telephone communications, and the persecution of human rights monitors."[5] Within the first year of its founding, the Watch Group gained such recognition by Soviet citizens that they were constantly provided with examples of abuses. They narrowed their focus partially due to lack of bandwidth, but also to maintain the original focus of the third basket of the Helsinki Accords. To use the Helsinki Accords as leverage, the Group wanted close adherence to the original topic, even though other human rights abuses occurred.

The founding members of the Watch Group were already active dissidents. Many were previously involved in the exchange of *samizdat* literature, and it was these pre-existing networks that allowed the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group to find such success. *Samizdat* literature began circulation in the early 1960s due to Khrushchev's thaw, which represented the first step in Soviet history to encourage more openness in society. A major part of the thaw also included the Soviet Union's first public rejection of Stalinism and the associated terror. Many survivors of Stalin's gulags began to write about their experiences in order to preserve history, which led to survivors meeting and inciting discussion. These conversations originally provided the space for the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group to converse. The connection between the Group and *samizdat* is critical because even when the group was temporarily shut down, *samizdat* continued to circulate. *Samizdat* maintained coverage of human rights abuses when the Group was unable to report. An example is *The Herald of the Human Rights Movement,* a journal which began circulation to keep interested citizens updated on arrests and other events relating to human rights. In general, the entire conversation of ideas and their relation to political policy all originated from the circulation of samizdat literature, causing a prominent Moscow Helsinki Watch Group leader to refer to *samizdat* as "the backbone of the human rights movement."[6]

The power of *samizdat* literature and its ability to facilitate conversation under an oppressive regime is embodied in *The Gulag Archipelago.* Written from 1958-1968 and authored by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, the nearly one-thousand-page text provides commentary on imprisonment and other brutal practices inflicted on the Soviet people by their own government, focusing on the period of 1929 through Stalin's death

3. Lyudmila Alekseeva, "A Thematic Survey Of The Documents Of The Moscow Helsinki Group," (Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Washington DC, May 12, 1981).

4. Daniel C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), 162.

5. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect*, 162.

6. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Eleven Years After Helsinki," 135.

in 1953. The book is a collection of experiences within Soviet gulags, inspired by s own experiences. "the author. He follows each individual from arrest, to prison, and finally release. After writing the book, Solzhenitsyn did not intend for it to be immediately published. However, there was an extra copy of the text kept with a woman, who shared it with a friend, who then shared it with a friend until the text reached a KGB official. After being questioned about the text and then released the same day by KGB officials, the woman went home and committed suicide. Historians attribute her death to the imminent arrests that would take place after the KGB obtained the book.

When Solzhenitsyn learned the KGB had obtained a copy of *The Gulag Archipelago,* he distributed copies to western journalists so that it would be published for the world to see, before preparing for his own inevitable arrest. Because Yuri Orlov, one of the leading members of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, had contributed to the work, *The Gulag Archipelago* was also used by Soviet officials to indict him. Despite the arrests, *The Gulag Archipelago* became incredibly important not only for the dissident movement, but for the rest of the world so they could develop a more accurate understanding of the crimes against Soviet citizens. In commentary from *The New York Times* released in 1974, historian Stephen Cohen refers to the brutality that *The Gulag Archipelago* cites as "the other great holocaust of our century."[7] The text even gained such recognition that Solzhenitsyn was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1970. Another founding member of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, Aleksandr Ginzburg, remarked that "Everyone must read *The Gulag Archipelago*. I was glad when the investigators and judges read it. I am glad that you read it. Because of it, the world will become a slightly better place."[8]

In addition to the iconic *The Gulag Archipelago,* another extremely important work not only for the circulation of *samizdat* literature, but also the human rights movement and the general conception of Soviet history is *Everything Flows* by Vasily Grossman. The narrative follows Ivan Grigoryevich, who is released from a Soviet gulag after spending thirty years at a series of prison camps. We are introduced to Ivan's cousin, Nikolay Andreyevich, a scientist who is very committed to continuing his work, despite limitations placed by the regime. In addition, we are introduced to Ivan's lover, Anna Sergeyevna, who reveals she was an activist during the 1932-1933 famine that caused the deaths of about three to five million Ukrainian peasants. Even though Ivan became technically free, he found the real world to be almost as harsh and cruel as the gulag he was previously in.[9] It is as if Ivan is in a daze and lost in his own thoughts. He frequently reflects on memories from his childhood and his time in the gulag and finds that everything he thought he knew about the outside world in Moscow and Leningrad was no longer true. Even though *Everything Flows* was not yet completed when Grossman died in 1964, the ideas perpetuated by the novel would affect dissident movements, such as the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, long after Grossman's death.

*Everything Flows* importantly highlights the societal debate over whether Lenin should be held responsible for Stalin's terror, or if the terror was completely a creation of Stalin alone. To further contextualize, Khrushchev praised the revival of Bolshevism and a return to "Leninist norms." However, many dissident circles began to believe that Stalin was a direct result of the Bolshevik revolution and Lenin's

7. Stephen F. Cohen, "The Gulag Archipelago," *New York Times*, 1974.

8. Robert Horvath, *The Legacy of Soviet Dissent* (Oxford: Routledge Curzon, 2005), 31.

9. Charles Peterson, "'Everything Flows: A Novel' by Vasily Grossman," *Los Angeles Times*, March 14, 2010.

government. Even though the Khrushchev period has been labeled by historians as a great thaw, many future dissidents of the time, including Group leader Yuri Orlov, were dissatisfied with the extent of reform. Even though Khrushchev had claimed that there were no longer political prisoners, research and the spread of information through *samizdat* and other avenues revealed his claim to be untrue.[10] Historian Robert Horvath claims that dissidents during the early 1960s believed that "Stalin's terror realized Lenin's innermost essence," and thus Lenin should also be held historically responsible for the Stalinist era crimes. This trend of thought was further enhanced by the publication of Vasily Grossman's *Everything Flows* in 1961, which placed Lenin at the center of Soviet crimes.[11]

When describing how Stalin's death immediately affected Soviet society, Grossman states that "it was like an invasion; it was a sudden irruption into this vast system of mechanized enthusiasm, of carefully planned popular wrath."[12] Many people rejoiced, while others were deeply upset and grieved. For Ivan's cousin, Nikolay Andreyevich, the death of Stalin and the return of Ivan causes him to reflect on his government involvement. Most notably for Andreyevich, his involvement included numerous occasions where he voted for the death of other citizens because of crimes they were accused of by the Soviet government. He envied his cousin Ivan because while in the gulag, Ivan was never faced with such decisions, and thus could not be held accountable for the death of another.[13] In order to preserve his own status in society and well-being, Andreyevich felt that he must vote for their guilt without hesitation. He felt that voting not guilty would indicate that he "had doubts about this mighty State and its great ideals," and it logically makes sense to vote guilty because "he believed, after all, in the ideals of the Party of Lenin and Stalin."[14] Andreyevich was convinced that he was bound by the society that he lived in to support the Soviet government, and resented Ivan for being able to escape these constraints by going to the gulag.

As previously stated, Khrushchev began the policy of destalinization in 1956 because he wanted to break away from the wrath inflicted by Stalin and defer to the principles promoted by Lenin. Texts such as Grossman's *Everything Flows*, however, convinced dissidents such as Yuri Orlov that Lenin also bore responsibility for the tragedies committed during the Stalin era because he secured the foundation. When examining Grossman's text, it would be a stretch to say that Lenin bears the full responsibility for Stalin, even if this is how dissidents later interpreted his work. Instead, Grossman briefly details Russia's long history of "slavery" through serfdom. He argues that the use of slavery is also where Russia most greatly differs from the West. While advancement in the West was built on concepts of freedom, "Russia's evolution was fertilized by the growth of slavery."[15]

However, according to Grossman and many Soviet dissidents, it is Lenin that gives in to the historical inclination to continue Russian slavery instead of free its people. Lenin believed that the people would be free when the revolution brought socialism, and eventually communism. He led the revolution with an "unshakeable, dictatorial power" because by withholding freedom of speech and expression from the populace, it guaranteed that the ideals of the revolution would be "preserved in all its

10. Horvath, *The Legacy of Soviet Dissent,* 21.
11. Horvath, *The Legacy of Soviet Dissent,* 23.
12. Vasily Grossman, *Everything Flows* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2009), 25.
13. Grossman, *Everything Flows,* 38.
14. Grossman, *Everything Flows,* 30.
15. Grossman, *Everything Flows,* 179.

purity,"[16] because he would not allow ideas that contradicted the revolution to be disseminated. Lenin reaffirmed Russia's history of taking advantage of its people and provided the foundation for Stalin to unite "within him all the most ruthless traits of slave Russia."[17] Future dissidents who praised Grossman's work found it problematic that Khrushchev, and later Gorbachev, wished to return to Leninist principles. Since many who read and believed in Grossman's work included prominent dissident leaders such as Yuri Orlov, the anti-Leninist sentiment promoted in the text points to a major reason why groups such as the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group were persecuted by the government. Since Soviet leaders were harkening back to Lenin as an example in moving away from Stalinism towards a better communist system, anti-Leninist sentiment was directly harmful towards this new image that Khrushchev and Gorbachev tried to create.

It is largely due to *samizdat* literature that many primary actors in the Group were already heavily involved in dissident activities and were already watched carefully by the KGB. Yuri Orlov was the most well-recognized founder of the Group and became one of the Soviet Union's most prominent advocates for human rights. He went on to speak at conferences in the Soviet Union, United States, and other countries, and he spoke on numerous occasions to the US Congress. Even before the Group's founding in 1976, the KGB obtained an apartment near Orlov's residence to house several KGB operatives. The operatives rotated sleeping schedules so that there would always be at least one operative watching Orlov's apartment and tracking his whereabouts. [18] This shows that even before the founding of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, Orlov was already seen as a threat to the KGB and Soviet government. Orlov's most well-known arrest was on February 10, 1977, the eve of the Belgrade Conference and less than one year after the Group's formation. The purpose of the Belgrade Conference was to immediately follow up with all the countries that signed on to the Helsinki Accords to discuss any concerns and ensure compliance from reluctant countries. When arrested, Orlov was sentenced to eight years to a special regimen camp. [19]

Even though the Soviet Union committed to upholding human rights, there was a significant gap between government rhetoric and reality. The same year the Helsinki Accords were signed, the Soviet Union had a total of 850 political prisoners, with 261 of them sentenced for anti-Soviet propaganda. Over approximately the previous ten years, about 1,500 people were arrested for anti-Soviet activities, even though Khrushchev announced that there were no political prisoners as of 1956. In total, approximately 68,000 people were called in to question by Soviet authorities and warned that their activities were "impermissible."[20] Khrushchev's blatantly incorrect statement means that he had already realized in 1956 the importance of rhetoric when speaking about human rights issues. He acknowledged the importance of abiding by both domestic and international human rights norms. The Soviet government intensely worked to silence dissidents. They conducted investigations to find who authored anonymous documents that were deemed anti-Soviet, and even attempted to track their distribution.

The statistics kept by the KGB reveal that most anti-Soviet documents were writ-

16. Grossman, *Everything Flows,* 178.
17. Grossman, *Everything Flows,* 191.
18. Yuri Orlov, *Dangerous Thoughts,* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1991), 165.
19. Lyudmila Alekseeva, "A Thematic Survey Of The Documents Of The Moscow Helsinki Group."
20. Anatoly Chernyaev, *Diary Excerpt,* trans. Svetlana Savranskaya (Soviet Union, January 3, 1976).

ten and circulated by people under thirty years old, and that the total number of documents tended to decline among the army and the navy, as well as those in the Soviet special regimen camps. Those who were caught either writing or disseminating anti-Soviet materials were prosecuted. The prominence of young people in efforts to share anonymous documents is critical because this age group shares a different cultural history than previous generations. At roughly thirty years old, this group mostly came of age during the Stalinist period, and many were teens during the period of the Great Purges from 1936-1939. By the time this generation could grasp politics, any remnants of Lenin's policies were long overridden by Stalinism. This generation never lived in a society where they experienced any freedom of speech or expression. While these rights were also curtailed under Lenin and during the tsarist empire, resources during the earlier period were very limited, meaning that harsh laws were not enforced as strictly outside of cities and urban areas.

According to KGB records as of 1976, 25.9 percent of those charged decided to partake in crime because of "political immaturity and delusion," 12.8percent due to mercenary and other selfish goals, 8.7 percent out of "thuggish" and other amoral persuasions, and 8.5 percent under the influence of anti-Soviet foreign radio broadcasts and other forms of ideological diversion.[21] It should be noted that the period immediately following the signing of the Helsinki Accords was a period of relative tolerance for dissidents and their respective groups. The percentage of people arrested during an average protest decreased by a third from the period of 1968-1974 to 1975-1978.[22] Thus, the pressure mounted by the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group contributed to increased tolerance in the latter period. This period of tolerance ended by the late 1970s, showing that the Soviet government recognized that the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group and other human rights activists was a threat to the status quo on this topic.

Since the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group set the tone for human rights advocacy within the Soviet Union at this time, other groups of dissidents followed their example and tried to invoke international pressure to draw attention to human rights abuses. This not only demonstrates the impact made by the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, but it also shows the widely accepted belief in the effectiveness of international pressure. Within the special regimen camps and other types of labor camps that prisoners were sent to, treatment was known to be very harsh and cruel. In March of 1983, the *Ukrainian Weekly* magazine published a letter from ten Soviet political prisoners that was addressed to U.S. President Ronald Reagan. The letter describes instances of harsh treatment faced by political prisoners, including members of both the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, as well as the Ukrainian Helsinki Watch Group in Camp 34 in Kuchino, Russia. The prisoners refer to the camp as having an "atmosphere of lawlessness" where punishments were meted out unnecessarily. This includes when three prisoners were placed in a "punishment cell" for fifteen days for celebrating Easter, because participants were charged with organizing a mob.[23] The fact that this letter originated from a prison in the Russian Republic, was published by a Ukrainian magazine, and was written to the President of the United States provides insight on how the abuses publicized by the Helsinki Groups became global

21. Yuri Andropov, "On the Results of Search for Authors of Anti Soviet Anonymous Documents in 1975" trans. Brian Bachor and Svetlana Savranskaya (National Security Archive, Moscow, March 13, 1976).

22. Daniel C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect*, 164-165.

23. Henrich Altunian, Vladimir Balakhonov, Norair Grygorian, Myroslav Marynovych, Viktor Nekipelov, Viktor Niytsoo, Alexander Ogorodnikov, Mykola Rudenko, Antanas Terliatskas, Oles Shevchenko, "Political Prisoners seek Reagan's aid in urging inspection of Soviet Camps," *Ukrainian Weekly* (March 20, 1983).

topics of interest and importance. The invocation of the US President by these prisoners also provides insight into the power of international institutions, and the ability of domestic organizations to use precedents set by international institutions to hold their own respective governments accountable.

The United States government frequently discussed the status of Soviet dissidents and human rights in general. The cause of emigration, and even more specifically, Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union, was even a topic of importance to U.S. President Jimmy Carter. He is reported to have received monthly updates on emigration from the USSR, including available statistics on which embassies processed which number of visas per month.[24] In March of 1977, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) sent an overview of Soviet dissident activity to President Carter. The briefing cites that the CIA believed that there is "little evidence that the people have either tangibly supported the dissidents or are prepared to do so."[25] As previously stated, it was clear to Soviet citizens that if they were to express support of dissident movements, then they would be placing their own well-being in jeopardy. However just one year previously, in his personal diary entry Anatoly Chernyaev stated that "there are hundreds of thousands of people in the Soviet Union, who are either acting or are ready to act (under proper circumstances) against the Soviet regime."[26] Thus, there was clearly a conflict of opinion between Soviet insiders and the CIA regarding the likelihood for an uprising.

The extensiveness of the impact made by the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group is shown in the increased activity of affiliated human rights and religious freedom groups when the Helsinki Watch Groups were shut down in 1983 and early 1984. Many of these groups were religious, since the Soviet Union did not allow citizens to practice religion. The lack of religion in the Soviet Union dates back to Vladimir Lenin and Marxist ideology. According to Marx, religion should not be present in a communist state because it means that citizens are committed to other causes outside of the welfare of the state. In practice, the Soviet state did not approve of the presence of religion because a church provided a source of authority that could rival the government. Since the Soviet government wanted to be the only source of authority, it was easy to invoke Marxist ideology and outlaw religion, regardless of which religion citizens hoped to practice.

Most notably, groups that rose in place of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group includes the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers, which rose in prominence after the Lithuanian Helsinki Watch Group was forced into inactivity. In total, the Catholic Committee released 53 documents relating to human rights and religious persecution, and many of their members were also arrested for anti-Soviet activities. Other religious groups that filled the void temporarily left by the forced inactivity of the Helsinki Watch Groups included the Action Group for the Defense of Rights of Believers, which fought for the establishment of the Catholic Church of Ukraine, as well as the Council for Baptist Prisoners' Relatives. [27]

The Moscow Helsinki Watch Group inspired the creation of nongovernmental organizations to advocate for specific communities. For example, the Initiative Group for the Rights of the Disabled continued its work after the Watch Groups were shut

24. Vance Cyrus, "Memorandum for the President," (State Department, Washington D.C., February 14, 1977), 1-3.

25. Central Intelligence Agency, "Intelligence Memorandum: Dissident Activity in East Europe: An Overview," (Washington DC, 1977), 134.

26. Anatoly Chernyaev, *Diary Excerpt,* trans. Svetlana Savranskaya (Soviet Union, January 3, 1976).

27. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Eleven Years After Helsinki," 129.

down, and even after one of its prominent members was placed under involuntary psychiatric detention for an indefinite period of time. Members of the Working Commission on Psychiatric Abuse also faced imprisonment and persecution.[28] Thus, members of these affiliate groups were so active that many members received criminal charges, just like members of the Helsinki Watch Groups had.

One of the main constituencies of people that increased their advocacy efforts after the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group was forced into inactivity was the Jewish community. However, it is first important to note that the Jewish community was very active in resistance before the Watch Group was shut down, largely because they had a history of being persecuted against in the Russian Empire and early Soviet Union. Before the 1917 revolution, Jews were only allowed to live in an area called the Pale of Settlement on the Western edge of the Russian Empire, above the Black Sea. The area was originally designated for Jews under Tsar Catherine II, who reigned from 1762-1796. Jews were also very limited in their educational opportunities, and most often not able to attend a university. Beginning in 1887, restrictions placed on Jewish education required that only tenpercent of total school enrollment within the Pale of Settlement be allocated towards higher education for Jews.[29] During the late Soviet era, the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group and other human rights proponents frequently drew attention to the lack of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. Restrictions were even tighter for self-identified Zionists who wished to immigrate to Israel, as opposed to another country.

In October of 1977, over one hundred Jewish activists from all parts of the Soviet Union joined together in Moscow to submit a 2500-word letter to the Soviet government. The letter details human rights abuses across the Soviet Union, including ways in which the government suppressed Jewish culture and the Hebrew language. Following submission of the letter, sixty-nine of the signatories stayed in Moscow to engage in a three-day hunger strike to further demonstrate the seriousness of the previously cited abuses. According to the New York based magazine *Jewish Newsweek*, after the letter was submitted, there was an average of 400 Jewish emigrants a week reaching Vienna. Thus, the pressure that the Soviet Jewish community placed on the Soviet government was effective.[30]

After the Soviet government forced the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group into inactivity in 1983, The *Jewish Almanac* began to document human rights abuses relating to the Jewish community. This way, there would be a consolidated place to list all the abuses, and it would be documented for people outside of the Jewish community to read. This could include problems relating to emigration of Jews, which was previously a heavy focus of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group. In general, the rise of all these groups when Helsinki Watch Group was forced by the Soviet government into inactivity reveals that when the group stopped reporting, it left a gap in a developing civil society. Thus, these alternative, more focused groups rose in order to fill this gap and provide human rights information and commentary. Overall, this reveals the immense impact the formation of the Helsinki Watch Groups had in less than ten years of activity.

While the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group primarily focused on the use of interna-

28. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Eleven Years After Helsinki," 129.

29. Victoria Frede-Montemayor, "Final Review" (lecture, History 171B UC Berkeley, Berkeley, CA, December 9, 2014).

30. "100 Jews risk retaliation to brand Russia violator of Helsinki rights pledges," *The New York Jewish Week* 187, no. 20 (1977).

tional pressure in order to achieve their overall goal of elevating the topic of human rights in hope of greater compliance by the Soviet Union, the Soviet government used a greater array of tactics with the goal of suppressing the efforts of the Group. This is largely because the Soviet government believed that the goal of the Watch Group was "placing in doubt the sincerity of the USSR's efforts,"[31] and thus, the Soviet government viewed the Group as a threat to their power. Before Yuri Andropov became Premier of the Soviet Union, when he served as head of the KGB, he stated that the Watch Group "have objectively encouraged bringing together the participants of various tendencies of anti-Soviet activities."[32] In a memo between Andropov and Premier Brezhnev, the KGB's purpose in regard to the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group was to ultimately shut the group down. Andropov writes that because of the work of the KGB, efforts by the watch group were "frustrated." He claims that the Watch Group tried to "abuse the general principles of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in Helsinki for hostile purposes."[33] Yuri Orlov, who as previously mentioned was not only the recognized leader of the Watch Group but was also a physicist. Andropov referred to Orlov as "unemployed,"[34] which indicates a clear lack of respect for Orlov.

In the previously discussed letter from prisoners to President Reagan, the prisoners also describe "ideological revenge," which took place when guards targeted prisoners for their political leanings, especially regarding human rights. Nekipelov, a novelist in his mid-50s, had his copy of the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* confiscated because it was viewed "suspicious in content." This confiscation and treatment of literature within the prison camp is evidence of the Soviet government's effort to reform the mindset of those who were already prosecuted as a dissident. Refusing to provide access to information fits the trend prevalent outside of prison, which is that by limiting access to ideas, only ideas permitted by Soviet authorities would be accepted by the people.[35]When Nekipelov's health began to fail rapidly and he was denied the necessary medications to live, members of the prison camp began the "strike of despair." In total, sixteen prisoners went on strike, resulting in ten of the prisoners being placed in punishment cells and an additional three being sent to more intense labor camps.[36] Even after spending years in the terrible Soviet prison conditions, prisoners were not only still incredibly passionate about human rights, but this strike also shows the bonds and group mentality that the group developed. They saw the Nekipelov as one of their own, especially after spending years in prison together. According to a 1985 United States Congressional Hearing, members of the group often faced "house searches, threats, job loss, detentions, arrest, trials, concentration camps, gulags, imprisonment and exile,"[37] as well as the denial of educational

31. Yuri Andropov, "About the Hostile Actions of the so-called Group for Assistance of Implementation of the Helsinki Agreements in the USSR," trans. Svetlana Savranskaya (National Security Archive, Moscow, November 15, 1976).

32. Yuri Andropov, "About the Hostile Actions."

33. Yuri Andropov, "Report on the Work of the Committee for State Security in 1975" trans. Svetlana Savranskaya (National Security Archive, Moscow, March 30, 1976).

34. Yuri Andropov, "About the Hostile Actions."

35. Henrich Altunian, Vladimir Balakhonov, Norair Grygorian, Myroslav Marynovych, Viktor Nekipelov, Viktor Niytsoo, Alexander Ogorodnikov, Mykola Rudenko, Antanas Terliatskas, Oles Shevchenko, "Political Prisoners seek Reagan's aid in urging inspection of Soviet Camps," *Ukrainian Weekly* (March 20, 1983).

36. Henrich Altunian, Vladimir Balakhonov, Norair Grygorian, Myroslav Marynovych, Viktor Nekipelov, Viktor Niytsoo, Alexander Ogorodnikov, Mykola Rudenko, Antanas Terliatskas, Oles Shevchenko, "Political Prisoners seek Reagan's aid in urging inspection of Soviet Camps," *Ukrainian Weekly* (March 20, 1983).

37. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Eleven Years After Helsinki," 5.

opportunities.[38] Even though members of the Watch Group were not breaking international law while investigating the Soviet Union's compliance, the Soviet government still found reasons to threaten individual members to shut the group down. This is largely because as more information spread regarding the Soviet's lack of compliance, it resulted in international pressure and a negative opinion of the Soviet Union due to its history of violating human rights.

The arrest of Victoras Petkus, a leading member and one of the original founders of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, demonstrates another way in which the Soviet government attempted to eliminate the Group and damage other human rights movements. Petkus was well known by many soviets as a leader in the movement for Lithuanian National Liberation Movement, as well as a leader in the Lithuanian Catholic Youth Movement. He was arrested by the KGB on charges of homosexuality, corruption of minors, and the creation of an anti-Soviet organization. However due to his previously stated involvement, it was the opinion of the Moscow Helsinki Watch group that he was put on trial to "discredit the peaceful national liberation movement in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia".[39] The Soviet government felt that if they could delegitimize leading members of groups they deemed to be harmful towards their state policy, then not only would the group itself lose legitimacy, but other Soviet citizens would be less likely to join or support these groups. Even after the Soviet government's original attempt to eliminate the group, Petkus would later reestablish the Lithuanian Helsinki Watch Group in 1988, after glasnost took effect under Gorbachev.

Similarly, Jewish advocate Anatoly Shcharansky was arrested and put on trial in July of 1978. Shcharansky's advocacy focused on the ability for Jews to emigrate freely from the Soviet Union. He was charged with compiling a list of *refuskniks* who wished to emigrate from the Soviet Union and sending that list abroad. Because of his role and stature, The Moscow Helsinki Watch Group believed that Shcharansky was targeted by the KGB "to foster a hysterical atmosphere of spy mania around the struggle for the right to emigration."[40] Because part of the charges placed against Shcharansky included meeting with American Senators and Congressmen, the charges and the trial itself violates the principles set forth by the Helsinki Accords because it targets the sharing of information with foreign powers.

The Shcharansky trial received international attention. *The Jewish Week* newspaper based out of New York stated that the trial "was interpreted by political observers as a direct rebuff to President Carter who in recent statements has been pressing hard for full human rights for all people everywhere."[41] Considering the context of the late Cold War, the trend of United States commentary on Soviet politics is very common. According to *The Jewish Week*, the KGB had in fact been factually correct when they stated that Shcharansky had met with American officials, even if it was illegal to prosecute these actions under the Helsinki Accords. Shcharansky was recognized by foreign media sources and the United States "as a key link in a communications network that reports violations of the Helsinki human rights pledge to western newsmen."[42] Thus, not only was the Soviet government trying to discredit emigration

38. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect*, 92.

39. Moscow Helsinki Group, "On the Trials of Anatoly Shcharansky, Aleksandr Ginzburg and Viktoras Petkus" *Lithuanian Quarterly Journal of Arts and Sciences* 25, no. 2 (1979).

40. Moscow Helsinki Group, "On the Trials of Anatoly Shcharansky."

41. Postal Barnard, "Sharanksy arrest as 'spy' seen as challenge to Carter on Helsinki" *The New York Jewish Week 187,* no. 3 (1977).

42. Postal Barnard, "Sharanksy arrest."

attempts, but the trial is also direct backlash to international pressure regarding the Soviet human rights record.

The Soviet Union amended laws to more easily persecute political activists, even while simultaneously renewing their commitment to human rights at the Madrid Conference in 1977 and 1978. Following up on the agreements reached in 1975, the Soviet Union began to enact the harsher punishments and laws previously described and elaborated upon after 1982. During the Madrid Conference, the various delegations had agreed that while the Helsinki Accords were binding, it is only domestic law in each individual country that is able to enhance the purpose of the Final Act. The Soviet delegation returned from the Madrid Conference only to expand restrictions and limit freedom; their actions were interpreted by many in the international community as disrespectful and showed that the Soviet Union was not intent on abiding by the Final Act.[43]

Documents compiled by the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe reveal that the Soviet Union wanted to prosecute more activists because of the public pressure the Watch Group created. When Andropov came to power in 1982, Soviet law was amended so the government could more easily exercise judgment in prosecution and sentencing. Since it was not uncommon for dissidents to spend time in prison, the Soviet government brought back the Stalinist concept of "eternal prisoners." This refers to changing the punishment of infractions committed while in prison from solitary confinement to adding years to a prisoner's sentence. If the officers in the camp could find an infraction to charge the dissident with, they could theoretically be kept in prison until their death. Many of these infractions included refusing to recant political opinion that were deemed anti-Soviet, thus showing that this law was targeted at political dissidents.[44]

During this period, Soviet law expanded to more easily prosecute political prisoners. The definitions of treason, sabotage, anti-Soviet agitation, propaganda, parasitism, and other crimes were expanded so more people could be charged with them. In addition, after 1984 there was a greater focus placed on "acts of terrorism."[45] The Soviet government cracked down on communication with foreigners. There were increased limits on the amount of economic data that could be shared with foreign organizations, and there were more severe punishments for those who had any ties with foreign organizations. If a Soviet citizen was caught assisting a foreign visitor within the Soviet Union, even with everyday necessities such as transportation or lodging, it was a crime. The Soviet government recognized the threat of sharing information for foreign sources and governments, even if the sharing of information was agreed upon in the Helsinki Accords originally in 1975.[46]

There is evidence that the Soviet government signed the agreement while never intending to abide by the sections related to human rights. After the signing, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko stated that "We are masters in our own house." This statement has been interpreted by many, including historian Daniel C. Thomas, to show that if the Soviet government felt it was necessary to preserve stability in their regime, then the government would refuse to comply with those sections of the Final Act.[47] As the human rights section of the Final Act began to gain recognition

43. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Eleven Years After Helsinki," 123.
44. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Eleven Years After Helsinki," 124.
45. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Eleven Years After Helsinki," 123-124.
46. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Eleven Years After Helsinki," 125.
47. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect*, 91.

in the Soviet Union and in other parts of the Eastern Bloc, the Soviet government made attempts to quiet discontent by "limiting public awareness of the actual content of the Final Act."[48] Even though when signing the Accords, it was unclear to most that there was the potential for significant impact on human rights, pressure brought on the Soviet government within the first year of signing the Accords even caused the government to generate propaganda showing their compliance for the treatment of dissidents.[49]

The Soviet Government continually attacked the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group. They delegitimized the group and its leaders and changed Soviet law to more easily prosecute political dissidents. The Group was forced into temporary inactivity in 1983. *Glasnost*, which was a policy adopted in 1986 under Mikhail Gorbachev, allowed for a greater openness in society and decreased censorship on political and other thought, and contributed to the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group's reactivation shortly after. The passion this group exerted during its early years, as well as its reemergence, can be seen as a contributing factor to how far the policy of *glasnost* was pushed under Gorbachev, and overall, the group paved the way for human rights movements in Eastern Europe.

While Gorbachev acknowledges that his changes to the Soviet economy and lifestyle are fundamentally different due to pressure for democracy, Gorbachev used Lenin to rally support within the establishment for radical changes. Historian Archie Brown states that "in the Soviet era, the way in which to legitimize concepts and policies was to invoke Lenin."[50] Thus, whether new policies echoed Leninist sentiments or not, invoking Lenin could be used to unite the people. Dissidents from groups such as the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, however, did not acknowledge that Gorbachev was only invoking Lenin as a piece of rhetoric to quell the criticisms of active hardliners who resisted his reforms. This means that even though dissidents, especially those within the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, had spent years working to push for reform, when Gorbachev took office and was ready to implement reforms that should theoretically please dissidents, such as *glasnost* that provided for greater openness in society, the dissidents were not fully supportive.

When Mikhail Gorbachev began to engage in reforms in 1987, prominent dissidents felt that his radical reforms were twenty years too late. In fact, Gorbachev was leading reform from above, which Yuri Orlov had advocated for in a statement released on International Human Rights Day, in 1974. In the statement, Orlov advocates for reform from above that includes "general political amnesty, free movement of citizens out of, into, and within the country; independent publishing houses; creation of legislation on strikes."[51] By the time Gorbachev began lesser, albeit extreme reforms, dissidents were already demanding for much more radical change.[52] Yuri Orlov would write that after years of circulating *samizdat* literature and participating in dissident movements, Soviet citizens were ready to "inexorably and peacefully push the boundaries of Gorbachev's glasnost toward the dissidents' conception of it: freedom of expression in the Western sense, a fundamental human right."[53] However, one strategic reason that Gorbachev wanted to slow the reforms, and that he was unwilling to reject Lenin to execute the societal reforms, is by rejecting Lenin,

48. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect,* 98.
49. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect*, 110.
50. Archie Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor,* (UK: Oxford University Press, 1996), 234.
51. Yuri Orlov, *Dangerous Thoughts,* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1991), 180-181.
52. Orlov, *Dangerous Thoughts,* 165.
53. Orlov, *Dangerous Thoughts,* 315.

Gorbachev would also have to reject a commonly understood Soviet history. Lenin was a figure that was so highly regarded in Soviet history, that it would have upset every factionalized group to completely reject him.

It is unclear whether or not dissidents such as Orlov and Sakharov wanted democracy. However, in 1990, Orlov states that there is an "urgent need to form a broadly based, peaceful second party to compete with the Communist Party and provide a constructive framework for any future mass worker movement."[54] He also commented on the problems associated with Gorbachev's approach to reform, which can be viewed as choosing to reform when most convenient for the Soviet government. Orlov remarked that it appeared as if Gorbachev did not understand that "democracy and freedom of expression cannot be doled out like doses of medicine."[55] In a speech in 1990 to the Congress of People's Deputies, Orlov said that the Polish Solidarity Movement should be used as an example for reform. Orlov chose Solidarity specifically because of the alliance between workers and the intelligentsia.

Coalitions in the Gorbachev years were fractured. There were conservative hardliners and moderates on the right, but more importantly, the reform effort was severely fractured. This is because, as stated, the dissident movement was ready to push the reforms much farther than Gorbachev was willing, largely because they had spent decades circulating *samizdat* literature and participating in dissident movements. They simply were much more prepared for change. On this note, is important to consider the earlier statistics on participants of dissident movements. Statistics kept during the Khrushchev era, the late 1950s and early 1960s, revealed that the majority of the dissidents involved in the circulation of *samizdat* literature and other early Soviet dissident movements were under thirty years old. That means by the Gorbachev era, or the mid-late 1980s, many prominent dissidents were in their forties or fifties. More importantly, this means that the dissidents themselves had been given the opportunity to grow with the movements their supported. While Gorbachev was rather new to the reform movement, activists were experts in this area, and did not necessarily have the patience for Gorbachev's originally slow approach. This caused dissidents to push the boundaries Gorbachev set in his slower approach. However, as previously stated, part of the reason Gorbachev took a slower approach was because he was still concerned with quelling the concerns of moderates and hardliners. Thus, the pushing of boundaries on behalf of dissidents, especially the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, caused even greater societal divide. Thus, when inklings of this freedom finally came, the entire "Leninist-Stalinist structure" came crashing down.[56]

When the Helsinki Commission did a check-in with the leaders of the RSFSR of the quickly disintegrating Soviet Union, they had four goals. They were to discuss the future of the Soviet Union as a unified country, to discuss human rights, to emphasize the continued concerns of the US for the long-term status of *refusniks*, and to attend the opening of the Conference on the Human Dimension.[57] During this trip, the Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Petrovsky even stated to the delegation that the Soviet government had abandoned their long-standing policy of non-interference in internal affairs, especially relating to human rights. He justified the shift in position by agreeing that "the human rights of citizens in any country are the

54. Orlov, *Dangerous Thoughts,* 317.

55. Orlov, *Dangerous Thoughts,* 316.

56. Orlov, *Dangerous Thoughts,* 315.

57. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Report of the Helsinki Commission on The U.S. Congressional Delegation Visit to Vienna, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Georgia, Armenia, and Moscow," (Washington DC, 1991), 36.

legitimate concern of all other countries."[58] While overall the Commission agreed that there was significant improvement in the realm of human rights, there remained serious internal resistance.

The Moscow Helsinki Watch Group emerged in order to do what the Helsinki Accords could not do - hold the Soviet Union accountable for human rights abuses. The group and its various leaders had a profound impact, largely because they elevated the voice of dissident sentiments that already existed due to the circulation of *samizdat* literature. As a group itself, the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group succeeded in advancing the conversation of human rights so that the Soviet government was continually pressured, both internally and on the international scale to uphold the human rights basket of the Helsinki Accords. Thus, by the time Gorbachev took on reforms to make society more open to converse ideas, the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group and the rest of the dissident movement was so far advanced that it further contributed to the destabilization and eventual dissolution of the Soviet Union.

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58. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Report of the Helsinki Commission on The U.S. Congressional Delegation Visit to Vienna, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Georgia, Armenia, and Moscow," (Washington DC, 1991), 41.

# Inventing a More Perfect Role: Martha Washington and the Making of the Position of the First Lady of the United States

**Sarah Oslick**

**Abstract:** A More Perfect Role explores women's political power and influence within the Early Republic of the United States, particularly pertaining to Martha Washington and early First Ladies. It asks what non-Constitutional role these women crafted for themselves and how this impacted Early Republic policies and the future position and influence of First Lady. This research fills in a gap within women's history as there are primarily only non-scholarly books about First Ladies and research about women in the Early Republic has not examined the role they created. Using a feminist perspective, the author analyzes Martha Washington's correspondence and what other people said about her in letters and newspapers. The position of First Lady was created by the women who were the wives of early Presidents. Martha Washington's contributions and sculpting of the role can still be seen today. She, and the women who followed her (Abigail Adams and Dolley Madison), had a profound impact on creating and sculpting the role of the First Lady, and the fact it is not a Constitutional position should not be reason to give it no less worth than it is due. Martha Washington calculated her every move as First Lady – she was setting precedent and acted accordingly, with the result a seemingly limited role, focused mainly on being a hostess and polite visitor and an advocator for Revolutionary War veterans.

As the plan to form a new government for the recently born republic was set into motion, there remained many elements still to be determined, especially when it came to the role of women in this era. Despite the Constitution almost all decisions were made by government officials and elected individuals. Nothing was explicitly said about women in the Constitution, therefore conversations and decisions had to be made about how much formal power, if any, women would have in the new government. The question then became not if women would influence the political sphere, but rather what role they would play and how influential they would be. One position which became a place of power for women was First Lady.

The wives of the early Presidents created the position of the First Lady and shaped the political structure for women in this new era. Martha Washington and subsequent First Ladies Abigail Adams and Dolly Madison shaped the position and insured its enduring power for future women. While women have always influenced politics, the First Ladies rose to the forefront of the American political stage. They did this mostly through non-partisan actions. To understand their influences and power, it is first necessary to understand the world they came from because "the unsurprising conclusion [is] that individual First Ladies have reflected the status of American women of their time while helping expectations of what women can properly do" evolve. Therefore, it is important to understand the world of women in the Early Republic.[1]

For most women, the Revolutionary Era introduced them to politics and new forms of political action. The homespun and boycott movements brought politics into their immediate homes and lives, and the way to incorporate this new-found political voice into the Early Republic resulted in a struggle as to what women's roles

1. Betty Boyd Caroli, *First Ladies: From Martha Washington to Michelle Obama* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), xxi.

would be. As Linda K. Kerber writes,

> searching for a political context in which private female virtues might comfortably coexist with the civic virtue was widely regarded as the cement of the Republic, they found what they were seeking in the notion of what might be called 'Republican Motherhood.' The Republican Mother integrated political values into domestic life. Dedicated as she was to the nurture of public-spirited male citizens, she guaranteed the steady infusion of virtue into the Republic.[2]

Consequentially, the concept of Republican Motherhood "provided justification [for] women's political behavior."[3] The initial First Ladies emerged from a world in which societal expectations required them to understand and teach politics and republican virtues. Only through this concept of Republican Motherhood were these women able to partake in the political realm.

These women lived through the colonial era for much of their lives, and though Republican Motherhood became the prevalent idea, they had grown up with a different understanding of their role. In the Early Republic "colonial women's attitudes toward themselves, their families, and the world around them were shaped by a combination of their of their own daily experiences and society's expectations of them."[4] For these colonial women, "the household, the basic unit of eighteenth-century American society, and universally understood hierarchical structure" and they were used to the structure that included man, mistress, children, servants, and slaves who were all.[5] While these patriarchal precepts were true in the Early Republic, Republican Motherhood was not taught to Martha Washington – it was a role she took on later in life as society and culture changed with the Revolution. This influenced what she believed women were able to participate in. As a result, Martha Washington's efforts as the First Lady left a legacy further bolstered by other influential women in that position such as Abigail Adams and Dolly Madison.

It can also be noted that women in the Early Republic were not entirely without a voice, even beyond the ideals of Republican Motherhood which emphasizes women's influences on their children. Women in New Jersey, for instance, "possessed of a certain property, and having paid taxes, are entitled to vote at elections" according to a Boston newspaper published in 1800. And it is known that "Abigail Adams also was aware of these developments, Adams declared mischievously, 'tell [your friend] if our State constitution [in Massachusetts] had been equally liberal with that of New Jersey and had admitted females to vote, I should certainly have exercised in this behalf.'"[6] Although this phenomenon occurred exclusively in New Jersey, it presents and interesting aspect of the political experiment in the new Republic. Mercy Otis Warren and her political plays and history of the American Revolution provide another example of how women engaged publicly in politics, beyond the intensely political boycott and homespun movements during the Revolution.

2. Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Williamsburg, VA: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 11.

3. Kerber, *Women of the Republic,* 11-12.

4. Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1980), xiii.

5. Norton, *Liberty's Daughters,* 3.

6. Rosemarie Zagarrie, *Revolutionary Backlash: Women and Politics in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 33.

With the impacts of late colonial, Revolutionary, and early Republic culture, the role of the First Lady was constructed by individual preference with the evolving role of women in mind. Martha Washington is the easiest portrayal to identify as she embodied the typical southern colonial woman. Abigail Adams, with her fiery passionate words, was far more revolutionary – the republican mother who meddled much in the affairs of her husband and children. Dolley Madison, the third of these First Ladies, raised herself above partisan politics to create parlor politics where women discreetly influenced the political realm. In their own ways, each cemented the role of First Lady.

While the position of First Lady is not mentioned in the Constitution, it came from a need separate from the ideals of democracy; for, "Kings and Queens have always focused people's feelings [and] since we're not very far away from a monarchy, the President's wife, whoever she is, has little choice but to serve as our queen."[7] People wanted someone they could rally around, and since the new government would give them no King to raise on a pedestal, in some ways that became the job of the First Lady. Martha Washington, with her carefully composed ways, and Dolley Madison, with hers, are easily seen as such; Dolley was even referred to as 'Queen Dolley' by those around her and in the papers. As typical throughout the times they lived in "each woman worked within a set of expectations for her time and place, often within the confines imposed by the special needs of marriage to a politician."[8]

Despite this allowance of women into the political sphere, there were many individuals who opposed their involvement. Catherine Allgor, noted Dolley Madison scholar, writes,

Much as they might have wished to purge republican politics of the contaminating influence of women, some political theorists, especially influential Scottish Enlightenment school, recognized the power of women and the inextricable linkage of society and government. They attempted to acknowledge these facts by a new formulation of social life, one suited for the republican woman and focused on the role of manners as the way to regulate human society and government.[9]

These women, through their political actions, were breaking a mold, setting a precedent, and helping the concept of Republican Motherhood succeed by showing the glories of it.

Martha Washington's story began as the wife of a Virginian plantation owner. She later became wife of a General and, after Washington's election by the Electoral College, she became the wife of a President. Washington preferred her life at Mount Vernon and constantly wished to return to its perceived tranquility. But, along with George Washington, her position required that she enter the public stage. George Washington is second to none for how he set precedent. For example, there is nothing about serving only two terms in the Constitution, as it looked then; there is nothing about the Cabinet and its positions and what it would influence the President to do; and there was little about how a President should govern. While these topics have been heavily explored by historians, the non-Constitutional position Martha Washington and the successive line of First Ladies assumed is minimally studied. Martha Washington created this position and began to design it.

Martha Washington had a profound impact on the role of the First Lady. Subse-

7. Caroli, *First Ladies,* xvii.

8. Caroli, *First Ladies,* xxi.

9. Catherine Allgor, *Parlor Politics: In Which the Ladies of Washington Help Build a City and a Government* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2002), 55.

quent First Ladies have worked across party lines, promoted personal causes, and have risen above the banter of Washington – all because of the precedent set by Martha Washington and her immediate successors; their work as hostesses, as advocators for individuals and causes, and as a spokesperson of compromise and civility earned them praise and established the role of First Lady. Martha Washington established the First Lady as hostess of the nation – a space for political participation in the nation for future women in her position.

## Martha Washington: Creator of the Role

Since Martha Washington left few details behind when she died at Mount Vernon, historians have attempted to piece together her political or private life. Her correspondence is sparse at best, nonexistent at other times. After George Washington died, Martha Washington destroyed many of their letters, leaving behind little evidence from which historians could use to piece her life together. Still, the details that remain show Washington was "deeply aware that an ill-considered decision could reverberate for years," particularly during her time as First Lady.[10] In every decision she made, Washington chose her words strategically – even her correspondence and replies after visiting with government officials were exceedingly polite and carefully worded. Tobias Lear, George Washington's own secretary, advised Martha Washington on social matters and how to craft her written correspondences.[11] The careful calculations the two of them made in terms of Martha Washington's correspondence and social involvement exemplifies how she approached her role in the new government.

While Martha Washington was on her way to join her husband at the capital in 1789, titles for the First Lady were being discussed The Gazette called her Marquise (a title of nobility), while others called her Lady Washington (another almost noble title, but without the same connotation), The Presidentess (a female version of the president – holding some level of political authority, perhaps), or simply Mrs. Washington.[12] The term First Lady was not used until later, well after Martha Washington took on the role. However, even before she arrived, she was planning, at least to some extent, to be the nation's hostess. She sent a long list of purchases for Tobias Lear to make on her behalf, items she would need to run the household, and any event she held.[13] Similarly, George Washington and his advisors had to craft their own positions as they saw fit – there is little detail in the Constitution about what a president must do, and nothing is written about the role of the spouse, if there is one. Similarly, Martha Washington, then, had to decide, very carefully, what she was going to do, knowing everything she did was going to be scrutinized by the president as well as by posterity.[14] Martha Washington calculated her every move as First Lady. In this regard, while she took on a new political role, she stayed within the expected norms of the era.

On the 8th of June in 1789, Martha Washington wrote to her niece, Fanny Bas-

10. Robert P. Watson and Anthony J. Eksterowicz, *The Presidential Companion: Readings on the First Ladies* (Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina Press, 2006), 23.

11. Watson and Eksterowicz, *The Presidential Companion,* 30.

12. Carl Sferrazza Anthony, *First Ladies: The Saga of the Presidents' Wives and Their Power, 1879-1961* (New York: Quill William Marrow, 1990), 48.

13. Helen Bryan, *Martha Washington: First Lady of Liberty* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2002), 289.

14. Bryan, *Martha Washington,* 289; Patricia Brady, *Martha Washington: An American Life* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 17.

sett Washington. It was only to Fanny that Martha revealed her personal feelings, and until her death, Fanny would be one of Martha Washington's most frequent correspondents. In these letters Martha Washington's own personality comes out; the letters were written without the formality which permeates most of her other correspondence. In this letter in particular, Martha Washington tells of her arrival "in Philadelphia on fryday [sic] after I left you [Fanny] without the least accident to distress us."[15] There, she met with George Washington and with members of state, such as Mrs. Morris and her husband. Her time and duties as First Lady began the moment she arrived.

During her time as First Lady, Martha frequently met with various members of the government and their wives. On the Wednesday following her arrival in Washington, Martha continued to travel and meet other members of the newly formed government. She was "met on wednesday [sic] morning by the President [,] Mr. Morris and Colo[.] H[amilton?] at Elizabethtown point with the fine Barge you have seen said of in the papers."[16] After telling Fanny of this exchange, she writes, "I have not had one half hour to myself since the day of my arrival – my first care was to get the children [little Wash and Nelly, her grandchildren] to a good school, which they are boath [sic] very much pleased at" but her time was utterly consumed with the visits with politicians constantly filling her days.[17] In her new role as First Lady, Martha Washington was pulled into a political position which required her constant political action and attention.

From the first letter to Fanny, it is instantly clear Martha Washington's time was consumed by the new role. Her duties as First Lady (though the title was not yet established), began immediately and were constant from day one. She was expected to make and return calls, set up the president's residence and run the household, as well as continue to take care of her grandchildren.[18] Eventually, though it is not entirely clear through her letters, it was established that George Washington would have men's only receptions on Tuesday afternoons, called "levees," and Martha Washington would host "drawing rooms" on Friday evenings where both men and women were in attendance. Though Martha's gatherings were slightly more informal than George Washington's, they were still very calculated and elegant events.[19] One of her famous lines from these occasions was "the General always retires at nine and I generally precede him."[20] When the capital moved from Philadelphia to New York, Martha Washington's gatherings switched from starting at seven o'clock and ending at nine to beginning at eight o'clock and ending at ten o'clock.[21]

As wife of the President, Martha was careful with her actions. She "gave no evidence of playing anything other than the hostess role – and George gave no evidence of ever requesting that she do more – but the role she filled should not be dismissed lightly."[22] Even though her main role was being a hostess, she was doing important work. By making calls and hosting parties where government society mingled, Martha Washington designated and established an official function for future First Ladies: they were expected to be somewhat involved, though to some extent indirectly.

15. Martha Washington to Fanny Basset Washington, June 8, 1789, in "*Worthy Partner:*" *The Papers of Martha Washington,* comp. Joseph E. Fields (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 215.
16. Washington to Washington, 215.
17. Washington to Washington, 215.
18. Washington to Washington, 215.
19. Caroli, *First Ladies*, 5.
20. Caroli, *First Ladies*, 197.
21. Bryan, *Martha Washington*, 313.
22. Caroli, *First Ladies*, 8.

Yet, her silence on political issues in the letters suggest a choice she made knowing her actions would be looked at in the future. The rest of her letters from the summer of 1789 were to Fanny Bassett Washington and these do not contain anything about her role as First Lady, they are both focused on the children.[23]

Starting in August of the first summer of the newly formed government, Martha Washington's correspondence began to include letters more political in nature. Buried in and among the letters to Fanny, she writes almost every waking moment was consumed by the role of what she did as First Lady. In her collected letters there are also short missives to various other prominent women in government society. To Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton, Alexander Hamilton's wife, she wrote "Mrs. Washington presents her compliments to Mrs. Hamilton and if she is disengaged this Evening will do herself the pleasure to visit her."[24] This is just one illustration of what such notes looked like.

Although menial tasks like answering calls, as well as receiving and returning visits were not designated duties of the First Lady, Martha took them seriously. These tasks allowed her to be connected throughout governmental society, although she never openly engaged in political debate. She was careful about what she wrote down and wrote the bare minimum to convey the message. Although receiving and returning calls as a woman was common in the era, performing this service as First Lady had a political importance. While Martha Washington may have been maintaining tradition, regardless of her intentions, she allocated space for women to enter the political and social structure of the new government. In this regard, the role of First Lady expanded beyond the duties, they performed at home to those within the political realm. By making social calls and hosting events, Martha Washington the role of the First Lady: she was to be the nation's color and receiver of calls.

Shorter letters to other prominent women of the new Republic demonstrate the extent of Martha Washington's political involvement. The letter to Eliza Hamilton was not alone in the writings to the political elite – this strain of brief missives to other prominent ladies continued through her time as First Lady. To Mrs. Abigail Smith Adams during October 1789, Martha Washington wrote a similar reply to the one that she wrote to Eliza Hamilton: "Mrs. Washington presents her compliments to Mrs. Adams and family and requests the pleasure of their company today to dinner & if agreeable we'll in the evening accompanying her to the concert."[25] Later in the year, on November 4th of 1789, Martha Washington again wrote to Abigail Adams. This letter is more personal – they had developed something akin to friendship over the course of this time because they were so often together. "My dear Madam," she begins.

> I should have been very happy to have seen you yesterday. – and am truly sorry the bad day disappointed me of the pleasure, your servant brought you kind faver yesterday while I was at dinner. he could not stay in the evening was so bad, - I have the plesure to ask you, how yourself Mrs Smith Miss Smith and the little ones are today, I intended yesterday after the sermon to bring the children out with me on a visit to you, but the weather prevented me –

23. Caroli, *First Ladies*, 217.

24. Caroli, *First Ladies*, 218.

25. Martha Washington to Abigail Smith Adams, October 1789, in "*Worthy Partner*:" *The Papers of Martha Washington,* comp. Joseph E. Fields (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 219.

I will dear Madam – doe myself the pleasure to dine with you on satterday with my family and she'll be very happy with the General Knox and the Laides, - mentioned or any others you please
I am dear Madam with
Esteem your
Your affectionate Friend
And Hble Svt
M Washington[26]

Martha Washington, though slightly more open with Abigail Adams, was still careful with her choice of wording. There is little intimacy or discussion of personal matters within the letter. While she may have cared for Abigail Adams, she understood well these letters were going to be read by others someday. Both George Washington and Martha Washington understood their lives were no longer private, but public on many levels, and their actions and words were going to be scrutinized for years to come. Martha Washington also attended other social events, such as the concert mentioned in the first of these two letters to Abigail Adams. Like the aristocracy of Europe, the governmental society in the early Republic were expected to show themselves publicly.

Not only did Martha Washington correspond with Eliza Hamilton, Abigail Adams and other politicians' wives, but she wrote to other prominent women as well. Though her correspondence with Mercy Otis Warren is not as detailed or extensive as the correspondence between Abigail Adams, it nevertheless reveals more about Martha Washington herself than the short misses about attending concerts and receiving calls does. In her letter to Mercy Otis Warren, one learns Martha Washington did not think George Washington would be the spotlight again after the war. "I little thought when the war was finished, that any circumstances could possible had happened which would call the general into public life again," she wrote. Washington continued, "I had anticipated that from this moment we should have left to grow old in solitude and tranquility together: that was, my Dear madam, the 1st and dearest wish of my heart; - but in that I have been disappointed; I will not, however, contemplate with too much regret."[27] In this letter Martha Washington also writes, "when I was much younger I should, probably, have enjoyed the inoscent [sic] gayeties of life as much as most my age," referring to the duties she had taken on in hosting parties and making and receiving calls.[28] She also mentions that her close companionships helped her time as First Lady, making it "not indeed a burden to me."[29] Though taking a role in the public sphere, she took on roles which were not necessarily required of her. High society did, of course, make calls and host parties, but Martha Washington did choose at some level her involvement in these affairs. She wrote she was "still determined to be cheerful" despite the fact this public life was not her first choice, and she chose to do certain things, such as sharing the duties with Abigail Adams and building a relationship with her.[30]

By 1790, Martha Washington clearly established her role as First Lady. Her letters after 1789 and 1790 continue to cover the same topics as before. In March of 1790,

26. Washington to Adams, 219.

27. Martha Washington to Mercy Otis Warren, December 1789, in "*Worthy Partner.*" *The Papers of Martha Washington,* comp. Joseph E. Fields (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 223.

28. Washington to Warren (1789), 223.

29. Washington to Warren (1789), 223.

30. Washington to Warren (1789), 224.

a letter written to Robert Morris from both "The President and Mrs[.] W" contains "regards for Mrs[.] Morris and the family" and a "safe return in this city when his business in Philadelphia shall be accomplished."[31] Martha writes again to Mercy Otis Warren concerning personal matters, stating she hopes "Congress should have a recess this summer" and she "hope[s] to go home to Mount Vernon for a few months" during this period though she also states she is "as happy hear as I could be at any place except Mount Vernon."[32]

During the remainder of Martha Washington's time as the First Lady, she wrote other short letters containing similar subjects as the ones to Robert Morris, Elizabeth Hamilton, and Abigail Adams. Martha Washington also wrote a longer letter to Janet Livingston Montgomery, the widow of General Montgomery. Martha Washington also responded to individuals who were affected by the Revolutionary War. On occasion, she also helped assist others. She received a letter from John Dandridge (her nephew) who says he found he "shall not be able to raise out of my father's estate enough to pay all in Debt" but he fears "the president may suspect that I meant to deceive him by exciting expectations of payment."[33]

This was not the only instance of someone asking for Martha Washington's help. She was well known for aiding those who requested assistance. An anonymous letter detailed another case of someone asking Martha Washington for help. From the opening lines of the note, it seems as though asking for and receiving help from Martha Washington was not out of the ordinary, even if the person requesting aid was neither a friend nor from the political circles of the capital:

> I am induced from your well known generosity of heart, and charitable disposition, to intrude for a moment on your patience - the object of these lives is to crave a Boon which the writer hopes your benevolence of Soul (manifest on every occasion of this nature) will not refuse to grant to a person whose necessities compel him to make this uncommon request - a request which Madam, is as distressing to his feeling as it may appear to you extra-ordinary, for an Anonymous Signature to make –
> a young man of genteel connections in the city, from unforeseen circumstances, is likely to be involved in difficulties which if not speedily prevented will be greatly to his disadvantage - if not his utter ruin, his cases of so delicate in nature that he would sooner suffer death, then make it known to the circle of his Friends – 30 Dollars would relieve him from the most inconceivable distress - & to you Mrs Washington as the patroness of distress'd merit he submits his case presuming on that benefits of mind which is the greatest ornament of human nature & with which Madam, you are so eminently endowed to extricate him from a Scene of (ruin) that will inevitably ensue unless your friendly hand will be pleased to administer that relief which he now humbly solicits -
> I am Madam
> Yr Most Obedt & hmb Servt

31. Martha Washington to Mercy Otis Warren, June 12, 1790, in "*Worthy Partner:*" *The Papers of Martha Washington,* comp. Joseph E. Fields (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 225.

32. Washington to Warren (1790), 226.

33. Martha Washington to Janet Livingstone Montgomery, January 29, 1791, in "*Worthy Partner:*" *The Papers of Martha Washington,* comp. Joseph E. Fields (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 229.

Anonymous.[34]

We do not have Martha Washington's reply to this letter, or many other letters asking for the same type of help, however that opening line, "I am induced from your well-known generosity of heart, and charitable disposition, to intrude for a moment on your patience," suggests that she frequently aided constituents.[35] From such letters, she seems to have helped struggling individuals and was well known by the Capital for doing so. This was not an unexpected role for her to fill, but one she developed and acted upon herself - more so than the hosting of parties and returning calls, which were expected of her as an upper-class woman. While being the patroness of those less fortunate was often a job upper class white women took on, by choosing one cause (helping veterans from the Revolutionary War), Martha Washington set precedent for future First Ladies to advocate as well.

Several researchers have remarked on occasions where Martha Washington went out of her way to help other people. In *Martha Washington: First Lady of Liberty,* Bryan writes "had the ability to take a kindly interest in whoever she was talking to without seeming vulgar or familiar…Her reputation for her war work and her way with veterans added a dimension that increased her general popularity and reflected well on George."[36] By helping individuals such as this young man and other war veterans, Martha Washington was establishing one of the most recognized roles as First Lady: advocating for a certain cause.

Washington worked tirelessly in a job she did not covet. George Washington's role in the new Republic forced her to set precedent as they went along. At times she received praise for being a model of Republican ideals, but she also received the opposite; Congressman Rodney, for example, "was one of the few people to voice any criticism of Martha herself, and it was for not behaving grandly enough."[37] Just as it is today, and as it has been throughout United States history, the First Lady reflects on the president's term. Martha Washington's actions then were careful, but as she "with some help from Tobias Lear, had successfully calculated her appearance and behavior to reflect positively on George in the early days of his administration." She knew she was setting an example and her actions reflected that, even down to the idea that "the presence of Martha and the children was politically advantageous. It cast George in the light of family man, which rounded out his public image nicely."[38] Because Martha Washington was a woman who had lived in colonial America, revolutionary America, and the early Republic, her understanding of her roles as a woman changed. In her position as First Lady, she embraced the ideas of Republican Motherhood, from the woman who had lived through and experienced the Revolutionary War, and it is from this society, this culture, this world, from which she created her role. However, Washington also understood the importance and significance of her decisions to act as the nation's hostess, correspond with other leading revolutionary women, and help war veterans because it reflected upon not only the new Republic, but also upon the position on the First Lady itself.

## Conclusions

34. John Lamb to Martha Washington, March 22, 1792, in "*Worthy Partner:*" *The Papers of Martha Washington,* comp. Joseph E. Fields (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 236.

35. Lamb to Washington, 236.

36. Bryan, *Martha Washington,* 303.

37. Bryan, *Martha Washington,* 296.

38. Bryan, *Martha Washington,* 303.

The role Martha Washington helped create is still reflected in the First Lady's role today. The First Lady is still a hostess and frequently attends social events with the president. Most First Ladies continue the precedent Martha Washington set, taking on a meaningful cause like Martha Washington's letters to soldiers following the Revolutionary War. With no examples in the Constitution, each First Lady has had to look to the First Ladies who came before them to better understand the role they are expected to fill. It is clear most First Ladies have built upon Martha Washington's example. Though the role has changed as time passed, Martha Washington's role has been preserved up to the twenty-first century. When Martha Washington left the position of First Lady as George Washington left office, Abigail Adams took over the role. While Abigail Adams maintained parts of what Martha Washington established, she also expanded and modified the role as well. Today, as women can increasingly involve themselves in politics, the transition from the informal political power wielded by Martha Washington, Abigail Adams, or even Dolley Madison has been replaced by women who have their own careers in politics and civil service.

John Adams' presidency brought the more forceful and decisive First Lady, Abigail Adams, to a prominent position. Many First Ladies who found themselves in her position did not take on a so politically partisan role, yet Abigail Adams did. In doing so, Adams left her indelible mark on the role because she let it be known that to be so politically partisan was an option and there were other roles than hostess a First Lady could be, and should be, allowed to fill. Abigail Adams' experience in the political world, from traveling abroad with John Adams in Europe and being the second lady for eight years while he was vice president, influenced her actions as First Lady. She had watched Martha Washington create the role of First Lady, helped her host parties and gatherings, and attended events with her. But unlike Martha Washington, she was more interested in politics, had strong opinions, and was unafraid to voice either. Abigail Adams continued much of what Martha Washington created, but politicized the role through making her own opinions heard and allowing herself to fill in positions such as political informant to ambassadors and secretaries, as well as fill a public relations role with her involvement through the press.

Yet, as with any story in American history, the story of the First Ladies cannot help but be connected intimately with slavery. When Thomas Jefferson took the office of President of the United States, he contributed to the institution. Sally Hemings, a woman enslaved by Jefferson, complicates the traditional narrative told about the third President and about the position of First Lady. Hemings was born in 1773, thirty years after Jefferson, and they became sexually involved when she joined him in Paris during his ambassadorial years.[39] Their story is complex and has been denied and debated by Jefferson historians for decades, however DNA evidence has now proven their relationship. The relationship between Hemings and Jefferson both before, during, and after his Presidential years lasted for decades, and resulted in children whom he did not legitimately recognize. Not acknowledging these children also meant Sally Hemings had no place in the White House. It would take over two hundred years before an African American woman would become First Lady of the United States. Hemings' omittance from the White House benefitted the woman who would come to take on the role of First Lady for Jefferson: Dolley Madison.

39. For more information on the Jefferson and Hemmings family see Annette Gordon-Reed, *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company, 2008) and Annette Gordon-Reed, *Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemmings: An American Controversy* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press: 1997).

Dolley Madison gained renown as the First Lady who saved the portrait of Washington from the White House during the British invasion in 1814. However, the copy of the portrait she saved was not the most important mark Dolley left on the country. She made a discrete social space in which the issues could be debated, discussed, and decided – but she did this without putting her own views as the deciding factor.[40] In, fact, she did this without voicing or making her opinion known at all. Instead, she provided the arena for debate, discussion, and decision. Dolley melded the roles Martha Washington and Abigail Adams created. She blended a world where politics were not allowed (Martha Washington) with one in which they were blatantly partisan (Abigail Adams) to create a new world where politics were allowed but only for conversation and compromise.

Because of the precedent Martha Washington set, Abigail Adams and Dolley Madison established a role which lasts to the present day. They created, without any Constitutional advice, a position that drastically withstood a changing American society. The women after Dolley Madison have been able to look back on the role these women build but also continue to shape the role according to the social values of the America in which they live. Some of them pushed boundaries and broke barriers and others acted as a hostess and championed for causes much like Martha Washington. As we look to the future of the United States and the future of the role of First Lady, there is room for change and adaptation to the constant ebb and flow of fluctuating social values. What the role will become in the future, whether it continues to be titled the First Lady or something else, is left up to us.

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40. Allgor, *Parlor Politics,* 58.

# A Hooded Order in Gold Country: The Ku Klux Klan In Placer County, California

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**Abstract:** Placer County, California is known primarily for its involvement in the Gold Rush of the mid-nineteenth century and as a modern suburban sprawl following the arrival of tech companies such as Hewlett-Packard and NIC during the 1990s. However, beyond the classic western architecture and shopping malls, the cities of Auburn, Folsom, Roseville, Lincoln, Loomis and Newcastle have a largely unexplored political and racial history waiting to be uncovered. One of these largely unexplored narratives is the rise and fall of the Ku Klux Klan in the area during the early 1920s. Though studies of the Klan's presence in California are available, they focus primarily on Los Angeles, Orange County, Tulare County, and Oakland. Utilizing a plethora of sources including newspaper articles and Klan published promotional material and contemporary census data, this research paper chronicles the rise and fall of Klan in Placer County, and explores what socioeconomic factors that motivated locals to embrace white nationalism. Also, this paper includes a study of locals which showed open disdain for the Klan and sought to mitigate its influence. Overall, *A Hooded Order in Gold Country* is an addition to the growing scholarship surrounding the Klan's short-lived national popularity following the First World War.

The Ku Klux Klan holds a unique place in American popular culture. The picture of an angry white man dressed in the famous white gown with a striking pointed hat is, for some, an example of the backward racial theories held by a small scattering of right-wing extremists in the American hinterland. Though still existent in small scatterings throughout the country, the KKK, or as they refer to themselves, the "Invisible Empire," has ceased to be the right-wing political force it once was. Groups such as Proud Boys, Neo-Nazis, and a plethora of internet personalities have taken the place of the Klan as the immediate threat to racial justice in America. However, for many Americans, especially those in minority groups, the Klan embodies the painful experiences of racism, nativism, and the scourge of racial violence that has reared its head numerous times in the history of the United States.

While the KKK has become a textbook example of American hatred for many during the twenty-first century, roughly one hundred years ago, the group was in the process of becoming a nationwide movement that would spread its influence from coast to coast. Unlike its reconstruction predecessor or civil rights era successor, the 1920s Klan was not a strictly southern phenomenon. Though only maintaining mainstream relevance until the mid-twenties, at the peak of its power, the KKK's country's membership revenue reached millions. The Klan earned so much by 1924 that D.C. Stephenson, the Grand Dragon of Indiana, earned four times that of Babe Ruth.[1] Of the states with a notable Klan presence during the 1920s in California. Scholars such as Christopher Nickolas Cocoltchos have shown that the Klan was active in several Southern California communities such as Anaheim, Fullerton, Brea, and La Habra.[2] Danielle Christine Griffiths has shown that the Klan was active well

1. Thomas R. Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American: The Rebirth and Decline of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2011), 23.

2. Christopher Nickolas Cocoltchos, *The Invisible Government and the Viable Community: The Ku Klux Klan in Orange County, California, during the 1920s*, (PHD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1983), 20.

into the 20th century in the Central California city of Visalia.[3]

While there are already studies of the Klan's presence in Southern and Central California, information on the group's presence in Northern California is limited. A master's thesis by Dennis M. von Brauchitsch analyzes KKK chapters in Northern California counties, although Placer's portion is limited to few pages. I will argue that the Ku Klux Klan had established an organization in the rural northern California county of Placer during the 1920s. I will analyze why the Ku Klux Klan was present in Placer county and analyze their presence. They attempted to enforce strict adherence to Protestantism through violent threats and local media for promotional purposes. In answering these questions, this research project seeks to add to the existing but limited historiography of the KKK in California.

In towns such as Roseville, Newcastle, Folsom, and Lincoln, the Klan made their presence known through public threats and displays of intimidation through parades, seances, and newspaper articles. Alongside chronicling the Klan presence in these counties, this paper examines how these small rural communities combated the Klan. The sources used to support the argument are newspaper editorials against the Klan's affiliated clergymen in their church; the Placer communities fought against the group and worked to mitigate their influence. Finally, this works seeks to compare the Klan of rural Northern California with others throughout the state to determine if there is a tangible link between the condition of California following the First World War that made it susceptible to the influence of the Invisible Empire.

The research of this project rests primarily on contemporary newspaper articles and editorials. As a rule, the Ku Klux Klan was highly secretive and destroyed most of its paperwork to disclose personal information about its members. However, newspapers are a rich source for constructing a narrative of the Klan because their activities were of interest to local papers such as the *Auburn Journal*, *Sacramento Bee*, *Roseville Tribune and Messenger,* and *Lincoln News Messenger*. These papers not only chronicled the public actions of local Klaverns, but they were also used by group leaders as a platform to voice threats, Klan ideology, and advertisements for upcoming gatherings. While these newspapers provided a crucial media platform for the Klan, they also covered the Klan member's criminal actions and often voiced concern and disdain towards the group. Editorial sections of small-town newspapers such as the *Lincoln News Messenger* published lengthy and passionate refuted against the Klan and warned of the dangers to democracy that the group could inflict if left unchecked. In addition, this project used census data and Klan-sponsored promotional materials. Data from the 1920 United States Census provides demographical information to show how Placer County was in a state of ethnic and religious change during the 1920s.

Before chronicling the lifespan of the KKK in Placer county during the 1920s, it is essential for the reader to understand the way historians have come to approach white conservatism; is important because studies that predominantly liberal scholars conduct can fall victim to an interpretation from the modern political lens which fails to approach the conservative ideology on its terms. As will be seen by several modern scholars, there has been an effort by American political historians to understand the socioeconomic and cultural forces which motivate the mindset of civil rights era segregationist or Ku Klux Klan member. In short, since the approach of this project is heavily influenced by the breakthroughs of modern scholars, it is pertinent to understand in what ways scholarship on white conservatism has changed and why.

3. Danielle Christine Griffiths, *A Community Divided: Visalia, California 1852–1940*, (master's thesis, California State University, Fresno, 2009), 39.

## The 1920s KKK: History and Context

Though existing today in smaller and hybrid forms, histories of the KKK divide into three distinct eras: the post-reconstruction era of the late nineteenth century, the 1920s, and the Civil Rights era of the 1950s and 1960s.[4] Ex-confederate soldiers who opposed the Union's reconstruction efforts started the KKK. Under the anonymity of masks and a dedication to secrecy, they conducted night rides, theatrical ceremonies, floggings, mutilations, shootings, and lynching to promote race hatred among war-torn south. By 1869, the original Klan had gained such a reputation for fear and violence that Congress and federal reconstruction officials cracked down on the group. Consequently, this resulted in the passing of anti-Klan laws in 1871, which ended the group as a public entity.[5]

Despite efforts by the federal government, the embers of the Klan ceased to exist. Reinvigorated by the grandson of an original Klansman William J. Simmons, the Invisible Empire of the 1920s was distinct in several ways from its predecessor. Historian Thomas R. Pegram describes the new Klan as a "…revival built upon twentieth-century developments such as mass entertainment and leisure, patriotic voluntary associations, advertising, and the go-go economic style of the 1920s."[6] Consequently, the second Klan was much more than a group of disenfranchised southerners. It was, instead, a national movement with official and non-official chapters throughout the United States. Thomas Dixon's 1905 novel *The Clansman* and D.W. Griffith's 1915 film *The Birth of a Nation* significantly influenced the Klan's revival roughly half a century past its first iteration.[7] Depicting glorious horseback riders in white robes defending white women from barbarous freed slaves, *Birth of a Nation* would become such a success that President Woodrow Wilson showed it at the White House. He commented on the film that "It is like writing history with lightning. And my only regret is that it is all so terribly true."[8]

Capitalizing on the mainstream success of Griffith's film, Simmons hired the help of publicists Edward Young Clarke and Elizabeth Tyler to promote his new version of the Klan. In 1920, Clarke and Tyler invented a new style of recruitment called the Kleagle system. The system featured professional recruiters called a Kleagle who would go from town to town selling the Klan message to influential figures such as protestant ministers and the heads of fraternal orders. Once these prospective members joined, a Kleagle would receive a portion of the membership dues paid.[9] Described by historians as a "Wildly successful pyramid scheme," the second Klan dramatically increased their membership in a brief time.[10] In 1921, liberal newspapers and magazines such as the *New York World* wrote front-page articles about the Klan, which led to an investigation by the House Committee on Rules featuring Imperial Wizard Simmons' testimonials. However, the mass publicity from government and media scrutiny created the opposite of the desired effect and facilitated a nationwide

4. "Ku Klux Klan: A History of Racism," Southern Poverty Law Center, March 1, 2011, Accessed October 8, 2020, https://www.splcenter.org/20110228/ku-klux-klan-history-racism.

5. "Ku Klux Klan: A History of Racism."

6. Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American,* 16.

7. Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK: the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s and the American Political Tradition* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2018), 11.

8. Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK,* 11.

9. Felix Harcourt, *A Visible Empire: The Ku Klux Klan and American Culture, 1915-1930*, (PHD diss., The George Washington University, 2014), 2.

10. Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American*, 23.

explosion of the group's popularity.[11]

The second Klan's ideology differed from its predecessor as well. If the original Klan was a direct response to federally enforced reconstruction, then the second Klan represented an accumulation of the anxieties felt by white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant America in a rapidly changing American culture. In her chapter entitled "Structures of feeling," Linda Gordon points out that the second Klan featured high member roles in cities with small black populations.[12] Therefore, they set their sights primarily on the influx of newly arrived Catholics and Jews. Gordon expounds on the Klan's newfound hatred of non-protestants: "The Klan did not view Catholics and Jews as biologically inferior…but charged them with specific offenses; these were neither minor nor victimless crimes, but a form of treason, aimed at undermining the nation."[13] In other words, the Klan's fear of losing their supremacy in a changing nation resulted in a desire to take the law into their own hands.

Though they did participate in violence, the second Klan sought primarily to push back through legitimate political means. In states such as Oregon, Indiana, and Arkansas, to name a few, members of the KKK were elected to public office and pushed their nativistic agenda. During the early twenties, they boasted the membership of sixteen senators, eleven governors, and seventy-five congress members nationwide.[14] By 1926, however, the rebirth of the Klan quickly fell apart. The arrest of Grand Dragon D.C. Stevenson for murder and financial disputes among leadership led to a dramatic decrease in member engagement.[15] So, the second Klan was quite different from its reconstruction counterpart – while it was less overtly violent for a significant number of Americans during the early 1920s, the Klan was a part of everyday life. California is a prime example of dependably liberal voting; however, if one were to take a closer look at California's history, examples of racial discrimination are prevalent. Consequently, the rise of the Klan in the state becomes less surprising when these state-enforced policies of racial discrimination are examined in detail.

**Race Discrimination and the Rise of the KKK in California**

In his first address to the California state legislature in 1851, Governor John McDougal stated, "a war of extermination will continue to be waged between the races until the Indian race becomes extinct…"[16] Just forty years before the second Klan, the California state legislature passed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which banned Chinese laborers from immigrating to the state. In 2006, the state legislature issued the "Apology Act for the 1930s Mexican Repatriation Program." The apology references the approximately 400,000 Mexican Americans who were the victim of "…massive raids…conducted on Mexican-American communities, resulting in the clandestine removal of thousands of people, many of whom were never able to return to the United States, their country of birth."[17] Also, police brutality towards African-Americans has boiled over several times, which led to the Watts, Rodney King, and Black Lives Matter protests. Therefore, despite its modern reputation as one of

11. Harcourt, *A Visible Empire: The Ku Klux Klan and American Culture*, 2.

12. Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK,* 41.

13. Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK,* 41.

14. Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK,* 164.

15. Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American,* 25.

16. "SHORT OVERVIEW OF CALIFORNIA INDIAN HISTORY," California Native American Heritage Commission, Accessed November 20, 2020, http://nahc.ca.gov/resources/california-indian-history/.

17. Apology Act for the 1930s Mexican Repatriation Program, California State Senate 2005, Ch. 663, Sec. 1 (January 1, 2006).

the most liberal American states, California's minority communities were repeatedly under attack by the status quo.

In the 1920s, California had its fair share of Klan activities throughout the state. The Orange County Klavern, for example, lasted for eight years and collected membership fees of 1280 participants. Klansmen even obtained elected office in the cities of Anaheim, Fullerton, Brea, and La Habra.[18] In Tulare County, the Klan survived well into the 1930s.[19] In April 1922, the District Attorney of Los Angeles Thomas L. Woolwine conducted a raid upon a local Klavern where he found a statewide membership list of two thousand members statewide. Woolwine would publish the list which disclosed the membership of "roughly 10 percent of the public officials and policeman in practically every California city were identified as members of the invisible empire."[20]

In the northern city of Chico, Klavern leader C. Edgar Payne boasted in the *Chico Record* that the Chico Klan had 236 members as of March 1922.[21] The Chico Klan presented itself as a vital force that, by May, the newspaper published a letter from the state council of the American Legion to the Chico Record regarding the rise of the KKK in the city. In the letter, the American Legion addresses attempts by the Klan to recruit its members. The Legion discussed worry that the Klan's growth was getting out of control in the city, resulting in real danger, which may cause violence or criminal behavior.[22]

The second Klan's appearance was also present in the cities of Marysville and surrounding rural communities. In Marysville, the Klan not only made itself known but publicly charged that the mayor of Marysville, George Richards, was complicit in illegal bootlegging activities. The mayor rebuked this statement with arrest statistics in which over 400 bootlegging charges were filed.[23] In the spring of 1924, the *Colusa Herald* published an article that describes complaints from local Colusans that their trip home from a ballgame in Sacramento was slowed to a stop by a parade of one hundred automobiles belonging to a Klan parade south of Woodland.[24] As these articles show, the second Klan was present throughout Southern California and the big cities of Oakland and Sacramento, but in small rural communities. Overall, the second Klan was a national movement where each Klavern had their reasons for existence and demagogic personalities to lead them. Out of these localized interpretations of Imperial Wizard Simmon's ideology, a pertinent example of how the Klan entrenched itself in the lives of small-town Californians can be seen in Placer county.

## Placer County: Population and Race

Placer County's place in California history revolves around its connection to the Gold Rush of the mid-nineteenth century. Cities such as Auburn and Newcastle still feature Gold Rush-era architecture which stands out in an area dominated by mod-

18. Cocoltchos, *The Invisible Government and the Viable Community,* 20.

19. Griffiths, *A Community Divided,* 33.

20. Griffiths, *A Community Divided,* 34.

21. "JUNIOR KLAN THRIVING HERE SAYS LEADER," *Chico Record*, March 17, 1922, California Digital Newspaper Collection.

22. "CHICO LEGION WARNED TO GUARD AGAINST LAWLESSNESS OF KKK," *Chico Record*, May 30, 1922, California Digital Newspaper Collection. Accessed October 6, 2020.

23. "Marysville Answers Klan Charges of Incompetency," *Chico Record*, August 16, 1923, California Digital Newspaper Collection.

24. "Ku Klux Klan Marchers Hold Up Highway Cars," *The Colusa Herald.* March 22, 1924, California Digital Newspaper Collection.

ern housing developments and apartment complexes. Today, the cities of Roseville, Folsom, Rocklin, and Lincoln have blossomed into upper-middle-class suburban communities following the arrival of tech giants Hewlett-Packard and NIC in the 1990s. However, in 1920, Placer county was still rural except for small-town centers. A total population of 18,584 had the largest urban centers being Roseville, with a population of 4,477, and Auburn, with 2,280.[25] The county's total population lived predominantly in a rural setting, with 14,107 of the total population living outside of town centers.[26]

Racially, Placer county was dominated by native whites of non-foreign parents – overall, they consisted of nearly half of the entire county population with 9,008 reporting in the 1920 Census.[27] However, the next largest portion of the population consists of foreign-born whites or foreign-born parentages at 7,414.[28] A majority of the foreign-born population were of Italian descent; it is also worth noting that the fast-growing Japanese population grew from one hundred in 1900, 1,474 in 1920.[29] Overall, Placer County fits the profile of other towns with a significant Klan presence, a small black population coupled with an increase in immigrants flowing into the area.[30]

**Placer County and the KKK**

The relationship between Placer County and the KKK starts in the movie house. *The Birth of a Nation* was enthusiastically advertised in local newspapers such as the *Auburn Daily Journal* for its showing at the Auburn Theatre. In 1916, the film was shown for two nights in a row and was touted as "…the greatest motion picture ever produced!" and "…represents the very acme of art and realism in motion pictures."[31] Interestingly, the article goes into depth about the movie's plot and breakdown of reconstruction history, "It treats impartially the causes for which each side was struggling and depicted the political conditions in of the North and South during this struggle." [32] This article stands out for its blatant sympathy towards the white supremacist imagery featured in the film and offers a unique lens into the Klan's mindset during the inception of its revival.

The article proves that the film was popular enough to play in Auburn for two nights in a row. As with many communities across America during this time, the moviegoers of Auburn lined up to see the film- they would examine how the Klan are not racist vigilantes, but instead are Protestant heroes who stood up against the threat of "violent" freed slaves. While it is impossible to know how many of those in attendance took the film as objective fact, as we will see in the coming years, many in Placer county were willing to empathize with the Ku Klux Klan values.

By the Spring of 1922, the Klan established a community within Placer county. One of the first notable community members who had a connection with the Klan

25. US Census Bureau, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920. State Compendium California: Statistics of Population, Occupations, Agriculture, Irrigation, Drainage, Manufactures, and Mines and Quarries for the State, Counties and Cities Volume vol. 1 and III*, 184 and 115, Directed by Sam L. Rogers and W.M. Stewart. Under supervision of William C. Hunt. 1921. Accessed October 12, 2020, https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1922/dec/vol-03-population.html.

26. US Census Bureau, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920*.

27. US Census Bureau, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920*. Vol. III, 115.

28. US Census Bureau, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920*. Vol. III, 115.

29. US Census Bureau, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920*. Vol. III, 109, 124.

30. Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK*, 41.

31. "'The Clansman' Will be at Auburn Two Nights This Week," *Auburn Daily Journal*, January 24, 1916, California Digital Newspaper Collection.

32. "'The Clansman'."

was a wealthy Loomis rancher William Ferguson. Through his wealth and interest in the Klan's ideology, Ferguson began a relationship with Sacramento Deputy Sheriff and headed Kleagle Edgar Fuller. The *Sacramento Bee,* who broke the story in August of that year, lamented that Ferguson would make trips to the Sacramento and Oakland Klaverns upon meeting the Kleagle. After each visit, he became increasingly obsessed with Klan and Kleagle Fuller, described as Fuller's "…boon companion."[33]

As Ferguson began his relationship with Fuller out of a passion for the Klan's ideology, Fuller saw Ferguson as a prospective financier for the Klan's community. Ferguson's family told the *Bee* that their patriarch began behaving "strange" once he started associating with the Klan, such as writing checks to pay for the Klan's development in the Sacramento Valley. Ferguson gave Fuller 1,500 dollars to fund a new Klan newspaper in Sacramento called the "100 Percent American." Once Ferguson ran out of money to give Fuller, he took out a banknote of 1,500 dollars and took off to Sacramento. Two days later, Ferguson came back to his bank in Loomis and tried to arrange a 1,600-dollar loan for Fuller. Worried about Ferguson's mental health. Ferguson's family told the *Bee*, "Until William Ferguson met with the Klan, he was happy and normal, but from that day on he became a changed man, and we do not hesitate to say that the Klan is responsible for his present condition."[34]

Ferguson was admitted to Clark's Sanitarium while on a trip to Stockton. The reason for Ferguson's admittance was likely due to his family's accusation that he was in poor mental health due to his sudden swing in behavior. Fuller's Klan newspaper never started, and the Ferguson family claimed they had no idea where the Klan used Ferguson's money. Local Klansmen, on the other hand, did not take kindly to the institutionalization of their newfound fiscal sponsor. John Ferguson, William's brother, received a letter signed "KKK" that demanded the release of William.[35] After Ferguson's brother's refusal, the Ferguson family reported someone had lit across at the entrance of their property in the middle of the night. When John came out of his house to see what was happening, all he saw were hooded Klansman on horseback shooting into the air with their revolvers.[36] After the incident, a Klan member joined Fuller in delivering a Writ of Habeus Corpus to the Sanitarium to get Ferguson released, but they were unsuccessful.[37]

As seen in the story of William Ferguson, his financial wealth was significant to the Klan. No newspaper articles refer to his influence on other community members. However, Ferguson's embrace of Klan ideology and his drastic decline from "normal and happy" to give all of the money away to a stranger was big news in a small town like Loomis. If anything, Ferguson's story is a testament to the fervor that the Klan's ideology could spark in some who were resistant to the changing demographics of Placer county. The only notable interaction about Fuller within Placer county is his involvement with Ferguson. However, Fuller's job as Deputy Sheriff of Sacramento helped legitimize him in the eyes of influential people such as Ferguson. Fuller, however, would not be the only persuasive personality to preach the gospel of the Invisible Empire in Placer County. The area's most well-known and publicized Klan member was Reverend C.R. Fairfield, a Roseville's Presbyterian Church pastor.

Rumors amongst the Placer County community of Klan activity were noted as

33. "'The Clansman'."
34. "'The Clansman'."
35. "'The Clansman'."
36. "'The Clansman'."
37. "'The Clansman'."

early as October of 1921.[38] However, by 1922 the Klan and C.R. Fairfield made their presence known throughout Placer county. In an April 1922 issue of the *Roseville Tribune,* Fairfield wrote a scathing and lengthy piece towards the *Sacramento Bee's* anti-Klan proclamations. In a sarcastic tone that is often nonsensical and difficult to follow, Fairfield writes, "The 'Sacramento Bee' is once more wrought up to a fever heat over the fact that the Ku Klux Klan has made its appearance in Sacramento… that it has shown its approval of a certain Protestant Pastor and the work he has been doing to help make Sacramento a cleaner and a better place to live and rear a family."[39] Fairfield then farcically describes everything the paper believes is wrong with the Klan, including an anti-labor stance and a hatred of Catholics. The pastor condescendingly asserts that the *Bee* was acting defensively towards the Klan because, "… our investigations have to lead us to believe that the Catholic order of the 'Knights of Columbus,' have sworn allegiance not an 'Emperor of an Invisible Empire,' who is, to say the least, an American, born and reared in America, but to a foreign hierarchy, whose very 'visible' ruler is an emperor."[40] Fairfield then argues that the newspaper seeks to incite a religious rivalry between Catholics and the Protestant members of the Klan. At the end of his article, Fairfield pens a stark warning to the *Bee*: "Loving the 'Bee' as we do, we cannot…refrain from passing on a little advice to the 'Bee.' The advice we would give…is, better be a little cautious with playing with matches. 'Behold what a great fire a little match kindled.'"[41]

This article by Fairfield threatens *Sacramento Bee* for exposing the Klan's activities in Sacramento. In the Spring of 1922, most Klan activity was centered in Sacramento, with rumors brewing that it would appear in Placer county. However, by the summer following this article, Klan's activity in the county would reach its greatest height with Reverend Fairfield at the helm. A month following Fairfield's "Bugaboo Letter," multiple local newspapers reported a Klan initiation near the town of Folsom. According to reports, there 2,500 people in attendance, complete with a flaming cross, and up to 200 were from Roseville.[42]

In July, the Klan was extremely busy with parades and initiations. During the July Fourth celebration in downtown Roseville, the *Lincoln News-Messenger* reported that the Klan marched through the city with a fiery cross.[43] On the banners were written: "White Supremacy," "All Native Born," "100 Percent American", "Bootleggers Take Your Jackasses Out of Roseville," "Degenerates Go," "This Town Must Be Clean," "All Pure White," "For Our Mothers, Wives, Sisters, and Daughters."[44] In an additional column below the main article entitled "Something to think about," the editors remark that there had been little enforcement of prohibition laws in the area. They warn, however, that the Klan has reached enough members in Lincoln and the surrounding areas that the enforcement of such laws may be "…put into effect and Readily enforced."[45] What is striking about this article is that by July 4, 1922, the Klan was a fully functioning organization in the area. They were so popular that the *Lincoln*

38. *Auburn Journal-Republican*, October 6, 1921. California Digital Newspaper Collection.

39. C.R. Fairfield, "The Ku Klux Klan Bugaboo and the Sacramento Bee," *The Roseville Press Tribune*, April 21, 1922, Placer County Archives and Research Center.

40. Fairfield, "The Ku Klux Klan Bugaboo."

41. Fairfield, "The Ku Klux Klan Bugaboo."

42. "Ku Klux Klan Initiation Near Folsom," *The Roseville Press-Tribune*, May 19, 1922, Placer County Archives and Research Center.

43. "Klux Klan Parade at Roseville," *The Lincoln News-Messenger*, July 7, 1922, Placer County Archives and Research Center.

44. "Klux Klan."

45. "Klux Klan."

*News-Messenger* felt the need to warn those who may consume liquor or participate in other illegal behavior that the Klan may be coming for them. In other words, within a year, the Klan in Placer county had gone from a rumor to a full-fledged entity capable of demanding not only the attention of the local press but a legitimate threat.

Later that month, the *Auburn Journal* and *Lincoln News-Messenger* reported that a massive Klan initiation took place on a top of a hill overlooking the local cemetery in Newcastle. The spot of the initiation held on land owned by the Southern Pacific Railroad was viewed by spectators who described a burning cross between the two railroad tracks.[46]Locals reported that at least a thousand vehicles had driven through the small city center of downtown Loomis to attend the ceremony, which came after several Kleagles had descended upon the Newcastle, Penryn, and Loomis area to find news members. However, it was reported that most in attendance were either from Roseville or Sacramento.[47] Law enforcement was also a part of the meeting. For example, one onlooker reporting that he had exited his car to walk closer to the spectacle but was stopped by a plainclothes man who flashed a sheriff's badge and told the man he could walk no further.[48] Placer county locals witnessed the cross burning and described hooded figures gathering around the burning cross, "They looked in the distance like a flock of sheep…some of them were standing and some kneeling. It was impossible to count them."[49] While it does appear that law enforcement did take part in the initiation, the *Lincoln News-Messenger* reported that they were not locals to Placer County. As seen with Edgar Fuller's title of Deputy Sheriff of Sacramento, it is possible that he or members of law enforcement from Sacramento were involved. Regardless, between Fairfield's threatening of the *Sacramento Bee*, the fourth of July parade, and publicly witnessed cross burnings, the Klan was in full force in Placer County during the summer of 1922.

While the height of the Klan's theatrics was during 1922, the group still managed to make the news well into 1923. The *Auburn Journal* reported a Klan meeting held at the Odd Fellow's Hall in September of that year, and members from Auburn, Lincoln, Marysville, and Roseville were in attendance.[50]

In October, the Klan made headlines for their public threats towards perceived wrongdoers in the community. In the article, District Attorney Orrin J. Lowell responded to the Klan's threats in the *Roseville Tribune*. In the advertisement entitled "Law Violators in this Community Take Notice," the Klan pronounced that they would be active participants in punishing wrongdoers in the community through vigilantism if necessary. The Klan pronounced that they had obtained evidence of persistent law violations in Roseville and the surrounding community. With this information, they ensured that they would work with law enforcement to ensure that the perpetrators were prosecuted.[51] Lowell rebutted the Klan's threats stating that he will not participate in the persecution of a few members of the community by other members, with no attempt made to correct a general evil.

While the Klan was still making headlines in Placer county by the end of 1923, its popularity would soon dwindle due to public backlash and the arrest of Reverend

46. "Klux Klan Still Doing Business," *The Lincoln News-Messenger*, July 20, 1922, Placer County Archives and Research Center.

47. "Klux Klan Still."

48. "Klux Klan Still."

49. "Klux Klan Still."

50. "Ku Klux Klan Hold Meeting" *Auburn Journal*, September 6, 1923, California Digital Newspaper Collection.

51. "ULTIMATUM GIVEN BY KU KLUX KLAN." *Auburn Journal*, October 18, 1923. California Digital Newspaper Collection.

Fairfield. Fairfield's first public embarrassment came in the summer of 1923, where he reportedly accused girls attending Roseville High School of being drug addicts. In an article published in the *Bee* entitled "Pastor Fails to Make Good Stories About School Girls," it was reported that Fairfield's accusations were taken seriously enough to warrant an invitation by the Grand Jury Committee of the County to provide evidence.[52] However, the pastor declined to state that his accusations were "blown up."[53]

In the Spring of 1923, Fairfield faced backlash from his congregation for his association with the Klan. Reported in the *Sacramento Bee*, the article also writes that Fairfield was, in fact, not an ordained minister at all but a supply pastor filling in a temporarily vacant spot.[54] During a meeting with the congregation discussing Fairfield's status as supply pastor, a woman named Annie King stood up, charged that he "is too interested in the work of the Ku Klux Klan and does not take enough interest in the work of the church."[55] Despite the objections of her statements by a Fairfield supporter, King held her ground, "It is not right for Rev. Fairfield to hold Ku Klux Klan meetings in the church…they ought to hire a hall for that purpose."[56] Coming to the defense of King, a woman named Mrs. Pelton said, "The church is getting just what is coming to it. The members are taking sides and are giving too much time to the external affairs of the Klan."[57]

In October of 1923, the *Roseville Tribune* came under fire for publishing Klan advertisements. In an article addressing the controversy, the newspaper acknowledges the backlash and asserted that its staff was not members of the Klan despite the accusations of some readers.[58] The paper formally denounced the Klan at the local level and the more significant national movement. The article finishes with a quote from the American Legion's national convention, which stated that any group that seeks to cause racial or religious strife and seeks to put the law into their own hands is fundamentally un-American.[59]

Following the backlash from his congregation and the local press, Fairfield found himself in the local spotlight again for his arrest during the same month as the *Roseville Tribune's* denunciation of the Klan 1923. Fairfield was taken into custody for speeding twenty miles over the speed limit in a school zone in downtown Roseville.[60] Upon his conviction, Fairfield was fined fifty dollars, but he was placed in the Placer County jail upon his refusal to pay and shared a cell with the Marysville Klan W.C. Wilkins' former head. The *Lincoln News-Messenger* speculated that Fairfield's decision to take prison time rather than paying the fine came from a desire to garner sympathy.[61]

While the *Lincoln News-Messenger's* claim that they were the only newspaper to condemn the Klan by the summer of 1924 is false, their disdain for the group is palpable. The paper also suggests that the Placer county Klan was in a weakened state following the arrest of Fairfield. On July 17, the newspaper published a message

52. "Pastor Fails to Make Good Stories About School Girls," *Sacramento Bee*, July 17, 1923.

53. "Pastor Fails."

54. "Roseville Pastor is Flayed for Giving His Time to the Ku Klux Klan," *Sacramento Bee*, April 7, 1923.

55. "Roseville Pastor."

56. "Roseville Pastor."

57. "Roseville Pastor."

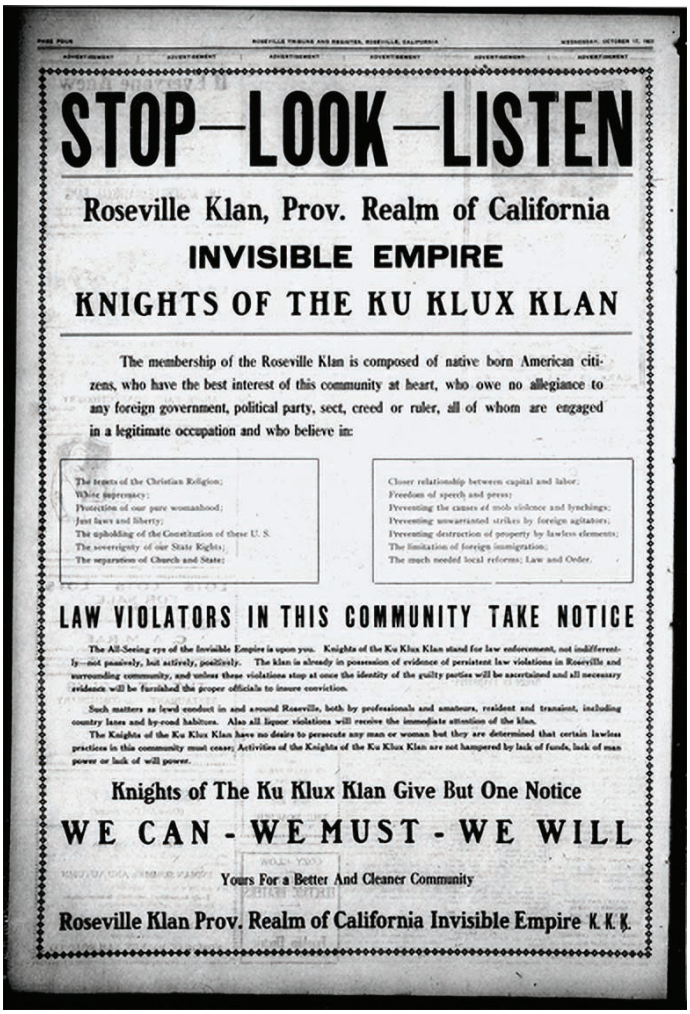
58. "The Tribune and the Ku Klux Klan," *The Roseville Press-Tribune*, October 1923, Placer County Archives and Research Center.

59. "The Tribune."

60. "Roseville Pastor in County Jail: Rev. C. R. Fairfield Begins Prison Term for Speeding" *Auburn Journal*, May 1, 1924. California Digital Newspaper Collection.

61. "Pastor Goes to Jail in Placer," *The Lincoln News-Messenger*, May 10, 1924, Placer County Archives and Research Center.

stating, "The *News-Messenger* is the only newspaper in Placer County that openly denounces the un-American Ku Klux Klan and those we know to be members of this rapidly degenerating organization…we have lost business in our so doing, but our conscience is clear."[62] Coupled with the *Roseville Tribune's* rebuke of the group and Fairfield's embarrassing debacle with local high school girls' accusation could not have helped the Klan's popularity in the area.



STOP—LOOK—LISTEN

Roseville Klan, Prov. Realm of California

INVISIBLE EMPIRE

KNIGHTS OF THE KU KLUX KLAN

The membership of the Roseville Klan is composed of native born American citizens, who have the best interest of this community at heart, who owe no allegiance to any foreign government, political party, sect, creed or ruler, all of whom are engaged in a legitimate occupation and who believe in:

The tenets of the Christian Religion;
White supremacy;
Protection of our pure womanhood;
Just laws and liberty;
The upholding of the Constitution of these U. S.
The sovereignty of our State Rights;
The separation of Church and State;

Closer relationship between capital and labor;
Freedom of speech and press;
Preventing the causes of mob violence and lynchings;
Preventing unwarranted strikes by foreign agitators;
Preventing destruction of property by lawless elements;
The limitation of foreign immigration;
The much needed local reforms; Law and Order.

LAW VIOLATORS IN THIS COMMUNITY TAKE NOTICE

The All-Seeing eye of the Invisible Empire is upon you. Knights of the Ku Klux Klan stand for law enforcement, not indifferently—not passively, but actively, positively. The klan is already in possession of evidence of persistent law violations in Roseville and surrounding community, and unless these violations stop at once the identity of the guilty parties will be ascertained and all necessary evidence will be furnished the proper officials to insure conviction.

Such matters as lewd conduct in and around Roseville, both by professionals and amateurs, resident and transient, including country lanes and by-road habitues. Also all liquor violations will receive the immediate attention of the klan.

The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan have no desire to persecute any man or woman but they are determined that certain lawless practices in this community must cease; Activities of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan are not hampered by lack of funds, lack of man power or lack of will power.

Knights of The Ku Klux Klan Give But One Notice

WE CAN - WE MUST - WE WILL

Yours For a Better And Cleaner Community

Roseville Klan Prov. Realm of California Invisible Empire K. K. K.

An advertisement promoting the Roseville Ku Klux Klan published in the Roseville *Press Tribune* in October 1923. Courtesy of the Placer County Archives and Research Center.

Following the summer of 1924, there was little coverage by the local press regarding the Klan. By 1925, the KKK was in swift decline, and the popularity of the group likely followed along with this trend. However, as seen in small pockets across the nation, portions of the Klan managed to function at a smaller and localized area. Regions within Placer county still supported them up until 1928. That year, a group of Klan members lit a cross in the yard of a Sheridan home described as "Love

62. *The Lincoln News-Messenger*, Editorial, July 17, 1924, Placer County Archives and Research Center.

Nest" by the local press because of the two unmarried couples who resided there.[63] The local press saw the cross burning as an act of intimidation by the Klan, whom the couple's neighbor tipped off. This ex-minister was angered by the living situation of the property's inhabitants.

## Conclusion

As seen with many Klaverns across the United States during the 1920s, the Ku Klux Klan's lifespan in Placer county was short-lived. From all indications, the height of Klan presence was roughly between the summer of 1922 to 1923. During this time frame, the Klan sought to intimidate and spread their white supremacist message through public display. These include the use of local newspapers to publicly threaten those whom they saw as wrongdoers, breaking the rules of the traditional Anglo-Saxon Protestant way of life. As seen in the local press' complicity in publishing Klan advertisements and personal attacks by men such as C.R. Fairfield, folks around the area perceived the Klan to be a legitimate enough organization to heed the attention of public officials like District Attorney Lowell. There were several confirmed cross burnings in the area during this time that were, in some cases, used to inspire new members, such as the parade through downtown Roseville on the fourth of July 1922. Cross burnings were also gazed upon by locals during Klan initiation in Newcastle and Folsom during this era. Some cross burning was an act of intimidation, as in John Ferguson and the "lover's nest" in the town of Sheridan.[64]

An important point about the Placer Klan is that despite these public displays of power and acts of intimidation, there is little evidence that the Klan ever actually acted upon their threats violently. There is no mention in the local press that any Klan members in Placer county were charged with violent or criminal behavior outside disturbing the peace besides C.R. Fairfield. In this way, Placer county fits the descriptions made by Linda Gordon, Thomas Pegram. The second Klan was a mostly non-violent and political-minded group instead of its reconstruction predecessor. While Fairfield tried to intimidate those that opposed his ideology, such as the *Sacramento Bee*, there is no evidence that the paper took the threat seriously or even took notice at all.

By comparison to other Klaverns around the state, it appears that the Placer Klan accomplished little in securing political power in the area. Unlike Klaverns in Orange County, for instance, who managed to have several members elected to positions of power, it appears that the only power the Placer Klan wielded was intimidation. Also, unlike Klaverns in Visalia, which lasted well into the 1930s, the Placer Klan was short-lived.[65] There is evidence, however, that the Klan was associated with law enforcement. However, those with badges seen associating with the Klan during the Newcastle initiation, for example, were not recognized by the local town folk. Therefore, they were likely from outside of the county. There were rumors published in the *Lincoln News-Messenger* that the Klan had a relationship with District Attorney Orrin Lowell; however, there is no evidence. This theory is weakened further because Lowell prosecuted C.R. Fairfield for his speeding charge. If it is true that the Klan had a relationship with Lowell that the Lincoln newspaper claims they did, then there

63. "Five Arrested in Apparent 'Love Nest' in Sheridan," *The Lincoln News-Messenger*, September 14, 1928, Placer County Archives and Research Center.

64. "Five Arrested."

65. Griffiths, *A Community Divided: Visalia, California 1852–1940,* 41.

would be a reason to believe the head of the Placer county Klan would have been able to get himself out of thirty-day imprisonment for speeding. As we have seen in the *Roseville Press Tribune*, Lowell publicly disavowed the Klan's threats of vigilantism towards those who broke prohibition laws.

While the Klan did have a presence in Placer County and the papers did help project that aura of intimidation, local resistance was strong. As seen in Fairfield's church and attacks by the Lincoln newspaper, there were members of the community willing to stand up against the Klan. The reasons why they disavowed the Klan, however, are varied. As seen in the dissent of the Roseville Presbyterian Church members, Fairfield and the Klan did not acknowledge the pastor was a racist. However, the pastor spent a lot of time with the group instead of performing the duties of the church. In the case of the Lincoln newspaper, their opposition to the Klan was for moral reasons, but this was because they viewed the Klan as un-American.

In comparison, the paper could have believed this because of the Klan's racist ideology. It is more likely, given the popular racial beliefs in American culture at the time, that they opposed the vigilante nature of the Klan – or, more specifically, their assaults on those who broke the lightly enforced liquor laws of the prohibition era. The only Placer County newspaper that published a statement condemning the Klan's racial theories was the *Roseville Press-Tribune*. The paper's condemnation of the Klan proceeded public scrutiny. The actual statement by the paper regarding the race issue was a quote from the American Legion; thus, this statement by the Roseville paper seems more of a public relation move to save face than the impassioned words of a progressive news outlet.

Placer county during the twenties was an area whose demographic shifts and religious makeup was typical of many towns across the nation of the time. They were a historically white, rural, and religious area whose members were dismayed at the changing world around them. This change came primarily in the shifting racial and religious demographics of the United States due to the influx of new immigrants from Europe and Japan. These new groups were viewed as a threat to the standard Anglo-Saxon Protestant way of life many Americans had always known. This fact was upsetting enough that joining the Klan seemed to be the right move to make. The relaxed enforcement of liquor laws within the county, mentioned by local media, was another reason for a strait-laced protestant to be upset with their community. Overall, the Klan's presence in Placer County was a symptom of its time.

**Author biography**: Kyle Bolla is a graduate student in Sacramento State University's M.A. program. His main area of study is white conservatism in the United States during the twentieth century. He has researched and written on the Ku Klux Klan in rural California during the early 1920s in his first published work A Hooded Order in Gold Country: The Ku Klux Klan in Placer County, California. Graduating Cum Laude with a History B.A. from Sacramento State in 2017, he has since taught at every level of the California school system from preschool to twelfth grade and currently is a teacher's assistant at Sierra College in Rocklin, California. He is also a member of the historical honor society Phi Alpha Theta.

# PHOTO ESSAY

## Dog Hole Ports, A Cultural Landscape Survey

**Michael Jasinski**

Photo 1: The craggy cover of the historic Fort Ross Doghole Port. View west.

This photo essay documents cultural landscapes associated with the doghole port maritime trade network. These photographs are part of a Historic American Landscape Survey that documents contemporary landscapes associated with the doghole port. The project seeks to expand the scope of the maritime trade network beyond

Photo 2: Typical vernacular structure associated with historic dog hole port operations.

the Gold Rush era into the broader subfield of California Environmental History and showcase the evolving relationship between humans and the environment along the coast of California. Photos were taken by Michael Jasinski and Andrew Shimizu between 2017 and 2019 using large format 4x5 negatives and hand develop dark room techniques.

Taking its name from popular folklore that referenced the similarities ships had with dogs circling to bed in the small and dangerous coves before porting, the dog hole port trade began as California's population exploded due to the Gold Rush.[1] Pioneers created the dog hole port trade to meet the food, fuel, and building supply demands of the rising population in boomtowns that arose seemingly overnight along the creeks of the goldfields of the Sierra Nevada Mountain foothills of California. Attracted to natural resources at the fog shroud intersection of land and sea, pioneers devised a system to extract food and fuel from the north coast. The dog

Photo 3: Stacked Railroad Ties. View south.

hole port trade combined new technology, ambitious frontier ingenuity, old-world skill, and cutting-edge engineering to make the resource of the north coast available to the growing State.[2] Specifically, the dog hole port trade made use of the newly invented two-masted schooner, a ship nimble enough to handle the harsh terrain of the coast to carry milled timber and fresh agricultural products for transport to feed the growing cities of the young state.[3]

The trade network not only allowed for the growth of far-off towns throughout the state but also developed local economies. They became the industrial and cultural centers for the once isolated north coast of California.[4] The lumber industry

1. Jason Field, "Big Sur Doghole Ports: A Frontier Maritime Cultural Landscape" (master's thesis, Sonoma State University, 2017), 12.

2. Walter Jackson, *The Doghole Schooners* (Volcano, CA: California Traveler, 1969).

3. Martha Sullenberger, *Dogholes and Donkey Engines: A Historical Resources Study of Six State Park System Units of the Mendocino Coast* (Sacramento: California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1980).

4. James Delgado, Denise Jaffke, Matthew Lawrence, and Deborah Marx, *Maritime Cultural Landscape of Sonoma's Doghole Port* (Silver Springs, MA: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Press, 2020).

expanded from 6 lumber mills in 1859 to 20 by the mid-1870s. Production expanded from 30-70 million board feet of lumber exported annually to 120 million board feet in 1896 and a massive 219 million in 1907 following the San Francisco Earthquake.[5] However, as quickly as this trade developed the dog hole port maritime trade was soon in decline due to the rise of the railroad and automobile. Soon, because wharves and chutes were both dangerous to operate and costly to maintain, they

Photo 4: Landscape view southwest, including water tower, and hotel from the historic community at Stewarts Port.

were dissembled.

This illustrates a multi-cultural human relationship with the landscape and management of nature that has evolved in California. The landscape shows evidence of indigenous land management techniques used by the native Kashya Pomo people in the native plants seasonally harvested and neighboring forest managed to sustain a community atop the coastal bluff.[6] Also present at dog hole ports is the shift away from traditional land-use practices and the influence of European land management in the Russian constructed infrastructure to support their fur trade and agricultural operations at Fort Ross.[7] After the Russian era of settlement and the rise of the dog hole port trade, landscape alterations illustrate the rise of modern commercial agriculture and logging on the land. Further, after the decline of the dog hole ports trade in the early 20th century, the logging industry expanded further using 'clear cut' forestry policies to keep up with the State's booming Post-war population. Contemporary dog hole port landscapes bear witness to the rise of the 20th-century environmental movement.[8] As communities could no longer rely on the unregulated logging economy State and Federal agencies purchased lands to manage and maintain cultural and natural resources.[9] With this, the region saw a rise in historic preservation,

5. Melvin E. Metcalf, *Timber Resources of Mendocino and Sonoma Counties, California* (Portland, OR: USDA Forest Service, 1972), 2.

6. Damon B Akins and William J. Bauer Jr, *We are the Land: A History of Native California (*University of California Press, 2021).

7. Glenn J Ferris, *So Far From Home: Russians in Early California* (Berkeley, CA: Heyday Books, 2012).

8. Metcalf, *Timber Resources of Mendocino and Sonoma Counties, California*, 3.

9. Jared Farmer, *Trees of Paradise: The Botanical Conquest of California* (Berkeley, CA: Heyday Books, 2017).

heritage, and natural tourism industries to attract people on day trips and vacations.[10]

Today in Sonoma County alone, 14 former dog hole port locations are managed by California State Parks. Although dog hole ports are a unique regional history, it is also one that fits in with a broader statewide and global history of the human relationship with the environment. Cultural landscapes showcase the way humans adapt the earth and transform it to meet their individual and societal needs. Cultural landscapes present a record of society's wants, needs, and struggles. As dog hole ports continue to attract visitors, either as State Parks or privately owned roadside attractions, it essential to remember that the landscapes are continuing to evolve. Landscapes not only gives insight into the past but also present values and prospects.

Photo 5: General dog hole port landscape with trail to the Pacific, Fort Ross. View west.

10. Sonoma County Economic Development Board, Sonoma County Annual Tourism Report: Industry Report 2018. http://sonomaedb.org/Data-Center/Industry/.

# BOOK REVIEWS

Jones, Hillary. *The Métis of Senegal: Urban Life and Politics in French West Africa.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013. xi + 276 pp. Maps. Pictures. Plates. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Paperback, $20.99. ISBN 978-0-253-00674-5.

Senegal's Métis population occupies a unique position within colonial African history. They were offered opportunities not available to most colonial subjects because they played an intermediary role between regional trade networks and the larger world system. French imperial officers and European merchants arrived in Senegal in the mid seventeenth century to booestablish lucrative trade networks and often entered into local marriages with prominent African Signares women to facilitate regional trade. The decedents of these "*mariage à la mode du pays*" are the Métis. Hilary Jones examines the origins of the Métis population of St. Louis, Senegal in her book *The Métis of Senegal: Urban Life and Politics in French West Africa,* where she traces their history from the onset of French colonialism into the early twentieth century.

Jones's study focuses specifically on the Métis population within the port city of St. Louis, the seat of the French colonial administration in Senegal, and an important node in the burgeoning imperial trade network. Analysis of the Métis from a world-historical perspective connects Saint Louis to events, institutions, and other forces from outside of sub-Saharan West Africa. The Métis of Saint Louis did not simply connect France to west Africa, they connected west Africa to the world. They seized their inherited positions gatekeepers to the African trade to gain wealth, power, education, and security. The patrilineal connections to France meant that political developments in Europe regularly impacted the lives of the Métis, yet their distance from western Europe allowed them to weather revolutionary chaos relatively better than French citizens. This codependent relationship of the Métis and the French Republic drew the Métis legally and culturally closer to Europe. Some gained status as citizens of French territories, attended European universities, and held prominent positions as administrators, merchants, corporate agents, and officers within the French military. The Saint Louis Métis were able to participate in limited self-government and control municipal budgets. For a time, they boasted representation in the French Republic. They were able to maintain their prominence until after World War I when increased consolidation of European colonial bureaucracies eroded Métis autonomy.

The analysis found within *The Métis of Senegal* reveals a lesser understood consequence of European colonialism, the emergence of new ethnic societies due to the prolonged interaction of geographically distant cultures. Jones's history of the Métis is a stunning example of how people born into the margins of oppressive colonial societies are sometimes able to use their positions to their advantage. It provides compelling commentary in an easy to digest format that covers race, nationalism, colonialism, and trade from a minority perspective. Hilary Jones's work on the Métis is a valuable resource for scholars of colonial history and ethnic studies.

**Jonathan L. Brimer**

Azuma, Eiichiro. *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. xxii + 299. ISBN 978-0195159417.

In *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America*, Eiichiro Azuma explores the interstitial experiences of Japanese immigrants who saw themselves simultaneously as both Japanese and American citizens. By following the already diverse origins of the Japanese immigrants in the section "Multiple Beginnings," the transformation of their culture in "Convergences and Divergences," their relationship with their future and their past in "Pioneers and Successors," and nationalism both in America and Japan in "Complexities of Immigrant Nationalism," Azuma does not restrict Japanese immigration to America. Rather, he analyzes it more broadly, observing the choices and treatment of Japanese immigrants in America and abroad between 1884 and 1941. *Between Two Empires* posits that Japanese immigrants simultaneously sought to Americanize themselves and retain their Japanese culture; Japanese immigrants actively participated in both American and Japanese nationalism because they did not find these values mutually exclusive.

Key to Azuma's argument is the dichotomy between American and Japanese influence on new immigrants. Even as the Japanese developed programs to Americanize themselves in schools and community organizations the Japanese government still exerted influence over their cultural development. The Nisei, second-generation Japanese immigrants, were especially helpful to the Japanese government as English-speaking representatives of Japanese interests in America and were thus targeted by cultural education programs. Azuma argues these disparate influences separated the Japanese from their ancestral land, distinguishing their experiences and ideals as inherently different from those in Japan.

Despite their goal to enter the west with the confidence and status of white imperialists, Japanese immigrants experienced social, political, and racial subordination that established. Between Two Empires explores the Japanese's relationship to whiteness, specifically the newly developed racial hierarchy in the agricultural west that designated whites as landlords, the Japanese as foremen. Their legal and economic struggles against their white employers disproved the initial notion that Japanese and American nationalism were compatible. According to Azuma, even if the Japanese could not achieve the dominance, they still tried to position themselves as superior to other immigrant groups as a vestige of their nation's colonial expansion.

*Between Two Empires* argues that despite their efforts Japanese immigrants failed to develop or retain significant ties to either nation-state. Azuma's core intention is to present Japanese American history beyond the context of the continental United States. Instead, he argues that to understand any people's history an international perspective is imperative. Japanese immigrants did not shed their racial and ethnic heritage as they crossed the Pacific, nor did they operate on American land as puppets to Japanese expansionism. Rather, they actively tried to transplant Japanese virtues and intentions onto the American landscape; they saw no need to differentiate between two forms of nationalism. In *Between Two Empires*, Azuma succeeds in arguing that Japanese Americans were neither all American patriots or Japanese pawns; instead, they created their own identity as Japanese Americans.

**Amanda DeFazio**

Portelli, Alessandro. *They Say in Harlan County: An Oral History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. 446 pp. $33.95. ISBN 978-0-19-973568-6.

*They Say in Harlan County* is an oral history conveyed through interviews with miners, their wives, mine operators, unionists, and strikebreakers in Harlan County, Kentucky. Alessandro Portelli works with many themes that intersect, overlap, and add layers of meaning to this oral history. Perhaps the most prominent theme is that of *dependence*. Ironically, coal miners in Harlan County needed the mining industry to earn decent wages to maintain a certain quality of life, yet this very industry also wrecked their bodies and destroyed the natural environment. *Identity* is another ever-present theme. During the struggle to unionize, miners and their families were challenged to reconcile the traditional American values of capitalism and Protestantism with labor unionism and socialism. For some this issue raised the question, am I free or enslaved? *Exploitation* and *political subjugation* are common themes as well. As Joan Robinett of Harlan said, "our lives here have been steeped in the tragedy and problems of a community long exploited from within and without. We've been disempowered far too long" (364). Timelessness may be a subtle theme in the book, but it permeates nearly every aspect of life in Harlan County.

These themes are integrated into the narrative which serves as the focal point of the book: the labor struggle of the 1930s. Coal miners felt exploited and dependent. The Appalachian region of eastern Kentucky did not provide many economic opportunities to men lacking capital. The mining industry offered secure jobs and wages that supported families, but the Great Depression disrupted this. Although miners' political subjugation began to unravel with FDR's New Deal programs, many of the miners' newly acquired rights—chiefly, the right to organize unions—did not have the support of law enforcement. The mine operators controlled the local Sheriff and *gun thugs* that he deputized. The federal government did little to control mine operators. The miners who sought better safety protocols, higher wages, healthcare, better housing, and pensions were stuck at the bottom of this power structure; violence was their only recourse. Harlan County was wracked by vigilante violence throughout the decade. Ideologies and identities clashed as well. Mine operators tended to utilize notions of *Americanism*. They viewed themselves as enterprising, individualist capitalists and the workers as un-American socialists. Using political ideology was not as convenient for the miners. Many were torn between trade unionism with its links to Marxism and their traditional American identities. But for most miners, economic matters formed a bottom line.

Timelessness is the book's most elusive theme. The region's isolation caused life to change at a very slow pace. Many who Portelli interviewed grew up in log cabins with dirt floors and no running water, just as their ancestors had. Illiteracy is still common. The old and modern exist side by side even today. At the same time, many aspects of this timelessness are threatened. Mountaintops are razed as a result of strip mining, debris from this process washes into valleys and causes floods, water sources are poisoned, and the coal will not last forever.

*They Say in Harlan County* is a highly captivating and emotionally stirring book. Folklore and facts are woven together in a seamless narrative. Memory plays an important role in Portelli's writing; chronology and factuality are not viewed as essential here. Although presenting facts and data is not the author's major focus, more information regarding the miners' wages would have been helpful to the reader. How

much did miners earn in a day, in a week, or in a month? What purchasing power did these wages have? What was the price of food and rent? How did these wages and expenses change over time? Even if Portelli had simply added this information in graphic form as an appendix, it would have given the reader a greater understanding of the miners' material concerns. But this omission is a very minor shortcoming. Portelli's postmodern view that peoples' perceptions are as valuable as statistics and data may not be appreciated by some, but his methodology certainly enhances the gritty reality of life in Harlan County.

**John Fedorko**

Selverstone, Marc J. *Constructing the Monolith: The United States, Great Britain, and International Communism, 1945-1950*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008. xi + 304 pp. $64.94. ISBN 978-0-674-03179.

In *Constructing the Monolith: The United States, Great Britain, and International Communism, 1945-1950* Marc Selverstone examines the origins and use of anti-communist propaganda in the United States and Great Britain during the Cold War. Selverstone received his PhD in History from Ohio University. *Constructing the Monolith* received the Stuart L. Bernath Book Prize from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. This book focuses on the joint Anglo-American response to the growing influence of the U.S.S.R. and communism as governing system. The main argument of the book is that officials in the United States and Great Britain viewed and represented international communism as a monolithic entity which served the interests of the Soviet Union and threatened Western democracy and values.

The main argument of the book is that Western powers, led by the United States and Great Britain, viewed communism as a monolithic entity intent on taking over the world. The United States was more aggressive and overt in their anti-communism, but Great Britain was of a similar mindset and created an entente with Americans to slow the spread of communism. Several moves by the Soviets prompted Britain and the United States to take action. The creation of the Comintern and later the Cominform by the Soviet Union in order to create a more coordinated movement under Soviet guidance. The West saw this as an imperial power grab as it gave Moscow control over the communist states in Eastern Europe. The apparent consolidation of power by the Soviets prompted a response from Western democracies, the Marshall Plan.

The Marshall plan was an attempt to gain influence in a region through the distribution of financial aid to countries that were recovering from the war. There was early support for the plan, because it intended to rebuild Europe; however, officials felt it was necessary to shift the goals of the Marshall plan to reflect containment of communism. While the public was willing to support economic recovery, they needed more convincing if they were going to spend tax dollars fighting communism. In order to sway public opinion, the United States and Great Britain both launched propaganda campaigns against the Soviet Union. Officials played off war-time sentiment through "Red Fascist" imagery, where the Soviet Union was compared to and syncretized with Nazi Germany as the epitome of evil in the modern world. All communists were represented as lackeys of the Kremlin, which isolated the domestic communist parties of the United States and Great Britain from the other political

parties. The left wing distanced themselves from communism as much as possible by supporting traditional democratic values such as free speech.

Overall, Selverstone offers a thorough analysis regarding how communism was viewed as a monolithic force in Western popular media. He relies on a variety of primary and secondary sources to support his argument. He utilizes an engaging style that makes the book easy to follow. His coverage of *Constructing the Monolith* a particularly useful book for anyone learning about Western responses to communism.

**Andrew Foley**

Tutino, John. *Mexico City: Power, Sovereignty, and Silver in an Age of War and Revolution.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2018. x + 289. $29.95 ISBN: 9 780826360007.

John Tutino provides his interpretation of the origins of Mexican independence by analyzing the year 1808 and its significance in Mexico City. The analysis begins during the political crisis spawned by Napoleon's invasion of Spain. This crisis quickly evolved into a trans-Atlantic crisis that threatened the stability of New Spain and its silver-based economy. Questions of legitimate authority in the wake of the king's absence undermined Silver capitalism which maintained an intricate regime of mediation responsible for delegating a balance of political representation between the diverse social groups in the city. Instead of mediation, methods of coercion through military force and calls for popular sovereignty dominated the political scene and lead to the coup of 1808. This led to the overthrow of Viceroy José de Iturrigaray and subsequently silver capitalism and the regime of mediation. Tutino asserts that the regime of mediation and silver capitalism, prior to the coup, was the primary driving force in the administration of the colony. Tutino's argument conflicts with other scholars' interpretation of Spain's authoritarian rule of New Spain. Tutino's main argument instead claims that Spain's administration of New Spain relied heavily on compromise and mutual agreement between individual social groups in the city. According to Tutino, "Spain's monarchy did not— could not— rule by coercive mandate" (112).

Tutino dedicates part one of the book towards exploring silver capitalism and how that created a regime of mediation. In this section, we are introduced to the social ranking of the city and Tutino splits these rankings into three distinct social groups. The oligarchs occupied the highest positions in the city, and controlled much of the profits from silver, and thus were able to exercise large amounts of political power. Next came the landed provincials, who also held power in politics, yet were not equal with the oligarchs in terms of social standing and wealth. Lastly came the people of the barrios, who represented the majority of the city's population, ranging from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and autonomous indigenous republics with their own unique systems of governance. Part one ties together Tutino's argument about the power of silver capitalism and the regime of mediation. He reveals that the deep political, economic, and ethnic inequalities within the city were only controlled through careful steps of compromise and mediation between various social groups. "The goal is to illuminate the central role of the mediating regime in sustaining New Spain's prosperity and stability"(106). The regime of mediation and the social fragmentation existent between classes helped prevent conditions similar to

the 1808 coup from occurring earlier.

Part two of the book explores how mediation was carried out in colonial administration. Tutino uses this section to stress the importance of the regime of mediation in maintaining New Spain's economic strength. We are introduced to multiple instances where the process of mediation helped lessen the economic burdens placed on the colony by Spain's increasing demand for revenue. As Spanish war debts soared in the mid to late eighteenth century, Tutino emphasized that the power of mediation helped New Spain negotiate deals with Spain.

Tuition's main argument is compelling with the amount of evidence it provides on the existence of mediation and the effects the 1808 coup had on silver capitalism. However, his argument suffers from the narrow perspective of focusing primarily on Mexico City. Although the city acted as the main hub for power in the colony, the lack of an expansive overview of the larger provinces outside the city undermines his focus on the power of pueblos and their influence on the development of popular sovereignty in New Spain before and after the coup.

**Tyrell Frederick**

Tetrault, Lisa. *The Myth of Seneca Falls: Memory and the Women's Suffrage Movement, 1848 1898*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014. VIII + 279 pp. $29.95. ISBN 978-1-4696-3350-3.

Lisa Tetrault reassesses the history and memory of the 1848 meeting at Seneca Falls in *The Myth of Seneca Falls: Memory and the Women's Suffrage Movement, 1848-1898*. Tetrault focuses on how Seneca Falls was remembered after the American Civil War. She argues that by distorting and mythologizing the narrative of Seneca Falls, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Stanton wrested control of the suffragists movement while minimizing the roles of other suffragists, including Lucy Stone. She also argues that this myth created a false sense of unity within a movement that was rife with disputes about how to fight for the voting rights of White women and Black Americans. In fact, Tetrault shows that Stanton and Anthony were often on the outside of popular suffragist opinion during these disputes. *The Myth of Seneca Falls* illustrates the misrepresentation of this event and the fallout that continues to reverberate through women's history.

Though the American Equal Rights Association was divided on how to reasonably provide voting rights for both White women and Black Americans, Stanton and Anthony promoted overtly racist ideas to convince the AERA and the public that White women should take precedent. Those who attempted to push both agendas simultaneously within the movement, like Lucy Stone, were appalled by their support of ideas about superior white intelligence and white entitlement. However, in making these points the author does not take away from Stanton and Anthony's accomplishments and gives their racist ideas historical context. To succeed where they felt the AERA had failed, they realized they had to shift the balance of power by controlling not only the future of the history of women's suffrage, but the past.

*The Myth of Seneca Falls* reveals that the basis for Stanton and Anthony's control over this narrative was their claim that the original meeting in Seneca Falls was the birthplace of not only the women's suffrage movement, but of the women's rights movement. Tetrault shows this to be patently false. She uses several examples

of pioneering women that preceded them, such as Grimké sisters, Sojourner Truth, and Lucy Stone. Despite Stone and many other's efforts within the movement to more accurately record the history of women's suffrage, Stanton and Anthony outmaneuvered them and remained in control of the narrative. In Stanton and Anthony's multi-volume book, History of Women's Suffrage, they positioned themselves at the forefront of a united suffrage movement rather than recording it accurately as a fiercely contested battle between rival factions. Because they owned the de facto origin story, were the most prominent figures in the movement, and had the public support of Frederick Douglass, their detractors increasingly became background noise.

Tetrault makes no attempt to disguise her disbelief in Stanton and Anthony's account of history. Chapter four is called "Inventing Women's History:1880-1886." The Epilogue is called "The Bonfires of History." However, her criticisms are fair, and her evidence is substantial. She frequently praises their work and calls Anthony the greatest women's historian during her time. Tetrault's purpose is not to subtract from the legacies of Elizabeth Stanton and Susan B. Anthony but to add to the legacies of women like Lucy Stone and other suffragists. *The Myth of Seneca Falls* delivers on Tetrault's promise of realigning the origins and the collective historical memory of women's rights and shattering the mythology of Seneca Falls.

**Matt Griffith**

Brown, Kate. *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. vi + 406 pp. $21.95. ISBN 978-0-19-985576-6.

Kate Brown uses a comparative strategy to examine the construction of plutonium factories in Richland, Washington and Ozersk, Soviet Union. In the context of World War II and the beginning years of the Cold War, the author uses contemporaneous government documents and scientific research, as well as first person accounts. The singular goal of manufacturing bombs created exclusive societies driven by the insatiable demand for consumer goods. Brown argues these societies mirrored broader racial and class tensions that existed in both states. While residents traded potential health risks for higher standards of living, officials overlooked environmental degradation and workplace safety for expediency.

Brown argues class and racial tensions are central to how both regions developed. Hanford Camp was built with minimal investment to house workers at the Richland plant, while only management lived in Richland. The owner of the community, DuPont company, quickly realized that a higher standard of living for nuclear families could be used to attract and control workers. Below market rate rents for large, middle-class homes and a plethora of community amenities gave the working class a false sense of middle-class status. Workers of color and temporary workers lived in the nearby community of Pasco. The area was characterized by high crime rates, overcrowded housing, subpar services, and excessive drinking. Brown argues that these stark divides mirrored racial and class divisions in American society.

There were similar cleavages in Ozersk and the Soviet Union. Desolate and underdeveloped, Ozersk housed prisoners from the gulag in poorly constructed camps. These workers brought the crude, rebellious, and disorganized culture of the gulag to the project. Lack of progress on the plant eventually motivated the re-

cruitment of workers who were promised a higher quality living. Brown aptly points out that the southern Urals experienced intense poverty, and thus, even a stable food source meant improved quality of life. Over time, these workers created nuclear families and community services improved.

Brown argues material improvements in both Richland and Ozersk led workers to overlook potential health implications and deprioritize safety. In Richland this tendency was supported by DuPont and Manhattan Project officials. Research was manipulated to silence health concerns, and medical testing of residents was used to promote the façade of safety, thus intertwining scientific data with public relations. In Ozersk, only after a group of women lab workers became ill did managers begin to dismiss workers at early signs of illness. Plant supervisors purposely assigned the least knowledgeable workers to dangerous tasks, which exacerbated inequalities across categories of class and gender. Both plants continually took short cuts on safety measures because of pressure to maintain politically motivated construction targets.

Environmental degradation was also deprioritized by Ozersk and Richland managers. The Richland plant regularly dumped radioactive waste into the Columbia River, even after scientists discovered plutonium's tendency for bioaccumulation in the bodies of living things. Only after a scientist alerted officials about potential contamination of the food supply were radioactive fuels temporarily cooled for longer times. In Ozersk, officials deemed it acceptable to dump toxins into the Techa River because it mirrored disposal in the Columbia. Drinking water and food consumed by local villages was contaminated, causing birth defects to this day. In both states, officials chose expediency and low costs over the health of the environment and the surrounding communities.

Brown's *Plutopia* is a story of priorities. In choosing economic security and nuclear families, both citizenries remained ignorant to potential health concerns and environmental degradation and were unwilling to confront race and class disparities. Brown highlights a plethora of social, environmental, and economic issues through mini chapters. Although this text deepens our understanding of the societal implications of the atom bomb, it would behoove the author to reconsider the use of mini chapters. Sometimes the extreme compartmentalization creates disjointedness and makes the arguments difficult to trace. Her text, nevertheless, is critical to understanding the history of the atom bomb and deepens our understanding of the tensions of the Cold War.

**Kerida Moates**

Rosenthal, Caitlyn. *Accounting for Slavery: Masters and Management*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018. xiv + 295 pp. $35.00. ISBN 978-0-674-24165-7

Debates on the emergence of the capitalist system rely on the often-conflicting definitions of what capitalism is and where it started. *Accounting for Slavery* offers an important look into the true scope and impact of the system of chattel slavery on the formation of the modern world and many of the modern business structures often taken for granted. Economists, world historians, Americanists, and Atlantic scholars, venture into the fray to proclaim precisely when and where capitalism emerged from the mercantilist systems of accumulation that define the early modern

world. Caitlin Rosenthal wrestles with the nature of capitalism by using business history and the history of slavery to trace how "slavery was central to the emergence of the economic system that now goes by that name" (3). Rosenthal reexamines the historiography of modern business and casts doubt on the long accepted "assumption that innovation occurred despite slavery, not because it" (6). Traditionally, business management history looks at industrial factory development, but Rosenthal examines hundreds of plantation records in a new light, revealing the deep similarities and connections between the management of human chattel and the transformative business practices that would mature into the modern wage labor system.

Commodity history and studies of the Atlantic capital economy reveal the inseparable connection between the modern world and past enslavement. Utilizing extensive and detailed accounting books, Rosenthal interjects a new argument by probing the relationship between plantation management and human capital, out of which scientific management took hold. While many contemporary histories of accounting and labor management view their beginnings in the industrial revolution, Rosenthal argues that these often-ignored slavery sources mark the actual birth of the vertically integrated maximization system that defined the nineteenth century shift to industrial capitalism. Rosenthal views systems of slavery as intimately connected to the modern management practices that arose from the extensive accounting records and discussions of production in contemporary agricultural journals.

The examination of productivity metrics may at first seem cold and disconnected from the immense human suffering of slavery. However, these cold and violent methods of human coercion represent the systems of plantation slavery experienced by millions of enslaved people. While the direct evolution of business practice remains elusive, the similarities between the antebellum and postbellum South and more industrialized areas of wage labor are unparalleled. Slavery provided an avenue to experimentation in labor maximization and surveillance that wage labor systems were simply unable to replicate and cast doubt on the simple agrarian economy arguments of many period historians. In many cases plantation economies were more productive and managed more thoroughly than industrialization allowed and make it easier to understand how management systems slid into exploitation.

For many students slavery can seem a distant institution disconnected from the modern world of pad holidays and eight-hour workdays. In reality, *Accounting for Slavery* makes understanding the proximity of slavery easier and casts light on the larger picture of modern economic systems. Describing the social effects of enslavement beyond sociological terms opens the book to a new readership and links the lessons learned in the past with the production-obsessed modern economy with the global production systems of yesterday. Rosenthal's work is highly recommended for amateurs and academic students alike as a way of bridging the past and the present and will serve as a guide for future inquisitions into the subject.

**Preston S. Moore**

Takriti, Abdel Razzaq. *Monsoon Revolution: Republicans, Sultans, and Empires in Oman, 1965-1976*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2016. xiv + 333 pp. $41.95. ISBN 978-0198783176.

Utilizing a rich body of primary source accounts, critical analysis, and even poetic

inclusions, Abdel Razzaq Takriti paints a dramatic picture of Oman as it formed into the modern nation state. *Monsoon Revolution: Republicans, Sultans and Empires in Oman, 1965-1976*, captures the atmosphere and feelings for all that were involved in a multilateral web of intrigue, conflict, negotiation, and nation and coalition building. This book can reasonably be broken down into four narrative sections: the Rule of Sultan Said Bin Taimur, the Coup d'état to depose him, his son Qaboos seizing power, and finally the ensuing power struggle between revolutionaries and the absolutist regime of Qaboos. Throughout the book, the British are an ever-present force working in the background to shape the sultanate into a state which they could abandon in anticipation of a future post-colonial era. Not only are the particulars of the events painstakingly narrativized, but the revolutionary fighting happening in Oman and the Dhofar region are put in a global context.

According to Takriti the book, "has aimed to set out a narrative that is particular to the Omani and Arab context, while engaging with the broader analytical themes that pertain to the process of imperial sovereignty and its contestation" (311). This method of both extreme particularization in selecting Dhofar for study, the hinterland of the hinterland, and extreme universality by exploring themes of Tricontinentalism and the Bandung conference is typical of this book. These extreme conceptual axes permeate throughout; the world's greatest empire, in Britain, interfering with the politics of one of the world's poorest places. The Monsoons referenced in the title relieve the scorched deserts of Dhofar each season and recede until the next season. The secular Maoist and Leninist rhetoric of the revolutionaries within the country sat alongside a stiflingly conservative tribal-based society. Finally, with respect to Takriti the discussion of the consequences of poetry on Dhofari culture amid a calculated investigation of the local and regional political climate.

Takriti went out of his way to revise certain notions and attitudes that permeate many of the histories and accounts of former British colonies. Rather than taking the records kept by the British Bureaucracy and their personal journals as face value, there was a comparative study of the first-hand accounts of Dhofaris and Omanis, and the British . In a sense, rather than centering any single nation or individual at the center of the narrative, it centered the dynamics that the disparate and idiosyncratic forces created in their shared struggle with and against one another. At times it became apparent that the political situation described was not a simple case of colonial exploitation, but a cooperating web of dependents, foreign officials, loyalists, mercenaries, slaves and tribal peoples. The many individuals, foreign and domestic to Oman and Dhofar, with all of their flaws and plusses were humanized, made concrete, not simply portrayed as helpless victuals to be snapped up by the forces of empire. Takriti has truly made a wonderful portrait of a particular time and place, but a portrait which can be reworked and redrawn and made to help us understand the dynamics ever-present, any place, immutably, throughout history.

**Dawson Nichols**

Breen, T.H. *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. xxviii + 380 pp. $19.99. ISBN 978-0-19-518131-9.

The impetus behind the American Revolution is traditionally painted as a tax re-

volt for liberty and freedom. But grandiose narratives of the Revolution leave out the lived experiences and impacts of the war on non-elite peoples. Consequently, they disregard the importance of how these peoples were able to revolt successfully against Britain. *The Marketplace of Revolution* provides an explanation with an examination of colonists' conspicuous consumption of marketed goods – particularly those from Britain. Breen argues that colonists' culture "as consumers provided them with the cultural resources needed to develop a bold new form of political protest" which in turn enabled the Revolution (xv).

Breen builds his argument with official government reports, archeological evidence, probate reports, newspaper advertisements, correspondence, and an amalgamation of previous historians' works on the Revolution to demonstrate its economic origins. The consumer culture and availability of goods emerged in the century before the war as newly available products made their way into everyone's homes. With this, colonists developed a new culture of consumption and modern values. The choices offered by the importation of British goods were key to this development. These social and economic changes became the framework for the unity of colonists in their resistance to the Stamp Act. Colonists now stood together with a cohesion based on their mutual desire for material goods which allowed them to turn to one another in defense of what they believed to be their rights. This was the pursuit of happiness that the colonists declared themselves on when they broke from England.

Breen's argument on consumerism left out a traditionally underrepresented group in the story of the revolution: enslaved peoples. The fear of repercussions, particularly of slave revolts, was a key factor in pushing elites, and potentially non-elites, towards revolution. Dunmore's Proclamation infuriated and scared both white elites and non-elites and caused Jefferson to allude to it in the Declaration as a cause for independence. White colonists' anger at the Proclamation could be drawn back to consumerism because of how slave labor provided the income necessary to support this culture, yet Breen omitted almost any discussion of slavery. Excluding complexities of what enabled and forced revolution leaves out important facets such as what supported a consumerist culture itself.

Clearly something pushed the American colonists to work together and change their minds about the British – whether it was a singular cause such as consumerism or a complex web of interconnective causes. Like many other historians of the Revolution, Breen leaned heavily onto John Adams' idea of the Revolution being in the minds and hearts of the colonists. However, to Breen, this is because of "consumer sacrifice" rather than some lofty ideology (238). With our increasingly consumerist society in America today, this is a motivating argument, but also one which might look too much on the present to understand the past.

**Sarah Oslick**

Pelka, Fred. *What We Have Done: An Oral History of the Disability Rights Movement*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011. 658 pp. $26.95. ISBN 9781558499188

In *What We Have Done: An Oral History of the Disability Rights Movement* Fred Pelka takes his readers on a journey through American Disability history from the early twentieth century through the passing of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act.

He accomplishes this by constructing a narrative by weaving historical summaries of the time period and using in-depth interviews from disabled American activists. He includes physically and mentally disabled Americans, detailing institutions that extend from home care and boarding schools to psychiatric institutions. By conducting an oral history of disability in America, Pelka illustrates a segment of American society that is frequently invisible using disabled activists' own words.

Pelka's interviews are from three main sources. The first source is the Disability Rights and Independent Living Movements project from the Regional Oral History Office at the Bancroft Library at University of California, Berkeley. The second is The Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund under the University of San Francisco, and the final sources consist of interviews conducted by Pelka himself (x). This impacts his thesis as he does not edit his interviews heavily, taking the relevant information and keeping the discussions with each interviewee accurate. As such, this book is an oral history that details the experiences of each activist interviewed, without editorializing to create an alternative argument. Containing primarily first-hand recounts of events by over forty interviewees, *What We Have Done* provides a comprehensive understanding of disability history.

In each chapter of his book, Pelka introduces the topic by establishing the historical context of the topic. Some chapters start by detailing the ableism faced by disabled Americans, then moving onto the interview. By organizing his book in this way, Pelka connects the known history with the unknown personal history, the discussions with American disability activists, and their experiences with activism. The majority of the book is chronological, starting from the early twentieth century and continuing until the end of the 1990s. Some chapters are not chronological, and instead discuss an individual subject like schooling, institutionalization, or psychiatric survivors. As a result, there are portions of the book that retread upon time periods previously discussed. Pelka explains that this is due to the interconnectedness of Disability activism in the United States (ix). While the first two portions of the book detail American Disability history and the rise of disabled activism, the third portion of the book explains the process of the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Pelka's overall purpose for constructing an oral history of Disabled American history is to spotlight the people who have spent their lives fighting for their human rights at home. This book details the pervasive amounts of ableism at all levels of life for disabled Americans, from their homes and family life, to schooling, hospitalization, and institutionalization. Not only does Pelka describe what disabled Americans faced, but also the fight that disabled adults, teens and children, their able-bodied parents, and loved ones engaged in for better conditions. Throughout it all, *What We Have Done* provides a great insight into the history of Americans with Disabilities.

**X Pasha**

Hammond, Mitchell L. *Epidemics and the Modern World*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020. xiv + 519 pp. Paperback, $41.36. ISBN 978-14875-9373-5.

Historians define the inception of the modern world through themes of politics, trade, and social stratification, but overlook the significant impact of disease. In response to this void, Mitchell Hammond presents a compilation of case studies that

trace the world's major epidemics. In *Epidemics and the Modern World,* Hammond discerns the environmental, behavioral, and physiological impacts on social structures and human movement through a lens of disease and illness. Hammond's analysis reflects on societal impact, exercise of power, and the unintended consequences of human interference with nature which intermingled to create the modern world.

Hammond relies heavily on scientific research to dissect the biological origins and etiology of diseases, as well as academic sources to decipher the historical context of plague, syphilis, smallpox, yellow fever, cholera, tuberculosis, rinderpest, influenza, malaria, polio, and HIV/AIDS. The Black Death epidemic of 1346 swept throughout the known world in a deadly display of nature's power. This phenomenon sparked panic amongst lay people who blamed the disease on the wrath of God. Hammond claimed whereas the plague evoked reflection on repentance and human sinfulness, syphilis fixated human attention on immoral behavior. Disease altered public opinion, humans' relationship to the environment, and the government's ability to curb the spread through movement restrictions on the socially marginalized. This division between have and have nots became more pronounced with outbreaks of smallpox. This fostered a sense of superiority amongst Europeans who believed their conquest of the Americas was preordained by God. European exposure to yellow fever further contributed to a division between decidedly clean, yet susceptible Europeans and their seemingly unclean and immune native African counterparts. Disease exacerbated social and cultural divisions, and increasingly spread alongside globalization.

European domination and industrialization furthered societal divisions and epidemic breakouts. Cholera spread through waterways, affecting massive cities in its wake and only dissipated in regions that could afford proper water filtration systems. Tuberculosis rampaged industrialized areas with the assistance of modern transit innovations. Diseases that affected developed countries propelled innovative responses and instigated social reforms of cleanliness upon the discovery of germs. The discussion on germs further developed with outbreaks of rinderpest in the late nineteenth century, which brought awareness to cross contamination of pathogens between humans and animals. These diseases co-evolved between humans and animals and flourished in nature- making them impossible to eradicate. Humans attempted to use concocted solutions, but results backfired. Through struggles at ecological control, humans allowed strands of malaria to evolve that were resistant to human efforts. Human interference in nature further condemned humanity with outbreaks of polio and the emergence of AIDS/HIV.

Hammond claims "the social, ecological, and environmental changes of the last several centuries have transformed the planet's landscapes of health and illness" (1). Detrimental repercussions result from attempts to curb disease; some have already started to surface. Global warming, animal farm pathogen contamination, divisions of wealth, growing regional interconnectedness, and continually invasive attempts to control the environment result in humanity's precarious position in the modern world of disease. This text presents an intriguing analysis of epidemiological studies suitable for anyone who seeks a greater understanding of the detrimental capacity of disease.

**Mallory Potter**

Cleves, Rachel Hope. *Unspeakable: A Life beyond Sexual Morality.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020. 1 + 369. $35.00. ISBN-13: 978-0-226-73353-1.

Norman Douglas was a beloved and popular author. He was a friend and contemporary of authors Aldous Huxley, Graham Greene, and D.H. Lawrence. However, unlike his contemporaries, Douglas's reputation and books have not stood the test of time. What has survived is a plethora of documents belonging to Douglas in a handful of scattered archives. Historian Rachel Hope Cleves came across some of these documents almost by accident and set out to write a monograph she thought she would never be able to sell. Douglas's papers provide a wealth of documentation that openly discuss his sexual exploits with hundreds of pre-pubescent children. Cleves's biography of Douglas serves as a vehicle to discuss how Anglo-American culture has understood what she refers to as "inter-generational sex," with often disturbing but wholly convincing evidence.

What makes Douglas so extraordinary for his time was not that he partook in sex with children. Cleves argues the practice was much more common, if not unspoken, than one might assume. Douglas was extraordinary because he was so flippantly open and unapologetic about his sexual life. Apart from a few run-ins with the law, Douglas's preference for child sexual partners was generally tolerated in his lifetime. Douglas even used his 'scandalous' reputation to sell books. He remained friends with his literary contemporaries and a handful of radical feminist women until his death.

Cleves devotes considerable attention to how the world responded to Douglas as much as he interacted with the world. His friends either shared his sexual proclivities or tolerated them. Many continued to defend Douglas even as contemporary attitudes about adult-child sex shifted from a cautious ambivalence of the pederast to the public outcry against the monstrous pedophile. The book examines at great length through letters, published essays, and diaries how Douglas's friends, child victims, and the wider world dealt with such an unapologetic pederast, a man who today would be considered an abuser of children without question.

*Unspeakable* portrays its subject as a famous, prolific, exploitive man, protected by his celebrity. Cleves explores the world that allowed such behavior to exist largely unchallenged for most of his life. She frames the argument with meticulous care. She includes letters and statements from both Douglas's friends and some of his child lovers, many of whom maintained relationships with Douglas long after the sexual part of their relationship ended. His friends and former child sexual partners often spoke of him adoringly. These documents allow Cleves to document changing attitudes toward sex, sexuality, and sexual practices from late nineteenth-century Europe through the 1950s, often uncomfortably.

The book and its conclusions are challenging, but Cleves's work sheds important light on a part of the history of sexuality and sexual practice that has largely vanished from the archives. It is not easy to read at times due to the subject matter, though not due to Cleves's prose, which is beautifully nuanced. It is a must-read for any scholars of sexuality.

**Elvy Seyman Villados**

Diouf, Sylviane A. *Fighting the Slave Trade: West African Strategies*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003. ix + 225 pp. $26.36. ISBN 9780821415177.

*Fighting the Slave Trade* is a collection of essays which discusses West African responses to the Atlantic slave trade. Contrary to popular belief that Africans were passive actors to European threat, Sylviane Diouf asserts that the African reaction was complicated. Each essayist analyzes a variety of primary and secondary sources including European textual evidence, African oral history, archaeology, demographics, and linguistics to conclude that disparate African communities utilized a variety of defensive, protective, and offensive strategies against threats of enslavement.

The book is structured into three parts with each section dedicated to a specific response strategy. Part One elucidates African defensive tactics. A common theme throughout this section focuses on how the local environment shaped defensive tactics. For example, Eliseé Soumani's essay describes how the Tofino in West Africa exploited geography to their advantage. Rather than fight, the Tofino fled to an area unreachable to Europeans who had no knowledge of the land.

Part Two focuses on protective strategies. The most notable essay within this section is written by Diouf. She analyzes West African oral history in conjunction with European first-hand accounts to explain how it was common practice to exchange a local captive for an enslaved family member. She successfully dispels the notion that Africans passively offered fellow Africans for enslavement, nor does the practice demonstrate collaboration between Europeans and West Africans. Rather, a desperate family offered a replacement for their enslaved loved one.

Finally, part three focuses on offensive tactics. Although many African communities had the resources and strength to violently oppose Europeans, some communities had no other choice than to participate in the slave trade as means to protect their community. Paul E. Lovejoy and David Richardson argue that local participation in the slave trade was an offensive tactic. Considering that Lovejoy and Richardson's analysis centers on Old Calabar, a hotbed of slave trading activity, it is logical for a local population to participate in the trade in order to protect their own people. In other words, they did not have much choice and adapted accordingly to circumstance.

Diouf and contributing authors do not exclusively rely on textual evidence because written accounts are disproportionally from a European perspective and inaccurately portrays the African experience. In order to combat a false narrative, the authors utilized a multidisciplinary methodology by incorporating African non-textual source material. For example, Diouf cross examines African oral tradition with a European slaver's narrative to conclude that Africans did not willingly surrender fellow Africans for enslavement as the European source suggests.

*Fighting the Slave Trade* is a fantastic collection of essays for any scholar interested in African history, Atlantic history, or history of the slave trade. It is also a great supplementary resource for U.S. history instructors and college professors.

**Michelle Spremich**

Gordon, Tammy S. *Private History in Public: Exhibition and the Setting of Everyday Life*. Maryland: AltaMira Press, 2010. vii + 153 pp. ISBN-13-978-0759119352

Tammy Gordon's *Private History in Public* examines non-traditional private museums and exhibitions throughout the United States. Gordon demonstrates that private exhibits portraying individualized narratives deserve a thorough analysis from Public Historians. Gordon argues that examining private museums and exhibitions will help cultivate an understanding of the role of private museums and exhibitions in curating individualized narratives and engagement with visitors for public historians. She argues that private museums and exhibitions represent cross-cultural, cross-class, and socio-economic conversations that contribute to economic and social change.

Gordon focuses on three private exhibit categories: vernacular, community, and entrepreneurial. Each of these categories coordinate each private exhibit into five types of exhibitions, which are academic, corporate, community, entrepreneurial, and vernacular. She analyzes case studies from the Da Yooper's Tourist Trap and Museum, World of Coca-Cola, the First Due Fire Museum in Hazelwood, Missouri, the Avenue Yacht Club, The Unknown Museum, and the Windy Hollow Restaurant and Museum in Owensboro, Kentucky through the lens of a paid customer. Gordon examines how private non-traditional exhibits generate engagement and a positive visitor experience. She uses a Prownian analysis, which is a heavily engaged museum visitor-based analysis, to focus on everyone in museums such as visitors, curators, researchers, and objects. Gordon uses this analytical method to grasp the general historical narratives and emotional nuances. She examines the non-traditional exhibitions, guests, and museum staff by using a sociological, historical, and ethnographic methodology to contextualize the intimate visitor experiences.

Gordon contributes to a wide range of historiographies such as public history, anthropology, tourism studies, and museum studies. She uses her analysis of private museums and exhibitions to add to non-traditional museums' conversations while also stressing that academic research and literature on non-traditional museums are non-existent and need to be acknowledged. Gordon demonstrates that non-traditional museums and exhibitions fall within the analysis of intimate pasts and contribute to the conversation of intimate American history. Gordon also continues the conversation by examining curated exhibits and visitor interactions of private museums and exhibitions.

Gordon argues that private, non-traditional museums and exhibitions create a space that can facilitate multi-cultural dialogue. Ultimately, non-traditional private institutions can help resolve America's fractured national history by creating a necessary intergroup, social class, cross-class, cross-ethnic, and cross-cultural dialogue. Gordon's supporting evidence throughout the book proved useful but unnecessary. Throughout the book she added illustrations showcasing the exhibits that she describes to reveal different community, entrepreneurial and vernacular exhibits. Gordon's book is well-organized, making it easy for readers to grasp her thesis and argument.

**Shelby Stepper**

Hämäläinen, Pekka. *Lakota America: A New History of Indigenous Power*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019. vii + 509. $17.69 ISBN: 97803002159.

In *Lakota America: A New History of Indigenous Power*, historian Pekka Hämäläinen describes the Lakota tribe's emergence as an empire—a dominating presence over its vast territories in the Great Plains until the 1890s. Hämäläinen argues that the Lakotas had indigenous agency and rivaled the United States as a continental hegemonic power. The book's prevalent themes focused on the Lakota's unique ability of adaptation, accommodation, and aggression, as well as their aptness to switch between these dynamics at a moment's notice.

Hämäläinen describes the Lakota as a much weaker tribe to their rivals despite their informal confederacy and cooperation with neighboring Siouan-speaking peoples. This cooperation was known as the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, or Seven Council Fires, and its people, the Sioux. The three major divisions of this alliance were the Dakotas, Yankton-Yanktonais, and Lakotas. Despite populating a large domain, the Lakotas had a daunting psychological and material disadvantage due to their lack of guns, iron, and trade with the colonial empires. The Lakotas strategically deferred to rival tribes to gain access to guns and trade, where the Odawas tribe—on the pretense they were a far inferior people who could not wage war—agreed.

Hämäläinen argues the influx of colonial trade and guns led to the supremacy of the Sioux but downplays the significance of horses which facilitated the Lakotas expansion westwards. The horses brought a transportation and communication revolution to the Lakotas, granting them the ability to mobilize their camps and increase the efficiency and yield from hunts. By not addressing this issue, Hämäläinen misses a huge opportunity to expand on his themes of adaptation and accommodation, as it contributed to their unpredictable mobility and trade with the colonial empires. With this added mobility, horses facilitated the Lakotas' advantage in controlling the Missouri while detached from their eastern Sioux allies.

The Lakotas' migration westwards and decade-held control of the Mníšoše, or Missouri river, is when they established their position as an empire. Although Hämäläinen never explicitly states when the Lakotas emerged as an empire, their influence was most prevalent during the 1790s when the Mníšoše became their political center. It was during this period that the Lakotas became a continental hegemony: they dictated the flow of peoples and goods traveling through their lands by tributes and payments; had full geopolitical control over their neighboring tribes, subjugating and exploiting the Arikaras, Mandans, and Hidatsas in trade, politics and coercion; and, according to Hämäläinen, were a unified, supreme entity. However, the notion that the Lakotas were a homogenous group who made their own sovereign, independent choices is a consistently flawed narrative throughout the book. Hämäläinen is heavily dependent on his imagination, extrapolating from secondary sources and ignores details when he makes broad statements about the Lakotas. In reality, the Lakotas were not one entity, but built from various sects and local leaderships. For example, Hämäläinen states the Lakotas accepted US forts and agencies because they were given new access to "markets, technologies, foods, peoples, and ideas" (299). This generalization that the Lakotas were accepting of this assimilation is a consistent, repetitive flaw. It does not address the animosity a majority of the Lakota had towards this forced adaptation and cultural genocide.

*Lakota America* ends with the Wounded Knee Massacre, both literally and figura-

tively. The Lakota empire under the leadership of Red Cloud, High Backbone, and Sitting Bull were the final frontier against the rapidly expanding American empire by the 1870s. The Americans eradicated the sovereignty of nearly all other indigenous states and dismantled the strength of the Sioux alliance, causing dissonance between its tribes. Although the Lakota won and dictated the terms of the first Great Sioux War of 1862-1865, they were still restricted under the Great Sioux Reservation. Following this, diplomacy between Lakota and the United States to coexist declined. The US was increasingly aggressive as animosity grew after the Battle of Little Bighorn in 1876, where General Custer served as a martyr for congressional action leading to indigenous genocide. The Lakota hegemony ended as they succumbed to US terms promising rations, annuities, and protections. Despite my criticisms, Hämäläinen did a masterful job narrating the history of the Lakota Americans and provided a compelling story of their rise and fall as an empire.

**Hiep D. Tran**

Hundley Jr., Norris. *The Great Thirst: Californians and Water; A History*. Revised Edition. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. 2001. 799 pp. $36.95. ISBN: 9780520224568.

*The Great Thirst* explores the history of California from prehistory into the twenty-first century with an emphasis on water ownership, use, and distribution. Using agricultural, ecological, zoological, and climatological data, Norris Hundley argues that water has been one of the most defining resources in shaping California society and politics. The breadth of Hundley's argument makes his work an excellent resource for water-related politics and environmental history that facilitates a broad understanding of Californians' relationship to the natural world.

Hundley examines indigenous and Spanish water use to highlight how the earliest human relationships with water and the environment influenced the course of California history. He describes indigenous Californian cultures that practiced irrigation and developed methods of agriculture that demonstrated a keen understanding of hydrological processes. Hundley argues that Spanish colonists adopted and transformed Indigenous water practices by introducing the principles of water ownership to California. The water demand around their missions forced the Spanish to establish usufruct rights to water for their settlements. The Gold Rush brought some of the most formative changes to the way Californians viewed water ownership and usage, as well as the environment itself. As Euro-American settlers flooded into California, they claimed large tracts of land throughout the state that frequently had riparian access to water. Riparian water rights became the first legal distinction that granted ownership to the new inhabitants of California. Agriculture and ranching expanded, which created more demand for water and prompted Californians to devise revolutionary ways to acquire and distribute it.

California emerged from the nineteenth century as a profoundly different society. Hundley attributes the change to new water practices that drove California's most prolific engineering projects. San Francisco and Los Angeles were metropolitan hubs that required greater access to water. Driven by Republican Progressivism, city and state politicians drafted plans for massive networks of aqueducts, canals, and hydroelectric dams to harness water for the growing urban population. The construction

of the Los Angeles Aqueduct and the Hetch Hetchy Aqueduct in the North marked some of the most substantial water infrastructure projects that influenced local and state politics.

The rapid change in water management and distribution underscores the social influence of water in California. The proliferation of dams and canals created resentment, particularly from rural farmers who worried that the growing urban demand would make it impossible to irrigate their crops during dry years. Water use intensified the social and political divide between northern Californians and southern Californians, particularly when the rapid growth of Los Angeles prompted insatiable demands for water. Water policies of the early twentieth century ultimately enforced the idea of water as a commodity rather than a public resource.

Hundley follows water's significance through the twentieth century as state politics and environmentalism became increasingly interconnected. Water became one of the principal resources that the nascent environmental movement sought to protect in California, which shaped water policies and politics throughout the state. Environmentalists pressured state agencies to assess the usefulness and environmental impact of the dozens of dams built during the mid-twentieth century. The outcomes of the assessments led to the demolition of certain dams to save fish populations and vulnerable watersheds. This portion of his argument extends into contemporary politics to demonstrate that water and its effect on politics and the environment plays a role in shaping modern-day California.

In his argument, Hundley uses water and California's environment as the basis for a nuanced examination of California history. With this approach, he explains how humans' relationship with water in California's environment shaped the state's political and physical landscape. The imposing scope of his approach leads to expository portions of the book that do little to expand on his argument. At times, it leads to the argument getting lost in the dense narrative. Regardless, *The Great Thirst* is brimming with valuable information for any California historian.

**Hunter Witt**

Dyl, Joanna L. *Seismic City: An Environmental History of San Francisco's 1906 Earthquake*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2017. ix + 355 pp. $34.95. ISBN 978-0-2957-4246-5

Weaving together government documents, archival research, and an abundance of secondary sources, Joanna L. Dyl's *Seismic City: An Environmental History of San Francisco's 1906 Earthquake* explores how the 1906 Earthquake and fires destroyed – and ultimately helped to reimagine – San Francisco's urban environment. Throughout the text, Dyl argues that human hubris, intense economic drive, and faith in technology led San Franciscans to overlook natural hazards when they designed the city. Despite efforts by city officials to exert control over nature, Dyl contends that the natural environment in San Francisco continued to mold the urban, human environment throughout the twentieth century – even influencing urban social constructions of race and class both directly and indirectly.

To trace the implications of the disaster, Dyl structures her work into three sections: before, during, and after the 1906 Earthquake. In the first section, Dyl discusses the rapid development of San Francisco. While early residents had initially "experimented with adaptations to the [region] and its hazards…a vision driven by

capital speculation, urban growth, and environmental transformation ultimately" led residents to ignore the potential threats posed by the natural environment (19). Instead, San Franciscans relied on technology and human ingenuity to physically manipulate the geology and ecology of the region – even building unstable foundations for the city out into the bay. While such actions met the vision of residents, they also demonstrated Californians' self-confidence in protecting the urban environment.

The second section of Dyl's text relates the events of the 1906 disaster and demonstrates how "San Francisco's vulnerability stemmed from…the intersection of [past] human choices and natural environmental conditions" (53). In particular, Dyl explores how early choices to alter the landscape and ignore natural hazards increased the scope of destruction. Dyl also considers how the urban layout of San Francisco disenfranchised the lower classes – they lived in geologically unstable areas – making them more susceptible to environmental threats.

Driven by Progressive era ideas and longstanding social stratifications, the final section of the text examines how city officials enacted plans to create a modern urban environment through attempts to control both the urban and environmental spheres. While these efforts included campaigns to improve sanitation and utility services, they also included attempts to relocate Chinatown, suppress labor unrest spurred by the disaster, and improve the "morality" of the poor. In this regard, "the earthquake launched a cycle of increased instability, undermining opportunities for poorer San Franciscans to achieve[…]stability" – not only from the fallout of the disaster itself, but because they became scapegoats of the city's rebuilding agenda (128). Yet, while the 1906 Earthquake proved that human choices and the urban environment played a role in the disaster, city officials stubbornly refused to confront this reality. While rebuilding the city residents employed the same practices – filling in land and altering the geology – convinced that new science, building techniques, and technology could prevent the next disaster.

Well-argued and intriguing, Dyl's *Seismic City* is a timely reminder of the ways in which the natural environment has shaped and continues to shape the course of urban and social development. Although the focus on San Francisco ultimately limits the scope of the study, Dyl's work nonetheless provides a strong model of analysis that can be applied to other regions and periods of history. Historians often overlook the implications of the natural environment; Dyl's examination of the relationship between the constructed and natural environments exemplifies why academics must look beyond anthropogenic history. In this regard, the text is an important work of scholarship not only for environmental and urban historians but for all historians.

**Rachel Wolff**

# PAT CONFERENCE REPORT

This year, members of CSU Sacramento's Rho Xi chapter of Phi Alpha Theta attended the 2021 Northern California Phi Alpha Theta Regional Conference held virtually by members from CSU Stanislaus. This annual conference provides an opportunity for undergraduate and graduate-level historians in the Northern California region to gain experience in presenting original research in front of their peers. Due to the virtual nature of the conference, everyone presented over Zoom, and the conference ran very smoothly. In total, nine student-historians representing our Rho Xi chapter presented at the conference. Janis Pope and Kelly Cullity and were awarded first and second prize, respectively, for their graduate-level submissions!

Special thanks to Dr. Aaron Cohen for his leadership and support. This was a great showing for CSU Sacramento and the Rho Xi chapter of Phi Alpha Theta.

ΦΑΘ
Phi Alpha Theta
National History Honor Society

CSU Sacramento Undergraduate Presenters and Paper Titles:
Natalie Brennan: "Buildup to Pearl Harbor"

CSU Sacramento Graduate Presenters and Paper Titles:
Kyle Bolla: "A Hooded Order in Gold Country: The Ku Klux Klan in Placer County, California"
Kelly Cullity: "A Keg of Dynamite with a One-Inch Fuse: The Marginalization of Vietnamese Refugees in Orange County, California, 1978-1982
John Fedorko: "A Leaf Torn from the Magyar Tree: Influences on the Formation of Hungarian-American Identity, 1851-1945"
Joshua Lourence: "An Explosive Secret: The Geopolitical Repercussions of the Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior"
Kerida Moates: "A Catalyst for Change: The Moscow Helsinki Watch Group and the Final Years of the USSR"
Janis Pope: "Peacetime Propaganda: The Contentious Beginnings of America's Cold War Public Diplomacy Through Voice of America Radio Broadcasting"
Alexzandria Simon: "Queering Popular Culture: Gay Men in Film from the 1970s to the 1990s"
Michelle Spremich: "Ancient Greek Ideas on the Nature of Reality and their Influence in the Discovery of Quantum Mechanics"

# NEWS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

**Graduate program acceptance**

**Shea Cooley** (MA, CSU Sacramento), **Kelly Cullity** (PhD, UC Davis), **John Dalessio** (MA, St. Andrews), **Court Hansen** (PhD program, Northern Illinois University), **Shelby Kendrick** (PhD, UC Berkeley), **Joshua Lourence** (PhD, UH Mānoa), **Alexzandria Simon** (PhD program, UC San Francisco).

**Awards**

**Suzanne Eckes-Wahl** (best documentary for the film *Lady Jessie: A Vietnam Story* at the Sacramento Film Festival), **Michael Fletes** (Nevada "History Student of the Year" 2020).

**Publications**

**David Dawson** and Rebecca Jo Plan, "Motherhood and the Obligations of Citizenship During World War II: U.S. Debates over Conscripting Women Civilians," *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000* (Spring 2020).

**Careers**

**Madison Levesque** (internship, National Parks San Francisco Cultural Resources office), **Mieke Lisuk** (tenure-track professor, Sierra College), **Paul Rendes** (coordinator, North Central Information Center), **Shelby Stepper** (architectural historian, Cardno Engineering Services).

**Graduate Scholarships 2020-2021**

*George & Eleanor Craft Graduate Scholarship:* Jonathan L. Brimer, John Fedorko, Hannah Phillips
*Faculty Graduate Writing Prize:* Kelly Cullity, John Fedorko
*Rose-Christensen History Research Travel Scholarship:* Jonathan L. Brimer
*Lawrence A. Brooks Graduate Conference Grant Scholarship:* Jonathan L. Brimer

**Undergraduate Scholarships 2020-2021**

*Peter H. Shattuck Scholarship:* Natalie Brennan, Christina Conley, Dmitriy Balan
*Undergraduate Scholarship in History:* Rachel Wolff
*Thomas Swift Japanese Minor Travel Scholarship:* Nathan Leslie
*Senator Nicholas Petris Award*: Ariel Bronstein, Macie Killough, Nathaniel Lewis, Giulia Stoian, Nathaniel Wewers

**Graduate Scholarships 2019-2020**

*George & Eleanor Craft Graduate Scholarship:* Corrine Lethco, Antonio Flores
*Faculty Graduate Writing Prize:* Corrine Lethco, Kelly Cullity
*Kenneth Earle Graduate Fellowship:* Kelly Cullity
*George Bramson Award:* Michelle Trujillo
*Lawrence A. Brooks Graduate Conference Grant Scholarship:* Ari Green, Kelly Cullity, Evan Mackall

*Kenneth Owens Award for Excellence in Public History Award:* Morgan Braun
*Rose-Christensen History Research Travel Scholarship:* Ari Green, Kelly Cullity, Evan Mackall

**Undergraduate Scholarships 2019-2020**
*Peter H. Shattuck Scholarship:* Tyrell Frederick, Rachel Wolff, Nathaniel Lewis
*Undergraduate Scholarship in History:* Etienne LeFebre
*Senator Nicholas Petris Scholarship:* Amado Francis Becerra, Ariel Bronstein

# CLIO EDITORIAL STAFF

**Karla Alcantara** is a transfer student to Sacramento State currently pursuing her B.A. in History. She graduated from San Joaquin Delta College in Spring 2020 with an A.A. in both History and Political Science and a certificate of completion for the Pathway to Law Program. Upon graduation she will pursue an M.A. in Public History.

**Jonathan L. Brimer** is a graduate student pursing his M.A. in history at California State University, Sacramento, where he also earned his B.A. in history in the spring of 2020. His research interests include postcolonial world history with an emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa, the role that trade and economics play in social development, and the impacts of the Cold War on the developing world. Aside from his historical studies Jonathan volunteers with the Center for African Peace and Conflict Resolution. Jonathan plans to earn his PhD once he completes his M.A.

**Amanda DeFazio** is currently pursuing a BA in History at California State University, Sacramento and will graduate in Spring of 2021. In the coming years she intends to obtain a MA in Public History. Her research interests include nineteenth-century American history, women's history, and early Christianity. She is currently researching gender, childhood, and family structure in Victorian London and contributing to the University of Houston's digital history project Sharing Stories on the delegates to the 1977 National Women's Conference.

**John Fedorko** is a graduate student in the History MA program at California State University, Sacramento. His areas of interest include antiquity, colonial America, and Eastern Europe. He is currently researching the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire and subsequent emergence of its successor states. John focuses on the diplomatic, intellectual, and cultural aspects of the region's history in his scholarship and writing. His past research focused on emigration from Hungary and Slovakia to the United States.

**Andrew Foley** is a senior at California State University, Sacramento. His primary area of interest is in Cold War history.

**Tyrell Frederick** is currently pursuing his Bachelors of Arts in History and a minor in Military Studies at California State University Sacramento. Shortly after receiving his degree, he plans to enroll in a Masters of Arts Global History program at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Currently, Tyrell is pursuing research on German military and imperial history in Africa, with a special emphasis on the First World War and the campaigns of Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck in present-day Tanzania. Tyrell is also contributing to the digitization of Buchenwald Concentration Camp documents through #everynamecounts to create a digital memorial for the victims of the Holocaust.

**Matt Griffith** is a first-year graduate student at Sacramento State University. His focus is modern US history, the impact of imperialism, and what historical and so-

ciological factors drive human beings to acts of othering and a state of complicity during government sponsored atrocities and efforts of discrimination.

**Kerida Moates** is currently pursuing an MA in History at California State University, Sacramento. Her interests pertain to the Soviet Union, nationalism in the former Soviet Republics, and international relations theory. She graduated from the University of California, Berkeley in 2017 with a BA in History, focused broadly on Eastern Europe. Upon graduation, Moates served as a Jesse M. Unruh Assembly Fellow where she negotiated legislation to protect victims of sexual harassment. She seeks to further her education in a Ph.D. program upon completion of the MA.

**Dawson Nichols** is pursuing a BA in History at California State University, Sacramento, graduating in the Spring of 2022. He intends to go on and earn a teaching credential and MA in education. Dawson's interests include California and Native American history as well as Russian and Near-Eastern histories in the early modern period.

**Sarah Oslick** holds a BA in History and Liberal & Civic Studies from Saint Mary's College of California, where she graduated with Honors, Magna Cum Laude in 2017. Additionally, she earned teaching credentials for both K-8 self-contained classrooms (2018) and single subject Social Studies classrooms (2019). She received an MA in Education from Saint Mary's College of California in 2018. She is currently enrolled in an MA in History program at California State University at Sacramento (2020-present). Her research in education pertains to elementary students' conceptions of historical time. In history, she focuses on revolutionary and early republic women in US history. This research earned her the Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz Thesis Award from Saint Mary's College of California in 2017.

**X Pasha** is a current undergraduate at California State University, Sacramento. They are pursuing a double BA in History and Sociology. They will be graduating in the Spring of 2022. Their historical interests are United States history and early independence movements of the twentieth century. After graduation, X intends to attend graduate school for Librarianship and Information Studies for a future career as a librarian.

**Mallory Potter** is a graduate student in the standard M.A. program at California State University Sacramento where she also received her undergraduate B.A in 2017 with *summa cum laude* honors. She currently works as a substitute teacher in Placer County but plans to teach at the community college level upon the completion of her M.A. program. Her studies focus around classical antiquity and western civilizations throughout the middle ages with a special interest in disease, religion, and women's history.

**Elvy Seyman Villados** is a first-year graduate student pursuing an MA in the Standard History Program at Sacramento State. She graduated *summa cum laude* with a BA in history from Sacramento State in 2020. Her research interests are nineteenth and twentieth-century American History, LGBTQ history, and material culture studies. Since 2012, she has served as a historical consultant (dramaturg) for the Folsom

Lake College Theatre Department.

**Michelle Spremich** is a graduate student pursing a M.A. in history at California State University, Sacramento. As a Graduate Research Fellow for the Center for Philosophy and the Natural Sciences her research interests are multidisciplinary and include the history of science with an emphasis on the history and philosophy of physics. She is also interested in the history of ideas, metaphysics, cosmology and world religions.

**Shelby Stepper** is a graduate student pursuing her M.A. in public history at California State University, Sacramento. She has completed her required course work and is working on completing her thesis to graduate in spring 2022. Stepper has also received her Bachelors in history and a Minor in Eastern European and Islamic studies at Sacramento State in the Spring of 2017. She has extensive academic experience ranging from volunteering at the California State Library in the California Manuscripts department and Museum Day as a guest judge, interning at the Gibson House, Woodland Ca, a graduate assistant at the State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) in the Information Management Unit (IMU), and the City of Sacramento Community Development, in their historic preservation office, and lastly works as a tour guide for the Sacramento Underground Tours at the Sacramento History Museum. Stepper's academic aspirations consist of completing her podcast thesis titled Museums, Through the Looking Glass and attaining a professional career within Historic Preservation and Cultural Resource Management.

**Hiep D. Tran** is a graduating senior at California State University, Sacramento with a BA in History. His research focus was in American legal history, where he wrote his undergraduate thesis on the legal adaptation of post-Exodus Vietnamese. He works as an event coordinator for two nonprofits, Mrs. Vietnam Sacramento and Community Partners Advocate of Little Saigon Sacramento, and as a legislative intern for Assemblymember Phil Ting of the 19th District. After completing his BA, he will be attending McGeorge School of Law to pursue a career in public interest litigation.

**Hunter Witt** is a first-year student in the history MA program at California State University, Sacramento. He graduated cum laude from California State University, Sacramento in 2020 with a BA in history. He is interested in nineteenth-century Native American history and the history of the American West. During his undergraduate and graduate studies, Hunter has worked in the transportation library at the Caltrans Headquarters assisting with archival cataloguing.

**Rachel Wolff** will be graduating with her Bachelor of Arts in History in May 2021. In the Fall, she will begin her Master of Arts in Public History at California State University, Sacramento. Currently, Rachel is conducting research on the social and geographical implications of the 1906 Earthquake. She is also contributing to the digital Sharing Stories collaborative project which aims to commemorate the work of 1977 National Women's Conference Delegates.

# The Masters in History at Sacramento State

Are you completing your B.A. in history (or have completed it already) and are still hungry to learn more? Are you interested in teaching history at community college or secondary-school level? Are you hoping to pursue a Ph.D. in history but need more preparation before applying to a Ph.D. program?

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**The Program admits students twice per year. For Fall semester admissions, the deadline is February 15, while for Spring semester admissions, the deadline is September 15. For more information, please visit the CSUS History Department website (www.csus.edu/hist) or contact Dr. Nikolaos Lazaridis, History Graduate Coordinator, at lazaridi@csus.edu and 916-2786234.**

# SACRAMENTO STATE
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- Two BA Tracks: History and History/Social Studies Pre-Credential
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- Two Year Transfer Track for Community College Students
- Minors: History, Hellenic Studies, Middle East & Islamic Studies, Latin American Studies

## Graduate Programs

- History MA, with Comprehensive and Specialized Tracks
- Public History MA
- Public History PhD (joint degree with UC Santa Barbara)

## Organizations & Clubs

- Phi Alpha Theta, History Honors Society, Rho Xi Chapter
- *Clio* History Journal

## Scholarships & Awards

- The Peter H. Shattuck Undergraduate Scholarship
- The Department of History Undergraduate Scholarship
- The Professor Thomas Swift History Scholarship
- Senator Nicholas C. Petris Scholarship
- The George and Eleanor Craft Graduate Scholarship
- The Faculty Writing Prize in History
- The Kenneth H.W. Earle Graduate Fellowship
- The Kenneth N. Owens Award for Excellence in Public History
- The George Bramson Award for Historic Preservation
- The Lawrence A. Brooks Memorial Graduate Conference Scholarship
- The Rose-Christensen History Research Travel Scholarship

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