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Creating Knowledge

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COVER ARTWORK

Alaia Murúa | *Step N°1* (detail) | Gouache on Stonehenge paper

CREATING KNOWLEDGE

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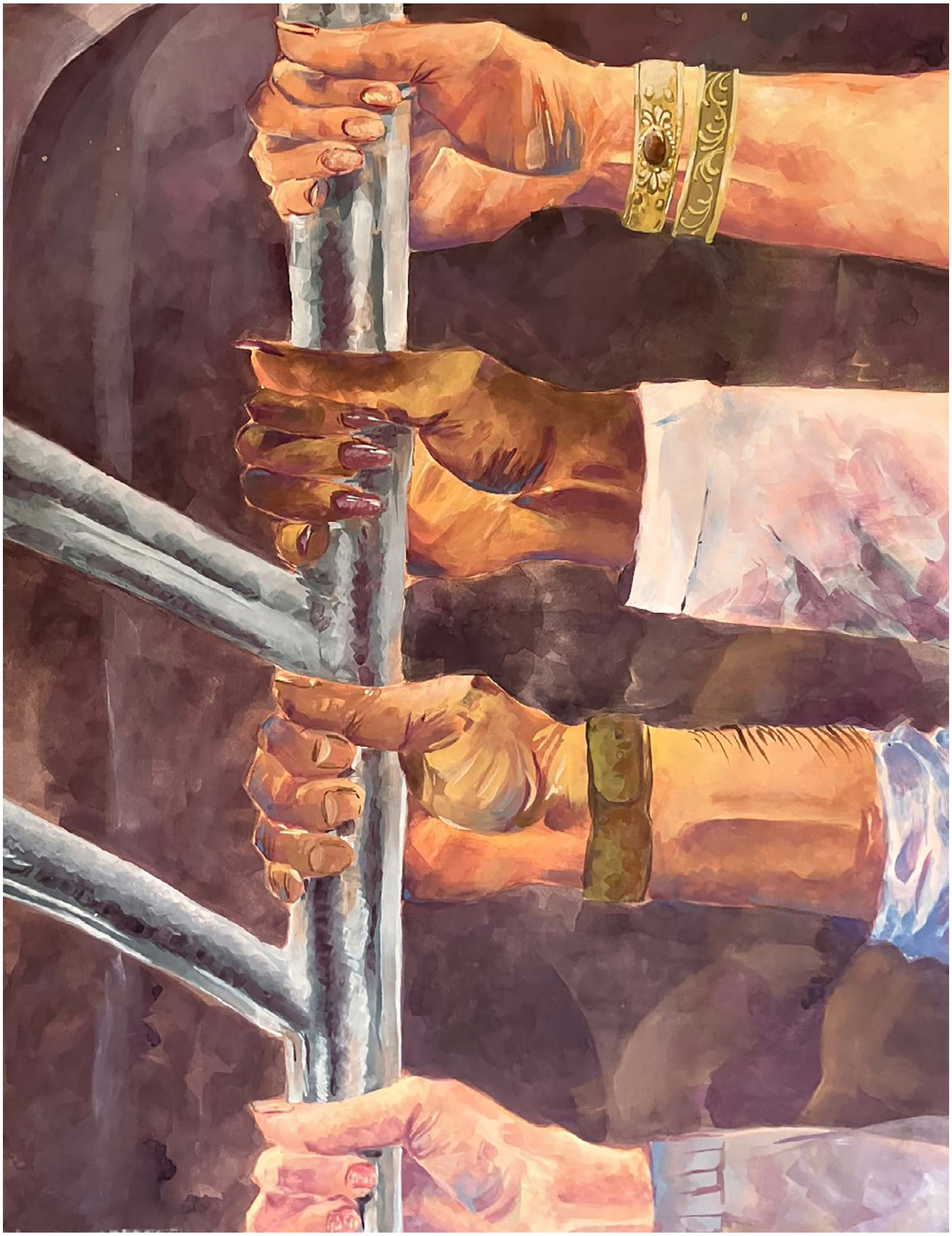

Alaia Murúa | *Step N°1* | Gouache on Stonehenge paper

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FOREWORD

Dear Students, Colleagues, Alumni, and Friends,

The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences stands at the heart of DePaul University. We carry the profound responsibility to support the integral human development of our students. We do that through our commitment to outstanding teaching, academic excellence, real-world experience, community engagement, and systemic change. Guided by ethics of professionalism and Vincentian personalism, we honor both our collective achievements and the individual voices that shape them, celebrating not only the shared pursuit of knowledge, but the personal journeys of discovery that define our academic community.

It is in this spirit that I am delighted to introduce the latest edition of *Creating Knowledge: The LAS Journal of Undergraduate Scholarship.* Each year, this publication affirms the remarkable dedication of our students and faculty, not only to learning, but to the creation and thoughtful sharing of ideas. This journal stands as a testament to the commitment of 39 undergraduate students who, with the mentorship and support of their faculty sponsors, have transformed classroom assignments into meaningful scholarly and creative contributions.

This year's volume features work from students across some two dozen academic programs, reflecting a vibrant spectrum of intellectual curiosity and academic excellence. Developed during the 2024–2025 academic year, the essays and artworks presented here embody the rigor, originality, and insight that characterize our students' academic journeys. In addition to 23 essays, this edition includes 14 pieces of student artwork curated by faculty from The Art School at DePaul. Our cover image, *Step N°1* by Alaia Murúa, beautifully captures the spirit of intellectual curiosity and active engagement that animates our scholarly community.

True to its formative mission, *Creating Knowledge* is not confined by a blind peer-review process. Instead, as manifestations of professionalism and Vincentian personalism, the journal relies on the thoughtful selection and revision efforts of faculty committees and supervising instructors within each department or school. Faculty mentors play a vital role in guiding every student through the challenges and rewards of rigorous research and creative expression, helping them navigate the responsibilities that come with sharing one's perspective. I am deeply grateful for our faculty's dedication to experiential learning and their steadfast support of our student contributors.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to our editor, Associate Professor Jason Schneider, whose leadership and collaboration with faculty and staff across contributing departments have upheld the journal's high standards of scholarship. His stewardship of this issue has provided students with a transformative, hands-on experience in academic publishing. Special thanks also go to Associate Professor Jessica Larva, Art Editor and Jury Coordinator, Editorial Assistant Cailey Scott, and Assistant to the Associate Deans Zia Pentescu for their critical contributions to this issue.

It is now my privilege to invite you to explore this year's edition of *Creating Knowledge: The LAS Journal of Undergraduate Scholarship*. May you find inspiration in the creativity, insight, and academic rigor displayed by our students.

All the best,

Guillermo Vásquez de Velasco, PhD
Dean

The 'Ole Time Bonnet': Headwraps as Creators of Memory for Black Women in the Antebellum South*

Mak Roban
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Introduction

In his 1985 book *Slavery and Social Death*, sociologist and Harvard professor Orlando Patterson coined a term that would revolutionize scholarship on slavery: "social death."[1] Patterson argued that a complete isolation and destruction of Black communities and family units took place because of enslaved Americans. In the years since this term was coined, however, other scholars like historian James H. Sweet have argued that despite the isolating measures built into slavery as an institution, enslaved individuals built rich communities, families, and cultural practices.[2] While many scholars of African American history have debunked or qualified the idea of "social death," this myth still pervades conversations about slavery.

Despite Spanish Louisiana mandating the wearing of headwraps or "tignons" in 1790, these accessories held ties to Western African cultural traditions, and the tignon quickly became an item that allowed women to take control of their bodies, build community with others, and care for their children.[3] Wearing headwraps spread beyond Spanish Louisiana in the following decades to encompass not just enslaved women working on plantations in the South, but also free Black women across the United States.[4] Although women were separated by geography, time, and status, their headwraps represented not just autonomy or resistance, but the creation of memory. Black women remembered their sisters, mothers, and grandmothers wearing headwraps, and were depicted wearing them in paintings. Through examining art pieces, narratives of enslaved individuals, and headwraps currently preserved in museum exhibitions, I explore headwraps as vessels of memory, resistance, community building, and culture for black women in the Antebellum South.

Introduction to Sources

This study does not aim to be exhaustive but instead offers a snapshot of the role headwraps have played in shaping a legacy of memory for Black women in the Antebellum South. First, I examined the collections of Slave Narratives held by the Library of Congress. While these sources are considered controversial by many in the historical community due to the unprofessional and often corrupt practices of interviewers and editors, they hold value in being some of the only testimony offered by those who were formally enslaved. They must be considered critically, however, and examined within their context. Because of the sometimes objectifying tone

* This paper was written for HST 390 (History Capstone), taught by Dr. Amy Tyson in Spring Quarter 2025. The submission was selected for publication by Dr. Tyson in consultation with the American Studies Program Committee and sponsored by Dr. Allison McCracken, Director of the American Studies Program.

1 Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Harvard University Press, 1985).

2 James H. Sweet, "Defying Social Death: The Multiple Configurations of African Slave Family in the Atlantic World," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 70, no. 2 (April 2013): 251–272.

3 Jessica Blake, "Black Tradeswomen and the Making of a Taste Culture in Lower Louisiana." *Early American Studies, An Interdisciplinary Journal* 19, no. 4 (2021): 764–765. https://doi.org/10.1353/eam.2021.0023.

4 Blake, "Black Tradeswomen," For further reading on the geographical continuities a of headkerchiefs throughout the Americas and the Carribean, please see Nicole Wilson, "Sartorial Insurgencies: Rebel Women, Headwraps and the Revolutionary Black Atlantic." *Atlantic Studies* 19, no. 1 (2022): 86–106.

and editorial distortions in the transcripts, I have chosen largely to summarize and synthesize the narrators' stories; I quote directly from them only sparingly.

Using a keyword search that combed through every digitized interview from this project, I found ten narratives that specifically drew on memories of headwraps and "head rags," which offered me an opportunity to analyze how these material culture objects were significant and understand their place in the narrator's memories after slavery's end. I also examined physical representations of memory: three paintings and an illustration from throughout the Antebellum period into the early 1900s. Taken together, these works of art show how headwraps were an important fixture in the preservation of the subjects and held stylistic value. Finally, I examine two headwraps that are currently held in major museums and kept in relatively pristine condition. For the art pieces and artifacts, I perform a material culture analysis, focusing on the objects' social, practical, and memorial importance.

Historiography

In the last few decades, American historians have transformed scholarship on Black women during slavery, from writings that largely focused on the laws and abuses enacted on enslaved women to more recently examining the agency *of* those women. Recent colonial historian Jessica Blake and political scientist Nicole Wilson have contributed largely to this pivot, focusing on the economic and social forms of resistance taken by Black women in the South.[5] Blake used art pieces and personal writings to argue for free Black women in Louisiana as actors in the economy, creators of culture, and resistors against colonial rule. Wilson, in turn, examined rebellion and uprisings in the Atlantic through an analysis of colonial writings, arguing that both enslaved and free Black individuals were subject to and protested against colonial subjugation. This school of historical thought is mainly concerned with Black women's roles in American systems and the effect of race, class, geography and freedom status.

5 Blake, "Black Tradeswomen," 263–268; Wilson, "Sartorial Insurgencies," 89–90.

Another major focus of historical scholarship on Black women is on their personal autonomy, behaviors, and relationships with others. Historians like Sylviane Ngandu-Kalenga Greensword combined analysis of bodily autonomy and resistance with other disciplines like trichology (the study of hair) or linguistics, building upon previous scholarship on physical and racial discrimination of Black women.[6] Hair texture, skin tone, clothing, and style have been long identified as points of discrimination against Black women, but Greensword and many others argue these physical traits, especially hair and clothing, have also been used to resist colonialism. Greensword primarily utilized narratives from previously enslaved individuals as well as feminist scholarship to make this argument. While Greensword wrote in 2022, as early as the 1990s historians were looking at clothing and hair as points of analysis. In 1994, historian Helen Bradley Griebel wrote multiple articles on the terminology, appearance, and origins of headwraps as a praxis of bodily resistance and fashion in the Antebellum South.[7] Griebel masterfully wove secondary scholarship together with analyses of Slave Narratives from the Library of Congress, as well as more contemporary writings on headwraps with a focus on their dynamicity. While this was one of the earliest available historical writings on this topic, later historians focused on the physical appearances and resistances of Black women to build upon their ideas.

However, there has been disagreement in the field on the approach historians should take in theorizing Black women's behaviors, experiences, and actions within their scholarship. Historians like Joan Cashin have examined Black women's fashion as a social, cultural, and political factor in the Antebellum South by comparing their actions with those of white women.[8] Other major voices in Black

6 Sylviane Ngandu-Kalenga Greensword, "Historicizing Black Hair Politics: A Framework for Contextualizing Race Politics," *Sociology Compass* 16, no. 8 (2022).

7 Helen Bradley Griebel, "The African American Woman's Headwrap: Unwinding the Symbols," Cornell University, 1994, http://char.txa.cornell.edu/Griebel.htm

8 Joan E. Cashin, "Torn Bonnets and Stolen Silks," *Civil War History* 61, no. 4 (2015).

historical scholarship like Stephanie M. H. Camp, author of *Closer to Freedom*, argue for centering the experiences of Black enslaved women from an interdisciplinary and expansive approach without putting emphasis on how their experiences may have diverged from white women.[9]

Following Camp's example, my own project centers Black women's experiences. Furthermore, rather than examining slavery from a systemic or institutional perspective, I examine headwraps through memory, personal relationships, and autonomy, drawing on material culture to explore how Black women acted and interacted rather than to merely describe the conditions they endured.

The Language and Styles of Headwraps

To understand how Black women utilized headwraps as multilateral tools of resistance and community building, it's necessary to explore terminology. Although differing by geographical location, form of labor, or social context, multiple terms were repeated throughout the Federal Writer's Project "Slave Narratives." The most common of these terms, repeated throughout narratives taken across the South, from Texas to North Carolina, is the "head rag" or simply "rag." Fannie Tatum, a woman who had previously been enslaved in Arkansas, described a common fixture of her daily dressings ("My sun hat was a rag tied on my head"), making clear that rags were not only adapted for style.[10] For enslaved women on plantations, it was instrumental to protect one's hair and skin from the sun while working outside for hours on end, as well as to keep their hair safely tied away from their faces. The practical reasons behind wearing head rags makes their symbolic importance two-fold, especially as a fixture of protection in an environment where women rarely received proper clothing, shoes, or hygienic items.

The second most common term used by these women seems to be "bonnet" or "sunbonnet," a term described by historian Helen Bradley Griebel as including styles commonly worn by white women.[11] This term usually referred to a larger or more structured head covering, one that both protected a woman from the sun with a wide brim but also held stylistic value. Black women in the South during this period sometimes used "bonnet" as a catch-all term for a head-covering, but also occasionally used the term when describing a more formal event such as attending church, as described in an interview of Adele Frost, a woman who had been enslaved in South Carolina. Frost described her church dress, stating, "On Sunday I wear a ole time bonnet, atm hole apron, shoes an' stocking," which firstly gives an air of formality to the wearing of a bonnet, and secondly makes a connection to the older women in her community through the decision to wear the bonnet while referring to it as "ole time."[12] The importance of Frost's statement is not to be understated, as her terminology suggests an affectionate but less common application of headwraps during her lifetime. This means headwraps may have been more popular during her mother's, grandmother's, or older female community member's lifetimes, and may be seen as "traditional" or "formal." For Adele Frost, the headwrap is a symbol of female connection and memory. This connection with other women in their communities as well as across the country becomes much stronger once other sources are considered.

In addition to the terms utilized to refer to headwraps by Black enslaved women, there were also a few common shapes they took, whether structured like a formal bonnet or tied into place. To protect from the sun or cover hair from public viewing, Griebel argued bonnets often had a fabric overhang at the back of the head to cover the neck and base of the skull.[13] Additionally, "the African

9 Stephanie M. H. Camp, *Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South* (University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

10 Fannie Tatum narrative in "Quinn-Tuttle," Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project 1936 to 1938 2, pt 6 (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1937), 257.

11 Griebel, "The African American Woman's Headwrap."

12 Adele Frost narrative in "Eddington-Hunter," Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project 1936–1938 14, pt.2 (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1937), 88.

13 Griebel, 1994. Additionally, see Figure 1.

FIGURE 1

Francois Fleischbein, "Portrait of Betsy." Oil on canvas, 1837. The Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans.

FIGURE 2

"Taupe bonnet with cross-stitched brim worn by the enslaved woman Martha Barnes." ca. 1827, National Museum of African American History and Culture.

American woman usually tie[d] the knots somewhere on the crown of her head, either at the top or on the sides, often tucking the ends into the wrap," which means that although Black women largely personalized and elaborated on this structure to serve their own physical or stylistic needs, the headwraps were always tied at the crown, rather than under the chin as white women often did in this period.[14] Tying the knot at the crown has an uplifting or "royal" effect, as well as continuity with pre-colonial West African culture and the tignons of Spanish Louisiana. The knotting, structure, and social importance of Black women's headwraps allude to forming connections with Black women of previous generations, as well as asserting autonomy over the body.

In Figure 1, "Portrait of Betsy," the subject was painted wearing a jeweled neck adornment with tulle and a bow, as well as a beige headwrap tied in an ornate manner. This head covering is wrapped cleanly and highly around the subject's head, with a floral knot at the crown and ruffling to the sides, leading to a small overhang of fabric over her neck. While the freedom status of "Betsy" is unknown, the painter's choice to depict her not only in jewels, but also in a high and accessorized headwrap suggests its wearing held importance, dignity, and pride for the subject. Furthermore, the choice of the subject to wear a headwrap when having their portrait painted, an act that basically immortalizes the subject, suggests that Betsy wanted a representation of her physical memory to include a headwrap.

While rarer, some enslaved Black women did indeed wear a structured bonnet, similar to that of white women in this period, such as Martha Barnes (Figure 2), whose taupe

14 Griebel, 1994. See Figure 2 for a bonnet worn similarly to how white women wore them.

bonnet is currently on display at the National Museum of African American History and Culture. This bonnet is made from a cotton blend, a common composition for bonnets and headwraps in this period. The brim is wide and relatively structured, with an ornate pattern of embroidery following the brim shape. Additionally, there is a high point near the crown, with a spot for one's hair to reside while wearing, followed by a fabric overhang at the base of the neck and two ties that would fasten under the chin. The style of Martha Barnes's bonnet was unique for Black women to wear in the Antebellum South as it diverged from the traditional fabric tying at the crown. The bonnet's survival over centuries also suggests that Martha Barnes may have had access to greater textile resources than other enslaved women, as textiles would often be reused or repurposed. Furthermore, this bonnet's survival also suggests that the woman who owned it may not have worn it while working, due to its pristine condition. Thus, the structured formation of Barnes's bonnet brings with it an air of formality and style, with less of a practical influence. Despite being unable to know precisely when and where Martha Barnes wore this bonnet, its survival suggests someone took care of it. Indeed, long after Martha Barnes died, her descendants may have seen value in remembering the headwrap she owned.[15] Furthermore, given that this bonnet and others have been preserved in major museums across the globe, these institutions and their curators have marked these items as essential to understanding the lives of Black women in the Antebellum period.

Stylistic Relationships Across the Mason-Dixon Line

Although my focus is largely on the relationships women had with headwraps in the South, it is important to note that the wearing of headwraps connected Black women across the United States, regardless of free status. Nancy Burns of New York, a free Black woman who primarily worked indoors, wore a head covering tied at her crown in a similar manner to those who resided in the South (Figure 3). Both Nancy Burns' head-covering and a portrait painted of her wearing it are currently on display at the American Museum in Claverton, England. The headwrap itself is much more understated in structure than those worn in the Deep South, as seen in Figure 1. Burns' headwrap fabric, which is also most likely some sort of cotton blend, follows the shape of the head with a much lower point at the crown. However, this headwrap has a strong plaid pattern and yellow color, which may suggest more stylistic importance for Nancy Burns over practicality.

FIGURE 3

"Nancy Burns' Headscarf." American Museum, 1844.

In the accompanying painting of Nancy Burns (Figure 4), she's pictured wearing the bonnet with a knot at the crown of her head, but interestingly without a cascade of fabric at the neck, and with an excess of fabric stylishly residing on the side of her head. Burns' expression is quite neutral, yet she faces the painter with a resolute stare. This portrait suggests that not only was this headwrap important enough to wear while being painted and thus becoming a part of her legacy and posthumous memory, but also the survival of Burns' headwrap suggests other clues about its importance and usage. As Nancy Burns

15 Tiya Miles, *All That She Carried: The Journey of Ashley's Sack, A Black Family Keepsake*, Random House, 2021. Miles's analysis of Ashley's sack as holding not just historical but memorial importance informs much of the methods utilized in this paper.

FIGURE 4

Boyle, Ferdinand Thomas Lee. "Portrait of Nancy Burns." American Museum, Claverton, UK. 1844.

was a free woman in the North, she would have most likely been working in the home rather than outside and, thus, covering her neck from the sun wouldn't have been as necessary. Additionally, the survival of this headwrap and its clean condition suggest, as with the previous headscarf that we examined, that not only might this scarf have been important to Burns, but she may have had greater access to fabrics as it had not been reworked into something else, or this headwrap was not worn as often.

While many women, especially those who worked in the home, wore white linen head rags, as described in a narrative from North Carolina taken as part of the Federal Writer's Project, many women who had access to colorful or patterned fabrics used them as a form of personal style.[16] Additionally, although Burns hails from the North, a very similar head covering is shown worn by a free woman from Louisiana in a painting from 1829 (Figure 5). The painting, while made a decade

FIGURE 5

Antoine Louis Collas. "Portrait of a Free Woman of Color Wearing a Tignon." New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, 1829.

before Burns' portrait, showcases a blue and yellow plaid pattern on the headwrap, which also has the customary structure of a knot at the crown and an overhang of fabric at the neck. The continuities between the Northern and Southern usage of headwraps suggest that while centralized in the South due to higher practical usage and a higher population of Black women (free and enslaved), headwraps connected women across the United States. Furthermore, the choice of the subject to wear a headwrap while being painted, as well as ornate jewelry and lace suggests importance, formality, and personality residing within the headwrap. For these women, headwraps seemed to represent much more than simply a stylistic piece or even a show of bodily autonomy, but rather a creator of community, connection, and family.

Beyond simply connecting women in the United States, political scientist Nicole Wilson describes a trend of headwrap-wearing throughout the Atlantic, especially

16 Narrative in "Eddington-Hunter," Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project 1936 to 1938 14, pt. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1937), 62.

as a consequence of laws mandating the covering of one's hair with a "tignon" or headscarf in Louisiana and other colonies.[17] Although one could argue that the prominence of these coverings resulted from laws such as the one above, Wilson also describes a cultural continuity of hair coverings that travelled from communities in Western Africa to the Southern United States as Black women were stolen from their homes and thrown into bondage.[18] Despite many arguments against any sort of cultural continuity between enslaved Black women in the South and women in pre-colonial Africa, Wilson argues that the emergence, popularity, and wearing of headwraps by Black women separated by geography represents a connection beyond shared bondage. Rather, Wilson argues there must be a deeper connection through headwraps for these women. In this view, headwraps represented an extremely dynamic form of both oppression and othering so free Black women in Louisiana and other colonies could be separated from the general population, but also as a form of resistance to the removing of an individual (or their parents or grandparents) from their geographic home through maintaining a physical and cultural connection. Effectively, these connections suggest Black women were fighting to hold onto ties between their ancestral homes, family members, and with other women in their community to resist the destructive force of enslavement.

Caring for Yourself and Your Community

While headwraps have rightly been asserted as simply a form of personal autonomy in a period where Black women had their control over their bodies stripped from them, they also represented a tool to comfort and connect. For women and children enslaved on Southern plantations, access to fabric—and the time to sew or weave—was limited. As a result, women used textiles in multiple, resourceful ways throughout their lives. "Rags"—as women referred to them in their WPA narratives—had a variety of uses, from "home-made rag dolls," to head coverings, to "stockings" and other clothing pieces.

Thus, the importance of these "head rags" or "bonnets" was great, as the resources owned by Black women who were enslaved were few and far between and, thus, held greater importance. Additionally, because Black women were systematically stripped of their autonomy under slavery, the act of sewing bonnets or head rags offered a small but meaningful form of control—over their time, physical appearance, and ability to care for loved ones. A previously enslaved woman from Texas described making matching bonnets and dresses out of calico for her five children, an act of care representing her desire not only to keep her children physically covered and safe from the harm many young girls unfortunately experienced during enslavement, but also to provide them with the autonomy of having stylistic agency over their clothing.[19]

Additionally, women sometimes used their head rags or bonnets as tools to take necessary cooking ingredients like flour from their enslavers in order to properly nourish themselves, their children, and their community in an environment which rarely provided the amount of food necessary to keep one healthy.[20] Furthermore, in instances where women were threatened by their enslavers, they were forced to flee with little more than the clothes on their backs to survive. Despite lacking opportunity, time, or space to bring resources when hiding out from an enslaver, these women took their bonnets, suggesting both a highly practical and emotional tie to these items. Headwraps or bonnets may have represented connection to their homes, children, and community while away, as well as an item of comfort in an environment where women had so little autonomy over their bodies. For Easter Wells' mother, a previously enslaved woman from

17 Nicole Wilson, "Sartorial Insurgencies: Rebel Women, Headwraps and the Revolutionary Black Atlantic," *Atlantic Studies* 19, no. 1 (2022): 89.

18 Wilson, "Sartorial Insurgencies," 90.

19 "Adams-Duhon," Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project 1936 to 1938 16, pt. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1937), 95.

20 Willis Winn narrative in "Sanco-Young," Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project 1936 to 1938 16, pt. 4 (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1937), 202.

Oklahoma, she only took her bonnet and sustenance while hiding out in the forest for weeks after having her life threatened by their enslaver.[21] From these accounts, headwraps seemed to represent dignity, connection, safety, and survival, and were necessary to have in any situation a woman found herself in.

FIGURE 6

Ellsworth Woodward. "African-American Woman with Tignon." Etching on paper, 1910. Louisiana State Museum, Louisiana.

Headwraps and Memory

Throughout the numerous WPA interviews of previously enslaved women, as well as the many art pieces depicting Black women in the South adorned with headwraps, it is clear that headwraps have a distinct place in the memory of Black women during the 19th century. The decision by artists to depict these women wearing headwraps suggests that the women themselves viewed them as significant enough to wear during the sitting, and that the artists, in turn, found them meaningful enough to preserve in paint or print. In a post-Civil War etching from 1910, a woman is depicted wearing a headwrap not unsimilar to Nancy Burns', with a plaid pattern and knot at the crown. Despite being removed from slavery for almost half a century, the choice to illustrate a woman wearing a headwrap and keep that vision of her in public memory suggests that headwraps were far from just accessories. These items connected women across time, geography, freedom, and bondage, and will forever be immortalized not just in art or museums, but in the memory of those who wore them.

Many of the women interviewed in the WPA narratives, such as Charity Anderson, were described by their interviewer as continuing to wear a headwrap well into their old age, and many years after slavery had ended.[22] These women also described their older female community members wearing headwraps throughout their childhood, especially when it came to church or other formal occasions. It becomes clear that these women were seeking to maintain a connection not only with their past selves who had worn headwraps or bonnets as children, but also the women in their community who had been wearing these head rags long before they were born.

Legacy

Although major museums have preserved paintings, illustrations, and the headwraps themselves, other scholars have taken to creating art to memorialize headscarves. In January of 2023, artist Chesley Antoinette debuted an exhibition in the Wright Gallery of Texas A&M University called "Tignon" (Figure 7): "Through contemporary photography and textile sculpture, the exhibit explores headwraps as a form of self-expression and empowerment for black women," with her focus on rebellion by free Black women in the wake of the 1786 Louisiana Tignon Laws.[23] By displaying these colorful, embellished headwraps, Antoinette asserted their importance in historical scholarship and participated in forming their contemporary legacy. Additionally, despite being used as

21 Easter Young narrative in "Adams-Young," Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project 1936 to 1938 13, (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1937). 317.

22 Charity Anderson narrative in "Vaden-Young," Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project 1936 to 1938 2, pt. 7 (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1937), 12.

23 Rebecca Pugh, "Antoinette's 'Tignon' Examines Headwraps as Self-Expression for Black Women."

forms of oppression and racial separatism through Tignon Laws, Antoinette highlights how Black women reclaimed headwraps as representations of personal autonomy and social connection, a practice which continues today.

FIGURE 7

Chelsey Antoinette, print depicting the styles and formation of headwraps on display in her 2023 exhibition at Texas A&M University, "Tignon."

Conclusion

While allowing enslaved Black women in the South to reclaim their personal expression and autonomy, headwraps also assisted in forming community ties, caring for family members, and asserting control over the physical body. Black women wove fabric and fashioned it into ornate, stylish headwraps for their children and friends, continuing ancestral African traditions of hair wrapping. By continuing these traditions, Black women have maintained a powerful thread of connection, from the women who first wore headwraps in African nations before kidnapping and colonization, to those who sustained the practice during slavery and spoke of it in interviews for the Federal Writers' Project, and on to the women who wear headwraps today.

Acknowledging the role of headwraps for enslaved Black women in the Antebellum South provides greater understanding of social, familial, and personal relationships, and the continuities of personal expression throughout history. Considering a trend of mid 20th century scholars examining the "social death" and limited Africanisms of enslaved individuals in the United States, the making and wearing of headwraps stands as powerful testimony to Black women's resistance to slavery's dehumanization.[24] Complicating the narrative of Black women's experiences in slavery is instrumental in understanding their lives, relationships, resistance, and cultural legacies in the centuries after the end of slavery.

Scholars like Stephanie M. H. Camp and Jessica Blake have researched and argued extensively for thoughtful, complicated, and inclusive Black histories, and their work has led to immense strides in historical scholarship.[25] Their work has been critical in uplifting the voices of Black women throughout history and encouraging others to do the same to form a better and more inclusive historical community. Especially as the current American administration fights to undercut decades of educational reform focused on centering the lives of Black individuals, such as attacks on Critical Race Theory, AP African American History, and African and Black Diaspora Studies, it is imperative that we as historians continue to preserve and explore these histories.

24 Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).

25 Camp, *Closer to Freedom.*; Blake, "Black Tradeswomen."

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Negotiating Recovery: An OCD Narrative within U.S. Healthcare*

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It was December of 2023, on the morning of my 21st birthday. Like all my birthday mornings growing up, I woke up in the house of my best friend, Ashla, and started the morning with her mom. It was day two of our two-day ritual, where we spent our birthdays together. We spent all our time together in the living room or on the front porch. Her family had recently moved into a new house, and since then, I had not seen the inside of her bedroom. Ashla has obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)—specifically, contamination obsessions concerning her own body. She desires to keep all her germs to herself, and this means that she has designated spaces in her life that are strictly for her. Ashla considers her bedroom to be the most contaminated room she inhabits, and therefore, I was not allowed inside as a measure to mitigate her contamination anxiety. Before leaving her bedroom each morning, Ashla followed the strict routine of immediately showering to remove contamination from her bed, and she could not spend any time in her room throughout the day unless she wanted to shower again before leaving. In the couple of years since 2017 to that 21st birthday, she had taught me her routines and rituals so that I may respectfully and effectively move around in her space.

It was around 9 am, and the shower had just cut off. Her mom had just sent her a text that we were back from our trip to procure donuts, a birthday favorite. When Ashla came downstairs, her freshly dyed hair was wet and pulled into a bun. She stopped in front of where I was seated on the couch and said, “Happy Birthday. Do you want a hug?” This had been the first time we would hug in my recent memory. Prior to this morning, I could not recall the last time we'd hugged or even sat next to each other. Ashla and I had talked previously about how her OCD was a barrier between her and the world, the most painful reality being the barrier between her and those she loves. For years, she struggled to hug her parents and little sister. She worried about petting her dog or, at times, walking too close to others on the street. I noticed her freshly washed hair, pulled out of the way, and how this was the first thing she did when greeting us in the kitchen; it was a carefully considered plan to circumvent all the anxieties associated with physical touch. I told Ashla I was proud of her, and that a hug was truly the best gift she could give me.

Methodology

Ashla (pseudonym) is my childhood best friend and has experienced obsessive-compulsive disorder since 2017. She grew up in the mid-south United States in an upper-middle-class white household with both parents and a younger sister and received a private K–12 education. Ashla attends university in the southeastern United States along the east coast, where she is studying 2D animation and storyboarding as a senior undergraduate. Our friendship provided the necessary rapport to have an open discussion about notoriously uncomfortable topics, such as personal experiences with mental distress. Ashla was eager to contribute to this illness narrative as she loves talking about her OCD. She finds validation in telling her story and confidence in being able to tell it.

Illness narratives are not only for medical use; they can provide an opportunity for a participant to express

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personal distress outside of a medical setting. Prior to our two semi-structured, informal interviews, I conducted background research on the pathophysiology and psychopathology of OCD as a disorder. This medical investigation into OCD was also informed by my prior experience with mental health diagnostic services and procedures. To avoid overt medicalization within our conversations, this prior research was necessary to limit the need for Ashla to explain OCD and its various definitions and treatments. Our in-depth discussions of how OCD impacts her life would not be possible in most medical settings due to time constraints. My interviews thus allowed Ashla to speak at length about what she finds important to share, rather than responding to a list of diagnostic questions. I initially interviewed Ashla during her sophomore year in undergrad, via Zoom in February of 2023, where we discussed her experiences with OCD since her initial onset of symptoms in 2017. In that initial interview, we also discussed her subsequent diagnosis and interactions with her healthcare providers. I then reached out to conduct a follow-up interview in April of 2025 to revisit many of the same topics we had discussed concerning how she continues to manage her OCD, and what new experiences she may have had with providers.

The discipline of sociocultural anthropology emphasizes an individual's story, centering the lived experiences of the participant within their various sociocultural contexts. For medical anthropology, the observation of ethnomedical systems, the focus is on the individuals who engage with these systems—either as healers or those being healed. One point of interest is when these ethnomedicines—specifically biomedicine in the U.S.—are situated in a way that ultimately hinders the delivery of care. For this article, I am concerned with how the illness narrative (as a biographical ethnographic tool, and also medical anthropology at large) can present diverse models of recovery that aid healthcare providers in treating patients through a more individually contextualized manner. Specifically, the *chronic* illness narrative disrupts traditional biomedical perspectives of "recovery" by exemplifying that recovery is not a state of being but an overall process. By engaging these narratives in medical education, this anthropological perspective on illness may also inform how we train medical care providers by considering sociocultural contextuality. Rather than a construction of narratives between physicians and patients, physicians instead become agents of data collection and diagnosis based on prescriptive Western medicine (Le et al. 2017). Chronic illness narratives through the lens of medical anthropology thus present alternative embodied definitions of treatment and recovery. For the case of OCD, the illness narrative perfectly illustrates oscillating states of wellness that are more easily defined by the participant rather than the provider.

Utilizing medical anthropologist Mark Nitcher's (2010) concept of idioms of distress and Laurence Kirmayer's (1998) reading of these idioms as being expressed by a participant's understanding of healthcare systems, I suggest that negotiating treatment for an OCD college student becomes about a presentation of distress to receive therapies while not exacerbating persistent anxieties. I argue that such negotiating becomes increasingly difficult for someone approaching the transitional phase of health coverage (going from being included in a family insurance plan to being uninsured without employment benefits) and show how, in the context of profit-driven healthcare, negotiations are between the sufferer and the insurance company. The provider then acts as an intermediary in cases where the desired course of treatment is not financially feasible (not covered by insurance) or there are barriers to treatment approval.

In this article, I aim to contribute to the broader ethnographic study of mental illness in the U.S. healthcare system by researching lived experience among those who have obsessive-compulsive disorder, a topic that is notably absent in the literature. In addressing recovery negotiation that Ashla engaged in with her providers, there is also the element of hindrance of treatment due to barriers such as provider disconnection from the contextual lives of their patients, and economic stressors stimulated by the for-profit, neoliberal nature of U.S. healthcare. Ashla's story represents a growing concern among college-aged students with increasing mental health pathologies who lack the resources (economic or infrastructural) to manage them, exemplifying a wider failure of care within America's healthcare system.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: An Overview

Obsessive-compulsive disorder is within the larger category of anxiety disorders and is characterized by obsessions (thoughts) that manifest into compulsions (actions/rituals) that serve to mitigate the anxiety and fear generated by such obsessions—for example, worrying that something harmful will happen to you or others if you do not perform a specific task a certain number of times in the correct order. Common comorbidities, or co-occurring illnesses, with OCD are generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) and depression. The World Health Organization (WHO) classifies OCD as one of the top ten most incapacitating conditions, and among the top three most debilitating psychiatric disorders, along with addiction and depression (Singh et al. 2023). OCD is typically treated with cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), high-dose sustained serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), and exposure and response prevention therapy as the existing first-line treatments. Common subtypes of OCD include contamination concerns, fear of harming either the self or others that result in compulsive checking rituals, aggressive, violent, sexual intrusive obsessions associated with mental rituals, symmetry concerns with ordering or counting compulsions, hoarding symptoms and behaviors, obsessional jealousy, and scrupulosity (Stein et al. 2019).

Despite its prevalence, obsessive-compulsive disorder has been sparsely investigated ethnographically by medical anthropologists. Anthropology graduate student Siri Dulaney and psychological anthropologist Alan Page Fiske have assessed the connection between OCD compulsions and cultural rituals, comparing the communicative nature of ritual to the psychopathological nature of compulsions (1994). In connection with receiving treatment, there is limited to no literature observing and involving participants with OCD in the U.S. In the case of models of recovery, medical and psychological anthropologist Rebecca Lester (2019) compares biomedical understandings of "cures" with different recovery models in her work and observation in a private inpatient eating disorder recovery center. Through her work, Lester also highlights moments in which providers must assume a dynamic identity between being a provider for the patient and a negotiator themselves with insurance companies to garner coverage. For this article, provider dynamic identity illustrates the various linguistic forms that descriptions of distress morph into, starting with the narrative given by the patient, then modified within a separate language ideology that exists within the context of health insurance coverage. Alan Radley, John Mayberry, and Melanie Pearce (2008) argue that the illness narrative is constructed "retroactively" back from its conclusion. I would add that illness narratives are continually deconstructed and reconstructed in terms of chronic afflictions. As various discussions of situating illness narratives appear in James Wilce's "Medical Discourse," one analysis by psychologist Lisa Capps and linguistic anthropologist Elinor Ochs suggests that therapists as providers interfere and disrupt the narrative construction of panic in the case of agoraphobes. This analysis can be mapped onto the treatment of OCD, where providers disrupt obsessions through exposure (Wilce 2009).

At the time of our first interview in February 2023, fear of contamination, specifically of her own contamination spreading to others, was Ashla's main obsession. This resulted in her consistent cleaning of surfaces, objects, and her body while setting strict boundaries about her possessions coming into contact with people. In our follow-up interview in April 2025, Ashla expressed a significant decrease in her contamination obsessions and reduced frequency in compulsive cleaning. Ashla continues to cope with her OCD through a combination of medication, cognitive behavior therapy, and exposure and response prevention therapy.

Life with OCD, Provider Interactions, and Treatment

During our first conversation, we discussed what a typical day looked like for Ashla during the school year. She described a hypothetical Monday during her sophomore year of college, where the first thing she does is wake up and remain in bed as long as possible. She tells me, "I'll wake up and I'll stay in bed for as long as I can because I feel like if I'm in my bed I'm contained. I'm like in a little cocoon. I'm wrapped up and I can just lay there and vibe and not have to worry about my OCD or anything" (Interview 1, February 4, 2023). Before Ashla can get up and take a shower, she makes sure that her housemate, with whom she shares the same bedroom, is not around; this way, Ashla can have time to clean off the door without disruption. She then describes the cleaning routine associated with taking a shower, where she uses Clorox wipes to clean the door handles and area around the door handles on the doors she touches and passes, the light switches (even though she doesn't touch them), the faucet handle on the sink and shower, the toilet, countertop and cabinet door handles—and on occasion, Ashla also cleans her roommate's dresser drawer handles, since they are near where she walks.

Ashla then shares how she commutes to class, either by walking or bus. Her rule for walking includes designating handedness, where her left hand is clean and can interact with the world physically, while her right hand is dirty and only touches her own items such as her phone and keys. Wherever she decides to sit in class, she always cleans the desktop before leaving, and when getting rides in friends' cars, she is careful to wash her hands before getting in. Once Ashla returns to her room and either sits at her desk or lies in bed, she cannot leave the room again unless she takes another shower and changes clothes. Given the time-consuming and stressful ordeal of her shower cleaning compulsions, it is rare that she will shower twice in a day (Interview 1, February 4, 2023). Physical spaces and certain objects are organized on a level system that is tiered between dirtiness and cleanliness. Ashla's bedroom and, most notably, her bed, are at the highest-level of dirtiness. She operates around her compulsions by starting from a high level and working her way down, but once she returns to a higher level again, she cannot go into a different space on a lower level before reestablishing cleanliness by taking a shower (Interview 2, April 5, 2025).

Much of Ashla's anxiety is also tied to the air around her being contaminated with a cloud of her germs, and she worries about others coming into contact with it. This results in her not only avoiding physical interaction but also creating visible distance between her and others. For our initial interview, I wanted to know about any other major improvements. I asked Ashla what has been the most remarkable compulsion or obsession that she has overcome. She gave me a bright smile and started detailing how she began walking side by side with people again. During freshman year of college, when she lived with her first roommate, whom I'll call Helena, Ashla was unable to walk in front of or beside her when they would go places—for fear that her germs would waft back on Helena through the air. She always walked behind her by at least five or six feet, which put a strain on their friendship, since they weren't able to have conversations and interactions during these walks. Through exposure therapy and Helena's encouragement, Ashla was able to decrease that distance gradually. When visiting home, Ashla would take long walks with her mom and continue to work on bridging this physical gap until this distance ceased. She elaborated on what that was like:

> I would have to push myself to stand closer and closer to her [Ashla's mother] until I got to the point where I could actually do it. It was one of those things where you can physically see it because it was a physical distance between us. Getting better at that and being able to walk next to my own mother, felt so good! (Interview 1, February 4, 2023).

Revisiting this topic with Ashla's current treatment plan, she describes a stark contrast to her perception of her OCD after having taken Vilazodone for an extended period.

> Since being on Vilazodone my OCD has become smoother, I guess. There have been things that I would have panicked about afterwards and it's almost like a forget about it. Like I don't want to shake someone's hand, and they go in for a handshake and I don't want to be rude, and I do it. I don't panic afterwards. It's like I forget about it and I'm ok with it… It's simply just living and existing. I've been able to give more hugs. It's been great! (Interview 2, April 5, 2025).

There are a range of differences between the provider interactions that Ashla has experienced. In our initial interview, Ashla described her experience at the start of her treatment journey with her first provider, who was reluctant to prescribe her a sustained serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) as she was set to leave for college out of state. She tells me that her doctor never intended to prescribe her medication while she was away at college and only informed her that it would be best to obtain a prescription from a physician located in her college city (Interview 1, February 4, 2023). Ashla was able to obtain a Sertraline prescription from a physician near her university, and she continued to take this medication for about a year or so without any observed improvements to her anxiety and compulsions. However, Ashla's current provider is located in her hometown and provides as-needed telehealth care if requested by Ashla. In our most recent conversation about her latest provider, I asked what it is that she likes about him more than her previous providers, and she stated, "He's concerned about your life outside of your illness" (Interview 2, April 5, 2025).

Telehealth care has been increasingly common since the COVID-19 pandemic, but it is not always the best fit for certain treatments. Initially, Ashla was adamant about avoiding telehealth therapy visits, as she did not want to associate her home with a doctor's visit. Also, the prospect of speaking her intrusive thoughts aloud in a shared space with her family and/or roommates was deeply troubling to her (Interview 1, February 4, 2023). She also tells me that her insurance, which is still her family's health plan, does not cover telehealth visits for mental health treatment and ballparks a price per visit to be around $150. She tells me that even though she understands her family is financially supportive of her health expenses, she often avoids scheduling visits to discuss her medication to avoid the additional expense (Interview 2, April 5, 2025). However, she tells me that she won't be able to request a dosage adjustment currently since she has not had a recent visit with the provider.

In terms of her medications, if not regulated, Ashla experiences debilitating dizziness and somnolence. She also describes experiencing vivid and distressing nightmares that are difficult to wake up from. The dizziness and nightmares occur if she misses a single dose or takes it too far off schedule. Ashla has figured out that taking the Vilazodone at night helps mitigate most of these symptoms, but she still experiences difficulty waking up. She complains that if she sleeps during the day, it is almost impossible for her to be fully awake later. For Ashla, the way that she decompresses is by relaxing in her room and lying in bed. If she were to take a midday nap, she would have difficulty waking up from it had she taken her medication in the morning (Interview 2, April 5, 2025). Her desire to restart therapy is due to concerns about her career prospects and worrying about the future, as she is set to graduate this coming June. As of our latest conversation, she has not yet reached out to a therapy office to schedule an appointment but still expresses the preference for in-person sessions, explaining, "I understand the limitations of telehealth because they can only see your shoulders and up. They need to see your whole body because you read so much more off a person that way and it's more personal" (Interview 2, April 5, 2025). For Ashla, this is significant to her pursuit of treatment. Much of her obsessional anxiety is somatically translated: not just manifested in compulsions but also in bodily concentrations and expressions evident in stance and body language. Ashla is hyperconscious of herself and how she physically interacts with the world as an attempt to mitigate stress about transferring her germs onto other surfaces and in new spaces. This physical discomfort associated with this connection is not effectively observed over the computer. Ashla is also still disturbed by the prospect of sharing her personal intrusive thoughts over the computer, which she cheerfully remarks have been noticeably absent in her recent memory.

Idioms of OCD Distress

Mark Nichter, in the *Routledge Handbook for Medical Anthropology*, describes idioms of distress as "ethnopsychiatric phenomena," or the concept that social suffering is understood through symbolic associations unique to a culture (Manderson et al. 2012, 95). A further analysis of idioms of distress expands on their culturally relative component. As Nichter writes, "... cultural idioms of distress be reserved for culturally prescribed ways of communicating distress... and commonly shared ways of articulating distress" (Nichter 2010, 407). Nichter is also careful to identify the criticism that the use of the term "cultural" often denotes "other cultures" and remains exclusive to that association of the "other." People communicate distress differently to their doctors compared to their friends and family, likely along the distinctive lines of how medical anthropologists differentiate illness from disease. This distinction is reflected in general provider-patient foci, in which healthcare providers are concerned with a definition of *disease* that entails structural and functional irregularities within physiological systems. Patients, conversely, are concerned about *illness*, which focuses on irregularities in daily function and the ability to fulfill their necessary and desired roles in their lives (Aggarwal et al. 2024).

Some recognized behaviors that index idioms of distress, particularly applicable within a Western healthcare setting, are 1) medicine (pharmaceuticals) taking behaviors, 2) the use or reframing of biomedical jargon, and 3) behaviors of seeking healthcare (Nichter 2010). While not all instances of OCD are managed with medication, Ashla noted that once she was certain her symptoms couldn't be managed with therapy alone, medication was her desired next step. When we spoke two years ago, she recounted the months-long struggle of negotiating with her provider to prescribe her medication, a treatment plan that was mutually agreed upon, but, as referenced, by moving out of state to start college, her provider was hesitant to start her on any medication. The act of seeking medication management for an illness indicates what is typically considered a higher order of care. In the case of mental illness, it indicates a severity that extends beyond non-medicated therapy, measured by a personal assessment of how one's *illness* affects their daily function. This assessment is either supported or contested by providers, with the latter often eliciting frustration on the part of the patient, as seen in Ashla's case. An assessment of her symptoms while taking Sertraline initially did not yield any significant improvements, which prompted Ashla to again seek a different medication. She told me during our second interview that both her provider at the time and her mother attributed her lack of improvement to the duration in which she was taking the medication and advocated for her to give it more time, despite having increased doses multiple times with no effect (Interview 2, April 5, 2025).

Idioms of distress are also expressed based on an understanding of the function of systems of healthcare specific to a population (Kirmayer 1998). In the United States, behaviors of seeking healthcare—particularly for psychological distress—often fall under the medical or social recommendation of seeking "therapy," which has become a generalizable term for primary mental healthcare. Often referring to cognitive behavioral therapy or talk therapy, seeking mental illness treatment beyond the biomedical interpretation of illness (biochemical imbalance, neurotransmitter reuptake dysfunction, hormonal dysregulation, physical brain damage, etc.) represents an idiom of distress informed by the healthcare options available. Seeking and then maintaining treatment takes on a new meaning under a system of healthcare that operates within the model of a free market economy. The choice of seeking healthcare as an idiom of distress adopts the additional recognition of financial burden, particularly for those of the working class.

Free market competition between health insurance companies comes at the expense of everyone, not just those with chronic illness. Ashla is encouraged by her parents to offload this financial burden onto them, as they gladly pay for her medical expenses while she is still in college, but she impresses upon me the stress of asking this of her family. Receiving healthcare in the United States means finding a specialist, getting referrals, and assessing whether an office or hospital accepts a given insurance plan, while weighing the costs of copays, therapies, and prescriptions. Ashla will remain on her family's health insurance plan until she turns 26 years old, at which time she will need to either take out a private insurance plan or receive one as a work benefit from employment. Most recently, we discussed the primary stress Ashla has been experiencing, which mainly revolves around her prospects of being employed as an animator post-graduation. Her confidence in securing a job in the industry for which she will receive a degree is shaken based on the current job market and the state of the 2D animation industry (Interview 2, April 5, 2025). In the case that Ashla chooses to forgo insurance and pay for her treatment out of pocket, she will become one of the many chronically ill uninsured or underinsured Americans receiving substandard care due to the privatized healthcare infrastructure.

Conclusion

Seeking out and receiving medical care has always been a political act, increasingly so as the United States becomes more mired in a hyper-capitalist agenda and politically fascistic. In a climate where the murder of the UnitedHealthcare CEO, Brian Thompson, has accelerated the public's political consciousness regarding the limitations and outright violence of privatized healthcare, it is and has always been my intention to turn purely ethnographic illness narratives into engaged work in medical anthropology. Anthropologist Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1990) describes how such critically applied medical anthropology can transcend the limitations of clinical medical anthropology that often over-medicalizes the social and political lives of participants because of a strictly Western biomedical model. Just as medical anthropology should be "an anthropology of affliction and not simply an anthropology of medicine" (Scheper-Hughes 1990, 73), so too should the practice of medicine. Illness and suffering, an important social *and* biomedical aspect of culture, cannot be completely understood under a Western biomedical framework from which it is often studied.

One aspect of engaged research within medical anthropology that warrants some further investigation is how to make research about critical medical anthropology more public facing. The problem here lies not with the consciousness of the public, as there is no shortage of complaints about the price and access to healthcare in America, but with the extent to which public awareness can enact institutional change. Commodifying healthcare is not sustainable in a free-market economy where aspects of social life are prone to being over-medicalized. The problem is then rightfully directed at the ruling class, who historically crumble under the pressure of the oppressed masses or turn to fascistic governments to enforce compliance. This is not just a paper concerning one participant with OCD; it is an illness narrative written in the context of a United States that increasingly does not care for the illness narratives of its citizens (and especially non-citizens). As Scheper-Hughes writes, "If anthropology cannot be put to service as a tool for human liberation then why are we bothering with it at all?" (Scheper-Hughes 2009, 3).

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Grace Bradley | *A Few Forms of Identification* | Oil on canvas

Lighting the Path Forward: Citizen Diplomacy Against the Rise of Illiberal Democracy*

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FIGURE I

U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism Ira Forman lights a Chanukah Menorah in Bartók Square. (*Photo Courtesy of Ira Forman/ISD*)

In December 2015, plans to erect a statue of former Hungarian official Bálint Hóman were interrupted by an onslaught of protests fueled by international outcry in Hungary's Bartók Square. The money for the statue came, in part, from the Hungarian government, as did the permit to place the statue on public land. While this was in an effort to strengthen Hungary's national identity, Hóman's antisemitic past was concerning to the Jewish community. The controversy surrounding the statue illuminated the rising tension between the Hungarian Jewish community and Prime Minister Victor Orbán, ultimately resulting in international intervention.[1] Though the case of this statue does speak to the importance of state-sponsored diplomacy, with U.S. intervention being one of the primary reasons the statue was not placed on public land, at its core, it showcases the importance of diplomacy beginning at a smaller scale: with citizens and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Through the utilization of citizen diplomatic theories, this analysis argues that Jewish Hungarians, and those who opposed the statue's construction, were able to successfully intervene due to their acting as citizen diplomats. The tactics of citizen diplomacy utilized allowed non-state actors to apply pressure from the bottom-up, urging states to act on their behalf.

Dimensions of Citizen Diplomacy

Several diplomatic theories and frameworks may be applied in the analysis of this case. This paper focuses on those that define and uplift the work of citizen diplomats, including Howard Stein's *Encompassing Systems*, *Art Diplomacy*, *Museum Diplomacy*, and *Transnational Advocacy Networks*.

A common notion of the diplomat, a man appointed by the state representing state interests, has allowed for the perpetuation of the perception that diplomacy is only expressed in an elite, exclusive diplomatic culture.[2] Consequently, the average citizen continues to believe that they have no place in diplomacy and many states' actions often reinforce this. It is an idea that benefits state interests, uplifting closed-door decision-making that eventually trickles down to those whom it actually affects. If this perception were true, the reality of diplomatic practice would be quite grim. Most fortunately, this is not the case. Citizen diplomats not only exist but

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1 Forman, *Whitewashing and Confronting Hungary's Antisemitic Past*.

2 Constantinou, "Everyday Diplomacy," 26–29.

are integral to the creation of a more compassionate, collaborative world through their practice. Commonly, citizen diplomats are identified as performing many of the roles of traditional state-sponsored diplomats on a smaller scale with less recognition.[3] They embody empathy, curiosity, and collaboration. Unlike those who are strictly activists focusing on the realization of a particular goal, the citizen diplomat moves in the direction of their goal by prioritizing mutual transformation through dialogue and collaboration.[4] This is not to say, however, that the role of the activist and the citizen diplomat are mutually exclusive, for it is quite often the case that individuals inhabit both roles simultaneously. Additionally, citizen diplomats often utilize the tactics of their vocations in their practice of diplomacy—a reality which reflects what is known as the *transprofessional* dimension of diplomacy.[5] Furthermore, such citizen diplomats are often practitioners of *Everyday Diplomacy*, a concept first proposed by Richard Sennett and popularized by the Cypriot scholar of diplomacy, Costas Constantinou.[6] Everyday diplomacy emphasizes action over theory, claiming that every time someone successfully represents and negotiates for a group or a cause, or mediates such negotiations, they are engaging in diplomacy.[7] This radically inclusive view of diplomacy offers a new notion of the diplomat: a non-professional practitioner of diplomacy who is driven by empathy and the desire to understand and constructively engage people with divergent worldviews. Though such an ostensibly broad group is easy to discount, those who are engaged in such a form of diplomacy have used it to create real, high-level change.

Diplomacy, Art, and *Transnational Advocacy Networks*

Two such forms of diplomacy are particularly relevant in the analysis of this case: *Art Diplomacy* and *Museum Diplomacy*. Both transprofessional, these expressions of diplomacy exemplify the fact that one must not be hired as a diplomat to practice diplomacy. Norwegian political scientist and historian Iver Neuman identifies several interactions between art and diplomacy, including art and media's influence on public perceptions of diplomacy as well as the use of art in diplomatic spaces, such as embassies, in his essay "Diplomacy and the Arts".[8] Neuman also touches on the possibility of art as a precursor to diplomatic action, which is the facet of art diplomacy most present in this analysis. This type of art diplomacy is often used to create cultural or cause awareness, which, Neuman states, opens the door to diplomatic discussion.[9] However, in conjunction with broader theories, such as everyday diplomacy, it becomes clear that art can also be a diplomatic actor. Neuman describes art as communication that represents phenomena, and as such, if said art represents a group and does so successfully, the art and artist themselves are engaging in diplomatic action.[10] Thus, in this case, art diplomacy can be defined as diplomatic communication occurring primarily through representative art. Similarly, museum diplomacy utilizes that idea on a larger scale, focusing on interpretations of art and history that are legitimized by their host nation. Author Suchen Wang, in the article "Museum Diplomacy: Exploring the Sino-German Museum Forum and Beyond," underscores this view by explaining that the artifacts displayed in government-subsidized or funded museums portray the national identity that governments hope to promote both to their own citizens as well as the international community.[11] Here, the artifacts, as well as their presentation, are the conduit for diplomatic communication between the presenters and the viewer.

A third dimension of diplomacy informing this case can be found in *Transnational Advocacy Networks* (TANs), which, as defined by authors Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink in their article "Transnational Advocacy Networks in International and Regional

3 Wellman and Wiseman, "What is Citizen Diplomacy?".
4 Wellman and Wiseman, "Qualities of a Citizen Diplomat."
5 Constantinou et al., "Thinking with Diplomacy," 568.
6 Constantinou, "Everyday Diplomacy."
7 Wellman and Wiseman, "What is Traditional, State-Based Diplomacy?"

8 Neuman, "Diplomacy and the Arts."
9 Neuman, 117.
10 Neuman, 114–15.
11 Wang, "Museum Diplomacy," 725–26.

Politics," are a network of actors across various states that share similar causes, principals, or values.[12] TANs are incredibly important in the realm of citizen diplomacy because they serve as the basis for the boomerang pattern. This pattern occurs when the efforts of non-state actors of diplomacy are dismissed by their own state, so they instead put out a call to their TAN, composed of non-state actors from other countries. These foreign non-state actors then put pressure on their own state to leverage its position in the international community against the state which has resisted the efforts of its domestic constituents.[13] These dismissals often occur due to the power imbalance between state and non-state actors and the institutionalization of top-down systems, in which actors with the most power create the change that trickles down to those with the least. TANs embody one of the most powerful expressions of bottom-up efforts to effect change, making them a key tool in the efficacy of citizen diplomacy.

Howard Stein's *Encompassing Systems*

Exploring the practice of citizen diplomacy in his paper "Encompassing Systems: Implications for Citizen Diplomacy," Psychologist Howard Stein argues that in order to resolve a problem or practice genuine citizen diplomacy, one must encompass "the system" emotionally. System, in this case, may be identified as a structure that contains individuals, as small as the family unit, or as large as the nation-state. By encompassing the whole system, one is able to humanize all those within it through acknowledging the "specieshood" of humankind.[14] In his essay, Stein establishes a choice one must make when exposed to a system that is foreign to them:

> Whenever one has a sense of outer strangeness and inner estrangement, or an uncanny sense of being among one's own kind... one can become a citizen diplomat and inquire into that common humanity that one feels alternately pressed to idealize or disparage, to reduce or increase the social distance between oneself and the other.[15]

This "uncanny sense of being among one's own kind" was not unfamiliar to Stein, who grew up as part of one of few Jewish families in a Catholic Pennsylvania community in the 1950s.[16] As a psychologist, Stein's own transprofessionalism informs his understanding of citizen diplomacy, applying emotional processing to diplomatic interaction between foreign groups. He argues that in understanding the emotional nuance of "the other," one can better practice citizen diplomacy without perpetuating or intensifying the conflict at hand.[17] At its most basic, Stein's theory suggests that citizen diplomacy is most successful when one group or individual approaches the other's perspective with empathy and generous curiosity, whether they be the perpetrator or victim of harm. This paper will assess the use of Stein's theory both by Hungarian Jews and by the dominant group of Hungarian officials. Moreover, this paper approaches its discussion of both groups with this in mind, extending empathy to all those involved, and seeking to understand their dueling perspectives.

The History of Hungarian Antisemitism

Jewish communities have been present in Hungary since the Middle Ages, with their level of persecution fluctuating throughout changing times and changing leadership. However, most relevant to this case are the recent shifts and increases in antisemitism. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Jewish community in Hungary prospered, making up a disproportionate amount of the specialized workforce.[18] Consequently, in times of economic downturn, Jews were often blamed or thought to be greedy due to their successes. This all culminated in the infamous 1882 Tiszaeszlár blood libel case. The blood libel is a long-perpetuated myth, designed to dehumanize Jewish

12 Keck and Sikkink, "Transnational Advocacy Networks," 89.
13 Keck and Sikkink, 93–94.
14 Stein, "Encompassing Systems," 379–80.
15 Stein, "Encompassing Systems," 371–72.
16 Stein, "Howard Finn Stein."
17 Stein, "Encompassing Systems," 366–67.
18 Forman, *Whitewashing and Confronting Hungary's Antisemitic Past*, 2.

people. It holds that Jews use the blood of Christians in religious rituals, typically for some type of consumption. In 1882, in the town of Tiszaeszlár, a young girl went missing, and the Jewish community was accused of killing her. Specifically, it was claimed that they had killed her and used her blood to make matzah bread for Passover. This accusation led to a trial, despite the fact that the girl's body was found in a nearby river with no evidence of violence against her. Her cause of death was ultimately determined to be drowning. The case was later thrown out, but not before it spurred antisemitic sentiment already rampant in Hungary, including the introduction of the National Antisemitic Party.[19] Founded in 1883, the National Antisemitic Party won seventeen seats in Hungarian parliament, speaking to growing prejudices in non-Jewish Hungarians' perceptions of Judaism.[20] The party also popularized the Jewish Question as a voting issue in Hungary. The Jewish Question is the historical debate regarding the civil status and rights of the Jewish people, infamously referenced in the name of Adolf Hitler's plan to execute the Holocaust: the Final Solution.[21] Despite this, Jews continued the effort to assimilate into Hungarian culture, adopting Hungarian as a first language at a rate faster than any other minority group and serving in the military.[22] Nonetheless, antisemitic nationalist sentiment increased due to the Treaty of Trianon following World War I, since Hungary's tighter borders created an increased percentage of Jews in the nation. In addition to the loss of territory, the Treaty also imposed trade and military restrictions as well as reparations, seemingly disproportionate to Hungary's involvement in the war. However, the negative economic and governmental effects of the Treaty were often falsely attributed to the increased proportion of Jews in the country.[23] Miklós Horthy, the prime minister of Hungary during World War II, forged an alliance with Adolf Hitler in order to reverse the Treaty's effects by gaining territory from former Yugoslavia. This forced even more Jews into Hungary, increasing their chance of being killed at the hands of German forces. In 1944, Germany invaded and began its occupation of Hungary.[24] In all, the roughly 450,000 Jewish Hungarians who lived in the country prior to World War II decreased to a mere 140,000 who survived the violence and deportations to Auschwitz-Birkenau, with approximately 50,000 of them migrating to Israel for fear of further violence.[25]

Hungarian Antisemitism in the 21st Century

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán was elected in 2010 under the Fidesz party, a party that ran on a Christian Nationalist platform. Throughout Orbán's time in office, he has introduced numerous xenophobic policies and largely dismantled the pillars of liberal democracy in Hungary. Though Orbán claims to oppose antisemitism, even lobbying to become the chair of the International Holocaust Alliance in 2015, he is also a huge proponent of Holocaust revisionism, downplaying the role of non-Jewish Hungarians in the Hungarian Holocaust.[26] The administration's first major conflict with the Jewish community was the lack of upkeep and funding for the Páva Street Holocaust Memorial Center, as well as the construction of an additional Holocaust museum. In the case of the former, the Center was seen as the only institution in the country to accurately depict the Hungarian Holocaust. As the government continually cut the Center's funding, it appeared they were preparing to close it down in favor of the new Holocaust museum, the House of Fates, which was set to open in 2014. However, it soon came out that the selected developer, Mária Schmidt, was a Holocaust revisionist, and she refused to discuss the project with historians and community leaders. This gained the attention of a Hungarian organization, The Federation of Jewish Communities (MAZSIHISZ). The Federation and other NGOs, as well as the U.S. government, stepped in to secure the Páva Street Center's funding.[27]

19 Véri, "The Tiszaeszlár Blood Libel."

20 Volovici, "Antisemetic Parties and Movements."

21 Volovici.

22 Forman, *Whitewashing and Confronting Hungary's Antisemitic Past*, 2.

23 Vardy, "The Impact of Trianon Upon Hungary."

24 Forman, *Whitewashing and Confronting Hungary's Antisemitic Past*, 3.

25 Forman, 4.

26 Forman, 1–5.

27 Forman, 6.

The second controversy occurred in 2015. One of the main initiatives of the Orbán administration was to increase Hungarian nationalist sentiment and identity through funding projects that pay homage to prominent historical figures, one of whom was twentieth-century historian and politician Bálint Hóman. As a historian, Hóman had authored a famous multi-volume history of Hungary, but his work as a politician was far more sinister. In the 1930s, he served as a government minister who drafted legislation to define Jews as their own racial group and asserted that all Jews were enemies of the Hungarian government. Hóman willingly kept his position in government despite occupation and called for the deportation of all Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz after German forces deported only half of the Jewish population.[28] In 2015, his war crime convictions were voided by the Metropolitan Court of Budapest.[29] Near the same time, the Orbán administration, as well as Hóman's native city of Székesfehérvár, funded the construction of a Hóman statue to be placed in a public square. Again, MAZSIHISZ stepped in, as well as the U.S. government, and the statue was not placed on public land.

Jewish Hungarian Citizen Diplomacy

Through the application of citizen diplomatic theories, this analysis seeks to frame this case as an example of how a citizen and NGO-led coalition can create formative change by applying pressure to states from the bottom up. Stein's theory of Encompassing Systems emphasizes the need for empathy in conflict resolution. Thus, utilizing Stein's theory, one can understand how Hungary's past has led to the extreme nationalist sentiments of today. Stein holds that in order to recognize parts of the system other than one's own, one must first feel recognized.[30] Assessing the treatment of Hungary by the international community post-World War I, the Treaty of Trianon becomes a notable case in which Hungarians did not feel recognized for their humanity and imperfections. Stein further acknowledges that the cognitive systems he recognizes, such as nationalism, have become "unassailable bastions of identity," and that to encompass the system in its totality one must "have the courage to explore the foundations of our own cultural fortresses."[31] For Hungarians, this courage would spur them to understand their historical role as both victim and victimizer, something that supporters of the Fidesz Party have not yet proven willing to embrace.

Stein's theory provides some reasoning as to why Hungarians have gravitated towards ostracizing their Jewish population, as the cognitive system of Hungarian national identity deals with highly complex emotional dichotomies: shame versus anger and humiliation versus pride. This theory becomes even more illuminating when applied to the mindset of Hungarian Jews today. Stein discusses encompassing the system emotionally in the context of being a minority in a space one is foreign to. It is an effort to create more understanding and universality between minoritized communities and the majority. For the foreign minority, this is a choice of whether or not to engage diplomatically and increase cultural understanding.[32] Following Stein's logic, the minority individual who is not foreign, who must exist in the minority day in and day out, loses the choice to encompass the system emotionally if they seek to resolve the systems of oppression they face. They must behave diplomatically, understanding their oppressor's narrative to prove their legitimacy. Hungarian Jews are both Hungarian and Jewish, meaning they must hold the oppression of the Jewish people and Hungarian nationalism in tandem. They must understand both the implications of the Hungarian Holocaust *as well as* the importance of Hungarian national identity following the Treaty of Trianon and the subsequent German occupation.

Considering this, the Jewish community in Hungary had little choice in how they responded to the construction of Hóman's statue. Hungarian Jews interpret their history

28 Forman, 8–9.

29 Forman, 1.

30 Stein, "Encompassing Systems," 368–69.

31 Stein, 373–74.

32 Stein, "Encompassing Systems," 379–80.

in Hungary as one of violence and fear, one in which they have strived to assimilate, and yet, their identity as Hungarian citizens is constantly thrown into question by their own government. By looking at Hungarian Jewish identity historically, an identity that was often persecuted simply for its proximity to non-Jewish Hungarians, it becomes clear that any government-sponsored act of antisemitism would be difficult to dismiss. Though Hungarian Jews do attempt to encompass the Hungarian system they are in, it is that system that oppresses them through lack of reciprocation and recognition. This lack largely comes from the government under Orbán seeing its history reflecting Hungary as the primary victim, first due to an unfair and humiliating treaty, and then due to Nazi occupation. Hungarian supporters of the Fidesz party, and particularly Hungarian officials, write off any blame the nation could share in the Hungarian Holocaust to the Nazi regime, regardless of the fact that historians and citizens alike know this to be incorrect. It is generally understood that Hungary could have resisted, given that they had three weeks' notice of the invasion, and that a resistance would not have been futile, given the proximity of Soviet troops.[33] During the occupation, German troops had a small presence in Hungary compared to other European occupations, and relied on the Hungarian people and officials to carry out their tasks, indicating a higher level of support for Nazi actions. As Hungarian Holocaust survivor Rozsa Heisler put it, "We didn't see any German soldiers until we reached Auschwitz. It was Hungarians who deported us."[34] Hungary has tried to rectify its national identity through a refusal to take accountability, as opposed to engaging diplomatically in an inherently diametric interpretation of its history, as Hungarian Jews must.

The Diplomatic Reclamation of Artistic Space

At its foundation, this case revolves around art and museum diplomacy, and the meaning that national symbols hold. The first large conflict between the Orbán government and the Hungarian Jewish community was the lack of upkeep for the Páva Street Holocaust Memorial Center in Budapest. In the early 2010s, the museum was subject to high staff turnover and low visitorship, already making it difficult to maintain. In 2014, the government also stopped paying its utility bills and staff salaries, allowing it to fall further into a state of disarray, potentially in an effort to close the Center altogether.[35] This museum painted a full picture of Hungary's involvement in the Holocaust, and thus, was an important symbol for the Jewish community. In international diplomacy, museums are utilized mainly in gifting or repatriation efforts, but in domestic diplomacy between state actors and citizens, museums speak to national history that is legitimized by the state.[36] Forcing the Páva Street Center to close would be to say that Jewish history in Hungary is not relevant to Hungarian national identity. However, the Orbán government did plan to erect a new Holocaust museum: The House of Fates. It was soon revealed that the selected designer, Mária Schmidt, was a Holocaust revisionist herself and had criticized the Jewish community for involvement in far-left parties following World War I.[37] The effort to replace one museum with the other, although it did not actually occur due to successful diplomatic intervention, speaks to Orbán's desire to promote national pride in Hungary through minimizing the government's problematic history. There is a refusal on the part of the Orbán administration to consider the lived experience of Hungarian Jews, illustrating Stein's concept of national identity as a fortress, unwilling to be moved through. Moreover, this effort further legitimized the dismay in the Jewish community surrounding the construction of the Bálint Hóman statue. In the eyes of Hungarian Jews, Orbán had made it his intention to erase Jewish history in Hungary when he attempted to close the Páva Street Center, and this statue was an extension of that.

Similar to museums, government-funded public art, like the statue, also solidifies what the state sees as valid

33 Ránki, "The German Occupation of Hungary," 267.

34 Kakissis, "Hungary's New Holocaust Museum."

35 Forman, *Whitewashing and Confronting Hungary's Antisemitic Past*, 7–8.

36 Wang, "Museum Diplomacy," 726–7.

37 Forman, *Whitewashing and Confronting Hungary's Antisemitic Past*, 7.

parts of its national history. Interestingly, in addition to typical protests, citizens also engaged in art diplomacy to express their views on the statue. During Chanukah in 2015, a large, ornate menorah was displayed in Székesfehérvár's Bartók Square, and citizens gathered for the candle lightings.[38] This was the first act of artistic reclamation of public space, as Bartók Square was the intended site of the Hóman statue. The second, also in December of 2015, was the erection of a makeshift wooden memorial that stood on the intended placement of the statue. Many citizens contributed to the memorial, adding photos and belongings of loved ones who were victims of antisemitism and Nazism.[39] This signaled an attempt by Jewish Hungarians to utilize the idea of encompassing systems to their advantage. By displaying these explicitly Jewish artworks in Hungarian public space, they sought to emphasize that both Jewish and Hungarian identity can and do coexist, as well as illicit empathy for those who were affected by the Hungarian Holocaust. If citizens had chosen to engage primarily in more typical forms of protest, their message likely would have read as "Do not build this statue," making them more activists than diplomats. Instead, they were able to use art to create a deeper conversation between actors, offering up different narratives and perspectives through artistic representation.

Throughout the statue controversy, a variety of NGOs made statements denouncing the actions of the Hungarian government. This included Hungarian organizations, such as MAZSIHISZ, American organizations, such as the Anti-Defamation League and American Jewish Committee, and world organizations, such as the World Jewish Congress.[40] These statements can be viewed as the boomerang effect in action; as Hungarian citizens and organizations voiced concerns, so did their American counterparts, applying pressure to the Obama Administration to intervene. Independent petitions as well as NGOs called for diplomatic action to halt the construction of the statue.[41] The fact that this effort was successful highlights the importance of TANs as a tool of citizen diplomacy as well as the power of citizen diplomacy altogether. The lack of recognition that Hungarian citizen groups received from their government spurred them to utilize tactics that demanded recognition. Conversely, for over a year prior to the Bálint Hóman statue controversy, there was an ongoing protest against a similarly antisemitic revisionist statue in Hungary. This protest received little international response, and little domestic response as well.[42] Thus, it can be seen that the ability to diplomatically link a large group of Jewish people and their allies across national borders was paramount to ending the plans for the Hóman statue.

The Work Ahead

The case of the Bálint Hóman statue is a prime example of the importance of citizen diplomacy. Citizen groups came together, and through their empathy, their tactics, and their support for one another, they were able to achieve their goal. In the face of rising illiberal democracy and increasing polarization, citizen diplomacy offers a path forward. Rather than tirelessly shouting at a government that refuses to listen, people must make an effort to see and understand one another, to embrace their universal humanity, and to encompass the entirety of the system they exist within. When Jewish citizens gathered to light a menorah in Bartók Square, it was more than just protest. For Jews, the menorah symbolizes the miracle of perseverance and Jewish unity. It is the light that guides through the darkness, bringing all people together. Just as Stein points out the importance of recognizing the indisputable specieshood of humanity, the menorah, too, represents this unity. Through community and hopefulness, citizen diplomacy provides a far broader conception of who can affect change and how they are able to do so. Though the statue of Bálint Hóman was not built, illiberal democracy in Hungary continues. Today, state-sponsored diplomatic collaboration between leaders of the United States and Hungary persists, with Donald

38 Forman, 12.

39 Forman, 14–15.

40 Forman, 11.

41 Forman, 12.

42 Wu, "Monuments and Holocaust Distortion."

Trump and Viktor Orbán having each stated their support for the other. As U.S. and Hungarian citizens consider the future of their nations, the tools of citizen diplomacy will be invaluable in moving forward.

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饮酒文化的未来不在欧洲，而在亚洲：中国对世界葡萄酒消费与生产的改变*

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ENGLISH ABSTRACT Conversations about the prevalence of alcohol and culture in the West today rarely mention China's importance on the global stage as a consumer of Western alcohols like wine, and as a historically prevalent site of distilled liquors with increasing relevant production of wines. Recognizing the scale of China's influence as a consumer and producer of wine, this article argues that China will cast a bigger influence on the world's alcohol production market and consumption culture. Firstly, the article analyzes how Chinese culture and history already emphasize the importance of local alcohols like *baijiu* and through its etiquette culture, creating an incentive to become a global consumer and producer for alcohol in all its forms. With a globalizing world also comes a globalizing China that has begun to expand tastes through Western exposure, e.g., increased wine consumption and production. With attention to developing international interests in the wine market, this paper analyzes how China has also begun to enter the main stage through international imports of wine (including both New and Old-World wines) and collaboration with foreign wine producers like the French winery Lafite Rothschild. Recognizing China's growing impact on the global wine market, this paper argues that there is much potential for China to become a powerhouse within the international wine scene, specifically drawing on how increasing climate change could lead to the creation of more opportunities for China to step up as a wine consumer and producer in the near future.

现代很多西方人觉得欧洲的饮酒文化在世界上最有影响力。西方人想到重要饮酒文化的时候，马上会想到法国葡萄酒或者德国啤酒，从不会想到茅台白酒。21世纪的世界充满了变化，所以我们的饮酒文化自然也会变化。这篇文章会解释为什么世界的饮酒文化和人们的观点会变化以及为什么在21世纪中国开始逐渐引领全世界的酒类生产及消费习惯。今天我们可以看到中国已经成为了葡萄酒市场的生力军，未来中国有可能会成为全球葡萄酒的主要生产国及消费国。

中国酒文化及历史

中国古代历史显示中国对酒的消费和生产一直是中国文化极其重要的一部分。历史上，中国通常是世界人口最多的国家，所以中国人当然会领先对酒的消费。可是我们还需要承认中国酒生产的重要性。中国有生产蒸馏酒（比如白酒）的悠久历史，"约一千年前的宋代，中国人发明了蒸馏法，从此，白酒成为中国人饮用的主要酒类"（宋斐）。今天中国最流行的国产酒还是白酒，一个特别有名的白酒品牌是茅台酒。中国的白酒研究专家郭子健称，"原产于贵州北部仁怀县茅台村的'茅台酒'，民国时期以成义，荣和、恒兴三家酒坊为主要经营者"。近年来，茅台酒品牌在中国社会越来越流行，"茅台酒品牌之演进，与近现代中国政治局势、商业规则、消费文化等诸多宏观因素紧密相关，背后亦涉及抗战时期

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贸易消费、大后方内迁人员的经济生活等议题” (郭子健)。现代很多中国人认为茅台酒代表中国的白酒文化和传统。另一方面，虽然中国的蒸馏白酒已广为人知，但中国还有更长的发酵酒（比如黄酒，米酒，和葡萄酒）历史。很多历史学家称中国的果酒及黄酒早在史前时代已开始（中国历史网），葡萄酒酿造的历史可以追溯到汉朝时期（宋斐）。

提到中国饮酒文化，人们一定会想到交际工具。在中国，这种交际工具代表着一种中华文化的酒桌传统。搜狐的酒评总结道，“古人有言：不学礼，无以立，中国自古以来就以‘礼仪之邦’著称于世，在喝酒上也是有一番礼仪讲究的，尤其偏重于宴会规矩，斟酒、敬酒、祝酒、干杯等等”。了解从古代中华到现代中国的饮酒思想很重要，这是因为中国的市场，特别是中国人对酒类产品的需求及饮酒习惯，对其他国家的酒类产品生产越来越有影响。

21世纪的中国饮酒文化

饮酒文化在21世纪的 “新” 中国还是非常重要。虽然最近我们才注意到中国政府在全球范围大力提倡中国饮酒文化，但其实中国一直在支持饮酒文化的传播。与此同时，中国的饮酒文化也深受全球化的影响。中国人一般认为西方饮酒文化非常不同，“在西方，饮酒的目的往往很简单，为了欣赏酒而饮酒，为了享受美酒而饮酒” (中国历史网）。最近中国政府既提倡中华传统的饮酒文化又提倡引进西方饮酒文化。一方面，中国历史悠久，中国的饮酒文化是中国传统文化不可或缺的一部分。出于文化的传承，中国传统的饮酒文化不会一时消失。另一方面，由于受全球化影响，中国人对传统饮酒文化中的一些规则有些改变。很多中国人开始享受美酒，而不是为了对他人表示尊重才饮酒。与此同时，现代的中国人对酒类产品的消费品味也有很大的改变。

现代中国的消费者，特别是年轻人，尤其喜爱外国酒类产品。正因如此，他们会影响外国产品生产和消费趋势，进而显示中国对全球饮酒市场的重要性。中国农业贸易促进中心在2020年的报告中提到，“据中国海关数据统计，2019年中国酒精及酒类产品进口额为50亿美元，其中葡萄酒居首位，占70.5%”。传统酒比如白酒和黄酒在中国还很流行，可是进口葡萄酒，特别是欧洲葡萄酒，在中国酒市场的占比越来越大。农业贸易促进中心的数据还显示，“2019年，法国、澳大利亚、智利、意大利和西班牙居中国葡萄酒进口来源地前五位。约60%的进口葡萄酒来自欧洲” 。中国的葡萄酒消费也开始逐年影响老世界和新世界葡萄酒生产。老世界葡萄酒来自欧洲特别是法国。“法国为中国葡萄酒第一大进口来源地。法国有着悠久的酿酒历史和精湛工艺，‘82年的拉菲’几乎成了大众认识葡萄酒的代名词....2018年法国向中国出口的葡萄酒占其葡萄酒出口总额的8.2%，中国是法国葡萄酒第三大出口市场” (农业贸易促进中心）。近年来，法国的拉菲和波尔多葡萄酒的新品种开发越来越受中国消费者的口味影响（Qin）。中国消费者以及中国的葡萄酒贸易政策也影响新世界葡萄酒生产和出口，例如澳大利亚葡萄酒。“自中澳自贸协定生效以来，中国自澳进口葡萄酒关税在五年内降为零，期间进口额持续增长，由2015年的4.5亿美元增长至2019年的8.7亿美元，年均增长17.5%。除了自贸区优势之外，澳大利亚葡萄酒的果香浓郁、口感圆润的风格深受中国消费者喜爱” (农业贸易促进中心）。目前，中国已然成为一个特别重要的葡萄酒消费国家。因此中国人对葡萄酒的需求和品味会影响所有葡萄酒出口国的生产。

除了对进口葡萄酒的需求越来越大，最近中国也开始发展和改进国内葡萄酒生产，尤其是加强了与国际品牌的合作。中国有生产葡萄酒的悠久历史，比如新疆是中国种植欧洲种葡萄最早的地区。但葡萄酒从未像其他酒类那样受欢迎，因此中国不以葡萄酒闻名。不过最近中国与全球葡萄酒生产公司的合作在持续增加。比如拉菲-罗斯柴尔德酒庄跟中国葡萄酒生产公司合作以扩大传统法国葡萄酒影响。不过在大陆拉菲的影响不太成功. 因为拉菲公司葡萄酒特别贵，所以中国市场和消费者对拉菲不太感兴趣（Qin）。虽然拉菲跟中国国内公司的合作不太成功，我们还可以看到中国对增加国内生产的国际品牌葡萄酒的努力。

中国对未来国际葡萄酒市场的影响

因为国内广大的蒸馏酒和发酵酒生产和消费市场，以及中国对全球进口葡萄酒的消费能力，中国已经开始演变成全球酒市场的领导者。未来中国对葡萄酒的进口会自然增长，进而加强葡萄酒的全球化。“据国际葡萄与葡萄酒组织（OIV）2019年度报告显示，中国已成为全球第二大葡萄种 植国，全球第十大葡萄酒生产国”（宋斐）。如果未来中国想要继续改变世界的饮酒文化，还有许多工作需要完成。中国葡萄酒研究学者陈默认为，“中国葡萄

酒市场潜力大，但是这个潜力的释放需要很长的时间和很多的工作。需要寻找适合中国的葡萄和葡萄酒，需要发掘中国的酒文化与葡萄酒的切合点，需要提高消费者的认知”。作为一个人口及酒类消费者大国，一旦这些改变完成了，中国将对世界葡萄酒市场的影响巨大。

谈到未来葡萄酒生产我们也需要讨论一个影响葡萄酒生产的重要因素—气候变化。由于全球气候变暖，很多欧洲葡萄酒生产国家深受影响，法国以及意大利会有更多转移开发葡萄种植区的问题。法国国家农业研究院的伯纳德西昆（Bernard Seguin）警告，“如果说温度上升2到3摄氏度（对葡萄酒产区来说）还是可控的，温度上升4到5摄氏度的话，全球的葡萄园地图将被彻底改变”（阚超群）。由于气候变化，未来欧洲的葡萄酒生产的国家可能会失去很多适宜的葡萄种植区。可是中国非常不同，中国有很多未开发的土地可以来发展葡萄生产。现在中国有名的葡萄产区是宁夏，新疆，山东，云南，另外中国还可以发展北边的土地。如果世界气温继续增长，中国葡萄产区就可以转移去中国的北边（阚超群）。因此，我们可以期望中国广茂的领土会帮助中国成为未来葡萄及葡萄酒的重要生产国，进而改变世界葡萄酒市场的格局。

虽然现在我们不一定知道未来的世界葡萄酒市场会是什么样的，但是我们可以预测如果中国对葡萄酒的消费持续增加，中国继续提高葡萄酒生产能力和技术，一百年之后中国有可能是葡萄酒消费与生产的主力军。

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Zhe Shi | *Lazy* | Watercolor

Is Costco Changing the Rules?: A Game Theoretical Analysis

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BA in Economics Program

Introduction: The Costco Business Model

For decades now, Costco has proven itself to be one of the most popular grocery stores in the United States, and the question is why (Fitzpatrick and Davis). The answer is Costco's business model. Costco's business model is one with multiple streams of revenue, unlike many other competitors in the market. As an article from the Digital Data Design Institute at Harvard states, this leaves Costco's competitors "at a disadvantage relative to Costco because no matter how efficient their processes, they must price products above their procurement cost" (Abenson). Costco is also able to minimize the amount of money they spend on shipping and storing items (relative to other stores), since Costco sells their items from the warehouse. Other than product sales, which is the main revenue stream for most grocery stores, Costco can get revenue through membership fees, its food court, and gas stations, just to name a few different revenue streams. Introducing these streams allowed Costco to expand outside of the realm of just groceries. In fact, their membership sales account for about 75% of their profits (Abenson). Costco members can then profit from services like a Costco gas station, tire center, and even pharmacy, all of which provide an extra revenue stream for Costco itself while satisfying the consumer.

According to an article from *The Street*, the last time Costco increased its membership prices was in 2017 (Kline). This is not normal for Costco since, traditionally, they increase prices every five to six years. So, why have they not increased them yet? Richard Galanti, the now-retired CFO of Costco, has stated that Costco has been hesitant to increase prices since Costco is being "wary of overall economic conditions" in the country, and that they "haven't needed to do it [increase prices]" (qtd. in Kline). Why not? In recent years, Costco has been consistently turning a profit, so as Galanti claims, they have not needed to do so.

While that was Galanti's view of the situation, a new CEO of Costco emerged, Ron Vachris. The ball is in his court now, and we will be examining the future of Costco's decisions through game theory concepts. This is an example of a game because there are players, payoffs, and rules. The players involved are Costco's new CEO as well as the members and, in certain cases, non-members. The payoffs vary depending on the different decisions that Costco is making. The rules involved are that the CEO has the sole decision over pricing policies and that memberships last for one year. We will be examining two different decisions the CEO will be facing in the near future: 1. A repeated game of whether to raise prices and how that will affect current members; and 2. An extensive form game about the new food court rules and how it affects non-members.

A New CEO and the Extensive Form Game

With the new CEO, Ron Vachris, taking over, he is faced with the dilemma of whether he should raise prices for membership status, services—which include things like the food court or auto services—the merchandise/groceries, or a combination of the three. The players in this game are the new CEO, as well as the people currently holding Costco memberships. The new CEO has the option to

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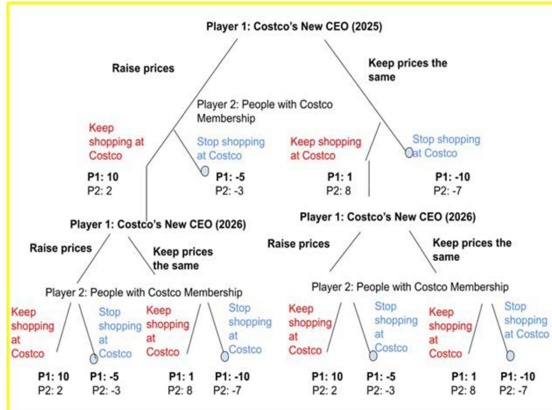
raise prices or keep prices the same. Now, as previously mentioned, Costco is a company that does not raise prices all that often. In fact, according to *Business Insider*, “The first Costco Wholesale store opened in 1983 in Seattle. Annual club membership was just $25 at the time” (Kupelian). Costco’s basic membership price has increased by less than $1 a year since opening. This commitment to low prices in the face of rampant inflation is what makes Costco’s customers so loyal. So, with a new CEO deciding whether to raise prices, Costco’s members are the second player, and their choices are to keep shopping at Costco or to stop shopping at Costco. With such a long history of keeping the prices the same, if the new CEO decides to defect and raise prices, this could prompt a grim trigger situation. This means that once one player defects, the other player will continue to defect for the remainder of the game. In this scenario, it would be continuing to not shop at Costco and cancel their membership as soon as Costco raises prices. This is also a repeated game, meaning that the new CEO will make future decisions on raising prices based on the previous reactions of Costco members to the CEO’s preceding decision to raise prices. For this model, the decision to raise prices is made annually, just like the decision to renew a membership. It is crucial to note that this is also a sequential game, meaning that the second player’s decision can only be made once the first player has made their decision.

There is an important assumption that we are making to be able to solve this game: that people enjoy shopping at Costco compared to a regular grocery store. This is to say that if prices at Costco were equal to the prices at any other grocery store, people would still pick to shop at Costco. If the new CEO decides to raise prices and the cost of purchases plus membership is way more than the cost of making those same purchases at any other grocery store, only then would people decide not to shop at Costco. We used the extensive form to solve this game.

FIGURE 1

Multi-stage game. Bolded: Player 1 decisions; Red: Player 2 decision: Keep shopping at Costco; Blue: Player 2 decision: Stop shopping at Costco; Blue circle: end of that stage of the game.



Payoffs for the New CEO

For the Costco CEO, raising prices and maintaining the customer base is going to result in his highest payoff (10), as seen in Figure 1. The preferences of the new CEO would be to maximize profits and increase revenue, all while maintaining and growing their loyal members. But when raising prices, Costco faces the possibility of people canceling their membership. This represents a constraint on the company. They do not want to raise prices too high to the point where they cannot sustain a solid number of members. When raising prices, some people will be forced to stop shopping at Costco because they cannot afford it. In this situation, the payoffs for the CEO would be very low because they would start losing the customer base that Costco has maintained for so long (-5). According to Statista, Costco has had a steady increase in membership, increasing by an average of 5.72 million new members annually for the past nine years, hitting its highest number in 2023 at 127.9 million members (Ozbun). To start losing members following a change in leadership would be a huge blow to the company. However, this would not be the lowest payoff because it is a direct cause and effect. The CEO would be aware of why they are losing members: because of his decision to increase prices. He could always decrease the price if needed to reel customers back in. If the new CEO decides not to deviate and to keep their prices the same, while it may not lead to an increase in revenue, he will have the opportunity to keep their customer base strong, which is definitely a preference of the company. This would be a payoff (1) because they would be in the same scenario they were in under the previous CEO. If the CEO kept prices the same and people still decided not to renew their membership, this would result in the lowest possible payoff (-10). This is because it goes against the company's preference of wanting to increase revenue and keep their members. This situation is the lowest payoff because there is no standout reason for people canceling their membership, so there may not be an obvious fix for the CEO.

Payoffs for People with Costco Memberships

For the people with Costco memberships, the payoffs are different. If Costco prices were to rise, members can respond by continuing to shop there or stop shopping there. If members were to keep shopping there, their payoff would be (2). Now, remember, we are operating under the assumption that people have a preference towards Costco; if prices were similar at other grocery stores, they would still prefer to shop at Costco. However, they would still be spending more of their income than they were before, so their utility would not be super high. For some members though, the rise in prices might be too high and act as a constraint that could prevent members from being able to afford Costco. These customers would be forced to stop shopping at Costco and take their business elsewhere. This would lead to a payoff of (-3) because, again, these people have a preference towards Costco and now they are not able to shop there, resulting in a negative payoff. If Costco were to keep its prices the same, this would be the highest payoff for the members (10). They would be able to continue to shop at the store they love for the prices they love. If Costco kept prices the same and members still had to cancel their membership, this would be the lowest payoff for them (-7). This is because it is not Costco that is stopping one from purchasing from them, but maybe an external constraint. An example of this could be if someone moved out of the area and is no longer in close range to a Costco. This is an outside factor that may be preventing them from going to Costco, even though they could afford it. A constraint like that may not be as easy to rectify.

Repeated Games

(Raise prices, Keep shopping at Costco) and (Keep prices the same, Keep shopping at Costco) are both examples of repeated games. As seen in Figure 1, after the members decide to renew membership or not for another year, in response, the new Costco CEO going into the following year can decide whether to raise prices again or keep them. Then the members get the opportunity to respond to the CEO again by renewing their membership for another year or not. With each time that the CEO decides to raise prices, he is placing more and more constraints on Costco members. They want to raise prices to increase revenue but not too high to the point where customers decide to leave. With each stage of raising prices, the number of members returning may diminish.

Single Stage Game

(Raise prices, Stop shopping at Costco) and (Keep prices, Stop shopping at Costco) are both examples of a single-stage side of the game. Both of these scenarios represent people who, going into the next year, will no longer be Costco members for either reasons of affordability or external constraints. The only way they would enter back into the game is if Costco decided to decrease prices; otherwise, it is a single-stage part of the game that stops after they cancel their membership.

Solving the Game

From analyzing this game, we found that there is both a dominant strategy and a Nash equilibrium. For the new CEO, his dominant strategy is to increase prices, because if the customer keeps shopping at Costco, he would rather have a payoff of 10 compared to 1, so he would choose to raise prices. If the customers were to stop shopping at Costco, then the CEO would have to decide between -5 and -10 for payoffs. In this situation, the CEO would, again, pick to raise prices. Therefore, the CEO has a dominant strategy in raising prices.

At this point, it is important to understand how, exactly, raising prices could affect the elasticity of demand for Costco. Raising prices will inherently lower the quantity demanded of Costco products, but as will be explained in the next section of the paper, this will not change much of the elasticity of the demand for Costco, since it is inherently inelastic. Keeping the elasticity of demand in mind is something that will be important to consider for the new Costco CEO, since he is the sole controller of price for Costco, but when bearing in mind that the demand is inelastic, it should not change the fact that Costco's dominant strategy will remain: raising prices.

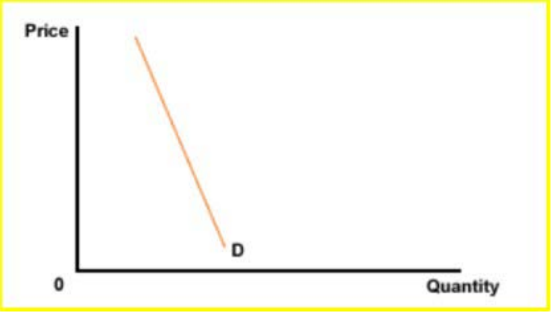
The customer also has a dominant strategy of continuing to shop at Costco. When the new CEO decides to raise prices, the customers would be deciding between a payoff of 2 or -3. They would want the 2, which is continuing to shop at Costco. If the CEO chooses to maintain the prices, then the customer would be deciding between a payoff of 8 and -7. The customer would again go with the higher value of 8, which is continuing to shop at Costco. Since both players have a dominant strategy, the optimal outcome would be (Raise prices, Keep shopping at Costco). This option is also the Nash equilibrium for this game, meaning that neither player could be made better off by changing their strategy. If either player changes their strategy, they would then be receiving a lower payoff, which they would not do because we are also assuming that players are rational.

Elasticity Argument

With the current assumptions we have of the consumers at Costco, we can take a closer look at Costco's demand curve and analyze its elasticity. The current assumption we have for the model is that people enjoy shopping at Costco more than they do at other stores. Another way of framing this is that when prices increase for Costco, they become relatively equal with that of other grocery stores. This means that the demand for Costco as it currently stands (i.e., without any pricing changes) is likely inelastic since people not only enjoy shopping at Costco, but also will keep shopping there so long as prices are equal to those of other grocery stores. According to a 2021 *Forbes* article, even though Costco prices were up 4.5% in 2021, Costco was still met with the same demand and, in fact, overall visits to the club were up 7%. Here is an example of how inelastic the demand curve would be:

FIGURE 2

Inelastic demand curve.



Depending on the outcome of the game itself and the choices made by the new CEO, we would then begin seeing some changes in the very inelastic demand curve currently at Costco. What aids Costco here is the fact that price is not the only factor in the demand elasticity—so is the consumer loyalty that is fostered through Costco, as well as its unwavering commitment to keeping its prices low. Costco consumers are not just consumers of the store; they are also members, which adds another aspect that reduces the responsiveness of the demand curve and its elasticity to price changes. It is also important to highlight that since Costco already has an inelastic demand curve before the implementation of any price changes, a very significant price increase would be necessary for any change in consumer behavior. This suggests that Costco has some flexibility when it comes to its pricing strategies that would not risk substantial declines in overall demand. It can also be interesting to look at the long-term strategy of Costco, since given its inelastic demand, Costco may, as it has for the majority of its existence, focus on prioritizing its value and customer experience/retention rather than focusing on the short-term profit it would experience from any significant price increases.

If prices were to increase in a minor capacity, Costco likely would not experience any changes in the number of consumers they receive, and therefore, there would not be any changes to the demand curve and its elasticity. However, if a major price increase were to occur, it would mean that there is a significantly higher chance that the elasticity of the demand curve would increase from a very inelastic demand curve to a less inelastic curve. This is mainly because, at some point, Costco members would start deciding that they should go to other stores, even though they can get the extra enjoyment in Costco of being a member or having exclusive access to things like a Costco member-specific gas station. It is important to consider that terms like "minor" and "major" increases are all relative here, since what may be considered a major change for one consumer may not be a change at all for another.

Food Court Example

To further evaluate Costco's new CEO's decisions utilizing game theory, we must look at another policy that has been recently enacted by the new CEO utilizing extensive form and a two-player game. According to Allrecipe's Courtney Kassel's article "Costco Just Made a Big Change to Its Food Court That Has Fans Divided," an active membership is now required to purchase food at the food court (Kassel). With this change, we can now observe a different two-player game. This new game still involves Costco's new CEO as one of the players, but instead of the other players being only Costco members, non-Costco members are, too.

To evaluate the payoffs for whether it makes sense for a non-Costco member to buy a membership, we must utilize an extensive form game. The players include people who do not have a membership but used to utilize Costco's food court, and, again, the new CEO. For the customers, there are two options: Option 1. Buy a Costco membership for $60 a year and continue to utilize the food court, or Option 2. Go to another food establishment. Having more people sign up for the membership would lead to an increase in revenue for Costco, but on the other hand, losing food court customers would cause a decrease in revenue. This causes the second player, in this case, the new CEO of Costco, to be faced with two options as well: Option 1. Continue to enforce its new policy of allowing only Costco members to utilize the food court Option 2. Omit the new policy and allow all individuals, active members or not, to utilize the food court. In this scenario, we are going to assume that non-membership holders are only going to Costco for the food court.

FIGURE 3

New two-player game.

Non-Costco Member Buys Membership, Costco CEO Allows Anyone to Use Food Court

In this scenario, Costco will be at a higher advantage, because Costco just made additional profits off people purchasing memberships in order to utilize the food court, leading to a payoff of eight (8). Costco, in this scenario, has the preference to sell as many memberships as possible to make significant profit from membership fees, which is something it would not achieve if non-membership holders did not buy a membership. However, non-Costco membership holders who may purchase the membership to eat at the food court are put at a disadvantage and maintain significant constraints in their payoffs from purchasing the membership. If non-Costco members purchase the membership and then Costco removes the policy, new membership holders just spent $60 on membership to eat at the food court when they could have eaten without having to buy the membership once Costco removed the policy. Therefore, non-Costco members may believe that their Costco membership was bought for no reason, leading to a negative payoff of (-1).

Non-Costco Member Buys Membership, Costco CEO Only Allows Members to Eat at the Food Court

In this scenario, although both Costco and membership holders are at a positive payoff, Costco's payoff is higher because they maintain their policy. By maintaining their policy of only allowing Costco-membership holders to use the food court, Costco increases revenue from food court sales, and they maintain the illusion of exclusivity, which is a prominent pillar in Costco's business model. Therefore, Costco, in this scenario, has the highest possible payoff (10). Moreover, membership holders benefit as well, as they save a significant amount of money by eating at the food court, and therefore, they maintain a strong belief that their purchasing of the membership was worth it. However, although food court patrons will save a significant amount of money by eating at the food court, this is not their highest payoff, because at one point they were able to eat at the food court without having to pay for a membership. Therefore, in this scenario, non-membership holders who purchased the membership's payoff are positive (5) because their payoffs are constrained by the prior ability to buy food without buying a membership.

Non-Costco Member Eats at Different Restaurant, Costco CEO Allows Anyone to Use Food Court

In this scenario, both Costco and non-membership holders are put at a disadvantage, as Costco loses patronage to the food court, which causes a decrease in profit from membership, food court sales, and even losses due to excess food being thrown out or left unpurchased, leading Costco to have a payoff of (-1). Moreover, Costco's payoff in this scenario is negative not only because they lose patronage, but because their ability to maximize profits is constrained. Likewise, non-membership holders are also put at a significant disadvantage, as now they must go to another restaurant and spend a significantly larger amount of money in order to get food at another establishment (See Appendix). Moreover, even though Costco removed the new policy and made the food court accessible to all, non-members still may not utilize the food court and instead go to another establishment, which is significantly more expensive. Therefore, in this scenario, non-membership holders have a payoff of (-2), as individuals have a preference to save money when purchasing food, and non-Costco members missed out significantly in this opportunity when they decided to go to another establishment.

Non-Costco Member Eats at Different Restaurant, Costco CEO Only Allows Members to Eat at the Food Court

In this scenario, just like in the previous scenario, non-membership holders will still be at a disadvantage; as mentioned earlier, they will have to go to another establishment and spend more money to eat. Costco, in this scenario, will have a slight advantage, because although they lost patronage and potentially profits, they still maintained their policy. In restricting access to the food court to only members, Costco gives off the illusion to membership holders and non-membership holders that they are less impressionable to external pressure, and that they will do everything in their power to maintain exclusivity for their loyal customers, giving customers the belief that the money put towards membership is appreciated and exclusive. This exact scenario also emulates a game of chicken, where Costco stuck to their policy, and non-membership holders chickened out. This would lead to a payoff of (1) for Costco and (-2) for non-membership holders, which is preferable to a situation in which both players chicken out and payoffs are (-1) for Costco and (-2) for non-membership holders. By standing their ground, Costco maintains a higher payoff, and therefore, wins the game.

Solving the Game

In this scenario of Costco's new food court policy, we have a very clear Nash Equilibrium, and that is for Costco to maintain its policy of only allowing current members to utilize the food court, encouraging non-members to purchase a membership to utilize the food court. In this scenario, Costco can maintain its profits through food court patronage and increases in membership fee profits. Likewise, in this scenario, food court patrons (new membership holders) will benefit significantly as well, as they will save money by eating at the Costco food court as opposed to going to another establishment.

When determining the better financial deal between eating at Costco or a different restaurant, we found that Costco was the more cost saving option. This is how: for simplicity purposes, we will say that a current non-membership-holding patron is Jo. Jo goes to the Costco food court three times a week on his lunch break, and every time he goes there, he buys the following: one Hot dog and Drink Combo ($1.50), one slice of pizza ($1.99), and one ice cream cup ($1.99), leading to a grand total of $5.48 per meal (Bowlby). With the current Illinois state tax of .01% on food and beverage (Illinois Department of Revenue), we then have a grand total of $5.53.

Now, if Jo, instead of buying a Costco membership, simply chose to go to another restaurant, with the national average cost of eating out in the United States, he would pay approximately $16.28 per meal (Maggiolo). Therefore, If Jo were to buy a membership and continue to utilize his local Costco food court three times a week, including membership costs and food costs, he would spend approximately $922.68 a year on lunch. However, if Jo were to avoid buying membership and food at the Costco food court and instead chose to buy food from another establishment three times a week, he would spend approximately $2539.68 every year, costing him an extra $1,617 per year (Appendix).

Although many individuals may be upset about Costco's new food court policy that requires membership, Costco's new model for allowing only active members to utilize the food court serves as a significant win or a significant loss for both players, players in this case being Costco's new CEO and food court patrons themselves. Meanwhile, members can enjoy low-cost food, and Costco can keep their food prices down by subsidizing it through membership fees, saving both parties money in the long run and allowing for food court prices to be kept down.

Therefore, food court patrons will benefit tremendously from buying a membership and eating at the food court. This is because it is significantly cheaper to eat at the food court as opposed to any other establishment, and members will save money from eating at Costco even when factoring in membership costs.

However, significant losses can be observed for both parties as well. Prior to the enactment of this policy, anybody could take advantage of Costco's low prices, but now, individuals must pay $60 in membership fees per year to enjoy a hot dog or chicken bake. Likewise, Costco may experience significant loss too, as implementing this new policy may cause overall food court sales to decrease, leading Costco to decrease revenue in the food court or even be at a loss with excess amounts of food being discarded and not sold due to lowered patronage.

Conclusion

With a new CEO coming in, Costco faces much uncertainty. Will his newly implemented policies preserve or dissolve Costco's philosophy and, more importantly, the game that Costco plays in providing the highest quality goods at the lowest possible price? Time will tell.

Appendix

Costco ($5.53 x 3 x 52) + $60 = $922.68

National average for eating out ($16.28 x 3 x 52) = $2539.68

National average for eating out ($2539.68) - Costco ($922.68) = $1,617

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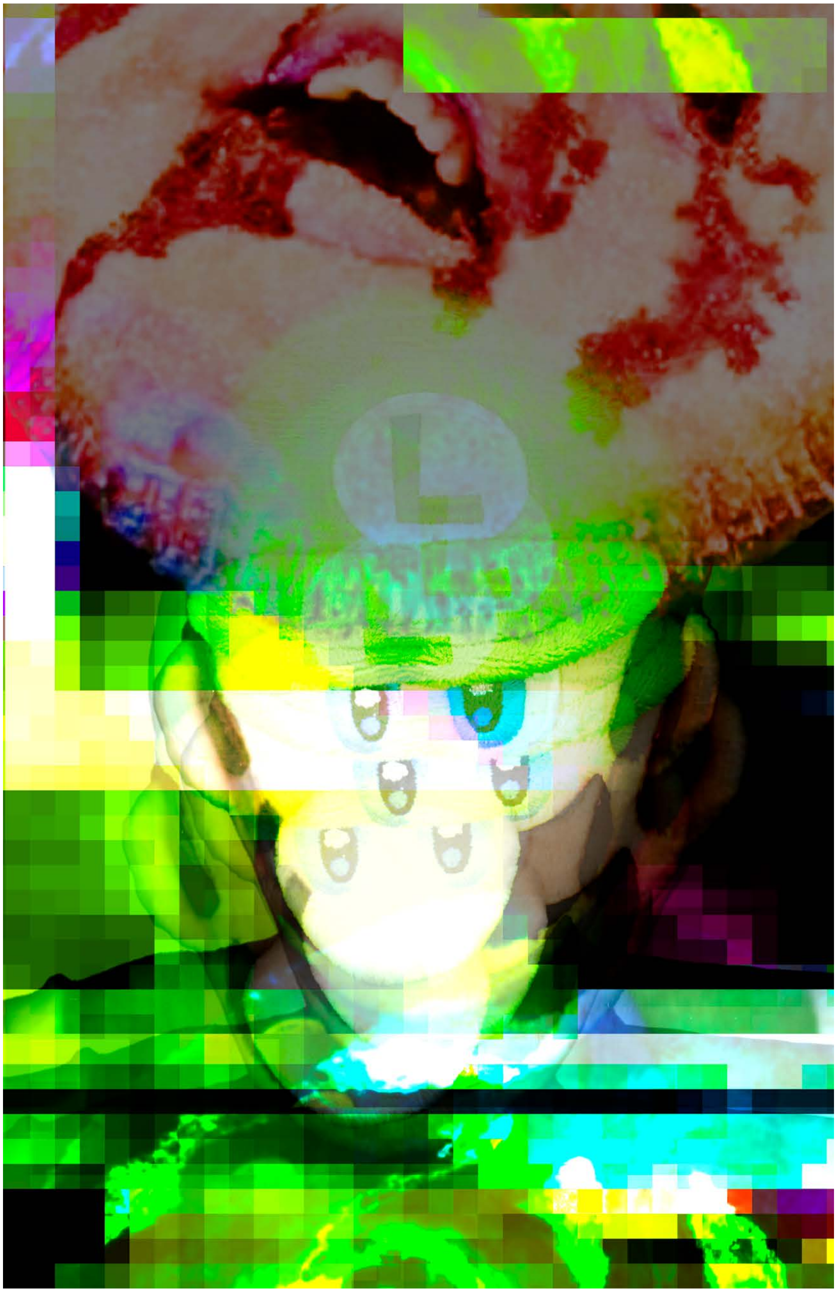

Perry Burrell | *LOVE2MUCH* | Digital photography, Photoshop

What is Love?: Amina Gautier's *The Best That You Can Do* and Black Feminism's Self-Actualization*

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Amina Gautier's *The Best That You Can Do*, published in 2024, is an intricate collection of short stories that deal with navigating split cultural identities, overcoming racist histories and experiences, and examining loveless relationships as a symptom of the modern commodification of love. Gautier's third section of her collection of the same title explores heterosexual marriage and romantic relationships as diminishing of identity and self-actualization, describing such connections with corporate, or entrepreneurial, language as a result of the pervasive nature of the market. Many of Gautier's chapters revolve around loveless relationships between Black women characters and their male partners. The woman characters initially seek love, but ultimately are left with the erasure of identity in their attempts to maintain a connection through immense sacrifice and self-denial. Gautier critiques a culture of relationships, wherein modern "love" is often viewed as transactional and quantitative, and, as I claim in the following essay, in direct opposition to Black feminism's concept of self-actualization. I argue that as Gautier's often nameless Black woman characters show a strong desire to connect and belong, they are unfulfilled in normative, heterosexual relationships and the institution of marriage. Such relationships are often antagonistic to self-actualization, love, and embodiment as tactics of survival, liberation, and wholeness.

My project, focused on specific chapters from the third section of Gautier's collection called "The Best That You Can Do," explores how the characters' relationships exist in opposition to Black feminism's concept of self-actualization—an attempt to become the best person one can be. As I find passion in Gautier's search for the meaning of love and friendship, especially related to liberation from oppressive and pervasive systems of colonialism and capitalism, I reframe the practice of love from outside of its heteronormative and white supremacist roles to focus on love as an act of freedom and survival through Black feminism's "love politics."

Love as What It's Not

In the third section of her collection *The Best That You Can Do*, Gautier writes a variety of stories exploring women's relationships with heterosexual love, sometimes from the woman's point of view and other times from an omniscient, third-person perspective. Love, in mainstream culture, is complicated, but often put into relation with "sexual passion and physical attraction" where it is commonly seen as a set of emotions and intense emotionality towards an individual, thing, or object (Rokach 1). Love can be mistaken for desire. While love takes many forms, such as in family, friendships, and romance, Gautier focuses specifically on love in romantic relationships. Gautier insinuates that love is something deeper and more intricate than sexual chemistry and attraction through a strategy of negation—love as what it is not, but ultimately what it has become. Gautier presents a problem of love to which Black feminism's love politics offer a solution. Black feminism defines love in opposition to the racist narratives that constrict Black

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women and posits love as a complex practice towards self-actualization.

Gautier's *The Best That You Can Do* revolves around relationships both during the Civil Rights era and in the 21st century. By exploring love in the present times, Gautier examines how love is currently associated with what it simply should not be, noting in particular that love has become cruel. Her chapter "Come Sunday," for example, ties love to cruelty through a lack of communication, where Natalie admits to her partner, William, that she feels as though William does not like her. William apathetically brushes off Natalie's pleas for respect and even a conversation, so she leaves him, and he later reflects on his behavior of "substituting cruelty for love" in his relationship with Natalie (Gautier 102). William is self-aware of his relationship faults, indicating that instead of showing love, he was uncommunicative and simply cruel, which, as Gautier notes, was a substitution for how he was supposed to behave as a partner. Gautier thus indicates that love is antagonistic to cruelty, and "Come Sunday" is one of the few chapters that reveals such a clear awareness of the male character's faults in heterosexual relationships. Love, then, is not repressive, cruel, nor uncommunicative.

As she puts love into contrast with cruelty, Gautier also opposes love to strangerhood in "A Recipe for Curry," in which the narrator comments on a couple's relationship as completely unchanging and dreadful. Liliane's partner has not fulfilled any of the promises he made, and their marriage has proven itself to be un-evolving, as the narrator writes sarcastically: "Dough. Pressed flat. Next year. Rolled into paper thinness. Next year. A house. Next year. A car. Next year, things will be different for us" (Gautier 120). The narrator has noticed the monotony not only in their relationship, but in Liliane and her husband, realizing that they are both still "strangers" in their marriage after many years (Gautier 117). Amina Gautier's depictions of love resonate with first-wave feminist critiques of marriage, such as Emma Goldman's 1914 essay "Marriage and Love," in which Goldman questions the longevity and integrity of a marital relationship: "Can there be any thing more humiliating, more degrading than a life long proximity between two strangers?" (3). Like Gautier, Goldman indicates that marriage does not lead to truly loving, knowing, and understanding one's partner; instead, it stunts a woman's intellectual growth and social consciousness by forcing and perpetuating a dependence on her husband. Goldman critiques marriage as a parasitic institution, but not love, for she notes love is the "harbinger of hope, of joy of ecstasy [...] the defier of all laws, of all conventions" (Goldman 8). Love stands in opposition to marriage, for it is free and the foundation of happiness, while marriage is constricting and unfulfilling. Both Gautier and Goldman suggest that marriage perpetuates strangerhood.

Gautier refers to modern love as having to do with erasing one's identity—particularly Black women's identities. In the chapter "Howl," one of the few chapters in the section told in the first person, the nameless woman reflects on her recently past relationship as one where she desired love, but "nearly settled for erasure" by continuing to be in a relationship that was clearly unhealthy (108). The character, at the expense of the relationship, felt that she almost lost herself—lost her identity by being with her ex-partner. The relationship did not allow her to grow, mature, and develop as an individual Black woman. A relationship that stunts one's growth and posits an individual as an "Other" is not truly love, as Mel Michelle Lewis, a Black lesbian critic, highlights. Lewis argues, however, that taking the "Other" as the "Self" can allow us to center and value experiences and aspects of knowledge that come from Black women's experiences; these experiences can help people understand themselves more fully, and thus, engage in the world more wholly (Lewis 37–38). In "Howl," the woman is in a state of reflection; she, only in the present moment, is realizing that she felt her identity slipping and is, in fact, the "Other." Lewis encourages a re-ownership of one's perceived "other-ing," particularly for Black women, to redefine oneself as an individual self. Gautier often uses nameless, yet utterly complex and affective characters as tools to explore how often loveless, or modern heterosexual relationships lead towards the erasure of identity by feeling, and therefore internalizing, being the "Other."

In the narrator's reflection in "Howl," she admits that her male partner "saw [her] as more womb than woman," completely erasing her of womanhood, race, and any other element of her consciousness that made her identity (Gautier 108). However, as Lewis would argue, such reflection is a state of reclaiming the "Other" as "Self." Gautier also plays with "otherness" in her lack of specificity of the nameless characters and use of third person. By contrast, many Black women writers, including Zora Neale Hurston, Anne Moody, and Maya Angelou, make use of first person in their autobiographies as an act of self-embodiment: "women engage in the production of *écriture féminine*, writing representative of female embodiment, and the autobiographers' compositions serve the function of embodying African-American women as well as offer a place for others to define themselves with dignity" (Hembrough 180). Hembrough argues that women write their histories to reinscribe themselves by claiming the "I" pronoun, which acts as a way of actualizing themselves; they "embody themselves through speech and writing acts" (178). Their writings, coming from their personal lives as Black women, focus on their truths and write their lives and discourses that are in opposition to the racist stereotypes that confine them. In writing their own stories, they give themselves a new, embodied story of their own, rather than becoming the object in other people's narratives. Gautier's use of mainly third person and only occasionally the first person limits the characters' abilities to self-actualize because they are not in control of their narratives, especially as she writes characters into relationships that are repressive and emotionally confining. Whereas Hurston's, Moody's, and Angelou's characters are able to embody themselves, Gautier's characters are unable to because of their positions as often nameless figures written through the narrator. Their love and relationships leave them unable to self-actualize and find liberation from their oppressive relationships.

Gautier posits true love as antagonistic to the erasure of identity, strangerhood, and cruelty; such effects are symptoms of loveless relationships that exist in opposition to Black feminism's objectives of embodiment and self-actualization. The specific heterosexual relationships Gautier develops reveal an expectation of love that is almost cyclically lacking: love is sought after, but ultimately diminishing and lost. Particularly in "Diminishing Returns," the narrator attempts to make herself a "demand" or an asset to her husband; she tries to get the attention of him again by cooking his favorite dishes and exercising in Pilates classes but is left with feelings of regret and loss of their relationship. Gautier's chapters display love as being lost and what it is not. So, then what is love if it is lost? What is love, then, if not cruelty, strangerhood, and erasure of oneself? And what makes love successful? The theme of lost love is pervasive, just as the language used around the loss—language that is tied to corporate language which I explore in "Love as the Market."

Love as the Market

While many of Gautier's chapters describe love through what it is not, her chapter, "In the Name of Love," describes love in positive terms, whereby love requires nurturance and commitment in order for a relationship to be successful. With dedication, love is successful. However, in the chapter, the woman character remains with her partner, even when he is clearly having a secret affair. Knowing he is with another woman, she continues to provide him with love, shown in her actions of cooking his favorite dishes every night. Gautier portrays love as commitment, but here, at the expense of the male partner's infidelity and greediness. The male partner "couldn't help being greedy" by continuing his affair while taking advantage of his partner's unwavering tolerance and loyalty (Gautier 134). Gautier understands that love requires commitment, but when love is mixed with greed, it transforms love into an exchangeable object. With greed, love becomes quantitative and marketized. Gautier repeatedly uses such corporate and numerical terminology to comment on modern love's intertwinement with capitalism.

Gautier explores modern love as measured through quantitative analyses in "Diminishing Returns," one of the only stories written in second person, where the woman tries to get the attention of her male partner by focusing on her physical appearance. She—or "you"—reflects on her dwindling relationship through a graph: "See his love mapped out on a pie chart? No, not a pie chart. A linear trend graph. See how that thick black line inches lower and lower? Each notch on the x-axis is a year of your marriage" (Gautier 111). Gautier forces the reader to examine a relationship graphically, as if we are seeing the trends of love fluctuate with time, portraying love through measurement, constrained by numbers rather than free and a source of happiness. In "Why Not?" Gautier's character questions why love is "founded upon the frequency rather than the substance of communication and where calling every day matters more than what is actually said" (97). Love is no longer qualitative; rather, it is based on numbers and can be quantified through Excel spread sheets and mathematic equations. Gautier repeatedly uses words such as "demand" and "paying" to note the expense of relationships, positing modern love as formed by economic restraints. Modern love—or more specifically, marriage—is an "insurance pact," as Emma Goldman states (1), and Gautier notes that "the market is a vehicle of risk; love is not FDIC insured" (112). Gautier puts love into relation, even entanglement, with the market, highlighting how capitalism's pervasive nature is deeply entrenched in interpersonal relationships. Marriage is an institution that, thus, produces loveless relationships and a system used for insurance.

Gautier examines the commodification of love by playing with the idea of ownership—particularly ownership of bodies. In her chapter "Minnow," the woman narrator is pregnant and does not want to tell her partner because it would feel as though she lost her individual agency. She writes, "My body has just become ours," indicating a sense of loss of herself and loss of ownership of her own body (124). Since becoming pregnant, she understands that sustaining herself is no longer for her own body, and the decisions she makes for her body will be both dictated by herself and her partner. Her body is no longer her own; rather, it is shared and co-operated by both her baby and her partner. While a baby means less agency, it also means her decisions will no longer be solely hers. Such language of "ownership" in the body is reminiscent of the ownership of capital because "property is a familiar and deeply ingrained notion in the consciousness of everyone" (Harris 62). The capitalist system in which we live derives its profit from property, making the concept of ownership and property entrenched in how we live our daily, interpersonal lives. Nicole Rousseau, sociologist and professor, describes private property and ownership as "cornerstones of the capitalist structure" that "work in tandem to maintain the patriarchal domination of women and women's labor" (197). In Gautier's story, whatever private autonomy the woman once had is now lost and taken by her male partner. While the body serves as autonomous and personal, the woman is stripped of such autonomy, feeling as though her body is shared.

Gautier uses numerical and often corporate language to explore the dangers of modern love becoming entwined with the market, deeply affecting interpersonal relationships and connections to one's own body. Using the dynamics of particular heterosexual relationships, she reveals how love is too often measured quantitatively. To Gautier, love has become a transactional, restricting process of giving, receiving, and producing, mainly at the expense of women's identities and bodies. Women's bodies are seen as valuable because of their reproductive abilities and are socially and economically expected to produce and sacrifice for the male partner. The modern love that Gautier explores and critiques is harmfully intertwined with the economic system. What, then, should love be if not tied to economic relations?

Love as Black Feminism

In *The Best That You Can Do*, Gautier explores the problem of modern love through negation. Love is not to be a stranger, nor does it mean cruelty or the erasure of one's identity. It should not be twisted through commodification: thinking of love as quantitative and measurable is harmful to women who think of themselves as self-actualized individuals. Such forms of love present real, material consequences in our romantic relationships. So, then, what is love? Black feminist thinking offers a different understanding of love. bell hooks and Audre Lorde offer an alternative view of love that Gautier's characters lack—a perspective on love as a practice towards liberation. Black feminists propose love as separate from the capitalist economic system, and as a practice that helps us embody ourselves as fully agent subjects.

bell hooks, a distinguished Black woman author, writes about love as a social practice of reciprocal care, respect, and general harmony. In her book, *Communion: The Female Search for Love*, she describes love as personal and collective growth and openness. She writes that love must be taught from within in order for love to spread to the collective—but first, before anything, we must critique the systems in which under we live: "To solve the problem of female body self-hatred, we have to critique sexist thinking, militantly oppose it, and simultaneously create new images, new ways of seeing ourselves" (hooks 116). We must break down the structures that inhibit love, such as the economic market that Gautier critiques, and redefine the systems to see love in a completely revolutionary way. hooks' practice and pedagogy of love is not modeled on economic exchange and self-interest, but rather strives for the nurturance of spiritual growth, first individually, then collectively. hooks argues that in attempting to end our suffering from oppressive systems of capitalism and racism, we must embrace what she calls a "love ethic," which, philosopher and professor Michael Monahan describes as "alter[ing] our motivation [...] toward the care and concern for others" (105). Such a love ethic is motivated by a combination of care, respect, and honesty to liberate ourselves from the opposing power and self-interest that fuels the economic systems in which we live. In arguing that love is not simply a feeling, but rather a practice and action, hooks highlights that love entails "care, affection, recognition, respect, commitment, and trust, as well as honest and open communication" (Monahan 106). To love, we must commit to honesty in addressing our own weaknesses as well as the weaknesses in the world around us to recognize the faults and foster a society that is grounded in love as a practice of freedom. Gautier's relationships are often built on a lack of communication and general respect, such as in "Don't Mention It," where the woman character feels as though her tasks and work around the house are invisible; she lacks recognition for everything she does for her family—the roles that women are often socialized into playing. Only later does the character tell her husband how she has been feeling, waiting until the moment he breaks to express her emotions through open communication. Gautier's "Why Not?" also shows a woman succumbing to a relationship she does not even seek, while "In the Name of Love" reveals a lack of open, honest communication while the husband cheats on his wife. Gautier's relationships lack trust, recognition, or even communication—all qualities that bell hooks encourages us, as readers committed to a loving environment, to have with ourselves and the communities we engage in. Gautier's critique of modern love—which is, in fact, loveless—as a symptom of the transactional, careless, and profit-driven society we live in, stands in direct opposition to the kind of love hooks proposes: love as free from economic arrangement and free from the pervasive system of capitalism.

hooks' love ethics is a part of a larger discourse of Black feminism's love politics—a form of politics that engages in love and a loving discourse that reinscribes Black women into a liberatory society. Love politics allows us to transcend the self, whereby we "work on the self, preparing it for the labor of social engagement, and for the task of advocating for the survival and wholeness of entire people" (Nash 110). Love politics believes that love is not solely about loving ourselves; love is also the practice of creating a public collective centered and grounded under love as a deep care and respect for humans. Gautier focuses on specific relationships, but in doing so, she makes deeper, broader reflections on modern love collectively: "And love—isn't it a burden, heavier than a satchel slung over the shoulder carrying a thousand lifetimes, a thousand memories, a thousand skins?" (Gautier 129). Noting love's weight, almost weighing down the individual, Gautier shows that love is not free; it is heavy, a huge responsibility full of painful history. And in connecting love to the market, love is expensive and costly. However, to bell hooks, Lorde, and other Black feminists who are proponents of love as a liberatory tool, love is an action that strives for freedom from exploitative and oppressive structures. Audre Lorde, Black feminist writer and poet, in her essay "Eye to Eye," writes about the internalization of racism and hatred and asserts that anger, like love, can be a liberatory tool to use productively towards change. Black women experience racism in all aspects of life, undoubtedly leading towards feelings of prejudice against themselves and other women around them, but such anger must be directed towards changing our systems and changing how we view ourselves. She encourages Black women to "mother" themselves, which means, as she writes, "I affirm my own worth by committing myself to my own survival, in my own self and in the self of other Black women" (Lorde 15). Mothering ourselves, or loving ourselves, is one of the most important beginning stages of envisioning and creating a world centered around love. Mothering ourselves allows us to see ourselves as we see others—with patience and recognition, and most importantly, value. We learn to be kind, tender, and genuine in learning our own worth, and therefore, other people's worth. To mother ourselves is to love ourselves, which Lorde proposes as a way to genuinely change our relationships with ourselves and each other and to form a community founded on love. Loving ourselves is the start of destroying the loveless relationships Gautier explores that are founded on destructive, capitalistic structures.

Love, as a practice or art form of care, respect, recognition, honesty, and communication, can be transformative in combating the systems that oppress us. Black feminism's love politics offer a way of reclaiming our identities—particularly those of Black women—by placing love in the foreground. Amina Gautier's collection *The Best That You Can Do* reveals relationships that result in the erasure of identity, inducing a lack of fulfillment in love. Self-actualization, the process of becoming the best we can be individually and societally, necessitates a new form of love to combat the kind of modern love Gautier critiques. With Black feminism's love, we have the opportunity to assert ourselves and others as valuable and worthy and to reject the love that capitalism forces us to inherit.

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Maryam Williams | *Am I Losing My Mind?* | Film photography, negative scans

Une étude du lai *Le rossignol* par Marie de France*

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ENGLISH ABSTRACT This piece analyzes the poem *Le rossignol* or *The Nightingale* by Medieval French poet Marie de France (circa 1160–1210). While little is known about the life of this celebrated storyteller, her poems, or lais, consist of enchanting tales of love and betrayal, and often include the presence of supernatural elements. The lai *Le rossignol* demonstrates the link between emotional intimacy, violence, and the song of the nightingale, referencing the power of poetry and music as expressions of love. The narrative centers on an emotional affair between an unnamed chevalier's wife and a neighbor who, separated by a tall stone wall, express their love to each other through the window of their respective homes. To explain why she withdraws to the window each night, the chevalier's wife claims she is captivated by the song of the nightingale. Understanding this to be a lie, the jealous chevalier viciously kills the innocent nightingale, preventing the affair from developing further but doing nothing to quell the emotional connection between the two lovers. In this 160-line poem, Marie de France artfully weaves a complex and profound tale of heartbreak by immortalizing love in the violent death of the nightingale, compelling her readers to consider what narrative choices enable a story to have a happy or just ending.

Marie de France, dans son lai *Le rossignol*, démontre sa capacité de conteuse en tissant un conte d'amour stratifié, tragique, et déchirant. Tandis que l'identité réelle et la vie de cette poétesse du 12ème siècle ne sont pas connues, son grand recueil de contes, *Les lais de Marie de France*, présente aux lecteurs des lais bretons caractérisés par la magie, l'amour, et la trahison. Ses courtes histoires, qui ont survécu au temps, sont initialement dédiées au roi anglais Henri II (1133–1189) et promettent aux lecteurs la justice pour les personnages innocents et la punition pour les personnages coupables. Dans ce recueil, *Le rossignol* est remarquable : ce lai, qui représente l'amour interdit, l'infidélité, et la violence, demande aux lecteurs de contribuer leurs propres idées sur la justice. Également intitulé *Laüstic* en breton, il contient seulement 160 vers pour illustrer l'amour puissant des amants séparés par un mariage et un mur, et menacés par la violence. Malgré une simplicité présumée, ce lai du Moyen Âge contient une structure narrative complexe et profonde. Par ses grands pouvoirs de conteuse, Marie de France a utilisé poétiquement le lai breton *Le rossignol* pour illustrer le lien entre l'amour émotionnel, la violence, et les chansons dans les contes d'amour émouvants.

L'histoire commence dans une ville avec deux voisins : un chevalier et sa femme, et un chevalier célibataire. Les trois personnages restent anonymes pendant toute l'histoire. L'épouse du chevalier tombe amoureuse de son voisin, le chevalier célibataire. Les deux se parlent et échangent des cadeaux d'une fenêtre à l'autre, sans

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jamais avoir la possibilité de plus. Le mari de la femme, soupçonnant une trahison, lui demande pourquoi elle se réveille chaque nuit et où elle va ; elle lui répond qu'elle va écouter la chanson du rossignol à la fenêtre. Enragé par ce mensonge, et aveuglé par la colère et la moquerie, le mari capture le rossignol et le tue, jetant le cadavre brisé du rossignol à la poitrine de sa femme. Couverte par le sang du rossignol, la femme comprend que la mort de l'oiseau signifie la fin de la liaison. Elle enveloppe l'oiseau dans une étoffe de soie brodée avec l'histoire de leur amour et l'envoie à son amant, qui le conservera à jamais auprès de lui. Même si les deux amants ne peuvent pas poursuivre leur relation, leur amour demeure vivant dans le corps détruit du rossignol.

Y a-t-il une différence entre le désir charnel et le désir émotif ou amical ? Les lais de Marie de France se composent de contes d'amour courtois et d'infidélité, mais pour la plupart c'est le désir sexuel qui éclipse le bon jugement et les mariages heureux des amants. Par exemple, dans le lai intitulé *Le Bisclavret,* Marie de France décrit explicitement l'amour qui existe entre les deux personnages, le baron et sa femme. Ce fondement existe dans les déclarations explicites de la narratrice (« Ils s'aimaient » (*Les lais de Marie* v. 23)), et par l'angoisse de la femme quand elle est abandonnée par son mari chaque nuit. Le récit atteint son sommet quand la femme découvre que le baron se transforme la nuit en un loup-garou surnommé Bisclavret. Révulsée par la forme monstrueuse de son mari, elle a une liaison avec un chevalier. En face d'un désir nouveau, elle abandonne son mari et leur relation établie ; pourtant, ce n'est pas le loup garou qui est représenté comme monstrueux et sauvage, mais la femme, dont la révulsion pour Bisclavret augmente son désir charnel pour le chevalier. Dans ce conte, une relation amicale existe jusqu'à ce qu'il y ait une motivation pour le désir charnel. La femme est dépeinte comme une scélérate, une femme perfide, trompeuse, et malveillante, comme quelqu'un qui ne ressent pas le moindre scrupule à placer le désir charnel avant tout. Au contraire, *Le rossignol* ne commence pas avec une explication de l'amour qui existe entre les deux époux. À sa place, Marie de France dépeint la sagesse, la grâce, et les bonnes manières de la femme (v. 14–16). Les explications sur l'absence d'amour entre les deux époux contribuent à l'interprétation de l'infidélité, et crée un niveau de complexité entre les relations dans ce conte. En plus, cette distinction indique que l'amour infidèle dans *Le rossignol* est fondé par une autre forme de désir, au-delà du désir sexuel.

N'ayant pas l'opportunité de consommer leur amour physiquement ou sexuellement, les deux amants trouvent l'un dans l'autre un compagnon. Leur désir se manifeste sous la forme d'une amitié, plus qu'une liaison sexuelle. C'est-à-dire que, « Leur joie vient de cette 'communication symétrique, réciproque' qui [...] est la base de l'amour absolu chez Marie. Le langage du poème insiste sur la mutualité et la réciprocité à travers la répétition du préfixe 'entre-' (entrechangier 43, entreveïssent 56, entreamé 57) » (Kaempfer 15). L'utilisation du mot « entre » indique un amour mutuel, qui est formé sur une amitié ; en plus, Marie de France utilise exclusivement le mot « ami » au lieu du mot « amant » pour décrire la relation entre les deux personnages. Les deux amis ou amants en puissance « se sont donc longtemps aimés » (v. 57), et ils « goûtaient le plaisir de se voir, puisqu'ils ne pouvaient avoir plus » (v. 77–78). Bien que les deux amis n'aient pas l'opportunité de se toucher, même sans l'attente de sexe, ils continuent de s'aimer et de se parler. Dans *Le rossignol*, cette infidélité émotionnelle découle du fait que deux personnages voient en l'autre un compagnon, une personne qui sait écouter, et un ami. Ce qui déclenche la jalousie de celui qui se croit trompé est la présence d'un amour puissant et amical, quelque chose que l'homme n'arrive jamais à obtenir dans sa relation avec sa femme.

Souvent dans les contes d'amour, le désir et la violence sont entrelacés. Et souvent, la figure du rossignol y joue un rôle crucial. Par exemple, dans le mythe grec de *Philomèle*, un roi violent coupe la langue de Philomèle, afin qu'elle ne révèle pas avoir été violée par lui. Une fois qu'elle s'est vengée en lui servant son fils à manger, par pitié, les Dieux la transforment en rossignol pour qu'elle puisse s'échapper et chanter toujours une chanson empreinte de peine et de douleur. Dans *Les lais de Marie*, les lecteurs voient une continuation de cette histoire par la présence du rossignol au milieu du désir et de la violence. Même sans l'expression d'amour charnel entre les deux amants, le chevalier marié est menacé par l'idée du désir entre sa femme et son voisin, et donc *Le rossignol* représente la violence de l'amour et du désir. Howard Bloch analyse une autre œuvre de Marie de France, *Les Fables*, dans laquelle il s'agit de contes à propos d'animaux qui représentent la nature humaine ; il dit que *Les Fables* illustrent l'animalité dans chaque être humain, et demandent aux lecteurs si l'humanité « peut triompher sur la nature animale ou prédatrice » (32). Malgré les différences entre *Les Fables* et *Les lais*, cette idée d'animalité peut être renforcée par les actions du mari dans *Le rossignol.* L'homme représente la violence et la sauvagerie d'un animal, un fait que Marie de France n'hésite pas à évoquer explicitement, dès le début. En présentant ce lai, « La poignante historiette du *Laüstic* met en scène une dame de l'aristocratie très surveillée par un mari jaloux et cruel » (Piguet 50). Les soupçons du mari le conduisent à intensifier la surveillance de sa femme, et contribuent éventuellement à la violence. Après que le mari a tué le rossignol, un acte de vengeance et de « pure méchanceté » (v. 114), Marie de France déclare que « il avait bien l'âme d'un vilain ! » (v. 116). Il est étrange que l'homme commette un acte si violent et vil sans une base évidente d'amour entre lui et sa femme. Cette animalité et cette violence représentent plus le pouvoir de l'homme, et sa capacité à exprimer sa colère et sa domination sans conséquence. Cette action indique son autorité, spécifiquement sur sa femme. Le mari n'a pas triomphé de la nature animale, parce que c'est cette nature sur laquelle son contrôle repose. La mort du rossignol signifie la fin de l'infidélité, et les effets sanglants de la trahison.

Les lais de Marie de France, écrits en octosyllabes, sont dotés d'un lyrisme poétique. C'est par ce lyrisme fort qu'on peut comprendre le symbole du rossignol, et le rôle de la chanson pour les thèmes principaux. La poésie inhérente au chant d'oiseau est remarquée dans la comédie grecque, *Les Oiseaux* d'Aristophane. La chanson du rossignol est décrite comme une « voix égale à celle des Muses (...) qui module sur la flûte harmonieuse des accents printaniers » (Aristophane, v. 658 et 676). En utilisant le rossignol, Marie de France évoque le lien entre les oiseaux, les Muses, et l'histoire sanglante de Philomèle pour présager la profondeur poétique du lai et sa conclusion tragique. Kaempfer explique que, « La joie d'amour chez Marie de France n'est pas muette mais communicative et musicale. Elle apparaît ainsi intraduisible dans le récit écrit et serait plutôt le propre du lai lyrique » (12). En outre, Kaempfer ajoute que conceptuellement, la musique du poème est connectée au chant d'oiseau ; il existe une métaphore double avec la forme et le contenu du lai. L'intrigue et les symboles dans *Le rossignol* sont liés à la forme lyrique : Marie de France raconte effectivement une histoire d'amour poétiquement en octosyllabes, tout en symbolisant l'amour et le désir par les oiseaux qui chantent. C'est par cet aspect de méta narration que Marie de France montre son pouvoir sur la poésie, et sa capacité à créer des couches ou strates dans l'histoire.

Par ailleurs, le rossignol représente et symbolise l'amour joyeux et impossible entre les deux amants. Kaempfer explique que le mari, en tuant le rossignol, a effectivement interrompu la joie et l'amour des amants. Delcourt renforce cette interprétation en expliquant que « dans la poésie lyrique médiévale (...) aimer et chanter sont, en fait, une seule et même chose » (822). Avec cette idée, Marie de France montre que les chansons et la poésie ont une forte puissance métaphorique dans les contes d'amour. En tuant le rossignol, le mari a empêché l'amour. Le corps du rossignol et le sang sur la poitrine de la femme montrent comment le désir de contrôle du mari se manifeste par la violence. Par ailleurs, la chanson d'amour entre les amants est arrêtée par la mort de l'oiseau. La violence a réussi à tuer l'oiseau et a arrêté la chanson, mais elle n'a pas éliminé l'amour amical. En fait, c'est l'inverse : l'amour est immortalisé dans la forme poétique du conte, laissant deviner une chanson qui existe pour l'éternité. La chanson, l'amour, et la violence sont entrelacés, tissés ensemble dans ce lai pour représenter une relation vivante, bien fondée, et joyeuse, mais éventuellement empêchée et réduite au silence.

Marie de France, dans *Le rossignol*, fait réfléchir les lecteurs sur le concept d'une fin heureuse. Delcourt explique que, « Ce qui nous est rapporté dans cette histoire, ce sont essentiellement les paroles et les émotions de la dame » (821). La femme est le centre de ce conte, et elle est partagée par sa loyauté envers son mari, un homme sauvage et animal, et son amant, un compagnon et ami. Elle est punie pour ses actions, mais elle est punie par un amour fort qui continue éternellement. Le chevalier, au lieu d'oublier tout ce qui s'est passé, garde la dépouille du rossignol près de lui pour toujours. Même avec la mort du rossignol, l'amour continue. La violence n'a ni gagné la fidélité émotionnelle de la femme ni augmenté l'empathie pour le mari trahi. La chanson du rossignol a été interrompue, mais la chanson de leur amour perdure dans le lyrisme du lai. Ce lai représente bien la poésie de la conteuse Marie de France, qui a révélé aux lecteurs et auditeurs un conte d'amour beau, triste, et intemporel.

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Den Nationalismus verhandeln: Deutschamerikanische Identitäten und Loyalitäten laut dem deutschen Zeitungswesen im Ersten Weltkrieg*

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ENGLISH ABSTRACT The early twentieth century was a time of tense social and political transformation in the United States, with hundreds of thousands of immigrants arriving around the turn of the century. With international tensions mounting in Europe—and immigrant communities having to navigate social, political, and economic struggles in the U.S.—immigrants were forced to find a balance between their cultural origins and adopted nationality. German-Americans were no exception to this, despite being widely praised for their assimilation and loyalty to the U.S. After the entry of the U.S. into World War I in 1917, German-Americans were forced to reckon with their cultural identities, personal loyalties, and what it meant to be a German-American. In this article, the author explores the representations of German-American identity and loyalty as seen through the German language press in Chicago, focusing specifically on the *Abendpost*, the *Sonntagpost*, and the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*. The author argues that despite outward pressures to reject German ancestry and culture, German-Americans embraced their pluralist identities and emphasized that German and American identities do not exist separate from or cancel each other out, and the German language press had various direct and indirect methods to maintain German-American culture, emphasize loyalty to the United States, and preserve community during a time of misunderstanding and prejudice from wider American society.

Ausweislich des United States Census 1980 haben 50 Millionen Amerikaner deutsche Abstammung.[1] Obwohl ungefähr ein Fünftel des Landes deutscher Herkunft ist, war und bleibt eine bedeutende deutsche öffentliche Kultur verhältnismäßig beschränkt. Deutsche Einwanderung in die Vereinigte Staaten hat seit dem 19. und 20. Jahrhundert drastisch gefallen. Das bedeutet, dass viele Antwortende mehrfache Generationen von ihrer deutschen Herkunft entfernt waren. Allerdings ist noch ein Faktor für diese gesunkene Beteiligung an deutscher Kultur die aktive Niederhaltung von deutscher Kultur, Sprache und Ausbildung während und nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg.

Deutsche Kultur und Sprache waren ziemlich erwünscht in den USA durch den 19. Jahrhundert und die Deutschen wurden als „das beste Art von Einwanderern" betrachtet, obwohl auch die Deutschen Xenophobie bestehen mussten.[2] Während der US-Neutralitätspolitik gegenüber dem Ersten Weltkrieg (1914–1917),

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1 Peter C. Weber, "Ethnic Identity During War: The Case of American Turner Societies during World War I," *Nonprofit and Volunteer Sector Quarterly* 43, no. 1. (2014): 187.

2 Sandra Del Valle, "A History of Language Rights: Between Tolerance and Hostility," In *Language Rights and the Law in the United States: Finding Our Voices*, (Channel View Publications, 2003), 31–32.

litten Deutschamerikaner nicht besonders von widerstreitenden Loyalitäten zwischen ihrer Heimat und dem angenommenen Land.[3] Aus diesem Grund hielten Deutschamerikaner es für ungefährlich, die deutschen Kriegseinsatz zu unterstützen, indem sie politisch eine weitere Neutralitätspolitik förderten und sich sogar freiwillig für die deutsche Armee anmeldeten.[4] Die Deutschamerikaner hofften, dass diese Neutralitätspolitik nicht nur Interessenkonflikte verhindern würde, aber dass sie auch Feindlichkeiten gegen deutschamerikanische Sprache und kulturelle Ausdrücke verhindern würde.

Nach dem Kriegseintritt der USA im April 1917 sind öffentliche deutschfreundliche Ausdrücke der Deutschamerikaner weitgehend verschwunden. Politiker und Aktivistengruppen waren gleichermaßen effizient in ihrem Versuch, das Antideutschtum durch Auslöschungversuche in vielen Facetten der amerikanischen Gesellschaft einzusetzen, z.B., deutschsprachliche Ausbildung zu verbieten, öffentliche Vorträge auf Deutsch zu beschränken, deutsche Medien zu verbieten und deutsches Essen- und Straßennamen umzubenennen.[5] Wie Frederick Luebke beschrieben hat, diese „superpatriotischen" Initiativen wurden konzipiert, um Angst einzuträufeln, und viele Deutschamerikaner übernahmen diesen amerikanischen „Superpatriotismus" als Überlebenstaktik.[6] Viele Deutschamerikaner nahmen jedoch einen Glauben an pluralistische Identitäten an: die Fähigkeit, mehrere ethnische, kulturelle oder nationale Identitäten gleichzeitig zu besitzen, ohne dass die eine mit der anderen in Konflikt gerät oder sie vernichtet.[7] Das zeigte sich verschiedenartig, zum Beispiel für US-Militärdienst mit dem gegebenen deutschen Nachnamen anzumelden, anstatt einen weniger deutsch klingenden Namen anzunehmen.

Das Deutsche Zeitungswesen war einen wichtigen Aspekt des deutschamerikanischen kulturellen Ausdruckes dieser Zeit. Obwohl die meisten fremdsprachigen Zeitungen in den USA um die Jahrhundertwende auf Deutsch geschrieben wurden, gibt es eine wichtige Abnahme von 564 deutschsprachige Zeitungen im Jahr 1914 zu 522 im Jahr 1917 und die Anzahlen fielen noch weiter bis zu 322 im Jahr 1918.[8] Allerdings blieb die Zirkulation der restlichen Deutschen Zeitungen beständig und sie wuchs sogar während der Kriegsjahre laut einigen Zahlen, was zeigt, dass die Deutschamerikaner weiterhin mit ihrer Sprache und ihrer Gemeinschaft verbunden blieben.[9]

Die scharfe Unterdrückung der deutschen Kultur in den USA und die Funktion des deutschen Zeitungswesens als eine wichtige kulturelle Stütze stellen die Frage: Wie haben die deutschen Zeitungen von Chicago den Konflikt zwischen staatlicher Loyalität und kultureller Identität für Deutschamerikaner während der Beteiligung der USA im Ersten Weltkrieg dargestellt? Diese Untersuchung wird sich auf Diskussionen über Identitäten, kulturelle Ausdrucken und staatliche Loyalität der Deutschamerikaner, wie sie durch deutschsprachige Zeitungen dargestellt werden, konzentrieren. Um die Darstellung von Identität und Kulturformen zu analysieren, werden in dieser Untersuchung Leitartikel, Artikel und ausgewählte Anzeigen aus der *Chicagoer Abendpost*, der *Sonntagpost* und der *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* zwischen den Jahren 1917 und 1919 verwendet.

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3 Sandra Del Valle, "A History of Language Rights: Between Tolerance and Hostility," 31–32.

4 Cheryl A. Hudson, "Making Modern Citizens: Political Culture in Chicago 1890–1930," (PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 2011), 98.

5 Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America* (Simon and Schuster, 2010), 292.; Tischauser, "The Burden of Ethnicity," 41, 49.

6 Frederick Luebke, *The Bonds of Loyalty: German-Americans and World War I* (Northern Illinois University Press De Kalb, 1974), 210,226. Mehr zum Thema "Superpatriotismus" in der detuschen und nicht-deutschen amerikanischen Gesellshaft finden Sie unter Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty,* 225–265 and Katja Wüstenbecker, *Deutsch-Amerikaner im Ersten Weltkrieg: US-Politik und nationale Identitäten im Mittelern Westen* (Franz Steiner Verlag, 2007), 245–304.

7 Weber, "Ethnic Identity During War," 188; Cheryl A. Hudson, "Making Modern Citizens," 228.

8 Robert E. Park, *The Immigrant Press and its Control* (Harper & Brothers, 1922), Table 18.

9 Wittke, *The German Language Press in America,* 244.

Von diesen Zeitungen wurden die Geschichte und Politik von der *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, die meist untersuchte. Die Illinois Staat-Zeitung wurde im Jahr 1849 von Einwanderern gegründet, die als „Forty Eighters“ bekannt waren: Revolutionären, die für die Vereinigung Deutschlands eintraten und als politische Flüchtlinge in die USA kamen.[10] Diese Zeitung vertrat im neunzehnten und frühen zwanzigsten Jahrhundert eine republikanischorientierte politische Haltung und wird dafür bekannt, dass sie Abraham Lincoln in seinen Kampagnen stark unterstützten.[11] Obwohl die Chicagoer Abendpost und Sonntagpost waren auch zwei wichtigen Publikationen für das deutsche Zeitungswesen der Stadt, gibt es nur wenige Informationen über ihre Geschichte, Gründer und politische Haltung. Diese Zeitungen wurden im 19. Jahrhundert gegründet; es ist daher möglich, dass sie auch von der „Forty Eighters“ Gruppe gegründet wurden.

Diese Sammlung von Unterlagen wurde aus dem Deutschen ins Englische von örtlichen Freiwilligen mittels der Chicagoer fremdsprachigen Zeitungswesenerkundung (FLPS) von den 1930er Jahren übersetzt. Es war eine Initiative der Works Progress Administration vom Illinois‘ Chicago Public Library Omnibus Project. Dieses Projekt beaufsichtigte die Übersetzung von mehr als 120.000 Zeitungsseiten aus zweiundzwanzig Chicagoer Sprachgemeinschaften ein. Die deutschen Zeitungen erstrecken sich über etwa acht Kisten in einer Sammlung, die derzeit vom Hanna Holborn Gray Research Center der Universität von Chicago Bibliothek verwaltet wird.

Die Geschichtsschreibung teilt die deutschamerikanische Erfahrung nicht nur in eine Zeit der Neutralität der USA und eine Zeit des Engagements auf, sondern nach Peter Weber auch in zwei Theorien von kulturellen Ergebnissen: die Theorie des ethnischen Verschwindens und die Theorie des ethnischen Überlebens.[12] Die Theorie des ethnischen Verschwindens, oder die „Lusitania Effekt,“ legt die komplette „Auslöschung“ von deutscher Kultur in den USA nach dem Kriegseintritt dar und führte die Unterdrückung der deutschen Sprache in dem Zeitungswesen und den Schulen als Hauptursache auf. [13] In einer Untersuchung der deutschamerikanischen Gemeinden in Chicago während und zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen argumentiert Leslie Tischauser, dass die deutschamerikanische Identität trotz der allgemein pluralistischen Haltung Deutschamerikaner durch den Ersten Weltkrieg stark beeinträchtigt wurde und sich nach anhaltender Diskriminierung und negativer Aufmerksamkeit während des Zweiten Weltkrieges nie wieder erholte.[14] Carl Wittke behauptet, dass während die nativistischen Amerikaner mit ihrer Betonung des „Amerikanismus mit Bindestrich“ die deutschamerikanische Identität von der traditionellen „Amerikanischen“ Identität abgrenzten, verursachte der Anschlag gegen deutsche Kultur, Sprache und Gesellschaft durch und nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg eine Löschung vom deutschen öffentlichen Leben, die bis in die Nachkriegszeit hinein weitergegangen ist.[15] Zwar gibt es noch einige deutsch-amerikanische Traditionen und Gesellschaften, behaupten diese Historiker*innen aber, dass deutsch-amerikanische Kultur weitgehend ausradiert wurde, so dass sie nie wieder ihre gesellschaftliche Prävalenz aus der Vorkriegszeit wiedererreichte.

10 Sebastian P. Wuepper, “Reams, Radicals, and Revolutionaries: The ‘Illinois Staats-Zeitung’ and the German-American Milieu in Chicago, 1847–1877” (PhD diss.), Loyola University Chicago, 2021, 4.

11 Wuepper, “Reams, Radicals, and Revolutionaries,” 7.

12 Weber, “Ethnic Identity During War,” 187–188.

13 Weber, “Ethnic Identity During War,” 187. Der “Lusitania Effekt” besagt, dass der Untergang des britischen Passagierschiffs Lusitania durch ein deutsches U-Boot im Jahr 1915 in den USA einen kritischen Gesinnungswandel gegenüber den Deutschen auslöste, der zur Auslöschung der deutschamerikanischen Identität führte. Weitere Informationen über den “Lusitania Effekt” finden Sie unter Frank Trommler, “The Lusitania Effect: America’s Mobilization against Germany in World War I.” *German Studies Review* 32, no. 2 (2009), 241–266.

14 Tischauser, “The Burden of Ethnicity,” 259, 263.

15 Carl Wittke. “American Germans in Two World Wars,” *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 27, no. 1 (1943), 9, 11. Weitere Informationen zur kulturellen Auslöschung im Zusammenhang mit deutschamerikanischen religiösen Gruppen und Zeitungen, finden Sie unter Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 316–320. Weitere Informationen über die sprachige Auslöschung des Deutschen während und nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg, finden Sie unter Del Valle, “A History of Language Rights: Between Tolerance and Hostility.”

Die Theorie des ethnischen Überlebens behauptet, dass Deutschamerikaner durch die Kriegsanstrengungen mobilisiert wurden und noch mehr mit ihrem Kulturerbe durch verstärkt gesellschaftliche Verbindungen abgestimmt wurden.[16] Obwohl Carl Wittke Informationen zur Verfügung stellt, die darauf hindeuten, dass die Zahl der deutschamerikanischen Zeitungen während und nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg abfiel, behauptet Wittke, dass das deutschamerikanische Zeitungswesen ein wichtiger Aspekt der deutschamerikanischen Gesellschaft durch und nach dem Krieg war.[17] Cheryl Hudson behauptet, dass Einwandergruppen in Chicago nicht glaubten, dass ihre deutsche Kultur oder Sprache sie davon befreiten, als Amerikaner zu gelten.[18] In einer Untersuchung von deutschamerikanischen Gesellschaften in vier Hauptstädten des Mittleren Westens (inklusiv Chicago) behauptet Katja Wüstenbecker, dass antideutsche Rhetorik die deutschamerikanische Gemeinschaft stärkte, anstatt es auseinanderzubrechen.[19] Obgleich der Erste Weltkrieg eine Zunahme des Antideutschtums einführte, behaupten diese Gelehrten, dass deutsche Kultur nach dem Krieg bestand und sogar gedieh.

Die Theorie des ethnischen Verschwindens und die Theorie des ethnischen Überlebens spiegeln beide kritische Kämpfe von den deutschamerikanischen Erfahrungen des frühen zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts wider und erkennen die Entwicklungen dieser Gemeinschaft an. Allerdings behaupte Peter Weber, dass eine Kreuzung der Theorien den Schlüssel anbietet, die Entwicklung von deutschamerikanischer Kultur und Identität zu verstehen, und diese Untersuchung wird analysieren, wie dieser Pluralismus im Chicagoer deutschsprachigen Zeitungswesen bekunden wurde.[20] Obwohl einige Autoren vorschlugen, dass die Deutschamerikaner ihre amerikanische Identität aufgeben sollten, setzte sich das deutschsprachliche Zeitungswesen Chicagos für die pluralistische Identität der Deutschamerikaner ein. Es betonte das „Amerikanisch-Sein“ der Deutschamerikaner und erinnerte andere ethnische und Sozialgruppen an die Aufopferung der Deutschen in der Geschichte der USA.

Vor der Verwicklung der USA im Ersten Weltkrieg, verblieb das deutschsprachige Zeitungswesen relativ Pro-Deutschland. In einem Artikel von der *Abendpost*, der über eine Jubiläumsfeier zur Gründung von Deutschland berichtet, wird eine Rede des deutschamerikanischen Pfarrers Julius Hofmann zitiert, in der er die Absicht der Alliierten betont, „Deutschland zu zerstören.“[21] Das deutschsprachige Zeitungswesen veröffentlichte auch Anzeigen, die Geldanweisungen und Kriegsanleihen für Deutschland, Österreich-Ungarn und Russland beförderten, und die Loyalität der Deutschamerikaner gegenüber den deutschen Kriegsanstrengungen insbesondere im Jahr vor dem Eintritt der USA in den Krieg betonten.[22] Hoffman sagte jedoch später in seiner Rede, dass Deutschamerikaner „wertvolle Ergänzungen bringen“ zu den USA und verdienten keine Diskriminierung.[23] In Übereinstimmung mit den Beobachtungen von Cheryl Hudson kritisiert diese Rede andere Einwandergruppen, die „aus Armut von Notlage“ eingewandert sind, was andeutet, dass die Deutschen in die USA kamen, um einen Beitrag zu leisten und nicht um Ressourcen auszunützen.[24] Obwohl das deutschsprachigen Zeitungswesen diese öffentliche und wirtschaftliche Befürwortung von der Heimat vor der US-Beteiligung betonte, zeigte die Positionierung von Deutschamerikaner auf ein höheres soziales und wirtschaftliches Niveau als andere Einwanderergruppen, dass die Deutschamerikaner die Untersuchung und Unterdrückung vorweggenommen haben, die der Krieg für ihre Gemeinschaften hätten verursachen können,

16 Weber, “Ethnic Identity During War,” 188.

17 Carl Wittke, *The German Language Press in America,* 244. Beachten Sie, dass ein anderes früheres Werk von Wittke, “American Germans in Two World Wars” unter die Theorie des ethnischen Verschwindens fällt.

18 Hudson, “Making Modern Citizens,” 118.

19 Wüstenbecker, *Deutsch-Amerikaner im Ersten Weltkrieg,* 308.

20 Weber, “Ethnic Identity During War,” 189.

21 “Festival of the German Friends,” *Abendpost,* 19. Jan 1916.

22 “Adv.” *Abendpost,* 2. Feb 1916 (a–d) and “(Adv.) German, Austro-Hungarian War Loan; Money Orders,” *Abendpost,* 12. Feb 1916.

23 “Festival of the German Friends in Memory of the Nation’s Birth,” *Abendpost,* 19. Jan 1916.

24 Hudson, “Making Modern Citizens,” 97–98. “Festival of the German Friends,” *Abendpost,* 19. Jan 1916.

wenn keine entsprechenden Maßnahmen ergriffen würden.

Nach dem Eintritt der USA in den Ersten Weltkrieg spiegelt das deutschsprachige Zeitungswesen von Chicago einen starken Pluralismussinn, der die Deutschamerikaner ermutigte, Gemeinschaftsaktivitäten fortzusetzen, auch wenn sie die Kriegsanstrengungen der USA unterstützten. Bereits im März 1917, weniger als einen Monat vor dem Eintritt der USA in den Krieg, betonte die *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, dass „Deutschamerikaner würden nicht zögern, ihre Loyalität zu zeigen" gegenüber ihrer Wahlheimat im Fall von Krieg mit Deutschland.[25] Viele deutschamerikanischen Vereine stornierten ihre Aktivitäten oder stellten sie zurück. Ein späterer Artikel von der *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* behauptet, dass die Absage von Kulturveranstaltungen ein Eingeständnis sei, dass „das Schicksal von [den Deutschamerikanern] mehr betrifft als das ihres eigenen Landes," und in einem anderen Artikel davon steht es, dass die Deutschamerikaner „Verpflichtungen gegenüber dem Land haben, das [ihnen] Schutz gewährt hat."[26] Obwohl die *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* die Wichtigkeit der Loyalität zu den USA betont, behauptete es in späteren Artikeln, dass die Deutschamerikaner „Bewunderung für viele deutsche Eigenschaften und Errungenschaften haben sollten, [aber] der deutschstämmige Amerikaner fühlt eine neue Freiheit," was zeigt, wie die Deutschamerikaner aufgerufen wurden, die Verbindung zu ihrem Erbe aufrechtzuerhalten, obwohl sie die neuen Freiheiten und Möglichkeiten in den USA zu schätzen wussten.[27] Horace Brand, der Cutter der *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* war, war hartnäckig für fortgesetztes kulturelles und gemeinschaftliches Engagement, sowohl innerhalb der Publikation als auch in Partnerschaft mit deutschamerikanischen Vereinen, was erklärt, warum die Zeitung sich so offen für kulturelles Engagement einsetzte.[28] Man soll aber zur Kenntnis nehmen, dass die einzigen Artikel, die von FLPS übersetzt wurden, kamen aus der *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* und es gibt keine Artikel aus der *Abendpost* oder *Sonntagpost*.

Durch die US-Beteiligung im dem Ersten Weltkrieg, betonten viele Redakteure, Autoren und prominente deutschamerikanische Persönlichkeiten die Wichtigkeit von deutschen Identität, während man treu zur amerikanischen Sache blieb. Die *Sonntagpost* beschreibt, dass die „Liebe der Deutschamerikaner zu ihrem Volk und ihrem Land, zusammen mit der Loyalität des wahren Amerikaners, mit ihrer Liebe zum deutschen Volk gepaart ist", und dass die deutschamerikanischen Soldaten nicht nur daran arbeiten, die Unantastbarkeit der USA zu bewahren, sondern auch das deutsche Volk von seinem unterdrückenden Herrscher zu befreien.[29] Als Antwort auf die Tatsache, dass viele Soldaten ihre deutschen Zunamen bei der Einberufung zum Militär änderten, teilt der Artikel mit, dass die Beibehaltung eines deutschen Zunamens bei der Einberufung der US-Regierung und der Gesellschaft zeigt, dass die Deutschamerikaner bereit sind, für dieses Land zu kämpfen und zu zeigen, wo ihre Loyalität steht.[30] Die Unterstützung des deutschsprachigen Zeitungswesens für pluralistische Identitäten oder eine Identität, die Aspekte sowohl der deutschen als auch der amerikanischen Kultur und Werte verbindet, ist bezeichnend für das angespannte soziale Klima der Kriegszeit innerhalb der deutsch-amerikanischen Gemeinden in Chicago. Obwohl diese Gemeinschaften unter Druck gesetzt wurden, die amerikanische Identität vollständig zu übernehmen und andere ethnische oder kulturelle Bindungen abzulehnen, brachte das deutsch-amerikanische Zeitungswesen in dieser Zeit kontinuierlich zum Ausdruck, dass diese Identitäten nebeneinander bestehen können.

25 "In the German Club," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 11. März 1917.

26 "German American Societies," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 25. Juni 1917; Dr. Maxin Niven, quoted in "German School Association," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 12. April 1917.

27 "Is it Worth While?" *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 25. Oct 1917.

28 Tischauser, "The Burden of Ethnicity," 37.

29 "(Editorial)," *Sonntagpost,* 1. Sept 1918.

30 "(Editorial)," *Sonntagpost,* 1. Sept 1918; Hudson, "Making Modern Citizens," 100–101.

In diesem Zeitraum von Pluralismus mit Schwerpunkt auf amerikanischen Loyalitäten der Deutschamerikaner, gibt es wenige Artikel, in dem eine dezidierte antideutsche Perspektive präsentiert wurde. Ein bemerkenswerter Artikel, der in die Abendpost im September 1918 veröffentlicht wurde, zitierte Chas H. Grasty, ein Journalist, der für den Kansas City Star über den Krieg berichtete. Grasty kommentierte folgendes über deutsch-amerikanische Soldaten:

> Ich möchte diese jungen Männer nicht als ‚Deutschamerikaner' bezeichnen, denn ich konnte nicht einmal eine Spur von der "Kultur" in ihnen finden. Wenn sie jemals damit geimpft worden wären, hätten sie sicherlich wieder loswerden können, und das ist das wunderbare und großartige an unserem politischen und sozialen System.[31]

Nach diesem Auszug behauptet der Abendpost-Schreiber enthusiastisch, dass die „Amerikanisierung" der deutschamerikanischen Soldaten „einer der erstaunlichsten Phänomene des Krieges" sei.[32] Obwohl dies ein Sonderfall unter den vielen Artikeln ist, die für die Beibehaltung der deutschen Kultur werben, ist es wichtig, die unterschiedlichen Perspektiven innerhalb der deutschamerikanischen Gemeinschaft zu verstehen, sowohl wie sie sich in dem deutschsprachigen Zeitungswesen auftraten.

Bereits vor dem Eintritt der USA in den Krieg und auch danach, tauchte ein besonderes Thema in den Diskussionen von deutsch-amerikanischen Loyalitäten auf: die lange Geschichte von den Beiträgen der Deutschen für die USA. Im März 1917 zeigte ein Artikel über eine Rede von George A. Mason im Deutsch Club die Tapferkeit von Marie Ludwig, die bei dem Kampf von Monmouth im Revolutionskrieg mitkämpfte, und lobte den Patriotismus der Deutschamerikaner, die in dem Revolutionskrieg kämpften.[33] Obwohl die deutschen Beiträge zur amerikanischen Geschichte während der amerikanischen Kriegsbeteiligung nur selten erwähnt wurden, wurden sie in der unmittelbaren Nachkriegszeit wieder präsent. Im Dezember 1918 druckte die *Abendpost* einen Artikel über den Einfluss des deutschamerikanischen Zeitungswesens auf das amerikanische Publikationswesen folgendes ab:

> Vor dem Unabhängigkeitskrieg wurden in Pennsylvania nur acht englische Zeitungen veröffentlicht, aber es gab zehn deutsche Zeitungen... Kein Geringerer als Benjamin Franklin hielt es für notwendig, deutsche Bücher zu drucken. In Amerika wurde die Bibel dreimal auf Deutsch und das Neue Testament siebenmal gedruckt, bevor sie auf Englisch gedruckt wurden.[34]

Diese Beiträge erinnerten nicht nur nicht-deutsche Amerikaner an die deutsche Loyalität in vergangenen Konflikten, sondern sie erinnerten auch Deutschamerikaner an ihre anhaltende und wesentliche Funktion in der amerikanischen Gesellschaft und Geschichte. Diese Verbindungen, gepaart mit der öffentlichen Unterstützung für die Sache der USA durch Kriegsanleihen und Rekrutierung, dienten dazu, anderen Amerikaner zu beweisen, dass Deutschamerikaner ihre Wahlheimat unterstützen konnten, obwohl sie ihr kulturelles Erbe bewahrten.

Mit der Beteiligung der USA in dem Krieg verschob sich der Schwerpunkt des deutschsprachigen Zeitungswesens auf die Darstellung der deutschamerikanischen Identität, wobei die deutsche Identität in den Hintergrund trat, während sich die amerikanische hervorhob. Vor 1918 verwendete das deutschsprachlichen Zeitungswesen in ihren Artikeln hauptsächlich den

31 "Better American Soldiers Are Not to Be Found (From the German Democracy Bulletin," *Abendpost,* 17. Sept 1918.

32 "Better American Soldiers Are Not to Be Found," *Abendpost,* 17. Sept 1918.

33 "In the German Club," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 11. März 1917.

34 "Germans in America," *Abendpost,* 23. Dec 1918.

Begriff „Deutschamerikaner."[35] Im Laufe des Jahres 1918 begannen die Zeitungen jedoch, Begriffe wie „Amerikaner deutscher Herkunft," „Amerikaner deutscher Abstammung," „Amerikaner deutscher Extraktion," oder „Amerikaner deutschen Blutes" zu verwenden.[36] Im Jahr 1917 war es für das deutschsprachigen Zeitungen angenehmer, die deutsche Identität in den Vordergrund zu stellen (z.B. „Deutschamerikaner"). Mit dem Fortschreiten des Krieges und der antideutschamerikanischen Rhetorik trat die deutsche Identität jedoch zugunsten der amerikanischen (z.B. "Amerikaner deutscher Herkunft") in den Hintergrund. Die Änderung der Betonung steht im Einklang mit der „Antihyphen" Rhetorik, die bereits während der Präsidentschaft von Theodore Roosevelt (1901–1909) entstand, als er klare Unterscheidungen zwischen dem subversiven „Deutschamerikaner" und dem patriotischen „Amerikaner deutscher Herkunft" machte.[37] Diese Änderung der Sprache zeigt, dass die pluralistische deutschamerikanische Identität trotz des äußeren Druckes, die amerikanische Loyalität durch die Sprache zu beweisen, bestehen blieb.

Das deutschsprachige Zeitungswesen begann mit dem Kriegseintritt, sich häufig für den Deutschunterricht in den USA einzusetzen. Ein solcher Kommentar war in jeder der untersuchten Publikationen während des gesamten Krieges zu finden, seit bereits April 1917, und war besonders relevant gegen Ende des Krieges im September und Oktober 1918.[38] In einem Artikel, der im April 1917 veröffentlicht wurde, weist die *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* darauf hin, dass der Deutschunterricht einer der wichtigsten „Trauben" war, die am „Weinstock" wuchsen, den die Deutschamerikaner in den USA pflanzten.[39] Darüber hinaus drückte der Leiter des Deutschunterrichts an den Chicagoer Schulen, Martin Schmidhofer, seine Besorgnis darüber aus, dass nur wenige deutschamerikanische Eltern ihre Kinder für deutschsprachige Programme an den Schulen anmeldeten, was darauf hindeutet, dass eine Hauptfunktion dieser Sprachprogramme darin bestand, die deutsche Sprache und Kultur bei denjenigen zu bewahren, die ein deutsches Kulturerbe hatten.[40]

In den letzten Kriegsmonaten änderte sich der vorherrschende Diskurs über den Deutschunterricht in den Schulen. Der neue Schwerpunkt lag auf den Vorteilen des Fremdsprachenunterrichts für den US-Handel, die internationale Wirtschaft und die Förderung der Position der USA als Weltmacht nach dem Krieg.[41] Ein Artikel der *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* von Juni 1918 sprach seine Leser an, indem er erklärt, dass an deutschen Schulen immer noch Englisch unterrichtet wurde, um den Wettbewerb auf den englischsprachigen Märkten zu fördern; daher müssen die Amerikaner dem Deutschunterricht Vorrang einräumen, um mit deutschen Wirtschafts- und Globalisierungskräften Schritt zu halten.[42] Etwa zu dieser Zeit wurde der Deutschunterricht umstritten, da viele Sekundarschulen und Universitäten Deutschkurse und -abteilungen wieder einführten, was zu Gegenreaktionen seitens verschiedener gesellschaftlicher Gruppen führte, vor allem der Daughters of the American Revolution.[43] Da diese Zeitungen sowohl als Kommunikationsmittel innerhalb der deutschamerikanischen Gemeinschaft als auch als Repräsentanten dieser Gemeinschaft funktionierten, war diese Schwerpunktverlagerung

35 See "Festival of the German Friends," *Abendpost,* 19. Jan 1916; "In the German Club," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 11. März 1917; "German School Association," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 12. April 1917; "German-American Societies," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 25. Juni1917; "Is it Worth While?" *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 25. Oct 1917; "Where We Stand." *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 31. Dec 1917.

36 "(Editorial)," *Sonntagpost,* 1. Sept 1918; "Better American Soldiers Are Not to Be Found," *Abendpost,* 17. Sept 1918; "(Editorial)," *Abendpost,* 1. Nov 1918; "Eventful Evening in Chicago Lincoln Club," *Sonntagpost,* 10. Nov 1918.

37 Del Valle, "Language Rights and the Law in the United States," 33.

38 "German School Association," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 12. April 1917; "The Teaching of German," *Abendpost,* 4. Sept 1918; "The Necessity for the Study of Foreign Languages," *Sonntagpost,* 27. Oct 1918.

39 "German School Association," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 12. April 1917.

40 "German School Association," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 12. April 1917.

41 "Gratifying Concessions," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 17. Juni 1918; "The Necessity for the Study of Foreign Languages," *Sonntagpost,* 27. Oct 1918.

42 "Gratifying Concessions," *Illinois Staats-Zeitung,* 17. Juni 1918.

43 "German Instruction to Continue," *Abendpost,* 2. Oct 1918; "German Instruction to Continue," *Abendpost,* 28. Sept 1918; "Fight Against German Instruction," *Abendpost,* 27. Sept 1918; "The Teaching of German," Abendpost, 4. Sept 1918.

wahrscheinlich eine Möglichkeit, für die Fortsetzung des Deutschunterrichts zu werben, ohne die deutschamerikanische Identität zu erwähnen, um einer Überprüfung von superpatriotischen Chicagoern zu entgehen, die von Anfang an die Abschaffung des Deutschunterrichts gefordert hatten.

Die Untersuchung der Darstellungen deutschamerikanischer Identitäten während des Ersten Weltkriegs im deutschsprachige Zeitungswesen von Chicago zeigt, dass die pluralistische Identifikation für deutschamerikanische Autoren von entscheidender Bedeutung war. Die Entwicklung von deutschfreundlich Rhetorik zu pluralistischer Identifikation und die Betonung amerikanischer Loyalität während der Kriegsjahre spiegelt wider, dass die Zeitungswesen glaubten, dass man weder deutsch noch amerikanisch sein muss, sondern dass diese Identitäten innerhalb der eigenen Kultur und Traditionen nebeneinander existieren können. Diese pluralistische Sichtweise wurde jedoch nicht von allen Amerikanern während der Jahre der amerikanischen Kriegsbeteiligung akzeptiert. Indem sie den amerikanischen Aspekt der deutschamerikanischen Identität betonten (z.B. „Amerikaner deutscher Abstammung") und die Leser an die deutschen Beiträge zur amerikanischen Geschichte erinnerten, gewannen die Autoren den Kontakt zu den Amerikanern, trotz der Tatsache, dass die deutschen Ursprünge der Gemeinde weiterhin anerkannt wurden.

Diese Zeitungen dienten sowohl als Kommunikationsmittel innerhalb der deutschamerikanischen Gemeinschaft als auch Repräsentation der Gemeinschaft nach außen. Daher boten diese Zeitungen nicht nur einen Einblick in die Themen und Diskussionen der deutschamerikanischen Gemeinschaft, sondern sie spiegelten auch die Botschaften wider, die das Zeitungswesen an den nichtdeutschen Amerikaner von Chicago vermitteln wollte. Trotz intensiver Untersuchung ließ sich diese Gemeinschaft nicht entmutigen und versuchte, einen Mittelweg zu finden, wonach ihre deutsche und amerikanische Identität auch ohne die breite Akzeptanz, die ihnen vor dem Krieg zuteil wurde, gedeihen konnte.

Diplomatie- und Militärhistoriker untersuchen den Ersten Weltkrieg aus der Perspektive der Regierungsmaßnahmen oder militärischen Innovationen der Länder. Obwohl diese Wissenschaftler wichtige Aspekte des Ersten Weltkriegs abdecken, sind sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen notwendig, um die Erfahrungen der Gemeinschaften zu verstehen, die vom Krieg auf der „Heimatfront" betroffen waren. Es ist von entscheidender Bedeutung, anzuerkennen, dass der Erste Weltkrieg nicht alle Amerikaner in gleicher Weise betroffen hat, und differenzierte amerikanische Erfahrungen wie die der Deutschen zu untersuchen. Auf diese Weise können Historiker die umfassenderen sozialen Auswirkungen des Krieges berücksichtigen, sowohl wie diese Gemeinschaften durch das zwanzigste Jahrhundert hindurch beeinflusst wurden.

Die Untersuchung der früheren Erfahrungen von ethnischen Gruppen und Einwanderern in den USA ist hilfreich für die Schaffung von Unterstützungssystemen für solche Gruppen heute. Die Deutsch-Amerikaner während des Ersten Weltkriegs waren Opfer schwerer Belästigung, staatlicher Kontrollen und der Unterdrückung ihrer Kultur und Sprache. Die Analyse davon, wie diese Nöte in dem deutschsprachigen Zeitungswesen dargestellt wurden, kann einen Hinweis darauf geben, wie andere ethnische oder kulturelle Gruppen von internationalen Krisen oder Konflikten betroffen werden und darauf reagieren, insbesondere in der Zeit nach dem 11. September 2001 und angesichts der komplexen Einwanderungsprobleme des 21. Jahrhunderts.[44] Um zu verstehen, wie Einwanderergruppen sich selbst und ihre Beziehungen zu den USA darstellen, wird zu einem respektvolleren Dialog mit Angehörigen anderer Kulturen und zu einem besseren Verständnis der Art und Weise führen, wie Einwanderer, wie die Deutschamerikaner während des Ersten Weltkriegs, von internationalen Ereignissen und Konflikten betroffen werden.

44 Weber, "Ethnic Identity During War" 185–186.

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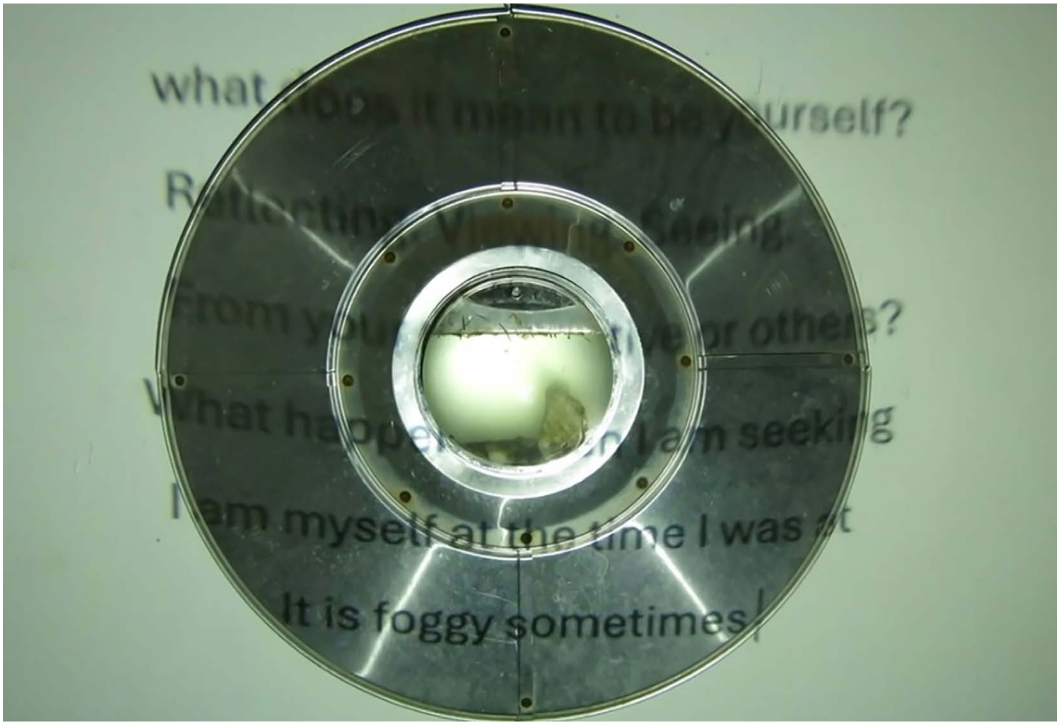

Jocelyn Gray | *finding clarity* | Water heater, hat, dead flowers, half an oyster shell, small rocks, plastic, mirror, projector

Mapping Digital Feminist Geographies in South Korea: Counterpublic Narratives in the Affective Reproduction of Space*

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Introduction

Technology, the internet, and digital media have come to play a major role in examining the unequal, gendered production of space, knowledge, and representation (Bae et al., 2021). The "digital," while originally conceived of as its own insular space (Negroponte, 1995), has become increasingly enmeshed with the physical (Özkula, 2021). In particular, social media and other communication platforms have transformed cultural forms of connectivity and relationality (McLean et al., 2013; Suk et al., 2023). Digital placemaking refers to the use of digital media to construct and reshape place-based meaning, identity, and belonging, particularly where physical access to space is restricted or contested (Mehan, 2024). This process involves the interaction of bodies, environments, and technologies, which enables marginalized groups to assert presence, claim visibility, and articulate spatial narratives. I argue that as digital spaces foster new forms of community, these mediated placemaking practices may translate into empowerment and collective identity formation, particularly by mobilizing affect. An affective theory of the political suggests that affect—pre-verbal experiences of feeling rather than emotions—is a primary driving factor in the formation of political sentiment. This has been shown to be particularly potent in the era of social media and digitally engaged activism due to the proliferation of emotionally provocative imagery and language (Olson, 2020).

In South Korea, gendered spatial segregation has long constrained women's access to education, employment, and political life (Mehan, 2024). Despite South Korea's rapid transformation—from one of the world's poorest nations to a highly developed economy within a few decades—the country consistently ranks among the worst for gender equality within the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in terms of employment, wage equity and social participation, compounded by misogynistic cultures of surveillance and public shaming, which extend into and are amplified by digital spaces (Jung, 2024; Sabitzkyzy, 2023). Nevertheless, feminist spaces of resistance and counterpublic discourse have emerged despite these acts of exclusion. Rather than replicating institutional logics, these feminist counterpublics subvert the appearance of neutrality by circulating affect, testimony, and intimate narratives of refusal. I argue that, in South Korea, the circulation of affect contributes to political change through affective expression and intimate engagement in digital feminist counterpublics. However, rather than acting as an immediate and deterministic force, affect slowly fosters connectivity that retains the primary characteristics that mediate whether affect serves as fuel for concrete mobilization or simply affects ephemeral engagement. Through a comparative analysis of Megalia, WOMAD, #MeToo Korea, #EscapeTheCorset, and #4BMovement, this article evaluates how feminist discourse circulates, coheres, and intervenes in South Korea's digital feminist landscape.

Literature Review

Katherine McKittrick (2006) argues against hegemonic conceptions of geography as neutral; instead, space

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is both materially and discursively produced through negotiations of power. Her notion of Black geographies constructs the concept within a contested framework originating in "terrains of struggle," texturized by slavery, colonialism, and modernity. These alternative geographies created by marginalized and dispossessed communities become sites of epistemological rupture, where hegemonic ways of knowing space are challenged and reimagined. In her critique of traditional geography, McKittrick (2006) claims that the embedding of racial-sexual bodily codes within geographic study can bind racialized and gendered bodies into patterns of disempowerment and dispossession.

In South Korea, gendered spatial segregation and political disempowerment under a history of colonial oppression, authoritarian nation-building, and the precaritization of labor have shaped women's socio-spatial and political-affective realities. As South Korean women have long been constructed as subjects within overlapping colonial, nationalist, and capitalist spatial orders, their bodies have thus been violently disciplined, both physically and discursively: hypervisible as maternal figures and reproducers of the nation, yet structurally dispossessed and politically disempowered. Understanding the spatial logic of the South Korean historio-sexual schema is central to understanding how feminist alternative geographies have contested and sought to reconfigure the deep space of patriarchal-national modernity.

Although South Korean women have faced persistent political disempowerment in public space and discourse, these conditions have lent themselves to the formation of "subaltern counterpublics," a term coined by Nancy Fraser (1990). Counterpublics are discursive arenas that challenge the basic terms and boundaries of the dominant public spheres. In South Korea, multiple feminist counterpublics have arisen at controversial periods of time, such as the "factory girls" counterpublic in the early 20th century (Mikyoung, 2003; Barraclough, 2012) and a more organized women's labor movement in the *Minjung*, the national movement for democratization. These movements transformed physical marginal spaces—like factories and dormitories—as well as discursive marginal spaces, like feminist literature into sites of struggle and representation. After the turn of the 20th century and neoliberal restructuring, women's economic and political participation were further translated into a conditionally inclusive network negotiated by institutional and cultural forces. While government policies encouraged women to join the workforce as part of economic revitalization strategies, these same women were burdened with precarious employment, care responsibilities, and enduring gender wage gaps—conditions that were justified through cultural ideals of maternal sacrifice and flexible labor, rather than addressed as structural inequalities (Y. Kim, 2021).

The advent of the internet and the spread of digital forms of communication created discursive space for the formation of networked feminist counterpublic discourse. As feminist consciousness began to integrate with the digital sphere, mediated forms of resistance provided the ground for alternative geographic practice. Particularly, the anonymity afforded by digital participation has allowed many women to engage in affective storytelling and intimate discourse without a fixed or visible attachment to their public identities. This technological affordance and key feature of activism in the digital age has not only encouraged ephemeral forms of interaction due to reduced risk of judgement or backlash (McLean & Maalsen, 2013; Suk et al., 2023), but has also contributed to higher rates of participation and a stronger circulation of affective resonance (Bunaeva et al., 2022; McLean et al., 2019).

Through anonymous and ephemeral interactions, participants contribute to what Papacharissi (2015) describes as *affective publics*—networked formations of users connected not just by shared interests, but by circulating intensities such as anger, grief, or solidarity. Further, these processes can be understood through the lens of *affective economies* (Ahmed, 2004), where emotions do not reside in the subject, but rather, move between bodies, texts, and platforms, attaching value to some bodies and delegitimizing others. The affordance of anonymity is especially critical in the early stages of counterpublic formation, as Korean women have historically faced public shaming and disenfranchisement for producing radical media or voicing dissent (Jung, 2023; Koh, 2010). In the digital age, this punitiveness has not diminished; for example, when women used online forums and social media to organize mass protests against sexual spycam crimes in 2018, many faced significant digital backlash, including doxxing, online harassment, and public threats (Jung, 2023). Thus, in South Korea, digital feminist counterpublics operate within and against an affective economy that has historically associated women's dissent with shame or deviance. The currency of resistance is found within affective labor and materializes in testimony, narrative, and women's bodies. The affective reconstruction of space through storytelling thus retains the potential to recode emotional association to cultivate networked political intimacy.

Methodological Inquiry

Digital activism can be broadly defined as the use of internet-based platforms to contest power and mobilize dissent. It is characterized by high levels of interactivity, user-generated content, and its capacity to transcend national and regional borders. As Özkula (2021) outlines, its central tenets span advocacy, commentary, recruitment, mobilization, online civil disobedience, research, and documentation. Digital activism manifests materially in hashtag campaigns, digital storytelling, live-streamed protests, and coordinated actions across social media platforms. Notably, digital activism is not limited to elite political discourse but extends into everyday political practices shaped by aesthetics, emotion, and community.

Bae et al. (2021) argue that online platforms have played a central role in expanding the public sphere and increasing citizen participation, particularly in settings with restrictive traditional media. A distinguishing feature of digital activism is its facilitation of counternarratives that challenge hegemonic media framings and foster the emergence of alternative ways of understanding and contesting dominant ideologies. In this way, digital media has been instrumental in fostering counterpublics, particularly among marginalized voices in South Korea. Specifically, feminist and youth movements have used social media interfaces like Twitter and digital platforms like Megalia to articulate dissent and build solidarity outside of institutional venues. These "networked counterpublics" (Suk et al., 2023) do not merely reflect political discontent—they spatialize it, offering digital arenas where feminist placemaking, memory production, and collective identity formation occur.

Digital activism has been subject to extensive critique, ranging from its conceptual vagueness and terminological ambiguity to its operational complexities. Scholars have challenged its grounding in digital dualism, implicit reliance on technological determinism, frequent framing through binary and reductive discourses, and susceptibility to algorithmic distortion. These critiques emphasize the need for a more nuanced and situated understanding of how activism actually unfolds within, through, and across digital platforms. Özkula (2021) points out that part of the difficulty in fully defining "digital activism" stems from its convergence of two already complex domains: digital technology and activism. Definitional challenges arise around what counts as "digitally assisted" activism—where the line is drawn between activism and advocacy, and how participatory actions are categorized. Critics of "slacktivism" or "clicktivism" have further argued that the low-bar entry to digital engagement often invites superficial involvement, which may dilute the long-term political efficacy and sustainability of activism (Papacharissi, 2016).

Theorizations of contemporary movement dynamics—especially within digital contexts—have increasingly shifted away from traditional models of collective action towards frameworks that better account for the dispersed, affective, and horizontal logics of online mobilization. Bennett and Segerberg (2012) argue that, unlike collective action, which relies on formal organization, hierarchical leadership, and shared ideological coherence—as exemplified by labor unions or civil rights movements—connective action enables individualized participation and the diffusion of personalized content across loosely networked digital spaces. Participation is thus not contingent on centralized identity or structure but emerges through loosely shared values and flexible forms of commitment. However, the same decentralization that makes connective action fluid and responsive also renders it structurally precarious. The incoherence of digital resistance is not a contingent weakness but an embedded feature of its rhizomatic structure (Chandler, 2018). Thus, rather than developing enduring counterpublics, these movements form "precarious publics"—fragile assemblages sustained by affective responsiveness rather than institutional solidarity. Their cohesion is ephemeral, dissipating as rapidly as it emerges, undermining their capacity for strategic opposition or systemic intervention.

In South Korea, social media platforms (e.g., Twitter) and insular web-based forums (e.g., Megalia) shape digital feminist activism through their distinct temporal, affective, and algorithmic orientations. Twitter enables users to rapidly circulate personal testimony and trigger public conversations through hashtags and viral moments. By contrast, platforms like Reddit—or South Korean equivalents such as DC Inside—offer slower, recursive modes of discourse in which users collaboratively construct feminist counter-narratives over time. Suk et al. (2023) highlight these contrasts, finding that Twitter and Facebook tend to produce event-driven, temporally-bound discourses, whereas Reddit facilitates self-sustaining affective economies, particularly when users coalesce around shared experiences and political identification. This distinction aligns with McLean et al.'s (2019) analysis of the Destroy the Joint (DTJ) campaign, which unfolded in part through a private Facebook group. They argue that DTJ's discursive cohesion and affective resilience were made possible not through algorithmic virality but through semi-private, non-commodified, and slower spaces of deliberation and support. The relatively closed infrastructure allowed members to build trust, circulate testimonial narratives, and form a developed feminist counterpublic grounded in emotional labor and strategic coordination.

Methodology

To evaluate the impact and sustainability of feminist digital counterpublics in South Korea, this study employs a qualitative content analysis of four major case studies with some intersecting and overlapping components: Megalia, WOMAD, #MeToo Korea, #EscapetheCorset, and #4BMovement. Each case was selected for its distinct mode of participation, platform infrastructure, and discursive impact, allowing for comparative insight into how affective connectivity is transformed—or fails to be—into collective feminist action. As such, rather than measuring "success" solely through institutional outcomes such as policy change or legal victories, this study evaluates counterpublic sustainability using four interrelated criteria: affective cohesion, or the intensity and continuity of emotional resonance (e.g., rage, grief, solidarity) that binds participants; discursive circulation, or the reach, mobility, and longevity of feminist narratives across digital platforms; platform affordances, or how platform-specific features (e.g., anonymity, algorithmic visibility, moderation, interface design) enable or constrain community-building; and continuity and regeneration, or whether the counterpublic sustains engagement over time, adapts to backlash, or catalyzes new movements.

Twitter is assessed for its amplification of testimonial and viral discourse, while Megalia and WOMAD are examined as insular forums that generated confrontational satire and mimicry. Platforms like Instagram and YouTube, central to #EscapeTheCorset, are analyzed for their emphasis on visual storytelling. The 4B movement, emerging largely through blogs, YouTube commentary, and private online forums, is examined for its textual density, ideological coherence, and discursive withdrawal from heteronormative and patriarchal structures. Cumulatively, these cases reflect a spectrum of feminist digital geography from connective affect to collective mobilization.

Finally, the analysis addresses the vulnerabilities of affective publics. Emotional fatigue, fragmentation, co-optation, and backlash are coded as structural and affective risks to sustainability. In this context, affect is treated not merely as a catalyst but as a metric—an indicator of how publics pulse, cohere, and dissolve. This framework ultimately enables a more nuanced evaluation of feminist digital activism—one that accounts for affective intensity, infrastructural constraint, and the slow, nonlinear rhythms of counterpublic formation and survival.

Content Analysis

Megalia and WOMAD

Emerging from the MERS Gallery on DC Inside in 2015, Megalia marked a rupture in South Korea's digital feminist discourse by reframing critique through satire, rage, and linguistic inversion. Using the tactic of "mirroring"—reversing misogynistic slurs against men—users generated confrontational parody and meme-based provocation. However, discursive rupture alone is insufficient for sustainable counterpublic formation, particularly in the absence of inclusive solidarity and regenerative infrastructure. Megalia demonstrated strong affective cohesion and platform mobilization, most notably in its crowdfunded campaign to shut down SoraNet, a revenge porn site. Yet the movement's momentum was short-lived. Internal divisions—especially over the inclusion of LGBTQ+ voices—fractured the group. In late 2015, a significant contingent of users who opposed solidarity with gay men defected to form WOMAD, a separatist offshoot that embraced biological essentialism, radical misandry, and exclusionary politics. This intra-movement fracture reveals a key insight: affective intensity, without discursive clarity or political inclusivity, can quickly fragment rather than sustain counterpublics (J. Kim, 2021).

While both Megalia and WOMAD thrived on anonymous, unmoderated platforms like DC Inside and later WOMAD's standalone site, their reliance on trolling, rage-driven satire, and unfiltered mimicry limited their discursive circulation beyond niche digital subcultures. WOMAD, in particular, became increasingly repellent to broader publics, not only for its inflammatory rhetoric and trans-exclusionary ideology, but also for its refusal to align with larger movements for structural reform. Its rejection of intersectionality, embrace of hate speech aesthetics, and aversion to coalition-building alienated potential allies and undercut the possibility of cross-sectoral feminist engagement.

Furthermore, WOMAD's ethos of radical self-reliance and political isolation mirrored neoliberal logics of individualism more than collective feminist transformation (Koo & Kim, 2021). Unlike movements that seek to build durable infrastructures or transform dominant institutions, WOMAD's separatism offered little in the way of continuity or regeneration. Ultimately, the same conditions that allowed Megalia to emerge—outrage, anonymity, and virality—also catalyzed its collapse. In the absence of strategic adaptability or an inclusive political imaginary, the counterpublic fractured under the weight of its own rhetorical excesses.

It is precisely against this backdrop of internal disintegration and rhetorical insularity that the #MeToo Korea movement gained traction. In contrast to Megalia's antagonism and WOMAD's insularity, #MeToo deployed a more palatable and strategically legible mode of feminist engagement—one grounded in testimonial sincerity, systemic critique, and institutional visibility. Emphasis on survivor-centered narratives and cross-sector alliances allowed it to traverse both digital and material spaces, setting the stage for a new chapter in South Korea's feminist digital geography—where affect was not only connective, but strategically mobilized toward collective action and public legitimacy.

#MeToo Korea

The #MeToo Korea movement emerged in 2018 after prosecutor Seo Ji-hyun's televised accusation of sexual misconduct broke through a long-standing culture of silence. Unlike the meme-driven satire and affective outrage of Megalia and WOMAD, #MeToo Korea centered the affective power of testimonial discourse.

Survivors used platforms like Twitter, Naver Cafés, and news media to share personal narratives of workplace harassment, school abuse, and systemic neglect—creating a wave of connective action rooted in affective solidarity.

As Jung (2023) argues, this connective infrastructure—based on horizontal, personalized engagement through digital platforms—was not an end in itself. Rather, it was the groundwork for a strategic transition into collective action. Testimonies were taken up by feminist NGOs, labor unions, legal associations, and academic institutions, producing a cross-sector alliance that transformed raw affect into formal advocacy and policy proposals. The visibility of digital disclosures, when scaffolded by organized civil society, allowed the movement to push beyond virality toward institutional critique and reform—or an emergent coalition politics of gender justice.

This transformation was also supported by multi-platform coordination: short-form tweets amplified testimonial fragments; long-form blog posts and media op-eds added narrative depth; legal experts curated toolkits for survivors; and feminist journalists created investigative follow-ups. These layered communications enabled discursive circulation across both popular and professional fields, helping to legitimize feminist claims within Korea's broader public sphere. From a methodological standpoint, #MeToo Korea exemplifies the criteria for affective cohesion, platform affordance, and collective regeneration. Affective resonance was high, and viral posts helped survivors feel part of a broader movement. But critically, as Jung (2023) observes in *Flowers of Fire*, what distinguished #MeToo Korea was its activation of hybrid political infrastructure—turning fragmented online voices into collective advocacy campaigns, including legal reforms, labor actions, and public education initiatives.

By 2020, the movement had lost much of its public visibility and discursive traction. Jung (2023) identifies several reasons for this decline. First, legal and institutional backlash—including defamation lawsuits and countersuits—discouraged further participation. Second, the emotional labor of disclosure led to burnout, retraumatization, and withdrawal, especially in the absence of long-term psychological or community support. Third, algorithmic shifts in platform attention—and the arrival of newer digital controversies—meant that sustained feminist engagement was deprioritized by media cycles. Finally, while the movement achieved visibility and virality, it did not fundamentally restructure the patriarchal foundations of Korean institutions, compromising its ability to effect sustainable transformation.

Thus, although #MeToo Korea marked a critical turning point in the evolution of South Korean digital feminism, its trajectory also demonstrates the temporal fragility of affective and counterpublic movements. Despite its powerful mobilization and brief institutional traction, #MeToo Korea struggled to sustain momentum in the face of backlash, emotional fatigue, and shifting algorithmic attention. This decline highlights a central methodological insight— that the success of feminist counterpublics cannot be measured by virality or visibility alone but must ultimately be evaluated for their capacity to adapt, regenerate, and endure over time.

#EscapeTheCorset and the #4BMovement

Building upon the discursive rupture initiated by Megalia and the institutional traction briefly achieved by #MeToo Korea, the #EscapeTheCorset and the #4BMovement represent a distinct evolution in South Korea's digital feminist counterpublics—one defined not by visibility within institutional channels, but also by the refusal of normativity itself. Emerging in 2018, #EscapeTheCorset rejected the hyper-feminized beauty expectations imposed on women, offering an embodied critique of aesthetic discipline and gendered biopolitics. Unlike the testimonial structures of #MeToo or the confrontational satire of Megalia and WOMAD, this movement utilized visual disidentification and personal acts of bodily autonomy as protest.

Women cut their hair, threw away cosmetics, and uploaded bare-faced selfies to Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter—platforms optimized for visual engagement and algorithmic amplification.

These acts of everyday resistance represented not merely aesthetic choices but deeply affective gestures, disrupting South Korea's entrenched heteronormative scripts by performing vulnerable, defiant, and emotional labor in public view. While #MeToo channeled affect through testimonial aggregation to appeal to institutions, #EscapeTheCorset translated affect into slow, intimate withdrawals from participation altogether, challenging the presumed neutrality of femininity as labor. In doing so, it transformed social media into a site of digital placemaking, where users collaboratively constructed new temporalities, identities, and kinship networks outside the expectations of state, market, and patriarchy.

The #4BMovement further radicalized this ethos of refusal. Emerging from the affective and discursive groundwork laid by #EscapeTheCorset, it transformed from aesthetic rejection to a full-bodied systemic disavowal of the reproductive economy. Women in the #4BMovement reject four pillars of normative womanhood—heterosexual relationships, marriage, childbearing, and sexual activity with men. Unlike Megalia or WOMAD, which depended on irony and virality, #4B emerged through long-form YouTube commentary, feminist essays, Telegram communities, and private blogs. These platform choices privileged discursive coherence, ideological depth, and subcultural endurance over rapid visibility. Intimacy, rather than spectacle, became the central mode of engagement. Through the slow, recursive circulation of texts and shared narratives, participants cultivated a feminist temporality of deferral, refusing futurities imposed by nationalism, capitalism, and demographic anxiety.

The integrations of these movements into the comparative analysis illuminate the limits and possibilities of affect in digital feminist geographies. Rather than assuming affect alone produces political outcomes, both #EscapeTheCorset and #4B demonstrate that affective expression—when embedded in discursive clarity and platform-aware strategies—can foster durable counterpublic formations. Their refusal to engage traditional institutions emphasizes the importance of alternative metrics of feminist success—not policy wins or media uptake—but the creation of emotionally resonant, ideologically coherent spaces of survival and solidarity.

Methodologically, these movements challenge dominant assumptions about what constitutes political action. Their strategies do not replicate institutional logics or seek mainstream approval; rather, they subvert hegemonic neutrality by affirming that intimate refusal and non-participation are themselves radical acts. Their power lies in their ability to re-map feminist geographies—to reimagine where and how a feminist life can be lived. While these movements may not yield immediate tangible outcomes, they sustain the affective infrastructures that make future mobilizations—whether digital, embodied, or both—possible.

In tracing this historical lineage, it becomes clear that South Korean digital feminism has moved from parody (Megalia and WOMAD), to testimony (#MeToo), to visual and ideological refusal (#EscapeTheCorset and #4B)—each phase experimenting with different platforms, discourses, and affective registers. Together, they illustrate that the circulation of affect is not a guarantee of change, but a condition of possibility—one that must be paired with platform affordances and discursive integrity in order to cultivate and foster the ability to imagine alternative geographies and public spaces for feminist engagement.

Affective Geographies and the Politics of Digital Space

> "When I was little … my goal was to graduate from college at the age of 24, work until I was 29 years old, and get married when I turned 30. In other words, my

> desire would come to a dead end at the age of 29… Having removed the [possibility of] marriage from my life course, I was a person full of potentialities" (Lee & Jeong, 2021, p. 638).

This reflection captures the spatial and temporal ruptures that South Korea's digital feminist counterpublics enact—a reorientation away from prescribed capitalist-patriarchal life courses toward alternative geographies of selfhood, community, and possibility. This article has traced how feminist movements such as Megalia, WOMAD, #MeToo Korea, #EscapeTheCorset, and the #4BMovement have used digital platforms to contest hegemonic conceptions of gender and power. In doing so, they have not only circulated affective and intimate narratives, but produced affective geographies—emotional terrains that both reflect and resist the structural violence of patriarchy and neoliberalism. Affect, across these cases, operates not simply as expression but as a political force that binds communities, ruptures dominant narratives, and reconfigures space. Movements like Megalia and WOMAD relied on rage, irony, and mimicry, leveraging anonymity for visibility. Yet these same forces revealed the volatility of affect: when not anchored in discursive clarity or inclusive coalition, they fractured under the weight of internal contradiction and external backlash. WOMAD's embrace of exclusionary misandry, in particular, revealed the limits of affective intensity when severed from regenerative strategy.

In contrast, #MeToo Korea mobilized affect through testimonial aggregation and coordinated mobilization, transforming pain into collective grievance. It demonstrated that affect, when scaffolded by legal discourse and civil society infrastructure, can traverse the digital and enter institutional space. However, even movements grounded in coordinated solidarity are vulnerable to fatigue, retraumatization, and discursive co-optation—especially when infrastructure fails to sustain them beyond the peak of virality (Jung, 2023).

It is in this context that #EscapeTheCorset and the #4BMovement mark a shift in feminist spatial politics—from visibility to withdrawal, from confrontation to refusal. These movements engage the digital not to appeal to dominant institutions but to exit them, crafting affective publics through visual storytelling, discursive depth, and subcultural endurance. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and blogs facilitated slow, recursive engagement, where intimate gestures of non-participation produced new spatial imaginaries removed from heteropatriarchal futurism. Their refusal of reproductive timelines, as the aforementioned testimony illustrates, opens a horizon not of lack but of potentialities. In conversation, these case studies show that the value of affect lies not in its intensity, but in its capacity to generate space, produce memory, and cultivate alternative geographies of belonging.

This article has argued that affective discourse—when circulated through specific platform architectures—can lay the groundwork for collective identity, sustained engagement, and political transformation. Yet this translation is contingent. Algorithmic infrastructures, social context, and platform governance all mediate whether affect becomes a catalyst for mobilization or dissolves into ephemeral resonance. Still, even failed or fragmented counterpublics leave behind discursive and spatial residues—traces that may animate future cycles of resistance. In refusing the gendered scripts of state, capital, and kinship, South Korean digital feminists are not merely protesting exclusion; they are mapping insurgent terrains—reimagining what feminist life can look like, feel like, and build toward. Their politics is not always linear, visible, or assimilable. But it is, above all, a politics of space—of where women are allowed to exist, gather, and imagine—and of how those spaces are made through the circulation of affect and refusal.

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Damnatio Memoriae and the Reuse of Sculpture from Tyrannical Emperors*

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Art from Ancient Rome plays an important role in understanding the reception and popularity of a Roman emperor. Emperors such as Augustus, Trajan, and Hadrian were considered to be some of the most virtuous, which is reflected in their many large-scale monuments and numerous sculptural works. These emperors set the standard for the Roman Empire. However, not every emperor lived up to these ideals of an honest and just leader, either because of incompetence or tyranny. Some of these rulers were so unpopular that the end of their rule was followed by campaigns to erase their image. Historians identify these campaigns as acts of *damnatio memoriae*, a modern phrase translated from Latin to mean the "condemnation of memory." These campaigns would be ordered by the Roman Senate to destroy sculptures of tyrannical emperors and destroy records and sculptures portraying them. Although our understanding of *damnatio memoriae* focuses on erasing someone's memory, the evidence we have from these emperors and their lives makes this goal seem more complex than just erasure. Rather than erasing the memory of someone from the public, the goal of *damnatio memoriae*, as it was carried out in the Roman Empire, is to rewrite the history and recontextualize the work. The act itself has meaning behind it; two pieces that prove an intention of rewriting over erasure are the relief panels of Emperor Domitian from the Palazzo Della Cancelleria, which were re-carved into Emperor Nerva and are known today as the Cancelleria Reliefs (see Figure 1 and Figure 2).

FIGURE 1

The Cancelleria Reliefs, frieze A, Rome, 1st century CE (Source: Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cancelleria-Relief-Fries_A.jpg)

FIGURE 2

The Cancelleria Reliefs, frieze B, Rome, 1st century CE (Source: Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cancelleria-Relief-Fries_B.jpg)

The Cancelleria Reliefs are a pair of marble panels with life-sized figures of the Emperor Domitian in an *adventus* scene and in a *profectio* scene, two standard military motifs. These reliefs were found in 1937 in the tomb of Aulus Hiritus and, judging by the pristine condition in which they were found, seem never to have been erected and placed in their desired location before the assassination of Domitian in 96 CE.[1] Upon the discovery

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1 John Pollini, "The 'Lost' Nollekens Relief of an Imperial Sacrifice From Domitian's Palace on the Palatine: Its History, Iconography, and Date," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 30 (2017), 115.

of these reliefs, scholars noted one eye-catching detail of frieze A: the head is disproportionately small. It became evident that, in place of the head of Domitian, there was now a re-carved head of Nerva, the emperor who succeeded Domitian. After Domitian's death, the Senate ordered that his name be erased and all art of him to be taken down, condemning his memory to damnation.[2] However, it is not as simple as the Roman Senate attempting to erase the emperor's name from history.

Lauren Hackworth Petersen uses Freudian psychoanalytical theory to claim that, akin to erasing a chalkboard, sculpture and painting can be mutilated and destroyed, but there will always be remnants of it in the memory of those who saw the work. Where chalk is erased on a chalkboard, smudges will still be left behind, reminding the viewer that something was once there. She uses frieze A of the Cancelleria Reliefs as evidence of this, claiming that the Roman people who saw Nerva's head carved over Domitian would not forget the history; rather, they would be reminded of the past when seeing evidence of the re-carved face.[3] Petersen's article makes the point that the act of *damnatio memoriae* is a contradictory act that does the opposite of what it seems to be intended to do. However, her argument does not make it clear if this is just a necessary consequence, or if perhaps the Roman Senate itself was not trying to erase, but to remind. By analyzing historical records and formal qualities in works that have been destroyed or reworked, it becomes evident that erasure of memory is not actually the goal of these campaigns.

Emperor Nero is one of the most infamous examples of this sort of damnation. Suetonius writes about how Otho ordered all of Nero's images to be destroyed or replaced once he came into power as the emperor.[4] Busts of Nero that show evidence of destruction to the sculpture in the face are examples of how many sculptures of Nero today have either had damage done to them or were re-carved because of this campaign against him.[5] Despite these acts of destruction, there is still sculpture and historical record to this day that we have of these emperors, which creates a contradiction between the Senate's spoken goals and the actions carried out.

Damnatio memoriae is not a practice that began in the Roman Empire. Some of the first instances of the intentional erasure of a person's identity come from Ancient Egypt with the works of the Pharaoh Akhenaten.[6] Erasure in this civilization centered around a person's name. Ancient Egyptians found the name to be a significant part of one's being, and that it was possible to continue living past death if the name was remembered. There were rituals that would be performed by pronouncing the names of the deceased to keep the spirit of them alive.[7]

The Egyptian concept of the afterlife was intertwined with the mortal one. Evidence of this can be seen in the elaborate tombs and offerings that were provided to the dead to keep them fulfilled even after death. This meant the destruction of someone's name was a horrific fate, as erasure of a name meant the destruction of the soul. After Akhenaten's death, the people of Egypt were quick to obliterate his name and image in response to his heresy. His name was erased from statues and monuments and his coffin was defaced after his death.[8] It is significant that an object that was not meant for public display was damaged in this way, suggesting it was not important that the act of destruction was seen by others. With such importance placed on a person's name in Ancient Egypt, and the clear attempt of erasure of the name and face, it appears that the use of *damnatio memoriae* in this period

2 Suetonius, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars, to which are added his Lives of the Grammarians, Rhetoricians, and Poets*, trans. Alexander Thompson (London: George Bell and Sons, 1909), 497.

3 Lauren H. Petersen, "The Presence of 'Damnatio Memoriae' in Roman Art," *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 30, no. 2 (2011), 6.

4 Suetonius, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, 258.

5 See Eric Varner, *Mutilation and Transformation: Damnatio Memoriae and Roman Imperial Portraiture* (Boston: Brill, 2004), 237.

6 Sanghwan Lee, "Killing Pharaohs in Exodus: The Anonymity of the Egyptian Kings, the Deconstruction of Their Individuality, and the Egyptian Practice of Damnatio Memoriae," *Religions* 14, no. 2 (2023), 9.

7 Lee, 7.

8 Lee, 9.

was a deliberate attempt to obliterate the memory of a person.

With Akhenaten, there are few artworks that can even be identified as depicting the Pharaoh due to this erasure. With Rome, more of these sculptures survive and can even be identified as specific emperors who had their image ordered by the Senate to be erased. One reason for this is that the Roman Empire reused a lot of this artwork, as reuse of materials was incredibly common for sculpture and architecture.[9] This was the case even for emperors who were not subjected to *damnatio memoriae*. This colossal head was originally a sculpture of Hadrian that was carved into a sculpture of Maxentius, and then Constantine (see Figure 3).[10] Although Maxentius had *damnatio memoriae* carried out against him once defeated by Constantine, Hadrian's image was never ordered to be systematically erased. In the Arch of Constantine, artwork from emperors known for being good leaders were reused, including sculptures of Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, and Hadrian (see Figure 4). This reuse of artwork from emperors who were well loved could be for many reasons but is likely a tactic by Constantine to embody their ideas.[11] However, when reusing artwork from an emperor whose reign was considered terrible enough that the Senate orders their entire image to be erased from the record, that purpose must be different.

It is possible that this was done purely out of practicality. Much of the sculpture and architecture in Ancient Rome was made from marble, a stone that was commonly quarried in the Mediterranean area. Its strength and lustrous appearance made it a popular stone for creating beautiful artworks. Michael Greenhalgh's book focuses on how marble is an expensive and heavy material that makes it reasonable to assume practical reuse.[12] There is no doubt this is likely a benefit to reusing such a material.

FIGURE 3

Colossal statue of Constantine: head, Rome, 313-324 CE (Source: Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Campitelli_-_010218_campidoglio_cortile_dei_conservatori.jpg)

FIGURE 4

Arch of Constantine, Rome, 312-315 CE (Source: Wikimedia: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arch_of_Constantine_(Rome)_-_South_side,_from_Via_triumphalis.jpg)

When an emperor has had a campaign of *damnatio memoriae* enacted against them, it would make sense to reuse the artwork rather than having to destroy it, wasting the expensive material. However, there are reasons to believe this is not the extent of the reasons behind this act. To discuss these reasons, it is necessary to explain what art meant to the people in the Roman Empire.

9 Dale Kinney, "*Spolia: Damnatio* and *Renovatio Memoriae*," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 42 (1997), 2.

10 Kinney, 119.

11 Kinney, 142.

12 Michael Greenhalgh, *Marble Past, Monumental Present: Building with Antiquities in the Medieval Mediterranean* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 40.

Art, and specifically sculpture, was everywhere in the city of Rome, to the point that it was something that one would likely see every day. It would be outside in public spaces, on the streets, and even utilized in the furniture of Roman houses.[13] Art was heavily engrained into the culture of the Roman Empire. Images could even be found on coinage. Emperors often put images of themselves, gods, and goddesses that they valued on their coins, and these travelled around with people trading money for goods. For this reason, this type of art was able to relay messages to large groups of people. When it came to commenting on a predecessor, the coins of Claudius are an example of this use. Claudius often used images of Libertas (liberty), Victoria (victory), and Pax (peace), on his own coins.[14] By using this imagery after the ruling of Gaius, who was thought to be absolutist and tyrannical, this would have been a promise to the people that he would not repeat the tyranny of his predecessor.[15] With these coins, it is evident that emperors would use iconography that belonged to a previous emperor as a means of commenting on their reign.

Art is clearly influential in the Roman Empire, but statues of emperors had even more power over the people. These were meant to physically represent the emperor, and there is evidence that the people of the Roman Empire considered them to have life to them. Eric Varner analyzes the writing from Pliny the Younger and his reaction to Domitian's artworks being destroyed. He explains how Pliny gives the "depiction of Domitian's images as living beings capable of suffering and pain" as they are destroyed, which Pliny took great pleasure in watching.[16] These accounts show just how deeply the Roman people believed in the power of artwork, as well as its ability to represent the people depicted. Sculptures are not only meant to represent the image of an emperor but are meant to physically embody them. This adds a layer of depth to carrying out *damnatio memoriae* against an emperor, when an image that is destroyed is meant to be the person depicted. It is not simply about destroying the artwork, but about attacking the emperor's being. Sculpture embodying the emperor represented adds depth to the act of reusing these images. It cannot only be practical when artwork holds this kind of weight within the Roman Empire.

When considering the weight that *damnatio memoriae* holds as a practice, it is important to note that not everyone agreed with it, and that reuse of artwork had its own limitations. The accounts of Dio and Pliny state their own dismay with the practice. Dale Kinney uses their writings in her article "*Spolia, Damnatio Memoriae and Renovatio Memoriae*" to investigate how *damnatio memoriae* was perceived by the Ancient Roman people. Kinney points out that changing out imperial heads could be considered treasonous depending on who was doing it, and yet it happened on a large scale. Dio and Pliny state that they consider reuse to be theft, and destruction of artwork to be historical erasure.[17] Through what Kinney highlights, we can see many contradictions through the practice. However, the statement from Pliny that Varner discussed showed that he enjoyed watching the artwork of Domitian being destroyed. It seems the limitations for reusing and destroying art depended on the way the emperor and the Senate viewed the act, rather than clear cut rules and regulations.

Though there are contradictions, these statements from Roman historians make it evident that this was not a practice that was taken lightly, and that a lot of careful thought was put into *damnatio memoriae* and into reusing artwork of those subject to it. Not only did some Romans not agree with *damnatio memoriae*, but some people even disagreed about who the Senate decided to enact these erasures against. When Emperor Domitian died, the Senate was quick to begin erasing his image, but soldiers in the military mourned him and asked for him to be deified.[18] This is likely because of the fact that

13 Kinny, "*Spolia*," 140.

14 Edwin S. Ramage, "Denigration of Predecessor under Claudius, Galba, and Vespasian," *Historia: Zeitschrift Für Alte Geschichte* 32, no. 2 (1983), 202.

15 Ramage, 203.

16 Varner, *Mutilation and Transformation*, 112.

17 Kinny, "*Spolia*," 135.

18 Varner, *Mutilation and Transformation*, 111.

Domitian was focused on the military and conquest, but it shows that the act of *damnatio memoriae* was not always agreed on by the whole population. It was not as simple as an emperor being tyrannical and hated by the general population so that no one disagrees with their erasure. There was evident nuance and thought being given to these campaigns that go beyond practicality, especially in cases where artwork was not only removed but reworked.

Regarding the Cancelleria Reliefs, there is obvious thought put into both the creation and reusing of the sculpture. The relief was found underneath the Palazzo Della Cancelleria in Rome, where it was believed to be stored in a workshop. Because of the pristine condition they were in, it is likely the reliefs never made it to their intended location.[19] There are two friezes, frieze A and frieze B (Figure 1 and Figure 2). Hugh Last explains that frieze A contains the image of Nerva, originally Domitian, being moved forward reluctantly by Victory, Mars, and Minerva. The meaning behind this scene is up for debate, but the subject is likely Nerva going to fight a war. Frieze B's central figures are Vespasian and Domitian. Vespasian is acknowledging his son, perhaps because he too is going off to war.[20] It is important to notice that Domitian has not been re-carved in frieze B, but has had his appearance changed to resemble Nerva in frieze A. There is evidence that sculptures of emperors who had *damnatio memoriae* enacted against them were reused without re-carving if used in a general enough context, meaning the scene had to be ornamental and ahistorical, but otherwise needed to be reworked for reuse.[21] This means the practice of *damnatio memoriae* was not being done at the whim of the succeeding emperor, but was a carefully thought-out process by the Senate that had rules and limitations.

Even after they were carved into Nerva, we can identify images that were carved from Domitian, as Varner demonstrates, by the Domitian-specific details in his sculptural hairstyle that he was even known to write about. This hairstyle can often still be seen on the back of the head in sculptures of emperors who did not have hair like this, such as Nerva. Domitian also had unique facial features that can commonly be seen in these works.[22] The effort Domitian put into his sculptural image shows how he was using his artwork to influence ideas of himself as a fearless and just leader, and yet there is a disconnect between how he depicted himself and how he was described by others. In artwork of him, through what we can see in both untouched and reused artwork, he showed himself as a youthful and strong military leader, represented in details such as a full head of hair. Others, such as Suetonius, describe him as being bald and scrawny with a bloated stomach, which he states is from an illness.[23] It is hard to know whether Domitian was pushing an image of himself as youthful and strong, or Suetonius was pushing an image of Domitian as a tyrannical leader,[24] but whether one or both of these people were exaggerating, it is clear that artwork played an important role in an emperor's portrayal. This is especially true for Domitian, who was met with dissatisfaction during his rule.

The Cancelleria Reliefs are significant because they represent Domitian as a military leader who would not go to war without just cause. In frieze A, he is shown hesitant and uncertain about the idea of war in his stance, despite the deities around him urging him off to battle, making him appear more modest than he is typically described. The relief makes it seem that the war was approved of by the gods, and yet Domitian still takes careful thought before going off. This meaning is subject to change when Emperor Nerva carves his own face over Domitian's. It is possible that Nerva is trying to portray the same message that Domitian was: that he would be a civil and just military leader. However, as with the coins that Claudius put out containing imagery of Victory and Peace

19 John Pollini and William Storage, "Recutting Roman Portraits: Problems in Interpretation and the New Technology in Finding Possible Solutions," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 55 (2010), 27.

20 Hugh Last, "On the Flavian Reliefs from the Palazzo della Cancelleria," *Journal of Roman Studies* 38, no. 1–2 (1948), 13.

21 Kinny, "*Spolia*," 143.

22 Varner, *Mutilation and Transformation*, 115.

23 Suetonius, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars,* 299.

24 Varner, *Mutilation and Transformation*, 112.

to comment on the reign of Gaius, the act of re-carving this relief may also represent a commentary on Nerva's predecessor. Hugh Last claims that "in its original form it said of Domitian that he was an emperor whose policy was not to make war without good cause," and that with the piece being reworked, the message was now truthful with Nerva.[25] This means that the sculpture itself is not only an image of Nerva as a good military leader, but that the act of re-carving from an image of Domitian also sends a message to the previous emperor's rule. It could be argued that this meaning was not intentional, and that reusing this message is purely practical. However, this seems less likely when one looks at the difficulties that came with carving Nerva's face over Domitian's.

The act of carving the face of Domitian into Nerva was not practical, which is clear from the most eye-catching part of the sculpture: the head of Nerva is much too small for the body. Domitian and Nerva were said to have had very different facial features. Domitian had wider eyes, a flatter nose, and a stockier neck. Nerva had smaller eyes, a longer nose with a hooked bridge, and a longer neck.[26] This caused some difficulties when it came to carving the face of Domitian into Nerva. Where there was already too much marble subtracted from one area, such as the eyes having to go from being large to small, or the flat nose now having to protrude further outwards from the face. Marble carving is done by subtracting material, making the addition of material impossible, and in the case of the Cancelleria Reliefs, this leads to awkward proportions when carved away too much.

The early years of the Roman Empire produced artwork that has been categorized as realistic due to its apparent ability to portray figures and objects as they would appear in real life. The Ara Pacis, which was commissioned by the first emperor, Augustus, shows these qualities in the depiction of a procession where the idea of crowds is given by life-sized figures being layered over each other, giving the illusion of space (see Figure 5). This approach to art was consistent throughout the Early and Middle Empire. In other words, a relief with such obvious disproportions would have looked out of place during this time in the empire. Perhaps this could be a reasonable drawback if Nerva needed an image of himself as a military leader, and they had this image from an emperor. This would make sense practically, except for the fact that Nerva never went to war and only ruled for two years before he passed away.[27] There would have been no reason for Nerva to portray himself in this way other than as a commentary about Domitian's ruling, and this conclusion is enhanced when he is carving his face over Domitian's in an image that was meant to celebrate him as a military leader. It is hard to believe that Nerva only reused Domitian's image for practical purposes when recalling Petersen's claim that the absence of space in an artwork only calls to mind what is meant to be there.[28] When a viewer saw the relief and noticed the small head, they wondered why it was like that, and that might have led them to wonder if something else had been there before. For a Roman citizen who knew history, this might even make them recall Domitian, despite the fact that *damnatio memoriae* was meant to erase his memory.

FIGURE 5

The Ara Pacis Augustae, Rome, 13 BCE (Source: Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=the+ara+pacis&title=Special%3AMediaSearch&type=image)

25 Last, "On the Flavian Reliefs," 14.

26 Varner, *Mutilation and Transformation*, 115.

27 Last, "On the Flavian Reliefs," 13.

28 Petersen, "The Presence of 'Damnatio Memoriae,'" 2.

If there were any noticeable difficulties in getting material during this period, such as marble, it could still be understandable to use the image of Domitian for no reason other than that it saves material, were Nerva to need an image of himself as a leader. However, Taelman did a study of the marble trade in the Roman Empire where he gathered information on the distribution of white marble over the centuries. In his study, he found that marble distribution actually peaked between the 1st and 2nd c. CE, and Nerva ruled over Rome between 96 and 98 CE.[29] This meant he would have been in power during this peak. There are reasons other than a lack of materials that could lead to a decline in marble distribution, such as changing trends for the material used, but this study still makes it clear that marble was not in short supply during Nerva's reign. Had Nerva wanted an image of himself made for his own propaganda, he could likely have gotten a sculpture created without problem, and a new sculpture would not have faced the same disproportions that the Cancelleria Reliefs have. However, Nerva intentionally chose this image of Domitian to carve his face over because of the fact that he was his predecessor. In fact, there are fourteen known sculptures of Domitian that were re-carved into Nerva.[30] Despite having access to materials, and despite the proportional issues related to carving his face into one that was not at all similar to his own, Nerva appropriated artwork made for his tyrannical predecessor and reworked it to change the meaning of the reliefs into a comparison between him and Domitian.

There is no question that reusing artwork from an emperor whose image could no longer be displayed provided benefits in terms of material and labor costs. In many cases, this was likely even considered by the person reusing the artwork. By the 4th c. CE, it was even more common for marble to be reused in new works rather than freshly quarried.[31] During the reign of Nerva, however, fresh marble was easy to come by and, as is obvious with the Cancelleria Reliefs, reuse was not always the easiest option. Had Nerva needed a military relief of himself, it could be understood as a convenient shortcut. However, this does not appear to be his motivation, since there was no reason that Nerva would have the desire to portray himself as a military leader aside from comparing himself to Domitian. Nerva specifically chose works of art of his predecessor to carve his own face over, despite the awkward proportions created in these sculptures as a result, because reusing Domitian's work served to promise the people that he was a better and more just leader. This can be applied to many other emperors as well, when remembering just how important artwork was to the Roman people and what it symbolized. In ancient Rome, these sculptures are believed to be more than just an image, but the life of the person depicted. This is brought to mind whenever an artwork is destroyed, hidden away, or re-carved for a new purpose. The original meaning behind that work of art is not completely gone, replaced with a new meaning. Instead, the original meaning and the act of reusing the art go hand in hand with each other, creating a relationship that would not be there if the new image was created from new material. For an artwork of an emperor who was subjected to *damnatio memoriae*, this largely relates to the idea of the predecessor's ruling, and how the new emperor will rule instead.

The act of *damnatio memoriae* does not only have to do with erasing the memory of someone. In fact, it can do the opposite, the empty space, for example, bringing to mind what is missing. It can cause the viewer to wonder what was once there, think about why it was erased, and ponder what message that sends to someone viewing the image. These acts of *damnatio memoriae* were carefully constructed political movements to express the ideas of the emperor, announce the position of the Senate on the predecessor's ruling, and direct the general population's view of an emperor whose actions did not line up with the Senate's ideal.

29 Devi Taelman, "Marble Trade in the Roman Mediterranean: a Quantitative and Diachronic Study," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 35, no. 2 (2022).

30 Varner, *Mutilation and Transformation*, 115.

31 Greenhalgh, *Marble Past, Monumental Present*, 41.

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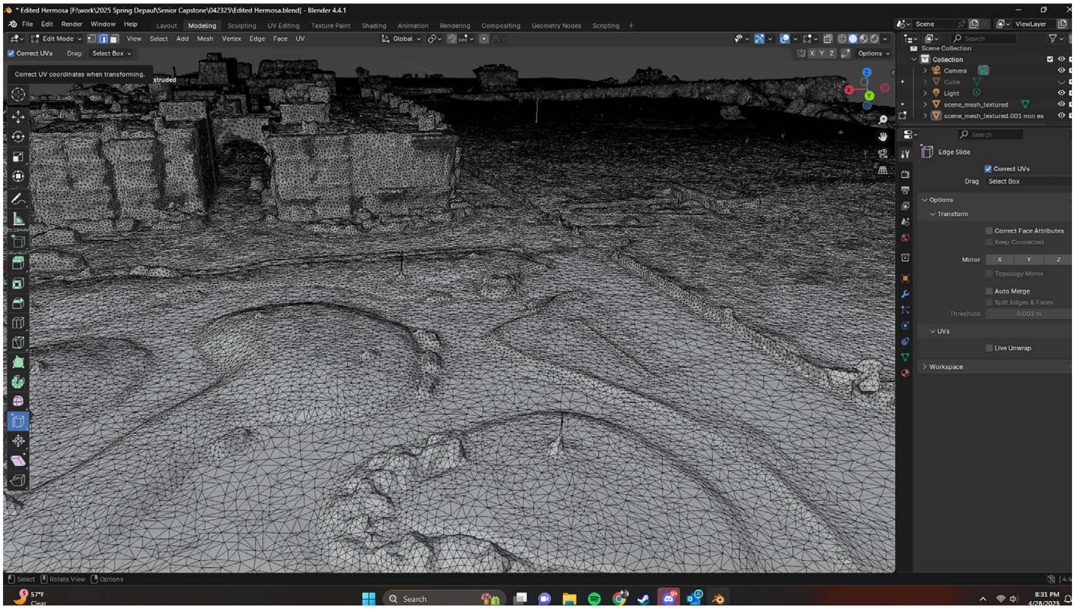

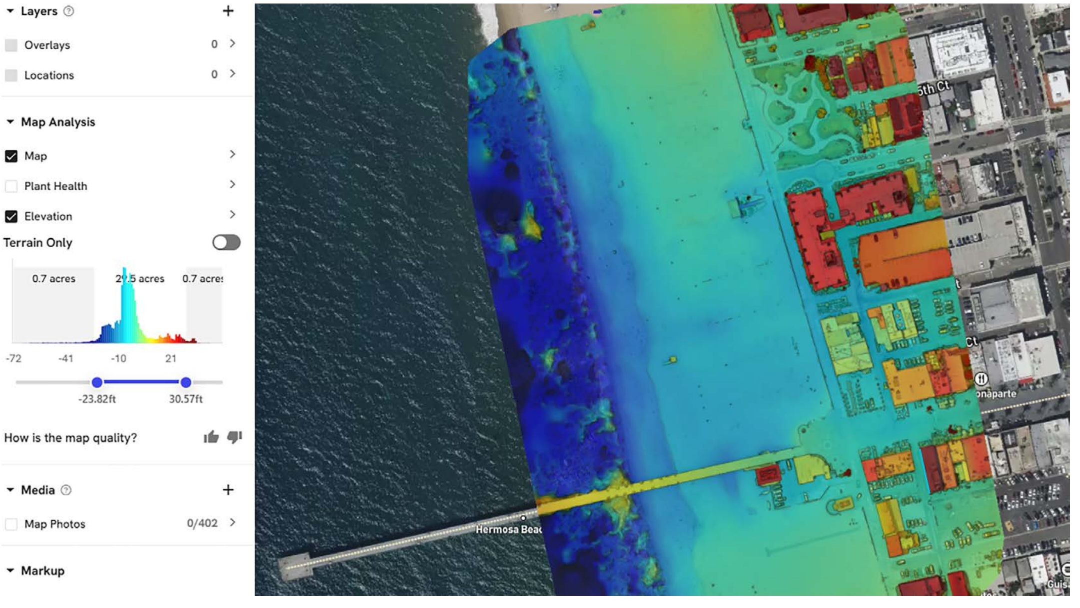

Sean Weber | *Hermosa Beach, Digital Model Blender Rendering; Hermosa Beach, Topographical Depth Chart (Top-Down)*

"Their Gospel of Prey and Obey has been Replaced by one of Rebel and Demand": The Growing Schism in Black Intellectual Thought Brought on by the First World War*

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The United States' involvement in the First World War marked a distinct shift in black intellectual thought that can be tracked through different black newspapers' coverage of the war, and by analyzing how this coverage addressed issues surrounding African American[1] identity during the period. To fully understand the impact this shift had on African American public life, it is imperative to understand the unique position black newspapers and periodicals held historically, in comparison to those newspapers that catered to predominantly white audiences. Prolific black intellectual of the period, Ida B. Wells, effectively summarized the symbiotic nature of African American periodicals by stating that "The Afro-American papers are the only ones which will print the truth, and they lack means to employ agents and detectives to get at the facts. The race must rally a mighty host to the support of their journals and thus enable them to do much in the way of investigation."[2] The relationship between African Americans and black periodicals during the period was fundamentally dialogical, in that they informed one another and are intrinsically tied; historians cannot form nuanced histories on the topic of black coverage of the First World War without also taking into account how these publications defined identity in the early part of the 20th century.

This paper examines the role black intellectualism in the black press during the period of the First World War played in shaping social movements like the New Negro Movement of the 1920s and 1930s. The source base includes issues of *The Crisis*, published by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and edited by William Burghardt Du Bois (more widely known as W.E.B. Du Bois). Viewed as the leading black intellectual of the time, Du Bois gave credibility to *The Crisis* and used the platform afforded to him by the newspaper to advocate in favor of full African American support of the war. This source is beneficial because it provides the best record of Du Bois' personal ideology during this period, as he focused his rhetorical strength on writing and editing for *The Crisis*. However, the NAACP was a white-owned organization, which colors the coverage of the war found in *The Crisis*. To rectify this weakness of the source, secondary scholarship written by historians who focus their research on Du Bois will be used to supplement the analysis.[3]

Du Bois viewed the war as an equalizer that would provide African Americans the ability to prove their

* This paper was written for HST 390 (Senior Capstone on the Great War), taught by Dr. Eugene Beiriger in Spring Quarter 2024. The submission was selected for publication by the Student History Conference Committee, led by Dr. Julia Woesthoff.

1 The term "African American" would have been new and not frequently used by the historical figures this essay will interact with heavily. The term "Negro" was the widely used term and was the established identifier for black people in the United States. Even though during this period it was understood to be a slur and derogatory, that is the predominant designation. However, even as a historian who understands the importance of allowing the sources to have their authentic voice, I will use "African American" whenever not directly citing a primary source.

2 Eurie Dahn, *Jim Crow Networks: African American Periodical Cultures* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2021), 1. This quotation is cited from Ida B Wells' autobiography in Dahn's bibliography.

3 Raymond Wolters, *Du Bois and His Rivals* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002), 112.

worthiness of full citizenship by performing their civic duties to the United States. This strong-held belief that is tracked throughout his published writing in *The Crisis* was reflective of his role as de facto leader of "Black Establishment," or the older generation of African Americans who grew up in the immediate aftermath of slavery that were relatively conservative, both politically and socially, as well as in their activism.[4] This perception of war as an equalizer was a credo that was passed down by African American Civil War veterans who fought for the Union Army and believed the passage of the 14th and 15th Amendments were a reward for their demonstrations of loyalty and by performing what they believed to be acts of citizenship.[5]

The next portion of the source base consists of issues of *The Messenger*, edited and published by A. Philip Randolph, a prominent civil rights and labor rights activist. Randolph's activism heavily focused on pushing the developing labor movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries to re-evaluate its racial policies and to become more far-reaching and racially inclusive with its impact.[6] Similarly to my analysis of *The Crisis,* secondary sources specifically about Randolph and his personal ideology will be used to support claims made about the sources. The rhetoric used by Randolph for his editorials and essays in *The Messenger* invokes Jeffersonian democracy in its claims of universal manhood and advocates for collective bargaining across all racial and class divisions. His reservations against the war were rooted in his socialist political ideology; he viewed the United States' involvement in the war as an attempt to further the growing imperialistic desires of the nation that began during the Gilded Age of the 1870s through to the 1910s. *The Messenger* gave Randolph the necessary platform on which to advocate more militantly against this imperialist action that propped him up as one of the leaders of the developing New Negro Movement, putting him in opposition with intellectuals like Du Bois and his "Black Establishment."

Previous scholars on this topic, such as Charlotte G. O'Kelly in 1982, argued that it is impossible to craft histories of black protest movements in the United States without taking into account the role that black newspapers and periodicals played in shaping and creating momentum for movements.[7] Specifically, in the case of the First World War, O'Kelly asserts that involvement in the war effort brought together groups of African Americans from all over the country that allowed them to build community and share ideas of their expectations for democracy in the United States in the aftermath of a victory abroad. The advancement of the black press in its printing and dissemination capabilities during this period allowed for a faster and more efficient distribution of African American public opinion that also aided in this renaissance of black opinion.[8]

William G. Jordan, in his monograph published in 2001, *Black Newspapers and America's War for Democracy, 1914–1920*, expanded the field by examining the role of black press in shaping black identity by focusing his research on how African American newspapers during the First World War defined "African American identity" by not looking at the written sources in a vacuum, but by also assessing the intentions of the authors in crafting their rhetoric.[9] Ultimately, Jordan argues that black newspapers generally supported the war and advocated for full participation in the war effort, even while voicing concerns or criticisms of the United States' claims for entering the war in defense

4 Ibid, 2. It is also important to note that Du Bois denounced racial segregation, but he also did not throw his full support behind integration either. Though he would not have used the term for himself, scholars have given him the label of "pluralist" due to his assertion that African Americans must not lose their black identity through assimilation into greater white culture. He viewed the possibility of system of dual/parallel development for African Americans alongside White Americans as the ideal structure for the United States.

5 Ibid, 115.

6 Cornelius L. Bynum, *A. Philip Randolph and the Struggle for Civil Rights* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2010).

7 Charlotte G. O'Kelly, "Black Newspapers and the Black Protest Movement: Their Historical Relationship, 1827–1945," *Phylon (1960–)* 43, no. 1 (1982): 1, https://doi.org/10.2307/274595.

8 Ibid, 5.

9 William G. Jordan, *Black Newspapers and America's War For Democracy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 15–16.

of democracy.[10] Jordan's work acts a cornerstone in the historiography and provides a necessary starting point for future historians who endeavor to explore how the black press defined African American identity in the interwar years and the impact that armed conflicts like the First World War had on this cultural shift.

Historian Chad L. Williams is the leading scholar on the impact that the black press, as well as black veterans, had on developing the New Negro Movement. In an essay published in the *Journal of African American History* in 2007, Williams used sources produced by editors and columnists for *The Messenger*, as well as other black organizations, to examine how African American veterans of the First World War came to understand their own identity as black soldiers for political and social change domestically.[11] Williams importantly asserts that the disruptive nature of the First World War forced black communities to re-evaluate their racial identity to cope with their growing disillusion, and that "the New Negro rejected the conservatism, parochialism, and political accommodationism of the 'Old Negro,' a signifier of individual leaders and methods of civil rights protest deemed outdated in the context of the post-war period. While in part generational, the New Negro was the product of a particular historical moment and its constituent social, political, and economic forces."[12] His research has aided in undoing the historiographical marginalization of African Americans in historical narratives crafted about the First World War. Black participation is far more nuanced than their experience as the subjects of unfair, racially motivated military policy or their role in supplying workers to the industrial war effort, and Williams' work acts as a bridge to close the gap between the field of African Diasporic historical studies and the field of First World War history.

10 Ibid, 17.

11 Chad L. Williams, "Vanguards of the New Negro: African American Veterans and Post-War War I Racial Militancy," in *Journal of African American History* 92, no. 3 (2007): 348, https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A169311965/LitRC?u=depaul&sid=summon&xid=150c031f.

12 Ibid, 348.

Williams is one of the first scholars in the field to emphasize the importance of the First World War in creating a schism between the old guard of black intellectuals, such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Ida B. Wells, Booker T. Washington, and Mary McLeod Bethune, who leaned towards a more conservative approach and advocated for passive social action, and those of the New Negro class who took inspiration from returning black veterans who wanted immediate, tangible change.[13]

The historiography on the topic of the role of the First World War and how it shaped black identity is well-researched and has branched off into many sub-categories. The scholarship has failed, however, to fully bridge the gap between the study of black intellectualism in the press and the impact of the First World War on the development of black social movements like the New Negro Movement. Though historians like Williams and Jordan emphasize the importance of the war on galvanizing black veterans into action, and the role of the black press in giving platforms to more radical and progressive intellectuals who advocated in favor of more militant action, they do not focus on how these intellectuals used their newspapers to disagree, debate, and define what the African American identity would be in the aftermath of a disruptive event like the First World War. Williams, who focused on black soldiers and does address the more militant voices found in *The Messenger* and how the black press gave voice to disillusioned black veterans of the First World War, still does not address the division in black intellectual thought during the era that putting papers like *The Messenger* and *The Crisis* into dialogue with one another can establish.

13 Similar arguments can be found in Williams' journal article, "A Mobilized Diaspora. The First World War and Black Soldiers as New Negroes" from an edited collection of essays published in 2013, titled *Escape from New York: The New Negro Renaissance Beyond Harlem*. David F. Krugler's *1919: The Year of Racial Violence,* published in 2014, makes many of the same arguments as Williams and further bridges the gap between the study of the dialogical nature of the black press and African American public life with the galvanization for more militant movements by the First World War. His work only focuses on one year, 1919, and how particularly violent it was due to unresolved tensions from the pre-war period, and therefore does not track the development of the New Negro Movement as far as this paper or the other scholarship mentioned.

This paper expands upon the current scholarship by demonstrating how black newspapers in the United States during the First World War functioned as arenas where black intellectuals battled how to best engage with the ongoing First World War, and how those disagreements reveal greater divisions over what it meant to be "African American" during the period. Intellectuals like W.E.B. Du Bois, using *The Crisis*, framed the war as an equalizer due to his belief that performing the civic duty of fully participating in the war would earn African Americans equal protection, whereas more socialist intellectuals like A. Philip Randolph opposed participation in the war due to his strongly held belief that the United States' intentions in participating in the war were nothing more than an attempt to further its imperialistic prospects abroad, so African Americans should focus their efforts on domestic problems. By focusing on how this schism formed in the black press, this paper will demonstrate how these intellectuals helped to form the growing New Negro Movement of the 1920s and 1930s.

Coverage of the United States' involvement in the First World War in black newspapers increased in frequency following Woodrow Wilson's declaration of his intentions to send troops abroad to assist in the conflict in April of 1917. Beginning in early 1917, the growing schism in black intellectual circles can be tracked in how the different publications addressed the inherent hypocrisy of claiming to "make the world safe for democracy" by fighting abroad while allowing for the systemic disenfranchisement of African Americans domestically.[14] In the June 1917 issue of *The Crisis*, an editorial was published that addressed the main conclusions reached by a convention attended by "the representatives of Negro organizations..." who asserted that though they acknowledge their belief that the true causes of the war were deeply rooted in the racist and colonialist beliefs of the European powers, the African American representatives:

> ...earnestly urge our colored fellow citizens to join heartily in this fight for eventual world liberty... Let our action, then, include unfaltering loyalty to our country, unbounded effort toward realizing the larger, fine objects of America and her allies; simultaneous with this and in further, stronger determination to realize world peace and self-government.[15]

The organization behind *The Crisis* argued in favor of African American participation in the war by appealing to an assumed patriotism held by its readership. The key point to draw out in this editorial is that *The Crisis* called for full African American support behind the Allies despite their poor track record in the treatment of African Americans, as well as having sordid pasts with chattel slavery. They were supremely aware of the flaws of fighting for their historical oppressors, but there is something to be gained if African Americans participate willingly in the war. Advocacy for an unfettering loyalty to the United States, despite the understanding that the country has failed to treat African American fairly, is a stance that *The Crisis* will continue to have.

In comparison, the November 1917 issue of *The Messenger* directly responds to the Wilsonian rhetoric of "Making the World Safe for Democracy" in an editorial that alludes to the growing dissatisfaction among younger African Americans with the leadership of organizations like the NAACP, which published *The Crisis* and articles that were pro-war in tone and rhetoric. The editorial details the publication's criticisms of the hypocrisy of the Wilson administration for claiming to want to enter a war to promote democracy for all, while failing to ensure the safety or prosperity of African Americans domestically. However, the most interesting portion of the editorial comes at the end, where the unspecified author alludes to a developing movement:

14 Woodrow Wilson, *Transcript of Address to Joint Sessions of Congress on April 2, 1918*, From the Library of Congress, *The Woodrow Wilson Papers*, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/world-war-i-american-experiences/about-this-exhibition/arguing-over-war/for-or-against-war/wilson-before-congress.

15 "Resolutions of the Washington Conference," *The Crisis* (New York City), June 1917. Marxist Digital Archive. https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/workers/civil-rights/crisis/0600-crisis-v14n02-w080.pdf.

> But a younger, more discontented type of 'new Negro' has gotten into those conventions. Their feelings will not [be put] down by prayers of patriotism. Their gospel of obey and trust has been replaced by one of rebel and demand... They really mean that this world must be safe for them. Until then it is not safe for democracy.[16]

The editors of *The Messenger* took a clear stance against the appeal to table discussions of systemic oppression and violence against African Americans, like that found in *The Crisis*, to promote involvement in the war. Randolph used *The Messenger* to both question the United States government's refusal to look at imminent domestic problems plaguing African Americans and shine a light on the developing "New Negro Movement," which was growing increasingly discontent with the more passive approaches being promoted by mainstream black intellectuals like Du Bois.[17]

The First World War marks a shift in this trend due to black intellectuals with differing ideologies creating their own platforms to voice their dissatisfaction, with dissention against mainstream black intellectuals promoted by leaders like Du Bois becoming more widely available. *The Messenger*'s coverage of the war not only criticized the Wilson administration's claims that the United States must enter the war to "Make the World Safe for Democracy" as hypocritical at best, and outright hollow and insincere at worst, but also highlighted the developing of more militant ideologies like the New Negro Movement who were dissatisfied with mainstream black intellectual leadership. Intellectual leaders like Randolph viewed themselves and their publications as the new guard of black intellectuals, who sought more radical and tangible changes. They rejected the approach of men like Du Bois, who viewed full enfranchisement as a long, generational pursuit that would only be delayed and undermined by what they viewed as extremist outliers acting out of accordance with the consensus of African Americans who wanted enfranchisement gained through civil and peaceful means.

Black newspapers and periodicals during the First World War era provided the arena where black intellectuals debated and attempted to redefine what the African American identity would be in the post-war era. The differing opinions on what actions should be taken by African Americans regarding the war effort reveal greater disagreements among men like W.E.B. Du Bois and the "Black Establishment" he represented, and A. Philip Randolph and his unionist and socialist ideals that gave voice to the generation of young and restless African Americans who demanded change. Du Bois used the platform afforded to him by the NAACP's *The Crisis* to advocate for all of black America to throw their support behind the war because of his belief that demonstrations of valor in war would then force the hand of the United States government to finally fulfill the promise of full citizenship and equal protections to African Americans. This belief put him in direct opposition to the new crop of intellectuals that included Randolph, who used *The Messenger* to voice his dissent of the United States' desire to "Make the World Safe for Democracy," viewing it as sanctimonious and dishonest. Randolph and his legion of "New Negroes" believed that the United States failed to make the country safe for its own non-white citizens and therefore could not hold the moral authority to appoint themselves as champions of democracy globally.

Though these scholars have acknowledged the dialogical nature of the relationship between African American culture and the black press, how they inform one another, they fail to recognize how Du Bois, Randolph, and other black intellectuals used the platforms given to them by their respective newspapers to debate and criticize one another about their handling of the war from the African American perspective. These debates provide insight into how African Americans grappled with what that designation meant; does either qualifier, "African"

16 "Making the World Safe for Democracy," *The Messenger* (New York City), Nov. 1917. Marxist Digital Archive. https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/pubs/messenger/1917-11-nov-Messenger.pdf/

17 Bynum, *A. Philip Randolph* 87.

or “American,” surpass the other, or do they hold equal weight in creating black identity in the United States in the post-war era? By putting these sources into dialogue with one another, the full extent of the schism formed because of the First World War becomes clear and helps explain why more militant movements, such as the New Negro Movement, developed in the aftermath of the conflict.

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De-Industrialized Chicago's Sacrifice Zones: A Photo Essay*

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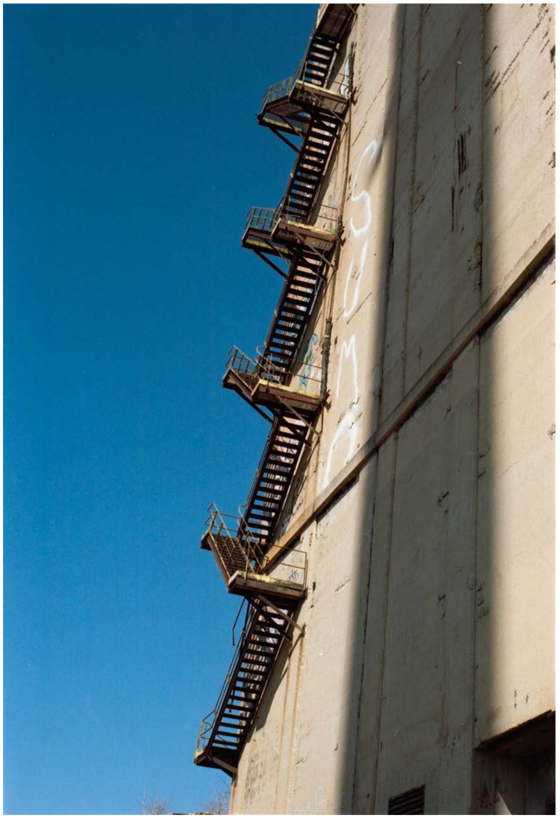
FIGURE 1

Abandoned building in one of Chicago's Sacrifice Zones



At the height of Chicago's industrial era in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the city's south and west sides were strongholds for massive factories built to manufacture steel, metalworks, railroads, machine tools, and related services. These areas were at the heart of the city's economy, supplying vast quantities of sophisticated manufactured products to the rest of the country and the world, while providing well-paying and secure work to the employees. The de-industrialization of Chicago began in the 1920s with the Great Depression and accelerated after WW2. By the 1970s and 80s, manufacturing in Chicago had declined significantly, as industries such as US Steel, International Harvester, and others began to close factories or relocate to the suburbs, the South, and overseas in search of cheaper labor and more lax regulations. This left the former industrialized areas of Chicago with nothing. While the risks of pollution and contamination would be enough to tear down the remaining massive concrete structures, they are, instead, still here. These areas and the people working and living there produced immense wealth for the city and the country, but once they were no longer profitable, they were summarily abandoned to become "sacrifice zones"—dilapidated and toxic remnants of abandoned factories in the south and west sides of Chicago. It is hard to deny the conclusion that the people living in these areas are effectively being sacrificed in the name of an economistic rationality that uses the high costs of tearing down, cleaning up, and rebuilding on polluted ground as the excuse for inaction.

In this co-authored project, we have focused on a select few key post-industrial sites. We visited to visually and ethnographically document the remaining physical structures and the surrounding landscape. We made note of what they were used for and talked to local community members about their lived experiences in the shadow of these abandoned structures.

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FIGURE 2

The walls of the old steel mill were monolithic in size and could not be torn down due to their mass and size. Across the factory ground, there are many different walls with two main walls on either side encompassing the factory's size.

I: Steelworkers Park

Located on 87th and Lakeshore Drive, there are two massive concrete structures spanning the entire length of a 500-acre property (Figures 1–3). The park is named after the workers whose careers were spent toiling for South Works Steel Mill. The steel mill opened in the late 1880s and closed only in 1992; its closure was linked to shifting markets in the steel industry and a changing economy. During the mill's largest run of production, it employed as many as 20,000 people and was considered the third-largest steel producer in the world. The factory was so large that some surrounding areas were built specifically to accommodate workers' housing needs (Pullman Museum 2020).

Post-1992 closure, the city of Chicago and the site's owner, US Steel, have made several attempts to redevelop Steelworkers Park, all ending in failure. The year 2010 saw efforts by the US Steel and McCaffrey Developments to redesign the park into a major commercial-residential-shopping development, with a large marina, high school, and luxury lofts (Sharroff 2010), but the ambitious project fell apart. The development was projected to cost around $4 billion dollars, but US steel had just lost $1.5 billion and decided to abandon the project entirely (Pete 2016). In 2024, the city greenlit yet another development effort to transform the space into a "Quantum Computing Campus" (Feurer 2024). No news has been posted about this project since its announcement in December 2024.

FIGURE 3

More steel mill walls are located near the water on the factory grounds, allowing barges to unload their ore for storage and transportation by railcars. For scale, each step of the wall on the left of the image is about 5 feet tall.

Steel production is a highly polluting industry. It contaminates air, land, and water. Most steel mills, South Works Steel Mill included, used coke as a cooking method (Ashour 2018). Coke-based steel production heats coal without oxygen, producing coke, a fuel and reducing agent that provides enough heat to melt iron ore into molten iron. Over decades of operation, coke and other toxic components and byproducts have seeped into the ground and polluted the area.

In building on polluted land, the minimum requirement is replacing topsoil before building on new ground. The city endorsed the 2010 Master Plan, which projected an estimate of 63,000 dump trucks of topsoil needed to make the area safe before building could proceed (Biosolids Bring Life Back 2016). Just by visiting the site, the legacy of contamination caused by decades of steel production becomes obvious. The grass is dead and seems to shrink away from any possible contact with the sun. The monolithic concrete structures overshadow an almost barren wasteland of what used to be a crown jewel in Chicago's heavy industry (Sayles et al. 2021). Jarrige and Le Roux's *Contamination of the Earth* details the harrowing history of industrial pollution, including those of steel production along Lake Michigan in Gary, Indiana, and southside Chicago (Jarrige and Le Roux 2021). The Midwest's rich history of manufacturing has left its mark on both cities and Steelworkers Park as a scar left over.

FIGURE 4

Steam plant boiler on first floor of the plant.

II: Lathrop Community Housing Steam Plant

Lathrop's steam plant differs from the rest of the industries discussed in this project in that it was built to provide steam-powered heating for the Lathrop community housing projects (Figure 4). The Lathrop Homes were built as one of Chicago's first public housing projects in 1938, with the steam plant accompanying the projects as an amenity (Brandel 2012). Between 1995 and 2010, Chicago made efforts to destroy all the housing projects within city limits under the guise of "reducing inequality." The Lathrop Homes were included in these mass demolitions, leaving the steam plant abandoned (Keiser 2023). Sticking out over surrounding areas, the plant's smokestack is a stark reminder of the city's indifference to and neglect of Chicago's lower-class. Post-shutdown, Lathrop's steam powerplant has been frequented by kids and artists, at some points serving as shelter to some of Chicago's unhoused population.

III: ACME Steel & Co.

The final property we visited during our survey happened to also be the most storied. ACME Steel & Co. was a coke-based steel mill that operated from 1905 to 2001. The coke used in steel production is heated and cooked in large ovens (Figure 5). Fumes produced during the coking process are dispersed via massive towers. Coke, coal, and soot had coated all the surrounding grounds that we walked on (Pickren 2019). At some points, coke had accumulated into small hills about the height of one of the authors, Jimi (5'11") (Figure 6).

On one end, we came across a half-demolished battery that had once been used to produce coke. We also found different sites of dilapidated office buildings and storage bunkers between two smoke towers and the coke ovens. A massive elevator and working space transported materials and workers from one site to another.

FIGURE 5

Oven used to turn raw coal into coke, an important ingredient in steel production. There are two of these structures located on either side of the coal elevator, each standing about 30 feet tall and hundreds of feet long.

FIGURE 6

Everywhere we walked, we were walking on coke. The material is contaminated and pollutes so easily it spreads everywhere, turning into these mounds.

FIGURE 7

Remains of smaller coke oven (battery).

The property is covered with remnants of half-demolished buildings and empty spaces where nothing has been built and no one besides the odd explorer is sure to go (Figures 7–9). There is even a small pond in the back areas of the factory with a coke beach. What are these spaces used for post-closure? What is their point? After speaking with locals, we were able to gain some insight as to what uses the empty spaces serve post-demolition:

Tearing down these kinds of sites costs millions of dollars and is incredibly dangerous for the workers as well as the local communities. As a result, the remnants of the factory are abandoned. ACME and Co.'s factory is in South Deering, in the deep southside of Chicago, and is a neighborhood of mainly low-income families and communities of color (South Deering Community Data 2024). These racial and class demographics have little political sway and are often ignored when it comes to safety or pollution concerns. By leaving the factory behind, Chicago is ignoring the people who live in the surrounding area. In our visit, we spoke with some of the local residents about their experiences with the factory.

> Joe: I've lived here for about 7 years.
>
> Julian: Have you noticed any activity or had any experiences with the factory since moving here?
>
> Joe: Yeah, lots of fly dumping... People go fishing in the lake.

Fly dumping is the unauthorized disposal of dangerous materials or waste that would otherwise need a specific disposal method (Figures 10–13).

FIGURE 8

Smoke stacks that polluted the air and contributed to the coke floor contaminations.

FIGURE 9

Elevator used to transport raw materials from storage into the coke batteries.

FIGURE 10

Oil canisters dumped on factory ground.

FIGURE 11

Dumped tires and demolished structure.

FIGURE 12

Rubber rolls dumped on factory grounds to avoid proper disposal.

FIGURE 13

Abandoned truck dumped on factory ground and deteriorated over time.

FIGURE 14

Swans living in pond entirely surrounded by beaches of coke contamination. Despite the contamination, they continue to thrive.

After some investigating, we found clear evidence of the fly dumping that Joe had referenced: rusted-out trucks and piles of rubber on the ground. Several oil vessels were opened and emptied onto the coke floor. We found barrels of wastewater left out in the open. According to Joe, people living in the area go fishing at the "lake," a small body of water located on the factory grounds. We made our way there and noticed that the entire beach was made of coke and soot, and the water was visibly polluted (Figures 14–16). A family of swans had made the lake their home and are surviving!

On our walk back, we decided to investigate some of the structures around the factory land. Upon walking into an orange building next to the main entrance road, a man came up behind us and promptly explained that just one week before our visit, he had seen a dead body exactly where we were standing. He had happened upon the deceased man and immediately called the police, who identified the body as a 52-year-old unhoused man who had died from exposure to cold weather. His body was not found until this man happened

FIGURE 15

Map of coke plant.

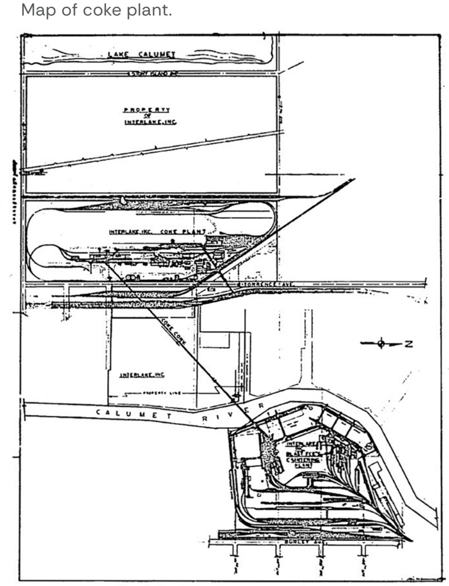


Fig. 1 Interlake, Inc. - Chicago Plant Map

FIGURE 16

Walking in a polluted area.

upon him while he was exploring. Our conversation made us realize how these large properties are now used—as shelters for desperate people in need. In the modern day, these buildings are frequently left standing, but without upkeep or anything of the sort, it is impossible to keep tabs on who is in and out (Figures 17–18).

IV: Conclusion: The Post-Industrial Landscape of Sacrifice Zones

Sacrifice zones exist as highly concentrated areas of contamination around polluting industries. The "zone" refers to the physical area designated for this type of industry that is framed as acceptable to destroy and contaminate in the name of industrial progress and value production. One of the authors of this paper (Julian) lived in Baton Rouge for a few years and often found himself around a pond at the Exxon Mobil site, an area that is largely considered the start of the notorious "Cancer Alley" due to the prevalence of highly toxic petrochemical plants. In the U.S., these large industrial and post-industrial sacrifice zones tend to be mainly concentrated around, and associated with, both lower-class communities and communities of color, allowing the polluting industries to dictate who, where, and what is okay to contaminate (Climate Reality Project). Ned Randolph (2021) explores the commonality between environmental racism and sacrifice zones, specifically in Baton Rouge, Louisiana's Mississippi River industrial district. Louisiana's situation is largely tied to the receding coastline. The fossil fuel industry can be directly tied to Louisiana losing land (Randolph 2021). At this point, this land loss totals around "2000 miles since 1930" (Randolph 2021), or 16 football fields daily. The universities designate massive amounts of funding towards researching and solving land loss crisis; however, when there is a massive industry right next door actively contaminating that land, there is only so much that can be done. Louisiana is segregated, and the location of fossil fuel industrial sites is an area mainly populated by the working-class poor and communities of color.

Chicago's polluting industrial plants and infrastructure share commonalities with Louisiana's. The old factories occupying the south and west sides of the city are largely populated by people of color and lower-class members of the city. The factories explored in this paper are located in old industrial corridors on the northwest side of Chicago and far south areas (Figures 19–20). While the Lathrop Homes steam plant seems like an outlier, the plant is in an old industrial area that only recently pushed into other economic models. The south and west sides of Chicago are largely associated with low-income people and communities of color; placing steel mills and other mass polluting industries in these areas enables the city to disguise the contamination and put them in the backdrop as opposed to the more affluent and better-known areas like Lincoln Park or the Gold Coast on Chicago's northside. The sacrifice zones emerged as the city and industry came to an agreement to determine what areas were less important than others, and which places and communities deserved to be considered worthy of sacrifice.

FIGURE 17

One of the authors being shown a police report regarding the body of the unhoused man. The man who shared the information was clearly distressed and had come to check up on the man's old living grounds.

FIGURE 18

The building that the deceased man used for housing on the factory grounds. This is the location where his body was found.

FIGURE 19

ACME Steel And Coke (bottom center) and Steelworkers Park (top right). Located from 87th street to 130th street, this stretch encompasses the Southside of Chicago, with ACME taking up land from 95th to 130th.

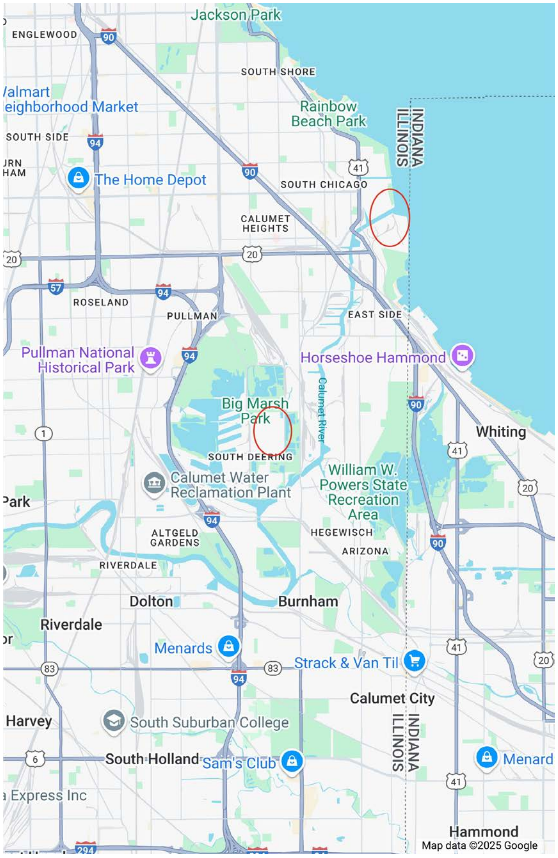
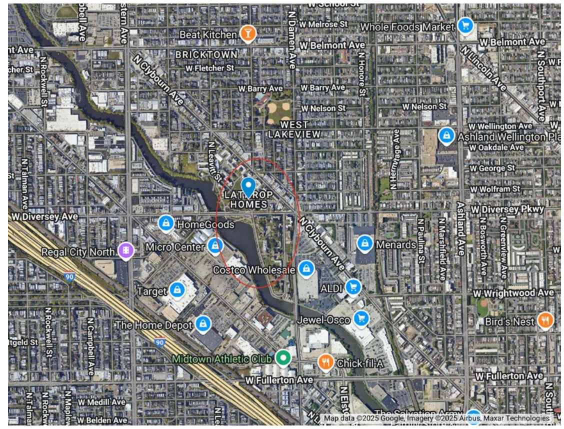


FIGURE 20

Lathrop Homes and Steam Plant map overview, Located on Diversey and Hoyne next to the north branch of the Chicago River, the community housing was some of the only housing in the area at the time of construction due to its proximity to an industrial corridor.



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In discussions of industry returning to the U.S., there seems to be this mystical belief in a magical fix for the economy and an immediate shift back towards a manufacturing model. In Chicago's case study, we can witness the social and ecological downsides of this model of industry that had prevailed for so long. By design, the factories were pushed into communities of color and lower-class neighborhoods only for the "free market" to enable these industries to move overseas in search of lower costs and higher profits. We have already seen what industries in the United States leaves behind, so in the event of industry returning, the process will only condemn more areas and more people as "sacrifice zones."

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Kyra Harrington | *BWCA* | Acrylic on canvas

The Fragmentation of the Self in *Conversations with Friends* and "The Dead"*

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James Joyce published his short story collection *Dubliners* in 1914, including his most famous story, "The Dead," an early 20th-century Irish narrative revolving around Gabriel Conroy and his wife Gretta attending a Twelfth Night Christmas party, and the couple's revelation that follows. Sally Rooney published her debut novel *Conversations with Friends* in 2017. The novel takes place in the early 2010s and follows best friends and ex-girlfriends Frances and Bobbi as they become entangled in the complex marriage of Melissa and Nick, a sophisticated older couple. Though the two narratives are vastly different in subject matter and temporal setting, they both focus on their protagonists' unstable senses of self. In this essay, I argue that James Joyce's "The Dead" and Sally Rooney's *Conversations with Friends* portray remarkably similar cases of fragmented, insecure identities across the divide of gender, age, and a century of radical changes in Ireland.

Sally Rooney's "Even if You Beat Me" is an essay on her experience in professional debate competitions. Rooney explains in this piece, "[t]he more I observed the structure of public debates, the more I thought: I could do this. I could be successful and popular too." Rooney is recognizing social structures as something she is not privy to, and to which she must instead somehow learn the code. Her actions do not emerge from her internal values but from the tenets of societal success. Her selfhood is not constituted from within, but instead from external validation of these debate structures. While Rooney uses her writing style to challenge the construction of a male-centered society, her yearning for success and popularity is seen as only achievable through traditional means. Instead of rebelling based on her internal values, Rooney adheres to the available structures to achieve success that is constituted by others. This is reflective of Frances, the protagonist in her debut novel, and perhaps more broadly of a certain kind of young and creative woman in contemporary society.

Rooney later describes the sensation she has in these debates, and how she herself is suspended in these moments: "[y]ou hear yourself constructing syntactically elaborate sentences, one after another, but you don't necessarily have the sensation that you are the person doing it." In this same essay, Rooney is taking communication, which should be an inherently intersubjective and human experience, and instead insisting that it become something that is not about connection, but merely a means to an end. Debating and writing become things that are not utilized for connection, but for approval. Rooney's description of herself in this essay reflects Frances's beliefs regarding her own poetry.

In *Conversations with Friends*[1], Frances describes the applause following her and Bobbi's poetry performance as "the most pure expression of what I was trying to do, which was to make myself into this kind of person: someone worthy of praise, worthy of love" (40). This notion of performance for other people evidently constitutes value for these insecure young women, both real and fictional. The novel does become nearly meta in

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1 *Conversations with Friends* will be cited hereafter as *CWF*.

this sense, as Rooney is depicting all these insecurities through a first-person point of view in a narration by a writer who is striving for worth, as voiced by those outside her.

Similarly, Joyce's physical description of Gabriel early in "The Dead" reflects Joyce himself. The central moment of the story with Gretta also reflects the background of Joyce's own wife, Nora Barnacle. The parallels between fiction and reality suggest that these writers are drawing from their personal experience. Putting these feelings in a fictional narrative outside themselves seems to enable the authors to examine alternative identities that hinge on their own weakest qualities.

For both characters, the firmest grip they have on their identity is through self-pity. Both protagonists have the habit of self-victimization, and though they are both privileged by their upward mobility in the middle class, they ignore this privilege and instead remain concerned with the ways in which they are lacking. While Frances has great difficulty in easing this woe-is-me attitude, Gabriel soothes these fears with his professional status and his feelings of superiority toward women and less-educated men.

Gabriel's aunts and niece are all music teachers, and unmarried. They must fend for themselves—though they are far from being economically underprivileged—because of the shortage of eligible marital partners following the Great Famine. According to historian Catriona Kennedy, "[i]n 1911, 27% of Irish men and 25% of Irish women aged between forty-five and fifty-four had never married" (480), a rate that was nearly double that of England and Wales. Following the famine, the skew in population and altered gender roles caused the expectations of domestic life to be challenged. Gabriel's role as the man of the house is exacerbated, as are his patriarchal tendencies.

Scholar Melissa Free argues that "Gabriel has become a man too enamored of the privilege afforded him by his gender, occupation, and intellectual prowess to value women" (277). For Gabriel, women are mainly useful insofar as they provide him with an emboldened sense of confidence due to their inherent inferiority. Virginia Woolf explains this idea in her essay "A Room of One's Own," arguing that women exist as a mirror for men, reflecting them as something larger than they are, which is why men "insist so emphatically upon the inferiority of women, for if they were not inferior, they would cease to enlarge" (41). Woolf proposes the notion that women are a necessity for men, but only insofar as their existence enhances that of a man's, a notion that is practically applied in the character of Gabriel.

Gabriel demands approval from others in order to be satisfied. Joyce iterates this through the prose: "[h]e would fail with them just as he had failed with the girl in the pantry. He had taken up a wrong tone. His whole speech was a mistake from first to last, an utter failure" (155). The narration reveals how much Gabriel is concerned with his performance of the self. With this, however, is the disregard he adopts for people outside himself, particularly women.

This is perhaps most evident in Gabriel's interactions with Molly Ivors, a staunch Irish nationalist and fellow professor. Molly questions Gabriel and his involvement with the *Daily Express*, a conservative Dublin newspaper that championed British imperial dominion over Ireland. Gabriel is especially taken aback by Molly's accusatory manner, claiming that he simply writes literary reviews that are apolitical. He misreads Molly's flirtation as an attack. He thinks of Molly as an embodiment of the emancipated "New Woman" of this era, resisting traditional gender roles, as he refers to her as "the girl or woman or whatever she was" (Joyce 165). Molly's mere existence is in some sense a threat to everything Gabriel understands as unshakeable truths about his place in society.

Melissa Free comments, "Gabriel proves unable to commune with the living, or to imagine into existence a truly modern Ireland" (278). Gabriel, therefore, is a traditional patriarchal protagonist, one who fails to see the abundance of women in his life as autonomous human beings. Perhaps this is why the seminal moment of "The Dead" is such a major epiphany; it is not because Gabriel has such an emotional reaction to Gretta loving a man before she met him, but instead, because Gabriel has no understanding of her separate inner life. The women in Gabriel's life, in his understanding, exist only insofar as they prove useful to him emotionally.

Frances has a far more complex way of addressing herself. Perhaps this is because *Conversations with Friends* is a contemporary novel, or because the protagonist is female, or because it celebrates both modern Ireland and the women within it. Changes in Ireland were plentiful in the hundred-year gap between "The Dead" and *Conversations with Friends*. Politics were optimistic, though sometimes turbulent, and various factors had greatly reduced the Catholic Church's cultural and political influence. The Celtic Tiger period from the 1990s to the late 2000s fostered great economic growth for the nation, though this improvement ultimately resulted in a property crash, causing an economic downturn after a remarkable advance (Ferriter 223). The decrease in religious dominance and the improved economy allowed for women to declare more autonomy over their lives. Despite these changes, Frances's relationship to her identity is by no means dissimilar to Gabriel's.

Frances's struggles are similar in her stride towards individuality, but her ways of soothing her inadequacy are entirely different. She recounts her diary writings in high school: "...as a feminist I have the right not to love anyone" (Rooney *CWF* 170). Frances is so hellbent on being radically emotionless in a feigned feminism that she ultimately hurts her loved ones and herself. In many conversations throughout the novel, Frances emphasizes her lack of feeling and attempts to deny that she is capable of emotions at all. She seems to be under the impression that emotions would make her into something lesser, and so she eliminates the idea that she has them through an intellectual excuse.

Frances and Gabriel both experience these moments of epiphany regarding their individuality. Following Frances's diagnosis of endometriosis, she says, "[s]uffering wouldn't make me special, and pretending not to suffer wouldn't make me special. Talking about it, or even writing about it, would not transform the suffering into something useful" (Rooney *CWF* 263). Frances spends most of the novel in an attempt to make herself into someone singular, someone who is wanted. This epiphany is connected to her body, and it seems to argue that action cannot lie in the way communication can.

Shortly after Gretta's confession of her love for the deceased Michael Furey, Gabriel stares out into the snowy night in contemplation. It is said, "[h]is own identity was fading out into a grey impalpable world: the solid world itself which these dead had one time reared and lived in was dissolving and dwindling" (Joyce 194). While Frances's epiphany consists of physical suffering, Gabriel's is emotional. It confirms his indistinctiveness, just as Frances's does. Both Frances and Gabriel are attempting to create something out of the pain they feel and to receive some confirmation from another that they are special. Yet, in this incessant desire, they only end up hurting their loved ones.

Perhaps the most central issue of these two stories is the objectification of the lover. As Gabriel attempts to leave his aunts' Christmas party, his wife Gretta lingers on the stairs, and he observes her as she listens to "The Lass of Aughrim" playing in the other room. During this episode, "[h]e asked himself what is a woman standing on the stairs in the shadow, listening to distant music, a symbol of" (Joyce 182). Gretta is not his wife at this moment, nor a person at all. She is, as the audience can infer, contemplating her depression and her love for her deceased childhood crush, Michael Furey. Yet, Gabriel mistakes her emotional state and merely questions how he can make her posture and expression into something beautiful. He remarks that if he were a painter, he would paint the image, and though this could perhaps be read as a true devotion for Gretta, he is ultimately concerned with how to make this lived moment into some creative expression that is good enough to provide him with external validation. Gabriel reminisces on the letters he sent Gretta early in their relationship, where he wrote, "*[w]hy is it that words like these seem to me so dull and cold? Is it because there is no word tender enough to be your name?*" (Joyce 186). Though these are thoughts that could be read as love, they ultimately serve Gabriel, not Gretta. As to Gabriel's assertion that Gretta is special, he is benefiting from his image of himself as a passionate lover, yet he is not perceiving her as a separate person.

The central conflict in *Conversations with Friends* emerges in the falling out of all relationships held by Frances. Frances publishes a story that is a thinly veiled description of her and Bobbi's relationship. Frances fails to make Bobbi aware of this, and as the manuscript moves toward publication, an acquaintance, Melissa, sends it to Bobbi, who reads it indignantly. Frances fails to consult Bobbi or even consider how she may feel about their relationship being fictionalized, causing a substantial rift in their relationship. Earlier in the novel, Bobbi remarks to Frances, "[w]hen you get to like someone, you make them feel like they're different from everyone else" (Rooney *CWF* 220). Frances's understanding of herself as valuable comes directly from others liking her. It seems she has the sense that what she *likes* says more about her than what she is actually like. Later, when Frances apologizes to Bobbi via email for hurting her feelings with the story, she tells her, "[w]hen I read the Bible I picture you as Jesus" (Rooney *CWF* 285). Frances makes her into a divinity, and while she does take accountability for her actions, it is this confession that holds the most weight. The value Frances gives the people she loves is seemingly what she believes to be the very thing that constitutes her own value.

Ultimately, Joyce's "The Dead" and Rooney's *Conversations with Friends* utilize the universal notion of the fragmented self in the face of social expectations to create two pieces of fiction that reflect the authors' own lives, immortalizing their experiences of being young Irish writers. By analyzing these stories, we can uncover these narratives as depicting distinctly Irish manifestations of an insecure self in their respective time periods. While Gabriel's Europe-oriented, deeply patriarchal sense of self is shaken by two women deeply connected to Irish identity, Frances' identity as a queer woman is shaken by the lack of control she has over her endometriosis-riddled body and socioeconomic circumstances. These narratives not only provide a fascinating look into two very different Irelands, giving a sense of the way major societal changes might permeate the marrow of interpersonal relationships, but also assure readers that the fragmented sense of self is a part of the human condition, influenced by particular social contexts.

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Chloe Kwasigroch | *Monoprint* | Ink pressed monoprint on paper

The Woman is Not. Any More Than the Man: Fanon's Offer to Liberation Projects*

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Introduction

"I, the man of color, want only this: That the tool never possess the man. That the enslavement of man by man cease forever. That is, of one by another. That it be possible for me to discover and to love man, wherever he may be. The Black man is not. Any more than the white man" (Fanon [1952] 2008, 231). So writes Frantz Fanon at the end of *Black Skin, White Masks*, asserting a vision where no lines of division measure one man against another, and where such lines of division cannot even exist. This humanist devotion to "discover and to love man" stems from Fanon's drive as a psychiatrist to pursue healing for his patients. In his writings on systems of domination and exploitation, however, there remains an absence—namely, the place of women in this humanist vision. Books like *Black Skin, White Masks*; *A Dying Colonialism*; and *The Wretched of the Earth* have all profoundly shaped post-colonial revolutionary thought and liberation movements, yet, Fanon's writings on women have invited criticism that he is misguided at best and a raging misogynist at worst.

However legitimate these critiques are, the salience of Fanon's work lies in his confrontation of the dehumanization of imperialism and the misanthropic nature of constructing racial identities as "biologically determined." During his time in Algeria, when he relinquished his career as a psychiatrist, Fanon concluded that he could not treat the psychopathology in his dehumanized patients without changing the foundations of society itself. These critiques of Fanon do not negate the humanist project that he strived for—instead, his ideas can be reconfigured to neutralize such critique and expand on his liberatory vision rather than devalue it for its limitations. By reapplying his body of work to include the bodies of women in his "project of love," the limitations found in his profoundly humanist project can be remedied to reimagine liberation.

Fulfilling Fanon's Endeavor of Love: Embracing the Body of the Mother

In her writings in *I Am a Martinican Woman*, upon learning her maternal grandmother was a white woman, Mayotte Capecia pondered the following: "If she had married a white man, would I perhaps have been all white?... And would life have been less difficult for me?... How could a Canadian woman have loved a Martinican?" (quoted in Fanon [1952] 2008, 29). Following such musings, Capecia comes to a conclusion: "I, who was still thinking about the Father, decided that I could love only a white man, a blond with blue eyes, a Frenchman" (as quoted in Fanon [1952] 2008, 29). So resolved Mayotte Capecia—she would strive towards "whitening" and "purifying" herself and her children through marrying a Frenchman, engaging in what Fanon described as a process of "lactification" (Fanon [1952] 2008, 29). To Capecia, a white spouse represented everything her status as a Martinican woman could not—social mobility, power, and beauty. In essence, marrying a white man was a "salvation" from her Blackness. To Fanon, a marriage built on such origins is a "perversion" of love; in his appraisal of Capecia in *Black Skin, White Masks*, he proclaims that "love is out of bounds for the Mayotte Capecias of this world"

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(Fanon [1952] 2008, 27). He continues by deriding her writings as "the most ridiculous ideas proliferated at random" and a "third-rate book, advocating unhealthy behavior" (Fanon [1952] 2008, 25). At first glance, such a reproach towards Capecia appears to be a misogynistic devaluation of her autobiographical writings and her very personhood. Fanon responds to a similar claimant quite differently. A male subject who exhibited similar psychopathological traits, Jean Veneuse, receives far gentler treatment compared to that reserved for Capecia. Arguably, Fanon neglects to analyze the capacity of the economic and social institution of marriage and its power to alter Capecia's living conditions.

However, such appraisals of Fanon's attitudes towards women misunderstand his purpose in analyzing Capecia—he declares that because "we believe in the possibility of love," it is necessary to ask "to what extent authentic love remains impossible as long as this feeling of inferiority... has not been purged" for people like Capecia (Fanon [1952] 2008, 24–25). Thus, Fanon repudiates what he describes as Capecia's perversion of love. Fanon's statements "hardly represent hatred of women of color or a failure to understand their situation"; instead, they "[address] a reality that permeates every racist society" (Gordon 2015, 39). Fanon did not loathe Capecia, nor did he loathe interracial relationships—he loathed what he argued was the psychologically inauthentic love that bound her to her white husband. Fanon's psychoanalytic training presents this kind of love as doomed once a pursuit towards "whiteness" marks it. Indeed, "where whiteness is the basis of the liaison, the effort is pathological and hence a form of failure" (Gordon 2015, 35).

A comparison between Fanon's writings on Jean Veneuse and his writings on Mayotte Capecia indicates that they are two sides of the same miserable coin in their quest for racial approval. "The anti-black black woman and the anti-black black man collapse into the same. Their desires mark the limitations of their flight into the world of intimacy" (Gordon 2015, 43). For Fanon, this pathological failure of authentic love emerges from both anti-Black Black men and women, not just the Capecias of the world. In their attempts to "whiten the world" and reject themselves, "they have thrown to the wayside the project of love" (Gordon 2015, 43).

Fanon's solution to the abandonment of the "project of love" is to destroy socially prescribed identity and modes of being (Fanon [1952] 2008, xv). He presents the concept of "sociogeny" to stand in for eugenicist social categories as an antidote to the inferiority embedded in such constructions. He proposes that they inhibit "genuine connection" between the Black man and the white man, which would fundamentally challenge colonial frameworks and categorizations of inferiority and superiority (Fanon [1952] 2008, 206). According to bell hooks, Fanon understands colonial violence as the "pain of men inflicted upon them by other men," and for him, healing can only begin once "this conflict between men is resolved" (hooks 1996, 82). Furthermore, freedom from the forces that allow the creation of "inauthentic love" only become possible once "biological bonds" are "negated in the interest of creating a new liberatory world order grounded in a shared vision"—a vision that re-establishes a brotherhood between white and Black men as the "site of hope and possibility" (hooks 1996, 83).

This kind of antidote systematically erases the Black female body—attempting to break free of the corporeal world in favor of this vision means that "the mother's body must disappear along with the body of the father" so that a "world of fraternal sameness and brotherhood can emerge" (hooks 1996, 83). By engaging in a "symbolic matricide," Fanon is able to forego "remembering the body of the mother," not only ignoring the Black body, but also erasing the Black female body in order to transcend the corporeal world and arrive at a "world of the mind" (hooks 1996, 83). In other words, the existence of female bodies serves as an inconvenient disruption to Fanon's "genuine connection" that is predicated on a "reciprocal recognition" between men (hooks 1996, 84). Thus, Fanon's "paradigms for healing" collapse—if liberation from colonialism becomes a "love affair" between Black and white men, wherein they engage in a "mutual patriarchal gazing," then what of women like Capecia? (hooks 1996, 85). Where can she find the antidote to inauthentic love?

In order to return to the project of love, it is necessary to return to Fanon through an "embrace of both mother and father"—in other words, to recognize the salience of Fanon's work in understanding the psyche of the colonized, while also finding the ways in which Fanon's writings are "longing for that return" (hooks 1996, 85). The following sections will examine the particular ways in which Fanon was not able to return to the "body of the mother" in his project of love as a means of liberation.

Taking Back "Our" Women: The Algerian Revolution and Masculinized Memory

Fanon traces how Algerian society had begun to change; family dynamics, technological adoption, and gender roles had shifted and metamorphosed in the process of resistance to French colonial rule. Fanon's boundless devotion to humanism is a fixture of his analysis of the revolution. As hooks observes, "Now and then [Fanon] evokes a world of universal humanism where women and men are struggling. This is usually when he is speaking of Algeria..." (hooks 1996, 84). Yet, his inability to speak with Algerian female revolutionaries limited his analysis of their experiences. As a result, Fanon overemphasizes the veil as a site of cultural reformation and exaggerates the changing societal role of Algerian women. He fails to explicate the relationship between patriarchy and anti-colonial revolution and its impact on female bodies. He fails to provide a robust analysis of the position of Algerian female revolutionaries in society. The clearest explanation for this failure is that he analyzed women's relationship to anti-colonial resistance primarily through the study of Algerian men.

For example, Fanon narrates the role of the veil in colonial domination through the eyes of both colonial and colonized men. He describes the European obsession with unveiling the Algerian woman as a means of "convening the woman, winning her over to the foreign values, wrenching her free from her status," while "at the same time achieving a real power over the man and attaining a practical, effective means of destructuring Algerian culture" (Fanon [1959] 1994, 39). In other words, destructuring the whole of Algerian society rested on "reforming" Algerian women, which humiliated Algerian men. This invoked a "reactionary form of behavior on the part of the colonized," where "in the face of the violence of the occupier, the colonized found himself defining a principled position with respect to a formerly inert element of the native cultural configuration" (Fanon [1959] 1994, 46). The colonized man takes on a defensive position against such attacks, and while Fanon identifies this sense of resistance among colonized men, he fails to ask how colonized women received attempts to "unveil" them. He struggles to recognize that the burgeoning sense of resistance in the colonized man stems from anger that "his" women had been violated by colonists. This kind of shortcoming can be indicative of the ways in which "nationalism typically has sprung from masculinized memory, masculinized humiliation, and masculinized hope" (Enloe 2000, 44).

Thus, we can see that Fanon reinforces and legitimizes a "masculinized memory" of Algerian resistance in two ways. First, he excludes the female voice and experience. And second, he fails to acknowledge how "anger at being 'emasculated'—or turned into a nation of 'busboys'—acts as the natural fuel for igniting a nationalist movement" (Enloe 2000, 44). When Fanon explains that "the plans of the occupier that determine the centers of resistance around which a people's will to survive becomes organized," he overlooks the ways that the "will to survive" interacts with patriarchal hierarchies (Fanon [1959] 1994, 47). This "will" may preserve the distinct national identity that the colonialist aims to destroy, e.g., the veil, but it also preserves the right of Algerian men to have jurisdiction over the behavior of "their" women.

Indeed, colonial populations have responded defensively to colonial administrators' anti-veil rhetoric. For example, Egyptian women and men adopted a defensive position when faced with blatantly "racist Orientalism" (Enloe 2000, 53). Specifically, they objected to "portrayals of Islam as incapable of dynamism and reform" and fervently defended the veil (Enloe 2000, 53). However, the experiences of Egyptian men and women diverge because Egyptian women must navigate the space between their colonizers and "their need to preserve ... alliances with Egyptian nationalist men" (Enloe 2000, 53). Because nationalists view rejections of the veil as treasonous, nationalist women subordinate critique of their societal norms, including that of the veil. They grow unable to challenge the patriarchal hierarchy within the nationalist movement, which, in the case of Egypt, allowed "male privilege to seep deep into the Egyptian nationalist movement" (Enloe 2000, 53).

Therefore, Fanon's analysis of the position of Algerian women lacks complexity. His statement that their attitude "with respect to the veil will be constantly related to [their] overall attitude with respect to the foreign occupation" epitomizes this lack (Fanon [1959] 1994, 47). He does not allow unveiled women to both oppose the occupying forces and the male privilege within the liberation movement, a stance that hails the conception that women represent "the members of the community most susceptible to *assimilation* and cooption by insidious outsiders" and whose actions are thus important "in the eyes of nationalist men" (Enloe 2000, 54). This attention to women does not necessarily guarantee that they "would be taken seriously as active creators in the nation's newly assertive politics" (Enloe 2000, 54). Because Fanon emphasizes the *behavior* of women, rather than the thoughts and feelings of the women themselves, he perpetuates the conception that they are nodes of revolutionary potential rather than producers of intellectual or agential content. His limited insight into the experiences of Algerian women collapses their behavior into a single dialectic: support the resistance or support the occupation.

Fantasies of the Veil: Collapsing and Rebuilding Fanon's Image of the Algerian Woman

Throughout *A Dying Colonialism*, Fanon's portrayal of female revolutionaries is steeped in the language of valor, causing him to "collapse" the experiences of Algerian women. This is most apparent in the chapters "Algeria Unveiled" and "The Algerian Family." Fanon details the evolution of the liberation movement: "until 1955, the combat was waged exclusively by men" but subsequently began to incorporate women as "the violence of the occupier ... induced the leaders no longer to exclude certain forms of combat (Fanon [1959] 1994, 48). Algerian women grew essential to the revolutionary struggle as they took on roles as informants and bomb carriers. Their shape-shifting capacity represents the most critical element of their success. They would remove their veils to appear "Westernized" and thus uninvolved with the liberation movement. They would replace them once the French caught on to their tactics (Fanon [1959] 1994, 53). Fanon finds this to reflect a transformation of the position of women in Algerian society. He proclaims that "[t]his woman who was writing the heroic pages of Algerian history was, in so doing, bursting the bounds of the narrow world in which she had lived without responsibility, and was at the same time participating in the destruction of colonialism and in the birth of a new woman" (Fanon [1959] 1994, 107). He praises revolutionary actions of Algerian women and emphasizes their "exemplary constancy, self-mastery, and success. Despite the inherent, subjective difficulties and notwithstanding the sometimes-violent incomprehension of a part of the family, the Algerian woman assumes all the tasks entrusted to her" (Fanon [1959] 1994, 55). Fanon is right to point out that the autonomy of Algerian women in society may have been reshaped in this process, but his overemphasis on the Algerian women's heroism typecasts them as symbols of revolution rather than actual people. Instead of centering their psychoanalytic selfhood, Fanon reduces them to their utility for the movement.

The depictions of Algerian women presented by Fanon and by French colonialists both reduce them to shallow fantasies, although they serve different purposes. Attempts to speak of Algerian women's bravery as revolutionaries yields to a mythology of valor, not unlike the way that a mythology of seduction inhabits the symbol of the veil and yields to fantasies that involve "baring her secret, breaking her resistance, making her available for adventure" and "a possible object of possession" (Fanon [1959] 1994, 43–44). Notably, Fanon imagines the Algerian woman as a superhuman revolutionary who can cast aside her "childish fears" as she enters combat (Fanon [1959] 1994, 52). Additionally, the position of the woman changes because she "cease[s] to be a complement for man"— for she had "literally forged a new place for herself by her sheer strength" (Fanon [1959] 1994, 109). The mythologization of Algerian women as mysterious objects that must be forced into submission justifies their colonial seizure to satisfy sexual fantasies and conquer the nation's "possessions." Fanon's depictions are something of a counterweight, wherein the bravery and "sheer strength" of the Algerian woman can act as fuel for the movement. However, resistance to the colonial narrative yields to a counter-narrative that flattens the experience of the female combatant into one of pure courage. Fanon's dismissal of the feelings of Algerian women is particularly striking. When he describes their fears of combat as "childish," he fails to acknowledge their humanity. He enters a space of tension in which these brave women are just as afraid of the torture and violence of the colonialists as their male counterparts. Fanon was unable to speak on the relationship between colonialism, liberation, and gender in large part because Algerian women remained abstract for him. As observed previously, he did not meet them. He did not speak Arabic. And he did not treat them. Thus, as expanded upon in the following section, it is necessary to examine the work of Algerian writers like Assia Djebar, who have chronicled the experiences of Algerian women post-revolution.

The Voices Lurking in the Shadow of Empty Prisons: The Invisibilized Traumas of Algerian Women

In *Women of Algiers in Their Apartment*, a female Algerian laboratory assistant who diagnoses chromosomal abnormalities lamented the societal position of women as she discussed the salience of changing an X chromosome to a Y chromosome: "Just change one [chromosomal] letter … and for us everything would change, really everything!" (Djebar [1980] 1992, 26). In another scene, a male painter cries out to his friend in a heated exchange, "…it's not only colonialism that's the root of our psychological problems, but it's the belly of our frustrated women! When we're just fetuses, we're already damned!" (Djebar [1980] 1992, 21). Djebar's retellings of Algerian post-colonial life expand beyond Fanon's imagined futures; she effectively illustrates the dislocations in their lives and indicates that the position of Algerian women in society has not fundamentally changed. To do this, Djebar relies on a recurring motif of uncovering darkness, which is representative of the invisibilization of the voices of Algerian women. Djebar tells the story of Sarah, a former revolutionary in the liberation movement who had spent her adolescence in French torture prisons.

Sarah's story begins in her husband's dreams, which carry fragmentations of her torture in visceral sounds of "the gasps stuck in her throat like a fishbone" as she sits "blindfolded, holes where eyes should be" (Djebar [1980] 1992, 6). As he awakens and returns to contemporary life, ordinary routines roar into focus. Sarah's husband goes to work. Sarah plans to do the same, until her French childhood friend, Anne, calls in a suicidal plea for help. Sarah goes to Anne's aid. As Anne explains the origins of her despair, a "predictable" story of "the husband, the three children, fifteen years of a strange life contained in one hour of words," Sarah remains silent. She keeps her own trauma hidden from Anne (Djebar [1980] 1992, 7–8). Eventually, however, she tires of listening to Anne. She gets up, pulls open the "enormous curtain of red-striped linen" (Djebar [1980] 1992, 8). Daylight blinds Anne, who exclaims that she "can't bear the light" (Djebar

[1980] 1992, 9). The exchange calls to attention the openness of Anne's suffering and the silence of Sarah's. Anne is able to reappear in Sarah's life and lament her troubles. Sarah's silence embodies a pain of the past that cannot be so casually rendered.

Later, Sarah goes to work at the Institute of Musicology. She transcribes tape recordings of Algerian women singing and finds herself uncovering their voices (Djebar [1980] 1992, 16–19). The work forces her to confront the stories of these anonymous women. Their songs carried invisibilized stories of women who are still "hidden in the walls" of Algiers. Sarah ponders, "Was she working on this ostensibly artistic project, a documentary of the city, in order to answer the interrogation that had begun to take possession of her these days? The city, its walls, its balconies, the shadow of empty prisons" (Djebar [1980] 1992, 34). The invisibilized women who currently inhabit the "shadow of empty prisons" are most clearly seen in the bath house, where they are "consoling themselves," "mute" as they "stare at each other across the steam: they are the ones who are locked inside for months or years, except to go to the baths" (Djebar [1980] 1992, 32). When Sarah is finally able to articulate her trauma, she compares herself to these women, stating, "A little like certain women of Algiers today, you see them going around outside without the ancestral veil, and yet, out of fear of the new and unexpected situations, they become entangled in other veils, invisible but very noticeable ones... Me too: for years after Barberousse, I was still carrying my own prison around inside me" (Djebar [1980] 1992, 47–48). Djebar's retellings make clear that while colonialism may be gone, both the traumas wrought from its existence and the patriarchal systems that have imprisoned these women remain.

This reflects a divergence from Fanon's hopes for the future for Algerian women, which include the insistence that a patriarchal social dynamic will no longer exist, and that "when Algeria has gained her independence such questions will not be raised, for in the practice of the Revolution the people have understood that problems are resolved in the very movement that raises them" (Fanon [1959] 1994, 48). His hypothesis extended into an appraisal of the family structure, wherein he resolutely stated that the "customary and highly structured patterns of behavior that were the crystallization of traditional ideas suddenly proved ineffective and were abandoned" (Fanon [1959] 1994, 100). Although Fanon is optimistic about the future of Algerian women, Djebar's writings render fantastical both Fanon's fundamental transformation of societal values and his image of the Algerian woman who carves a new path for herself out of "sheer strength" and who has been "birthed anew" (Fanon [1959] 1994, 109). In their stead, Djebar provides a nuanced description of how such strength exists alongside great pain and demonstrates that removing the veil did not guarantee liberation for women in the way that Fanon had predicted.

Fanon Reapplied: Towards a Sociogenic Approach

We might find a way forward by reapplying Fanon's own theoretical framework. As articulated previously, Fanon introduces the idea of "sociogeny" in *Black Skin, White Masks* to explain that identity, and the behaviors and "constitutions" prescribed to identities, are all socially and societally constructed. He applies this concept to the dehumanization of Black men under the French colonial system and emphasizes that "[s]ociety, unlike biochemical processes, does not escape human influence. Man is what brings society into being" (Fanon [1952] 2008, xv). The supposed inferiority of the Black man exists not because of an inherent biological difference between races but from a socially constructed idea of what he is.

In the case of Algerian women, by applying "sociogeny" to their experiences, it becomes clear that even though they were fighting the colonial structures that were dehumanizing them for being Algerian, they were limited by the socially constructed ideals of womanhood within the Algerian nationalist movement. While Fanon himself could not analyze this, for Algerian women, "sociogeny" applied beyond the colonial context, rooted deep inside patriarchal systems of power. If identity is a function of societal power rather than biology, then it is necessary to deconstruct both the colonial and patriarchal structures to reconstitute what it means to be an Algerian woman, and to do so in a way that does not hinge on the privileging of Algerian men. Fanon teaches us that if a humanist approach can be employed in understanding the liberation of Algerian women, we must reapply his ideas in ways he could not, and that perhaps, "The man is not. Any more than the woman" (2008, 231).

While there is much that Fanon could not articulate in his attempted confrontation of gender and anti-colonialism, such a critique, as bell hooks articulated, does not have to constitute an approach that results in "working over" Fanon for the purpose of "interrogating" his sexism (hooks 1996, 79). Fanon's conception of humanism and "sociogeny" was able to illustrate the ways in which colonialism and any structure built on exploitation manufactures identities and interrupts the possibility of liberation. By incorporating theorists and writers who build on Fanon's humanist approach, it is possible to recognize the layers of dehumanization that affect women differently than men in colonial systems and anti-colonial liberation movements. Liberating women is simultaneously about liberating men from racialization and gendered hierarchies and about creating systems where there can be no "possessing" of women in the name of legitimizing the power of men. Above all, Fanon desired freedom from the domination of one people over another, and he approached this possibility through the use of love as a liberatory tool. He reminds us to engage in "vigilant interrogation" (hooks 1996, 85) and asks us, what does "authentic love" look like? And what stands in the way of love?

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Right to the City and the Politics of Protest: Social History of Contested Spaces in Lincoln Park*

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Despite its current image as a white and gentrified neighborhood, Lincoln Park in Chicago has been a contested area where groups of residents, students, and community activists have fought for the right to space, safety, and autonomy. More than six decades ago, militant activists such as the predominantly Puerto Rican and African American Young Lords and Black Panther Party worked with DePaul University students and the Concerned Citizens Survival Front to resist the displacement of poor residents by gentrification and urban renewal projects of Mayor Richard J. Daley from the 1960s to the late 1970s. The more recent 2024 student encampment at DePaul, part of the larger nationwide student-led divestment movement, was the latest reminder of that. Lincoln Park has long served as a site of struggle, cross-sectional coalition-building, and grassroots contestation to claim the right to citizenship in space.

Lincoln Park has a rich history of activism and struggle for public space in Chicago, as this paper demonstrates. Lincoln Park can be understood as a contested space where social groups vie for control and meaning over physical locations, often due to power imbalances and competing interests. These spaces are not simply passively occupied; they are actively shaped and reshaped through conflict, negotiation, and resistance related to issues like housing, public access, and the right to the city (Harvey 2006). The throughline from the Young Lords Organization (YLO) to the 2024 student encampment becomes clear.

This paper aims to examine the history of contested neighborhood spaces by comparing the multiple occupations by the YLO in the late 1960s, which involved DePaul University, to the 2024 student encampment. The aim is to explore how and why diverse groups and individuals with different backgrounds and views come together to express a shared claim that challenges and changes existing urban spaces and their intended land use. This helps us understand DePaul's encampment and how it relates to Lincoln Park's history as a contested area of space.

Methodology

For this paper, I combine archival social history with ethnographic participant observation. I utilize university and public archives, as well as analyze archived news coverage. My participant observation took place during the 18-day encampment in May 2024. It is important to note that all student and faculty quotes used in this essay are from *The DePaulia*, the DePaul University student newspaper, during the 2024 encampment coverage. The project examines the social relations that were developed by the Young Lords Organization in the 1960s and the relations formed during the 2024 encampment, emphasizing the importance of viewing universities as contested spaces. My project draws on geographer David Harvey's book *Paris: Capital of Modernity* (2006), specifically examining how cities are deeply intertwined with politics, economics, and society. Harvey also explores how Paris transformed into a class project. Another theoretical reference is *Barrio Rising: Urban Popular*

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Politics and the Making of Modern Venezuela (2015) by Alejandro Velasco. In *Barrio Rising*, Velasco merges the geographical and political landscape of the *El 23 de Enero* housing complex with the oral political history of its residents. The book shows how this marginalized urban community navigates and engages with politics, contesting both the organization of the housing complex and the broader Venezuelan border policies.

In this article, I first provide the historical context of the Young Lords Organization and the ***Lincoln Park Press*** to illustrate how Lincoln Park has been a contested space where its residents have struggled for decades over who should inhabit the neighborhood and how the knowledge and wealth of the area should be utilized. This is followed by an ethnographic account of the 2024 divestment encampment, accompanied by a brief analysis of how students and supportive members of DePaul's faculty created a political and social space that sought to establish a new community within the university. I conclude my analysis with the actions of the Young Lords Organization and the 2024 DePaul encampment, identifying direct throughlines and noting their attempts to challenge how urban popular politics can be mobilized.

Historical Context: The Young Lords, Lincoln Park, and *The Lincoln Park Press*

To understand how Lincoln Park became a contested area, we must first examine Mayor Richard J. Daley's urban renewal project for Lincoln Park. Urban renewal is a process in which properties within a neighborhood are acquired or taken over by a redevelopment project, which then demolishes them and reconveys them to selected developers (The Nonviolence Project 2023). A key source of information for this paper has been the archived copies of *The Lincoln Park Press / La Prensa de Lincoln Park* (LPP), which was published between 1969 and 1979. This was a hyper-local newspaper with editors and contributors ranging from *DePaulia* editors to reactionary Lincoln Park residents voicing concerns about organizational efforts, as well as families taking out a page to celebrate a birthday, in what is known to be the first issue of *The Lincoln Park Press*. One article examines the influx of real estate speculators into Lincoln Park. The unnamed author goes on to explain how residents of Orchard and Burling Streets south of Armitage are being visited by lawyers representing a six-company syndicate (*The Lincoln Park Press* 1967, 1). The article goes on to state that the lawyers are offering between $6,000 and $7,000, which today would be between $57,748.20 and $67,372.80. This, as stated by the author, is less than what residents paid for their property at the time of purchase. This volume also features a recurring column titled *Demolition Scorecard*, which tracks the number of families displaced and the number of homes and businesses torn down due to urban renewal, versus the number of homes and businesses built by the Department of Urban Renewal to replace those demolished (*The Lincoln Park Press* 1967, 1). This column is in response to the rapid displacement of Lincoln Park's working-class populations. Instead of personal misfortune becoming the focal point of gentrification, the loss of community remains the focus.

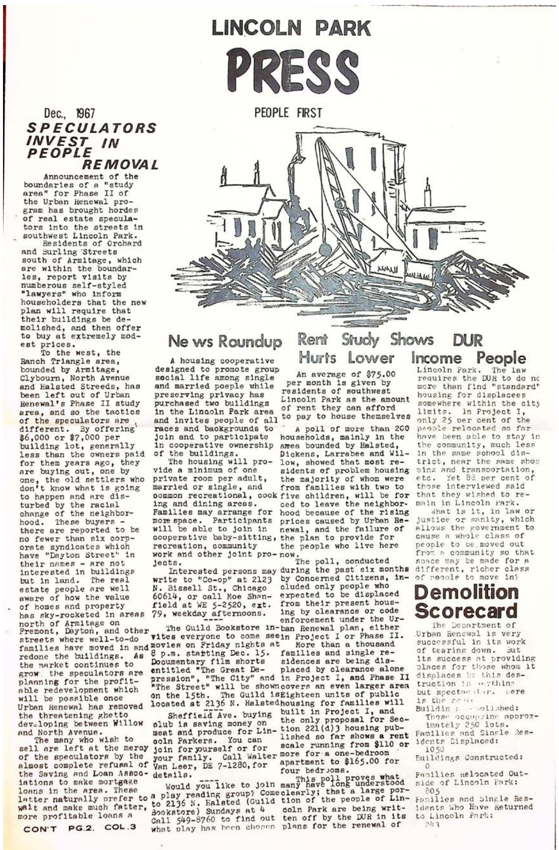
A later issue features a report on the racial pricing practices of People's Gas (*The Lincoln Park Press* 1968, 4). People's Gas has maintained a monopoly on gas services in Chicago. Enjoying a captive customer base, it has recently, as of 2022, been caught raising customer bills every month under the guise of spending the increased profits on a pipe replacement program (Illinois PIRG, 2022). As of July 1968, residents in Lincoln Park often paid up to $860 a month for gas (*The Lincoln Park Press* 1968, 4). Adjusted for inflation to 2025, that amount would be equivalent to $7,944.25 per month solely for gas.

The Lincoln Park Press maintained a citizen-created record of the neighborhood's history through a population actively involved in shaping and challenging mid-20th-century urban Chicago.

As Harvey (2006) argues, urbanization under capitalism is not a neutral process of modernization but instead a "class project" which he defines as a deliberate reconstruction of space to better serve the interests of a social elite at

FIGURE 1

Speculators Invest in People Removal, Rent Study Shows DUR Hurts Lower Income People, and Demolition Scorecard the Lincoln Park Press, Newspaper – *Lincoln Park Press*, 1967. Peter Bauer Papers, box 12, folder 2. Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University Library, Chicago, IL.



LINCOLN PARK

PRESS

PEOPLE FIRST

Dec., 1967

SPECULATORS INVEST IN PEOPLE REMOVAL

Announcement of the boundaries of a "study area" for Phase II of the Urban Renewal program has brought hordes of real estate speculators into the streets in southwest Lincoln Park.

Residents of Orchard and Burling Streets south of Armitage, which are within the boundaries, report visits by numberous self-styled "lawyers" who inform householders that the new plan will require that their buildings be demolished, and then offer to buy at extremely modest prices.

To the west, the Ranch Triangle area, bounded by Armitage, Clybourn, North Avenue and Halsted Streeds, has been left out of Urban Renewal's Phase II study area, and so the tactics of the speculators are different. By offering $6,000 or $7,000 per building lot, generally less than the owners paid for them years ago, they are buying out, one by one, the old settlers who don't know what is going to happen and are disturbed by the racial change of the neighborhood. These buyers - there are reported to be no fewer than six corporate syndicates which have "Dayton Street" in their names - are not interested in buildings but in land. The real estate people are well aware of how the value of homes and property has sky-rocketed in areas north of Armitage on Fremont, Dayton, and other streets where well-to-do families have moved in and redone the buildings. As the market continues to grow, the speculators are planning for the profitable redevelopment which will be possible once Urban Renewal has removed the threatening ghetto developing between Willow and North Avenue.

The many who wish to sell are left at the mercy of the speculators by the almost complete refusal of the Saving and Loan Associations to make mortgage loans in the area. These latter naturally prefer to wait and make much fatter, more profitable loans a

CON'T PG.2. COL.3

News Roundup

A housing cooperative designed to promote group social life among single and married poeple while preserving privacy has purchased two buildings in the Lincoln Park area and invites people of all races and backgrounds to join and to participate in cooperative ownership of the buildings.

The housing will provide a minimum of one private room per adult, married or single, and common recreational, cooking and dining areas. Families may arrange for more space. Participants will be able to join in cooperative baby-sitting, recreation, community work and other joint projects.

Interested persons may write to "Co-op" at 2123 N. Bissell St., Chicago 60614, or call Moe Shanfield at WE 5-2520, ext. 79, weekday afternoons.

The Guild Bookstore invites everyone to come see movies on Friday nights at 8 p.m. starting Dec. 15. Documentary film shorts entitled "The Great Depression", "The City" and "The Street" will be shown on the 15th. The Guild is located at 2136 N. Halsted

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Sheffield Ave. buying club is saving money on meat and produce for Lincoln Parkers. You can join for yourself or for your family. Call Walter Van Leer, DE 7-1280, for details.

Would you like to join a play reading group? Come to 2136 N. Halsted (Guild Bookstore) Sundays at 4 Call 549-8760 to find out what play has been chosen

Rent Study Shows DUR Hurts Lower Income People

An average of $75.00 per month is given by residents of southwest Lincoln Park as the amount of rent they can afford to pay to house themselves

A poll of more than 200 households, mainly in the area bounded by Halsted, Dickens, Larrabee and Willow, showed that most residents of problem housing the majority of whom were from families with two to five children, will be forced to leave the neighborhood because of the rising prices caused by Urban Renewal, and the failure of the plan to provide for the people who live here now.

The poll, conducted during the past six months by Concerned Citizens, included only people who expected to be displaced from their present housing by clearance or code enforcement under the Urban Renewal plan, either in Project I or Phase II.

More than a thousand families and single residences are being displaced by clearance alone in Project I, and Phase II covers an even larger area Eighteen units of public housing for families will built in Project I, and the only proposal for Section 221(d)3 housing published so far shows a rent scale running from $110 or more for a one-bedroom apartment to $165.00 for four bedrooms.

This poll proves what many have long understood clearly; that a large portion of the people of Lincoln Park are being written off by the DUR in its plans for the renewal of Lincoln Park. The law requires the DUR to do no more than find "standard" housing for displacees somewhere within the city limits. In Project I, only 25 per cent of the people relocated so far have been able to stay in the community, much less in the same school district, near the same shopping and transportation, etc. Yet 88 per cent of those interviewed said that they wished to remain in Lincoln Park.

What is it, in law or justice or sanity, which allows the government to cause a whole class of people to be moved out from a community so that space may be made for a different, richer class of people to move in?

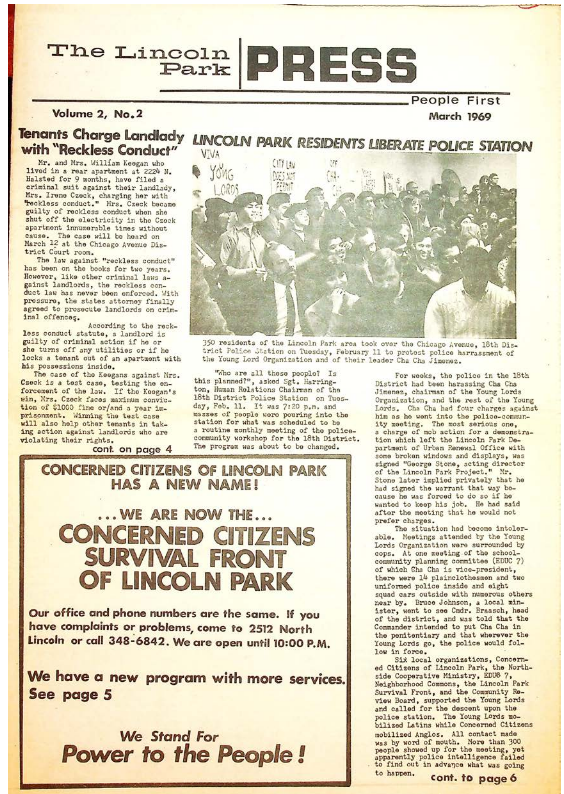
Demolition Scorecard

The Department of Urban Renewal is very successful in its work of tearing down. But its success at providing places for those whom it displaces by this destruction is anything but spectacular. Here is the score:

Buildings Demolished:
Those occupying approximately 250 lots.
Families and Single Residents Displaced:
1050
Buildings Constructed:
0
Families Relocated Outside of Lincoln Park:
805
Families and Single Residents Who Have Returned to Lincoln Park:
243

FIGURE 2

Lincoln Park Residents Liberate Police Station, Newspaper – *Lincoln Park Press*, 1969b. Peter Bauer Papers, box 12, folder 2. Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University Library, Chicago, IL.



The Lincoln Park PRESS

People First

Volume 2, No.2

March 1969

Tenants Charge Landlady with "Reckless Conduct"

Mr. and Mrs. William Keegan who lived in a rear apartment at 2224 N. Halsted for 9 months, have filed a criminal suit against their landlady, Mrs. Irene Czeck, charging her with "reckless conduct." Mrs. Czeck became guilty of reckless conduct when she shut off the electricity in the Czeck apartment innumerable times without cause. The case will be heard on March 12 at the Chicago Avenue District Court room.

The law against "reckless conduct" has been on the books for two years. However, like other criminal laws against landlords, the reckless conduct law has never been enforced. With pressure, the states attorney finally agreed to prosecute landlords on criminal offences.

According to the reckless conduct statute, a landlord is guilty of criminal action if he or she turns off any utilities or if he locks a tenant out of an apartment with his possessions inside.

The case of the Keegans against Mrs. Czeck is a test case, testing the enforcement of the law. If the Keegan's win, Mrs. Czeck faces maximum conviction of $1000 fine or/and a year imprisonment. Winning the test case will also help other tenants in taking action against landlords who are violating their rights.

cont. on page 4

LINCOLN PARK RESIDENTS LIBERATE POLICE STATION

350 residents of the Lincoln Park area took over the Chicago Avenue, 18th District Police Station on Tuesday, February 11 to protest police harrassment of the Young Lord Organization and of their leader Cha Cha Jimenez.

"Who are all these people? Is this planned?", asked Sgt. Harrington, Human Relations Chairman of the 18th District Police Station on Tuesday, Feb. 11. It was 7:20 p.m. and masses of people were pouring into the station for what was scheduled to be a routine monthly meeting of the police-community workshop for the 18th District. The program was about to be changed.

For weeks, the police in the 18th District had been harassing Cha Cha Jimenez, chairman of the Young Lords Organization, and the rest of the Young Lords. Cha Cha had four charges against him as he went into the police-community meeting. The most serious one, a charge of mob action for a demonstration which left the Lincoln Park Department of Urban Renewal Office with some broken windows and displays, was signed "George Stone, acting director of the Lincoln Park Project." Mr. Stone later implied privately that he had signed the warrant that way because he was forced to do so if he wanted to keep his job. He had said after the meeting that he would not prefer charges.

The situation had become intolerable. Meetings attended by the Young Lords Organization were surrounded by cops. At one meeting of the school-community planning committee (EDUC 7) of which Cha Cha is vice-president, there were 14 plainclothesmen and two uniformed police inside and eight squad cars outside with numerous others near by. Bruce Johnson, a local minister, went to see Cmdr. Braasch, head of the district, and was told that the Commander intended to put Cha Cha in the penitentiary and that wherever the Young Lords go, the police would follow in force.

Six local organizations, Concerned Citizens of Lincoln Park, the Northside Cooperative Ministry, EDUC 7, Neighborhood Commons, the Lincoln Park Survival Front, and the Community Review Board, supported the Young Lords and called for the descent upon the police station. The Young Lords mobilized Latins while Concerned Citizens mobilized Anglos. All contact made was by word of mouth. More than 300 people showed up for the meeting, yet apparently police intelligence failed to find out in advance what was going to happen.

cont. to page 6

CONCERNED CITIZENS OF LINCOLN PARK HAS A NEW NAME!

...WE ARE NOW THE...

CONCERNED CITIZENS SURVIVAL FRONT OF LINCOLN PARK

Our office and phone numbers are the same. If you have complaints or problems, come to 2512 North Lincoln or call 348-6842. We are open until 10:00 P.M.

We have a new program with more services. See page 5

We Stand For Power to the People!

the expense of the urban poor (Harvey, 2006). In Lincoln Park, the process of modernization through Mayor Daley's urban renewal program was such a class project. Urban renewal forcibly displaced the urban poor and racially marginalized to make Lincoln Park a more desirable space for the white middle class (McClelland 2018). This process would begin to displace residents, businesses, and public spaces to modernize Lincoln Park, attract new, wealthier residents, and expand DePaul University.

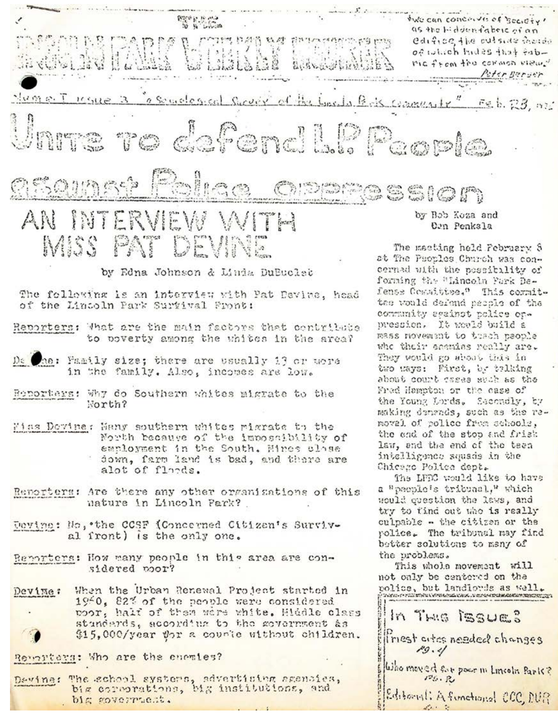
Among the most affected by the gentrification of Lincoln Park was the Puerto Rican community that, by the 1960s, had a population of around 32,000 (WTTW 2024). Out of this marginalized group, the Young Lords Organization emerged in 1968. Originally a street gang founded in 1959, the organization transformed into a revolutionary community after founding member Jose "Cha-Cha" Jiménez read works by Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and Pedro Albizu Campos, a figure in the Puerto Rican Independence Party. Jiménez would also be deeply influenced by the Black Panthers, particularly through the group's efforts to organize prisoners. The YLO would organize efforts to fight displacement and racial injustice affecting Latino communities in Lincoln Park, opposing Mayor Richard J. Daley's urban renewal plans and addressing racial violence faced by Lincoln Park's Latino residents. In the March 1969 issue of the *Lincoln Park Press*, as seen in Figure 2, an article details the mass occupation of the 18th District police station on February 11, 1969. The article goes on to explain that the occupation was in response to the continued harassment of YLO Chairman Cha Cha Jiménez and other YLO members by police officers from the 18th district. Three hundred people gathered at the police station to show support for the YLO in disputing the multiple charges against Cha Cha and others.

Within a year of the creation of the YLO, in collaboration with the Black Panther Party, the Brown Berets, a Chicano activist group, and the Young Patriots, a leftist organization of poor white southerners that relocated following the post-war economic boom (Krzywy 2019), created the Rainbow Coalition in June 1969. A few weeks later, in July 1969, the New York chapter of the Young Lords was established in East Harlem. The New York chapter separated from the Chicago group in May 1970 and became an independent organization known as the Young Lords Party (YLP).

As the YLO continued to collaborate with members of the Rainbow Coalition, a preferred tactic became the "popular occupation," a tactic used by many civil rights groups before them. One of the YLO's most well-known occupations is the taking of the McCormick Theological Seminary. With the support of neighborhood organizations like the Lincoln Park Survival Front, a poor whites advocacy group, among others, the YLO planned a popular occupation of the seminary. See Figure 3 for an interview with Pat Devine, founder of the Lincoln Park Survival front. Devine explains the group's purpose to the *Lincoln Park Weekly Inquirer*.

FIGURE 3

Pat Devine interview, Newspaper – *Lincoln Park Inquirer*, February 20th, 1970. Peter Bauer Papers, box 12, folder 1. Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University Library, Chicago, IL.



"We can conceive of 'society' as the hidden fabric of an edifice, the outside facade of which hides that fabric from the common view." Peter Berger

Unite to defend L.P. People against Police oppression

AN INTERVIEW WITH MISS PAT DEVINE

by Edna Johnson & Linda DuBuclet

The following is an interview with Pat Devine, head of the Lincoln Park Survival Front:

Reporters: What are the main factors that contribute to poverty among the whites in the area?

Devine: Family size; there are usually 13 or more in the family. Also, incomes are low.

Reporters: Why do Southern whites migrate to the North?

Miss Devine: Many southern whites migrate to the North because of the impossibility of employment in the South. Mines close down, farm land is bad, and there are alot of floods.

Reporters: Are there any other organizations of this nature in Lincoln Park?

Devine: No, the CCSF (Concerned Citizen's Survival front) is the only one.

Reporters: How many people in this area are considered poor?

Devine: When the Urban Renewal Project started in 1960, 82% of the people were considered poor, half of them were white. Middle class standards, according to the government is $15,000/year for a couple without children.

Reporters: Who are the enemies?

Devine: The school systems, advertising agencies, big corporations, big institutions, and big government.

by Bob Koza and Dan Penkala

The meeting held February 8 at The Peoples Church was concerned with the possibility of forming the "Lincoln Park Defense Committee." This committee would defend people of the community against police oppression. It would build a mass movement to teach people who their enemies really are. They would go about this in two ways: First, by talking about court cases such as the Fred Hampton or the case of the Young Lords. Secondly, by making demands, such as the removal of police from schools, the end of the stop and frisk law, and the end of the teen intelligence squads in the Chicago Police dept.

The LPDC would like to have a "people's tribunal," which would question the laws, and try to find out who is really culpable - the citizen or the police. The tribunal may find better solutions to many of the problems.

This whole movement will not only be centered on the police, but landlords as well.

In This Issue:

Priest cites needed changes pg. 4

Who moved the poor in Lincoln Park? pg. 2

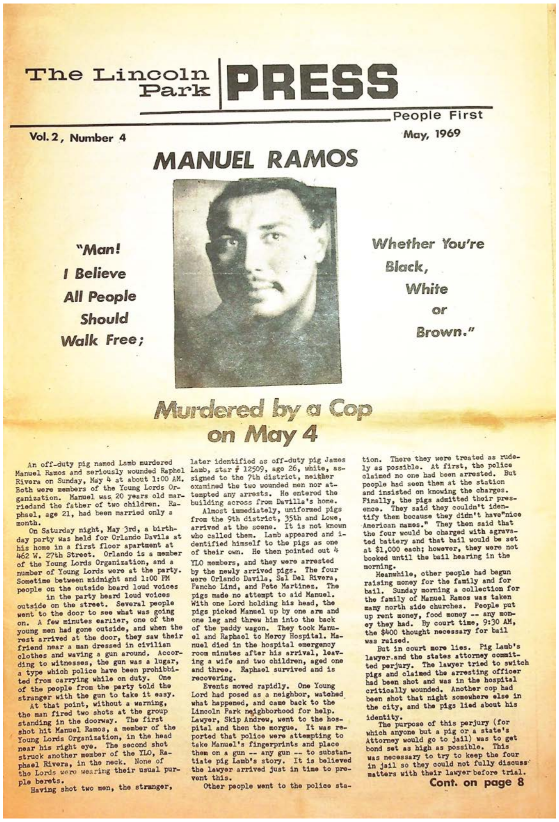
Editorial: A functional CCC, DUR

The McCormick Theological Seminary first opened in what would become Lincoln Park in 1859, and in 1969, the seminary was looking to expand into 804 W Belden Ave. A research paper put out by a group of students from the McCormick Seminary, with the help of members of the seminary's faculty, gave credence to community concerns over the institution's role in displacing people from Lincoln Park. This displacement was supported with the help of The Department of Urban Renewal's raising the rent on buildings rehabilitated under the urban renewal plan, which forced low-income families out of the neighborhood (*The Lincoln Park Press* 1969a, 3). Armed with their concerns, the residents of Lincoln Park prepared to meet the Board of Trustees of the McCormick Seminary on May 6, 1969. Sadly, two days before this meeting, something happened that would change the plans for the 6th.

The following is a summary of the front-page article in the May 1969 issue of *The Lincoln Park Press* (Figure 4): On the night of May 4, 1969, around 1 am CT, 20-year-old Manuel Ramos was shot and killed by Officer Lamb at a birthday party for Orlando Devila on 462 W. 27th Street. Ramos, a member of the YLO, who had recently married and was a father of two, was shot in the head near the right eye. Officer Lamb used a Luger pistol, a weapon officers were not allowed to carry. Officer James Lamb, a

FIGURE 4

Newspaper – *Lincoln Park Press*, May 1969c. Peter Bauer Papers, box 12, folder 2. Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University Library, Chicago, IL.



The Lincoln Park PRESS

People First

Vol. 2, Number 4

May, 1969

MANUEL RAMOS

"Man! I Believe All People Should Walk Free; Whether You're Black, White or Brown."

Murdered by a Cop on May 4

An off-duty pig named Lamb murdered Manuel Ramos and seriously wounded Raphel Rivera on Sunday, May 4 at about 1:00 AM. Both were members of the Young Lords Organization. Manuel was 20 years old marriedand the father of two children. Raphael, age 21, had been married only a month.

On Saturday night, May 3rd, a birthday party was held for Orlando Davila at his home in a first floor apartment at 462 W. 27th Street. Orlando is a member of the Young Lords Organization, and a number of Young Lords were at the party. Sometime between midnight and 1:00 PM people on the outside heard loud voices in the party heard loud voices outside on the street. Several people went to the door to see what was going on. A few minutes earlier, one of the young men had gone outside, and when the rest arrived at the door, they saw their friend near a man dressed in civilian clothes and waving a gun around. Accordding to witnesses, the gun was a lugar, a type which police have been prohibbited from carrying while on duty. One of the people from the party told the stranger with the gun to take it easy.

At that point, without a warning, the man fired two shots at the group standing in the doorway. The first shot hit Manuel Ramos, a member of the Young Lords Organization, in the head near his right eye. The second shot struck another member of the YLO, Raphael Rivera, in the neck. None of the Lords were wearing their usual purple berets.

Having shot two men, the stranger, later identified as off-duty pig James Lamb, star # 12509, age 26, white, assigned to the 7th district, neither examined the two wounded men nor attempted any arrests. He entered the building across from Davilla's home.

Almost immediately, uniformed pigs from the 9th district, 35th and Lowe, arrived at the scene. It is not known who called them. Lamb appeared and identified himself to the pigs as one of their own. He then pointed out 4 YLO members, and they were arrested by the newly arrived pigs. The four were Orlando Davila, Sal Del Rivera, Pancho Lind, and Pete Martinez. The pigs made no attempt to aid Manuel. With one Lord holding his head, the pigs picked Manuel up by one arm and one leg and threw him into the back of the paddy wagon. They took Manuel and Raphael to Mercy Hospital. Manuel died in the hospital emergency room minutes after his arrival, leaving a wife and two children, aged one and three. Raphael survived and is recovering.

Events moved rapidly. One Young Lord had posed as a neighbor, watched what happened, and came back to the Lincoln Park neighborhood for help. Lawyer, Skip Andrew, went to the hospital and then the morgue. It was reported that police were attempting to take Manuel's fingerprints and place them on a gun -- any gun -- to substantiate pig Lamb's story. It is believed the lawyer arrived just in time to prevent this.

Other people went to the police station. There they were treated as rudely as possible. At first, the police claimed no one had been arrested. But people had seen them at the station and insisted on knowing the charges. Finally, the pigs admitted their presence. They said they couldn't identify them because they didn't have"nice American names." They then said that the four would be charged with agravated battery and that bail would be set at $1,000 each; however, they were not booked until the bail hearing in the morning.

Meanwhile, other people had begun raising money for the family and for bail. Sunday morning a collection for the family of Manuel Ramos was taken many north side churches. People put up rent money, food money -- any money they had. By court time, 9:30 AM, the $400 thought necessary for bail was raised.

But in court more lies. Pig Lamb's lawyer.and the states attorney committed perjury. The lawyer tried to switch pigs and claimed the arresting officer had been shot and was in the hospital critically wounded. Another cop had been shot that night somewhere else in the city, and the pigs lied about his identity.

The purpose of this perjury (for which anyone but a pig or a state's Attorney would go to jail) was to get bond set as high as possible. This was necessary to try to keep the four in jail so they could not fully discuss matters with their lawyer before trial.

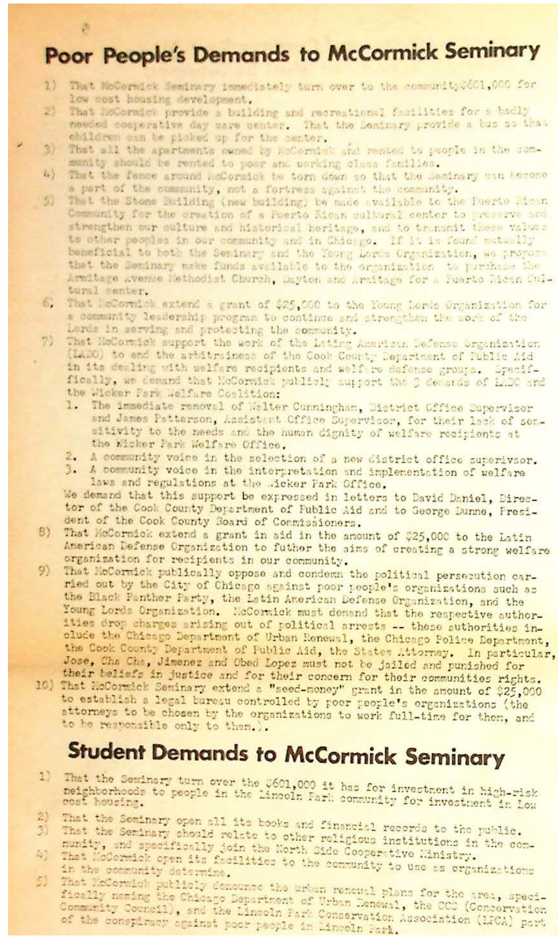
Cont. on page 8

26-year-old white off-duty police officer, was dressed in plain clothes and remained on the scene after Ramos was shot and fellow YLO member Raphael was wounded. Four other members of the YLO were arrested as well. Ramos's bloody body was placed in the back of the paddy wagon, and he would die of his wounds at Mercy Hospital.

Following the murder of Manuel Ramos by the Chicago Police Department and the ongoing efforts of McCormick Seminary to buy more land, the YLO carried out an 11-day occupation of the seminary in May 1969. In an act of remembrance and public mourning, the McCormick Seminary was renamed the Manuel Ramos Memorial Building during its occupation. The YLO, in collaboration with the Black Panther Party, the Concerned Citizens

FIGURE 5

Newspaper – *Lincoln Park Press*, May 1969a. Peter Bauer Papers, box 12, folder 2. Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University Library, Chicago, IL.



Poor People's Demands to McCormick Seminary

1) That McCormick Seminary immediately turn over to the community $601,000 for low cost housing development.
2) That McCormick provide a building and recreational facilities for a badly needed cooperative day care center. That the Seminary provide a bus so that children can be picked up for the center.
3) That all the apartments owned by McCormick and rented to people in the community should be rented to poor and working class families.
4) That the fence around McCormick be torn down so that the Seminary can become a part of the community, not a fortress against the community.
5) That the Stone Building (new building) be made available to the Puerto Rican Community for the creation of a Puerto Rican cultural center to preserve and strengthen our culture and historical heritage, and to transmit these values to other peoples in our community and in Chicago. If it is found mutually beneficial to both the Seminary and the Young Lords Organization, we propose that the Seminary make funds available to the organization to purchase the Armitage Avenue Methodist Church, Dayton and Armitage for a Puerto Rican Cultural center.
6, That McCormick extend a grant of $25,000 to the Young Lords Organization for a community leadership program to continue and strengthen the work of the Lords in serving and protecting the community.
7) That McCormick support the work of the Latin American Defense Organization (LADO) to end the arbitrainess of the Cook County Department of Public Aid in its dealing with welfare recipients and welfare defense groups. Specifically, we demand that McCormick publicly support the 3 demands of LADO and the Wicker Park Welfare Coalition:
   1. The immediate removal of Walter Cunningham, District Office Supervisor and James Patterson, Assistant Office Supervisor, for their lack of sensitivity to the needs and the human dignity of welfare recipients at the Wicker Park Welfare Office.
   2. A community voice in the selection of a new district office superivsor.
   3. A community voice in the interpretation and implementation of welfare laws and regulations at the Wicker Park Office.

   We demand that this support be expressed in letters to David Daniel, Director of the Cook County Department of Public Aid and to George Dunne, President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners.
8) That McCormick extend a grant in aid in the amount of $25,000 to the Latin American Defense Organization to futher the aims of creating a strong welfare organization for recipients in our community.
9) That McCormick publically oppose and condemn the political persecution carried out by the City of Chicago against poor people's organizations such as the Black Panther Party, the Latin American Defense Organization, and the Young Lords Organization. McCormick must demand that the respective authorities drop charges arising out of political arrests -- these authorities include the Chicago Department of Urban Renewal, the Chicago Police Department, the Cook County Department of Public Aid, the States Attorney. In particular, Jose, Cha Cha, Jimenez and Obed Lopez must not be jailed and punished for their beliefs in justice and for their concern for their communities rights.
10) That McCormick Seminary extend a "seed-money" grant in the amount of $25,000 to establish a legal bureau controlled by poor people's organizations (the attorneys to be chosen by the organizations to work full-time for them, and to be responsible only to them.).

Student Demands to McCormick Seminary

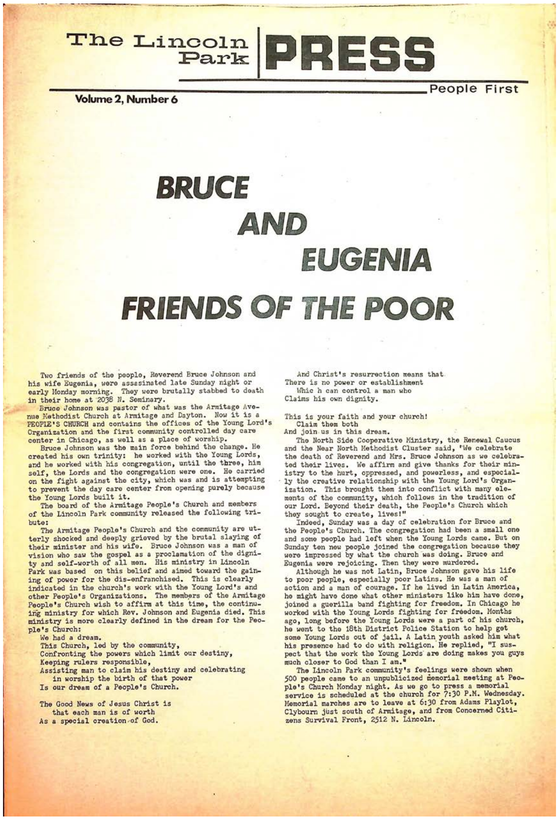
1) That the Seminary turn over the $601,000 it has for investment in high-risk neighborhoods to people in the Lincoln Park community for investment in Low cost housing.
2) That the Seminary open all its books and financial records to the public.
3) That the Seminary should relate to other religious institutions in the community, and specifically join the North Side Cooperative Ministry.
4) That McCormick open its facilities to the community to use as organizations in the community determine.
5) That McCormick publicly denounce the urban renewal plans for the area, specifically naming the Chicago Department of Urban Renewal, the CCC (Conservation Community Council), and the Lincoln Park Conservation Association (LPCA) part of the conspiracy against poor people in Lincoln Park.

Survival Front (predecessor to the Lincoln Park Survival Front), the St. Teresa's Welfare Mothers, the Young Patriots, and other members of the Lincoln Park community, developed a list of ten demands, as shown in Figure 5.

The occupation of the McCormick Seminary by the YLO can then be seen as not just a protest but a direct challenge to the political use of urban space. I use Harvey's (2006) framework to understand how the YLO utilized urban space to further demand a reconfiguration of power in shaping the urban landscape. The YLO, in

FIGURE 6

Newspaper – *Lincoln Park Press*, September 1969c. Peter Bauer Papers, box 12, folder 2. Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University Library, Chicago, IL.



The Lincoln Park PRESS

People First

Volume 2, Number 6

BRUCE AND EUGENIA FRIENDS OF THE POOR

Two friends of the people, Reverend Bruce Johnson and his wife Eugenia, were assasinated late Sunday night or early Monday morning. They were brutally stabbed to death in their home at 2038 N. Seminary.

Bruce Johnson was pastor of what was the Armitage Avenue Methodist Church at Armitage and Dayton. Now it is a PEOPLE'S CHURCH and contains the offices of the Young Lord's Organization and the first community controlled day care center in Chicago, as well as a place of worship.

Bruce Johnson was the main force behind the change. He created his own trinity: he worked with the Young Lords, and he worked with his congregation, until the three, him self, the Lords and the congregation were one. He carried on the fight against the city, which was and is attempting to prevent the day care center from opening purely because the Young Lords built it.

The board of the Armitage People's Church and members of the Lincoln Park community released the following tribute:

The Armitage People's Church and the community are utterly shocked and deeply grieved by the brutal slaying of their minister and his wife. Bruce Johnson was a man of vision who saw the gospel as a proclamation of the dignity and self-worth of all men. His ministry in Lincoln Park was based on this belief and aimed toward the gaining of power for the dis-enfranchised. This is clearly indicated in the church's work with the Young Lord's and other People's Organizations. The members of the Armitage People's Church wish to affirm at this time, the continuing ministry for which Rev. Johnson and Eugenia died. This ministry is more clearly defined in the dream for the People's Church:

We had a dream.
This Church, led by the community,
Confronting the powers which limit our destiny,
Keeping rulers responsible,
Assisting man to claim his destiny and celebrating
in worship the birth of that power
Is our dream of a People's Church.

The Good News of Jesus Christ is
that each man is of worth
As a special creation of God.

And Christ's resurrection means that
There is no power or establishment
Whic h can control a man who
Claims his own dignity.

This is your faith and your church!
Claim them both
And join us in this dream.

The North Side Cooperative Ministry, the Renewal Caucus and the Near North Methodist Cluster said, "We celebrate the death of Reverend and Mrs. Bruce Johnson as we celebrated their lives. We affirm and give thanks for their ministry to the hurt, oppressed, and powerless, and especially the creative relationship with the Young Lord's Organization. This brought them into conflict with many elements of the community, which follows in the tradition of our Lord. Beyond their death, the People's Church which they sought to create, lives!"

Indeed, Sunday was a day of celebration for Bruce and the People's Church. The congregation had been a small one and some people had left when the Young Lords came. But on Sunday ten new people joined the congregation because they were impressed by what the church was doing. Bruce and Eugenia were rejoicing. Then they were murdered.

Although he was not Latin, Bruce Johnson gave his life to poor people, especially poor Latins. He was a man of action and a man of courage. If he lived in Latin America, he might have done what other ministers like him have done, joined a guerilla band fighting for freedom. In Chicago he worked with the Young Lords fighting for freedom. Months ago, long before the Young Lords were a part of his church, he went to the 18th District Police Station to help get some Young Lords out of jail. A Latin youth asked him what his presence had to do with religion. He replied, "I suspect that the work the Young Lords are doing makes you guys much closer to God than I am."

The Lincoln Park community's feelings were shown when 500 people came to an unpublicized memorial meeting at People's Church Monday night. As we go to press a memorial service is scheduled at the church for 7:30 P.M. Wednesday. Memorial marches are to leave at 6:30 from Adams Playlot, Clybourn just south of Armitage, and from Concerned Citizens Survival Front, 2512 N. Lincoln.

collaboration with groups such as the Concerned Citizens Survival Front, demanded that the school pay $601,000 in reparations for the community's displacement caused by the seminary's expansion. Ultimately, they secured $700,000 for initiatives including low-income housing, a childcare center, and a Puerto Rican cultural center.

Knowledge about the actions and historical record of the Young Lords Organization and groups like the Concerned Citizens Survival Front is only possible because of resident journalists and the average Lincoln Park residents who documented their lived experiences, from mundane day-to-day activities to radical political actions.

The *Lincoln Park Press* published a front-page obituary after the murder of Reverend Bruce Johnson and his wife Eugenia in response to their allowing the YLO to house the organization's national headquarters at the Armitage Avenue Methodist Church. Reverend Johnson worked with the YLO and his congregation to establish a youth care facility and a free healthcare clinic. The article (Figure 6) shows the sense of communal grief at the violent death of such an active and caring member of the Lincoln Park community.

Contemporary Case: 2024 DePaul Student Encampment

On April 30, 2024, students at DePaul University initiated an encampment on the Lincoln Park campus quad to demand that the university divest from companies supporting genocidal practices and policies, as articulated in this quote from Human Rights Watch describing the situation in Palestine: "...Israeli authorities are responsible for the crime against humanity of extermination and for acts of genocide. The pattern of conduct, coupled with statements suggesting that some Israeli officials wished to destroy Palestinians in Gaza, may amount to the crime of genocide" (Human Rights Watch 2024).

The United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner also issued a press release regarding the situation in Palestine: "Israel's warfare in Gaza is consistent with the characteristics of genocide, with mass civilian casualties and life-threatening conditions intentionally imposed on Palestinians there" (United Nations Human Rights Office 2024).

DePaul's divestment encampment was also started as an act of solidarity with similar encampments nationwide. DePaul's encampment lasted for 18 days, being forcibly removed on May 16, 2024, when negotiations between the encampment's delegation and the administration collapsed. At 5:00 am on May 16, the police raided the encampment and forced the students off the quad. DePaul's encampment was part of a larger student-led divestment movement, which saw around 121 encampments at 117 universities across the United States. DePaul's encampment was not the only one to end in violence; a significantly more violent removal took place at Columbia University in New York, and the UCLA movement was dismantled by police or campus security. Police or campus security removals accounted for 51% of student encampments during the 2024 divestment movement (Attridge and Bryant 2024). The DePaul encampment, like others nationwide, was situated within a larger historical context of Palestinian dispossession and the ongoing genocide.

Students had to source basic amenities, including bathrooms, medical care, tents, and clothes, which were donated by both students and the Lincoln Park community, as well as people from all over Chicago and even beyond. The tents used by students were all donated by students and community members, and food was donated by local restaurants or purchased with funds raised through a GoFundMe established by the students. Food was one of the most significant parts of the encampment for me personally. As a student who often struggles to have consistent and reliable access to food, the divestment encampment was one of the few times I had access to consistent meals. *DePaulia* details the inclusion of a medical tent in their photo article of the second day of DePaul's encampment, stating that "A first aid tent resides near the DePaul University Quad on Wednesday, May 1, 2024. Volunteers and a trained nursing professional sat in the tent and provided protestors with supplies or treatment for minor injuries" (*DePaulia*, Photo Gallery: Day Two 2024).

As observed by author Velasco (2015), the informal but structured practices developed by residents of *El 23 de Enero* transformed their built urban environment into a site of political resistance and collective identity; struggles to maintain basic amenities such as water, electricity, housing, and access to food became sites of common struggle and identity. The same can be seen during the 2024 encampment. Students came together to source portable bathrooms, a consistent source of food, access to basic medicines, and knowledge production, thus transforming practical logistical concerns to acts of political resistance and contesting what it means to be a university and truly live by Vincentian values.

Teach-ins were also organized, along with multi-faith prayer circles from Muslim, Jewish, and other faiths, book clubs, and a few movie nights. Student organizations and faculty members organized student-led discussions and classes. As repeatedly described by students who participated in the encampment, students set up courses on topics they felt the university did not adequately cover. Students educated themselves on issues like gender, religious topics, labor relations, and the history of occupied Palestine. In solidarity with the students, some DePaul faculty members also showed their support. One of the professors who supported the cause was Professor Laura Kina. According to the *DePaulia*, she wore a button with the words "I work for the students, not the endowment" (Preziosi 2024), and it reports that Professor Kina was among several faculty members who participated in the encampment. These forms of occupation exemplify Velasco's (2015) argument that communities in a state of upheaval often turn to repurposing exclusionary spaces to perform social experimentation. DePaul's students reclaimed urban space to explore alternatives to traditional civil engagement.

DePaul students in this movement began to question what a university's role is in their lives and community. The thing that drew students to participate was their discontent with how the university was being utilized as both a physical space and a producer of knowledge.

Participants of the encampment sought to create a record of the event, featuring a daily schedule, student-made zines, student-distributed educational materials, and a social record compiled by local Chicago media (Vocalo Radio 2024). This collective social memory contradicts the narrative created by the administration. DePaul's administration was concerned over chants and signs: among the many "concerning" words were *Intifada* and the chant "from the River to the Sea." *Intifada*, according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, specifically refers to an armed uprising of Palestinians against Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Merriam-Webster 2025). According to Professor Amos Goldberg of the Holocaust History Department at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and Alon Confino, a professor of History and Jewish Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, the use of the phrase "From the River to the Sea" "... has historically been used to represent a wide range of political strategies for Palestinian liberation" (Grzybowski 2024).

The focus on the possible meanings and implications of slogans by DePaul's administration reveals a level of disregard for the students' demands, instead choosing to fixate on alleged procedural violations or campus disruptions. An example is DePaul's administration suggesting that by bringing in portable bathrooms, the encampment organizers violated university policy, as stated in the final paragraph of the email: "We know this encampment is upsetting to many in our community" (DePaul 2024a). In a statement issued on July 9, 2024, addressing the status of repairs on the quad following the encampment, Rich Wiltse, Vice President of Facility Operations, states that the reason the quad is closed is due to damage caused by students during the encampment (DePaul 2024b).

On May 16, 2024, DePaul University issued a formal response to the violent closure of the encampment on its website in the section "Notes from Rob," where the university President, Rob Manuel, posts his communications with the community (2024a). The university addressed seven of the ten demands made by students. The demands from the encampment were focused on addressing discriminatory study abroad programs, trustee affiliations, and seeking amnesty for protestors. The university rejected the request for amnesty and declined to pursue divestment, citing its commitment to Vincentian values. However, it acknowledged the need to lift Israeli restrictions on Palestinian IDs for travel. Regarding ethical investment practices, the administration stated that third-party fund managers oversee endowment investments.

Analysis: Occupying Political Memory and Reclaiming Space

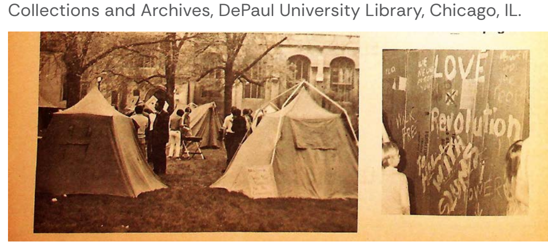
The connection between the Young Lords Organization, the 2024 student encampment, and the broader student-led divestment movement illustrates how diverse communities unite in coalition to advocate for what Marxist geographer David Harvey refers to as "the right to the city" (2006). Both the YLO and the 2024 student encampment made extraordinary claims that went beyond the actual physical occupation, demanding not just equitable access to physical space but also access to power to shape the urban environment around Lincoln Park.

FIGURE 7

DePaul encampment at night, digital photo, author's personal collection.

FIGURE 8

McCormick Seminary encampment, Newspaper – *Lincoln Park Press*, September 1969a. Peter Bauer Papers, box 12, folder 2. Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University Library, Chicago, IL.



Occupations such as those at McCormick Seminary (Figure 8) and the 2024 divestment encampment exemplify how urban residents come together to contest the production of urban transformation and demonstrate what Harvey (2006) calls "a class project." Mayor Daley's urban renewal projects of the 1960s used modernity as an attempt to cleanse Lincoln Park of its Puerto Rican, African American, poor white, and other residents deemed undesirable to a middle-class white population. Despite the gentrification eventually pushing out a significant number of its working-class population, the actions of the Young Lords Organization brought attention to the racial practices of urban renewal.

A similar situation can be found in what Velasco (2015) describes in the creation of *El 23 de Enero* in Caracas, Venezuela. Velasco (2015) describes how Caracas' *El 23 de Enero* housing project, built initially after forcibly displacing residents for a "superblock," became a site of resistance. After the dictatorship fell, displaced residents returned and turned housing struggles into political protests. They utilized urban spaces to organize activism across racial, age, and gender lines, contesting both their forced removal and shaping ideas of democracy in Venezuela.

Velasco's (2015) analysis of *El 23 de Enero*, as well as the political mobilizations of the Young Lords and the DePaul student encampment in 2024, reflect how marginalized communities utilize occupied physical spaces, such as housing projects or protest encampments, as sites to challenge displacement and oppression, thereby transforming them into platforms for broader political and social transformative processes.

Conclusion

In this essay, I have argued for understanding the historically contested space of Lincoln Park. I aim to explain why, after nearly six decades, neighborhood residents continue to organize and agitate for social change. One must first understand the historical context and socioeconomic factors that have shaped Lincoln Park. To highlight the rich history of radical community care and resistance, this paper offers a brief social history of Lincoln Park through the actions of the Young Lords Organization and *The Lincoln Park Press*, explaining how the YLO was created and the material conditions of the urban space it occupied, and recounting some of the YLO's activities in Lincoln Park. This paper also provides an ethnographic account of the 2024 divestment encampment, where I challenge the portrayal of the encampment by DePaul's administration by explaining what the students' collective efforts achieved at DePaul. Finally, I conducted a comparative analysis of both movements to show how people over time, in the same geographic location, have united in a collective fight for public space. This highlights how the spatial logic of displacement and reclamation can be seen in transforming everyday actions into political acts. The historic and ongoing struggle in Lincoln Park illustrates how urban spaces are shaped by their residents. From the YLO's occupations in the 1960s to the 2024 student encampment at DePaul, we observe the long history of residents and activists resisting displacement, economic marginalization, institutional pressures, and repression. In the occupation and transformation of space, these movements reflect Harvey's (2006) concept of "the right to the city."

Furthermore, they reflect not only the right to urban space and resources, but the right to shape urbanization itself. The YLO's transformation of the McCormick Seminary into the Manuel Ramos Memorial Building echoed 55 years later when DePaul students occupied the quad and turned the space into a hub of mutual aid. Borrowing from Velasco's (2015) analysis of *El 23 de Enero* to deepen this insight, we see that political space arises from the everyday practices of marginalized residents, who repurpose urban areas and turn them into acts of collective self-determination. Similarly, DePaul's students, with their tents, food donations, and makeshift open-air classrooms, challenge what a university can symbolize not just to the student body but also to the community.

I can't think of a better way to end this paper than with a quote from the Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci: "I hate the indifferent. I believe that living means taking sides. Those who live cannot help but be a citizen and a partisan. Indifference and apathy are parasitism, perversion, not life. That is why I hate the indifferent" (Gramsci 1916, 37).

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Elise Irvine | *Pigeons* | Reduction block print using water-based ink on paper

The Difficult Miracle: Why We Need Social Poetics More Than Ever to Resist, Restore, and Reclaim a Life Worth Living*

Trey Baker
Peace, Justice, and Conflict Studies Program

It is the beginning of March 2025, and I am starting my second-year residency as a teaching artist at Prince George's County Public Schools for my spoken word program, *Our Greatness Is Our Story*, in partnership with Scholastic. The glow of the sun is shining upon Gaywood and Seabrook Elementary schools, guiding the light of children's smiles as they enter the halls full of promise and curiosity. It is not only the first day of my poetry workshop but also the inception of our journey together, as 200 fourth graders from different races, genders, ethnicities, and social classes embark on a magical quest in search of each other's voices that live inside their seeds of astonishment.

If I took you into our classroom, you would see the ancient, sacred, and reimagined art form of poetics ubiquitously captured in each of our spirits. You would find it in the language we speak, the richness in which we write, the sounds we make, the laughter we exuberate from an unexpected memory, and the trust we have that stands as the foundation for which creativity and wonder feel safe enough to take over the birth of an idea that transforms into a beautiful testimony of existence. More practically, it evolves into a tool for peacebuilding that never rusts—always ready to expand an idea, find a solution, question the social order, reclaim one's voice, and transform language into change.

FIGURE 1

Trey Baker, award-winning spoken word artist, author, educator, and activist, nominated three times for an Emmy, teaching his students through a spoken word poetry exercise as part of his spoken word program *Our Greatness Is Our Story*.

This pedagogical practice of spoken word poetry comes from a historical record of literary resistance and nonviolence movements. During the barbarism of slavery, enslaved Africans fostered innovative relationships with nature to shield their bodies from their masters and

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protect their teachings of the Bible; the reconstruction era saw Black literary societies reclaim a culture of reading and sharing stories for collective freedom; the 20th-century saw the birth of literary arts institutions like the Nuyorican Poetry Cafe, Black Arts Repertory Theatre/School (BARTS), and June Jordan's *Poetry For the People* and *Voice of the Children* workshops that stood affirmed as academic, political, and cultural forces for social change. This history of poetics is grounded in the fight for oppressed people in a society capitalized by anti-blackness, anti-immigrants, anti-LGBTQ+, anti-working class, and more. In our current state of affairs, we are witnessing the legacy of anti-literacy laws (Maddox), the Native American boarding school system (Levitt et al.), and racial segregation legalized by Jim Crow laws seeping into the current political-social order.

In the effort to restore white supremacy and modernity into the fabric of American nationalism, President Donald Trump has made it clear by signing executive orders banning diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives throughout the federal government, ordering the Department of Education to eliminate "illegal race-based" programming (Aratani), and setting a new precedent by making himself the chairmen of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Italie) that the fight to control systems of information is necessary to conquer and divide oppressed people. Along with announcing that he's decided to "immediately terminate multiple individuals from the Board of Trustees [of the Kennedy Center], including the Chairman, who do not share our Vision for a Golden Age in Arts and Culture" his press secretary claimed that "The Kennedy Center learned the hard way that if you go woke, you will go broke" (Italie).

In this pivotal moment of anti-inclusion, historical suppression, and educational inequalities, culture has been exploited to divide the foundation of our existence and reasons for being with each other. This is precisely why we need what Mark Nowak refers to as a pedagogy of *social* poetics (2)—not solely as a manual for creation but as a philosophy for nonviolence, connection, and reconciliation—a mechanism for transforming educational oppression into human liberation.

FIGURE 2

Prince George's County Public School 4th-grade students in the *Our Greatness Is Our Story* spoken word program participating in a writing exercise together.

Just as racist policies are actively tilting the social balance beam away from truth, 19th-century literary laws prohibited enslaved Africans from finding their truth in books. However, this didn't stop their conviction toward obtaining the knowledge necessary to release their minds from mental captivity. Heather Williams, professor of history at the University of North Carolina and author of *Self-Taught: African American Education in Slavery and Freedom*, led a lecture series titled "A Conversation on Race," where she outlined the documentation of enslaved Africans forming what were known as "pit schools" ("Williams Leads Discussion").

Pit schools were created from trenches dug by enslaved people in the woods hidden from the master's sight, where they used candlelight to host secret lessons on Sundays to teach sections of the Bible—beginning the legacy of the first Black literary educators ("Williams Leads Discussion"). Williams even found in the historical record that enslaved people "hid spelling books under their hats to be ready whenever they could entreat or bribe a literate person to teach them" (Saunders). Even under conditions of cruel captivity, enslaved people fought to free their minds, shielded by the soil of the earth, to not only develop new knowledge but also to keep the spirit of hope alive—and indeed they did. This account of the earliest forms of literary resistance would illuminate the oral traditions of African American poetics that give the air for the vibrancy and electricity of Blackness to breathe in an anti-Black lithosphere.

What blossomed from the seeds planted by the "pit schools" was the formation of Black literary societies at the dawn of the Reconstruction era. As Black Americans established themselves in the North after the Civil War, they began organizing amongst each other on the principle that literature was the pathway to freedom of self and thus freedom as a people (Olsen). These self-created libraries manifested in homes, restaurants, churches, etc., in which newly freed slaves began to find refuge within the earliest forms of Black journalism, such as the "Freedom's Journal" and "The Colored American" that kept them up-to-date on current events (Fleming). While self-improvement became a focal point, African Americans sought literary societies to reimagine and regain political power (Olsen). They actively debated, discussed, and discovered solidarity through various forms of fiction and nonfiction to better equip them for civic life—one that required collective struggle for their civil liberties still being denied to them (Olsen).

This consistent and active exchange of knowledge through reading fostered a culture of oratorical expression that would become the needle to sew the fabric of Black poetic traditions. Given that there was a large number of illiterate members of the literary societies, it was common practice for each meeting to include numerous opportunities to read aloud (Olsen). This form of liberation teaching meant more people had the opportunity to begin exploring literary performance through poetry and narrative writing. By actively discovering new information in books, African Americans became empowered to experiment with different linguistic techniques to transform lines on the page into knowledge that would mobilize coalitions for nonviolent movements. Furthermore, this opened their creative imaginations to how Blackness could reach the conscience and soul of America to be better than it was in their present day.

Today, the traditions of Black literary societies are very much alive in community spaces and school districts serving diverse populations of students who deserve to explore the origins of their voices and thus inform the knowledge necessary to drive meaningful change. In 2024, the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) in California partnered with Harvard University professor Dr. Jarvis Givens to honor the historical impact of Black literary societies by birthing their own in many high schools to ensure students have the safety, resources, and community to learn about the rich traditions of Black education and Black literary culture ("Black Literary Society").

Moreover, their literary society is built on a curriculum so that students can use their criticality to analyze text through "a social, political, intellectual, cultural and economic (SPICE) framework" ("Black Literary Society"). This stretches the minds and hearts of students to critically think about the ways in which Black literature can provide contemporary methods for not only understanding racial hierarchy and social equality but also reimagining new ways to organize against it. By exploring various Black literature, students write narratives, discuss historical debates, and perform original poetry to make sense of their agency to forge new narratives for oppressed people. While lofty goals for social change can sometimes at first seem out of reach, LBUSD students are beginning with the exploration and expression of language that brings those ideas closer to actualization.

Another pivotal institution that captured poetics for political and cultural power among oppressed people was the Black Arts Repertory Theatre/School (BARTS), founded in Harlem in 1965 by poet, writer, arts educator, and activist Amiri Baraka (Bennett 61). This radically innovative hub for the arts laid the groundwork for the movement of spoken word poetry and its teachings to change the Black aesthetic and break the cycle of cultural dominance (Bennett 61). Following deep racial tensions after the killing of Malcolm X, BARTS was created with the belief that Black children deserved cultivation through the arts to reclaim their beauty and purpose for existing and to fight for a more just society during a time in which Black expression was portrayed as a threat to the social order. Baraka organized Black arts pioneers in their respective fields, such as "saxophonist Albert Ayler, jazz composer and band leader Sun Ra, and poet Sonia Sanchez" as educators to serve Black children's rising talent and potential on the precipice of seeking their creative awakening (Bennett 61).

Aligned with the Black Arts Movement, poetry existed within Baraka's pedagogy as a method to demonstrate Blackness as a trailblazer in the global struggle for freedom (Bennett 62). BARTS provided new ways for art-making that stood beyond its physical presence. It was through the creation of cultural projects such as "The Revolutionary Theatre" that Black children were empowered through loving and dedicated Black arts educators who prepared them to fight for peace through their stories by bringing them to the forefront of the communities they served (Bennett 64). This study of poetics, captured by the voices of the BARTS's students, matched the lively and dynamic style of the Black Arts Movement in which they were free to "produce, memorize, improvise, and perform poems" in ways that broke the black box, such that to be "Black" is not to be of a monolithic being, but a complex, vibrant, beautiful, and spirited community of humanity (Bennett 64). Through BARTS, Baraka refined the sounds and rhythms of the spoken word poetry movement to pursue the truths we seek today that unlock our human potential and reframe our shared identity that is more concerned with why we need each other to reach higher levels of what feels more like freedom and justice.

From these earliest forms of literary resistance came the emergence of poets who redefined the means for poetics to meet the evolution of social inequality. In a community center near the Brooklyn Navy Yard, poet, playwright, and essayist June Jordan founded the poetry workshop *Voice of the Children* in 1967 (Gansberg). She organized Black and Puerto Rican children, ages 9 to 16, from the Fort Greene area of Brooklyn on Saturdays to explore the cosmos of poetry (Gansberg). They shared their stories of struggle, joy, pain, and love (Gansberg). One student recalled in Jordan's workshop that they used to "rap, dance, snack, browse among the books lying around, and write their stories, poems, editorials, and jokes" (Gansberg).

This sense of literary freedom was activated through their weekly magazine titled "Uhura Na Umoja (Freedom of the People)" and a quarterly paper titled "Expand" founded around 1970 (Gansberg). Each of these journals showcased the poems of the children and their lived experiences, not only growing up in New York City but also navigating an anti-black world. Jordan magically utilized her pedagogy of poetry to disrupt the state-manufactured divide between oppressed children and use language as the ladder to stand up together, joined by their collective voices to fight for a society at peace with itself. This newly found relationship with poetics created a safe place to be vulnerable and truthful—capturing the children's imaginations of what freedom could look like, because they were going to be the ones who created it in their minds and would be fighting for it in their futures.

In the aftermath of the Black Studies Movement, June Jordan created her poetry program *Poetry for the People* at the University of California-Berkeley as part of the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies in 1991 ("Poetry for the People"). At the time, studying poetics through a social justice lens was new to higher education ("Poetry for the People"). With this programming, Jordan would shatter that glass ceiling by establishing a permanent program that is "guided by three principles: 1. That students will not take themselves seriously unless we who teach them, honor and respect

FIGURE 3

Trey Baker on stage with a Prince George's County Public Schools 4th-grade student performing his original spoken word poem at the *Our Greatness Is Our Story* spoken word program's oratorical festival.

them in every practical way that we can. 2. That words can change the world and save our lives. 3. That poetry is the highest art and the most exacting service devoted to our most serious, and our most imaginative, deployment of verbs and nouns on behalf of whatever and whoever we cherish" ("Poetry for the People").

This premise for using poetics to empower diverse groups of students with the literary, intellectual, and social tools to legitimize the worthiness of their words demonstrates a new way to educate for human liberation. By crafting and presenting their original poetry through this lens of community, students of *Poetry for the People* could take the voices of the past, present, and future, listen to what they are saying, and connect them with their own to disrupt the status quo and influence change that lasts within the voices they empower along the way.

Jordan's vision for educating and equipping the next generation of storytellers can be felt by one of her former students, who stated, "Each conversation with her unveiled a different time of her life, and the arc of purpose and love that lives at the center of a life worth living. I was struck by the quality of her listening and her capacity to be loving or indignant or vulnerable" (Shamasunder). This love of life encapsulated Jordan's teachings of poetics and gave her students newfound methods to build peace and be unafraid to care for one another as she did for them. She intentionally offered new ways of telling stories to the air so her students could breathe them in, thus allowing them to find their own words for living and finding forever in freedom. At its core, Jordan provided a global model for teaching poetics that challenged the places where it once existed in academia by giving it back to where it always belonged—with the people.

In the spirit of June Jordan's philosophy for guiding poetry through the necessity of community building and solidarity, there was another movement of poetics simultaneously taking shape in New York City on the Lower East Side during the 1960s and 1970s. One could hear the cosmos of voices from an apartment building grace the evening air—each sound part of a mosaic of stories rushing through the instruments of a new language, a new vibration, and a new way of being. Each seat is packed with listening ears and open hearts, hoping to catch a riff that takes them to a place they've never been before. The performers—poet pioneers like Ntozake Shange, Tato Laviera, Diane Burns—illuminated every word on the page, experimenting with literary techniques and taking the audiences into new territories of humanity (Bennett 31). While a piece was done, it was never finished. The collective ensemble between the audience and performers made the space their own by reflecting and revising each other's work (Bennett 31). It was safe enough for one to exist and give their fullest self to this process of literary democracy because, if we're being frank, everyone's voices mattered.

This apartment was owned by Miguel Algarín (Bennett 31). In the daytime, he was a professor of English and Puerto Rican studies at Rutgers University. By night, he was a spoken word poetry maestro, opening his home to the community of Puerto Rican, Black American, Afro-Latino, and Indigenous artists who were otherwise placed on the periphery of mainstream academic and artistic legitimacy (Hijazi). Miguel brought them to the center, forming what would be called the Nuyorican Poets (Bennett 32). The origins of "Nuyorican" stem from a robust oral history. At its core, the term refers to the movement of avant-garde artistry, academia, and activism led by New York Puerto Ricans (Hijazi). However, to others, it's directly correlated with Algarín's Cafe (Bennet 34). For those who identify as New Yorkers and Puerto Ricans, "Nuyorican" is a culture and way of life that encapsulates the arts as a beacon for human liberation (Hijazi).

Algarín's academic prowess, fused with his rich sense of culture and community, made him especially equipped to open the Nuyorican Poetry Cafe in 1973 (Bennett 32). By using his own money and organizing skills, Algarín turned his apartment into one of the earliest global institutions of spoken word poetry that put the power of words back with the people (Bennett 32). The Nuyorican poets leveraged the arts to tell the truth of oppression, fight in the civil rights struggle and antiwar movement, and rebuild local economies experiencing historical disinvestment throughout America's largest city (Bennet 36). As they strategically took up space, spoken word poetry became dense with sacrality toward resisting injustice against immigrant communities and reclaiming the beauty of their existence.

Algarín's vision for spoken word poetry became a universal key to unlocking the imagination behind every door of the arts to transform the human epistemology. As a forefather of the Nuyorican movement and Nuyorican Poetry Cafe, he would inspire future generations of arts educators and activists in pursuit of a multicultural democracy in which the practice of poetics becomes a throughline for reconciliation, collective healing, and the unexpectedness of human connection by reimagined ways of love. Today, we see this imagination taking shape across the country, where vibrant community-based organizations are interconnecting spoken word poetry as a nonviolent strategy, forging new systems for human connection.

Ultimately, poetry is as ancient as the beginnings of our first civilizations. However, throughout the historical record, this sacred art form has been captured by the souls of oppressed people to lead nonviolent movements against white supremacy, unchain the vulnerable through linguistic prowess, and dismantle dominant cultures that seek to romanticize otherness. As the history of oppression fights to repeat itself by dismantling educational opportunities, seeking to outlaw books that uncover our social truths, and masking epistemicide with the pursuit of the "Golden Age of America," we are met with yet another pivotal moment in deciding who we are going to be. In search of a way forward, Toni Morrison informs us that "This is precisely the time when artists go to work. There is no time for despair, no place for self-pity, no need for silence, no room for fear. We speak, we write... That is how civilizations heal" (Morrison).

While standing at this crossroads, we can seek collective nonviolent resilience and reconciliation in the Black poetic traditions of our society that have always fought and overcome injustice. This spirit of *social* poetics equips us with the power of language to fight against the places oppression tells us to go, where no promise, no opportunity, and no life exist. Instead, if we use poetry as a pedagogy for liberation, we can disrupt traditional standards for academic, social, cultural, and human legitimacy. When diversity, equity, and inclusion are under attack, the history of spoken word poetry demands the seriousness of the voices of children. It becomes a mechanism for raising their vibrations to the highest levels of worthiness and excellence. This relationship with literary resistance has shown that the movement of spoken word poetry is the enemy of forgetfulness and the denier of ignorance, proving more than the creation of art for art's sake, but rather an excess point to freedom. It empowers us to grow history, expanding what is possible for school communities, restorative justice practices, prison abolition, etc. With the pedagogy of social poetics in our hands, the more human voices we can bring together—lighting our hearts to guide new ways forward. Ways of truth. Ways of nonviolence. Ways of love—each inextricable to the rhythmicity of a life worth living.

FIGURE 4

Prince George's County Public Schools 4th-grade student getting to read her original spoken word poem at the *Our Greatness Is Our Story* spoken word program's oratorical festival.

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What Is It Like to Host a Bat? The Aporia of Unconditional Hospitality and the Binary of Human/Non-Human*[1]

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In the first year of his seminar on the concept of hospitality, published in English in 2023 as *Hospitality, Volume I*, Jacques Derrida deconstructs the notion of hospitality as it relates to individuals, nation-states, and cities. This notion of hospitality is deconstructed in order to rethink the boundary of the human, by showing that the binary boundary between the human and the non-human, the human and the animal, the human and the divine, and the living and the dead is a gradation of difference, rather than the distinct line it has often been considered to be. As such, Derrida's deconstruction of the notion of hospitality is related to his more general deconstruction of the distinction between the inside and the outside, a binary for which one side—the inside—has been privileged throughout the history of metaphysics.

This privilege of the inside over the outside is related to the distinction between humans and animals insofar as it is the result of a privileging of speech over another form of knowledge signification and production, namely, writing. Writing does not have to be scriptural or graphic, but can be any mark, any trace. The stump of a tree, gnawed with the signatory teeth marks of a beaver, a fish's body recorded in limestone, the trail formed from trampled underbrush—all this is writing, a recorded trace in the archive (Derrida 1998, 65). Thinkers such as Aristotle have claimed that the fundamental difference between animals and humans is reason, reason as *logos*—hence Derrida's claims regarding the "logocentrism" of the Western tradition. To think is to speak; thinking is thus writing understood metaphorically as "writing in the soul," which is signified as speech. Due to this logocentrism, animals have long been thought to lack speech as well as reason and are thus considered to be less than humans.

In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida treats the privilege of the inside over the outside and its resulting logocentrism, which will come to be central in his investigation of hospitality. According to Derrida, throughout the history of philosophy, much like the privileging of speech over writing, the inside has been prioritized over the outside (Derrida 1998, 7–8). For example, in Plato, the self is identified with the immortal soul, which is merely housed in the material body. Thus, for Plato, the true self, the self that is prioritized, is the inner self, the inside, rather than the body, the outer self, the outside. Platonism goes beyond the self, of course, positing that the true nature of all things is something other than what it appears to be. The material form of an object is not its true nature, for its true nature is that which is inside it. In Descartes, a dualism is thought, where there is the mind and the body, with the mind being linked to that which one would typically consider the self, the thinking thing. And in Kant, all one has access to is the inner experience of the world, while the outer world, the noumenal world, is inaccessible, and nothing can be said of it.

All of these examples point to a privileging of the inside over the outside. Derrida analyzes this tendency in relation to speech and writing. Speech, this metaphysical tradition has said, is closer to truth than writing. Writing distorts speech and disrupts the immediacy of knowledge

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1 My title makes reference to Thomas Nagel's famous essay, "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?" (Nagel 1974).

to which speech gives access. One can write down "That is large" on a piece of paper, referring to a large object in front of oneself. But if that paper is lost and later found, what "That" is cannot be deduced. Writing then distorts knowledge transference insofar as anyone who had instead heard the writer would have known what "That" refers to. Thinkers in this metaphysical tradition have referred to writing as the signifier of the signifier, writing signifying speech, and speech signifying some signified. Further, there is a conflation of thought and language; for example, the process of determining identity requires one to distinguish between objects and, especially, between the world and the self, which happens when one hears oneself speak. It is from the privileged status of speech that Derrida determines the tendency of logocentrism, which has come to define so much of the history of philosophy. This logocentrism and privileging of the inside are further revealed in his seminar on hospitality (Derrida 2023).

Derrida's deconstruction of hospitality reveals the complexity of its structure and the confusion its structure produces. For Derrida, hospitality is understood in two forms: conditional and unconditional. Conditional hospitality is what hospitality is generally thought to be: a welcoming of a stranger, but on certain terms that, if compromised, turn hospitality into hostility. In this sense, the guest is always presumed to be an enemy, or at least a potential enemy. The guest/enemy's potential to go too far conditions the nature of hospitality, eroding hospitality's sense from its beginning. Hospitality's end is unconditional hospitality, a hospitality of no limits, where the guest and the host become indistinguishable. Hospitality thus relies on the determination of self and other, for, without a sense of self and other, there is neither host nor guest, and yet, a truly unconditioned hospitality would see no difference between the host and the guest.

This distinction between the human and the animals is, as we have said, less rigid than is generally thought. When thinking about hospitality, this phantasmal distinction between the human and what is other requires one to reconsider whether hospitality is or should be restricted to the human, or whether it is or should be extended beyond the human to the animal (if such a distinction can be made). Or perhaps hospitality, insofar as it is autoimmune, reinforces the phantasm of self and sovereignty, which is established in the hospitable act, since, in order to offer hospitality, one must recognize oneself as a self, already a phantasm, and the guest as other than the self, and more fundamentally, one must be a host, the host of a guest, and, thus, the host as sovereign and the guest as subject. This sovereignty of host over guest implies a conditioned hospitality, as the host determines the limits for the guest in the area over which the host is sovereign. Establishing limits to hospitality in this way undermines hospitality's aspirations towards unconditional hospitality, and the autoimmunity of hospitality emerges in the paradox of conditional and unconditional hospitality. To be hospitable is to welcome a guest openly; however, if one openly welcomes a guest unconditionally, the distinction between host and guest dissolves, the host becomes a guest to her guest, and the guest a host to her host. Thus, to maintain the identity of host as distinct from guest, hospitality undergoes a process of autoimmunity, whereby it becomes inhospitable to continue to be hospitable.

The question of hospitality, when extended beyond the human, thus exposes the autoimmune logic of logocentrism: the human/animal binary—constructed through the metaphysics of "inside" (reason, speech, the self) versus "outside" (bodies, writing, the other)—collapses under deconstruction, revealing an *aporia*. This *aporia* arises because hospitality demands both the unconditional welcoming of the stranger and the conditional structures of human sovereignty controlling the other. By deconstructing the human/animal distinction, we face the *aporia* of offering hospitality within a logocentric framework, necessitating an ethics that grapples with this irreducible contradiction rather than resolving it.

Generally thought, hospitality appears as though it is a product of convention, a human invention of laws to govern how one ought to treat the stranger. However, understanding hospitality as a human invention carries contradictions. "Once hospitality is determined as a human thing, once it is forbidden to speak of hospitality with respect to God, the animal or plants, one can already say that there is something about hospitality that one is not yet thinking" (Derrida 2023, 17–18). When hospitality is thought of as only human, one is blinded to the other possibilities and realities of hospitality in action. Humans are frequently hospitable to God, in that God is welcomed into the home openly, at the dinner table when saying grace, and in church (which is a house of God), and that is to speak only of an Abrahamic God. If hospitality is human and cannot include gods, another contradiction arises when considering god in a Hindu way—Brahman is Atman, God is man, and man is God. If hospitality is only human, then that is true only in a Western sense, for humanity is extended to God in some Eastern cultures, and thus, the human-only hospitality would include God. Derrida speaks to this point as well in the seminar: "As for the distinction between animal, human, and divine, remember a comment that I quoted from remarks by Malamoud, who explained to me that in a certain Indian culture, the guest was always divine: in receiving a guest it was as if a god himself were come" (Derrida 2023, 209). Indeed, a god has come, for Brahman is Atman. This is also seen in a Western context in Greek mythology, such as in the Homeric hymn "To Demeter," where Demeter, disguised as a human, is welcomed into a home openly, but when she is seen placing the host's baby in a fire (to make him immortal, to deify him, thus, in a sense, to take away his human selfhood), she is cast away. When she then reveals herself as Demeter, she makes the host build her a temple and altar, a place where she will always be welcomed, and where she can teach her mysteries (Ruden 2005, 90–275). Thus, the unconditional hospitality of welcoming a stranger is revealed as conditional, only for that conditional hospitality to anger their divine guest, who, as a god, and thus a host of humanity on earth, demands a place of unconditional hospitality—a host become guest, become enemy, become host, become guest.

Hospitality, by its mechanism of welcoming the stranger, rejects the stranger—its limitation to humanity, thereby revealing its autoimmunity. The human limit given to hospitality is an act of violence against hospitality yet done in an effort to preserve hospitality. Just as divine hospitality exposes the conditional limits of human sovereignty, so the animal/guest destabilizes the structure of hospitality and the privilege of humans over animals, thus revealing an aspect of hospitality's autoimmune violence.

The difference between the human and the animal, in particular, has been given special attention throughout the history of thought and writing, with most positioning and privileging humans over animals. This privilege has its root in the phantasmal inside, one's interiority, the inner self, the self that hears itself speak, which has long been thought to be humanity's essence, soul, rationality, the self that Aristotle called *logos*. Like Plato, Aristotle thus falls into logocentrism. However, the frequently cited term Aristotle gave to refer to humans, "political animals," already shows the instability of this categorization. Were the first humans, as hunter-gatherers, not living in a city (*polis*), not human in the same way that wolves hunting in packs, orcas swimming in pods, and ants living in colonies are not human? That is to say, is it where one dwells or one's rationality that makes one distinct from animals? Animals, many thinkers have said, are instinctual beings, incapable of rational thought; they live entirely according to nature, with no convention, no *techné*, and no sense of self. Animals, these thinkers have determined, as opposed to humans, are impure, material bodies with no spirit and no language. If animals cannot speak, then how can they identify as guests?

Hospitality is thus another instance in which the phantasm of the self is determined and reproduced, where one becomes host to a guest, where one identifies as host, that is, where one's very selfhood becomes one of being a host. As the self is, according to Derrida, a result of hearing oneself speak, that is, a product of the *logos*, then, as hospitality reproduces the self, a being which cannot speak in human language threatens hospitality's self-reproducing process. Recognizing this threat to hospitality, it acts violently towards its own aspirations, that of unconditional hospitality, revealing the autoimmunity of hospitality. "But obviously, the whole paradox, the whole *aporia* of the law of unconditional hospitality, is that this hospitality, which is opened and offered to each one, singularly, appeals to a universality or generality at the very moment that it affirms the absolute uniqueness or absolute singularity of each and every one" (Derrida 2023, 231–232). Unconditional hospitality would require the host to welcome the animal as guest. To do so, however, would mean that the distinction between guest and host is blurred. But if animals are distinct from humans, how can the distinction between the human host and the animal guest become blurred? An *aporia* arises here as hospitality requires recognizing the uniqueness of the self of the guest, all the while appealing to the universal, unconditional hospitality. The unique identity between animal and human, no longer being recognized in an instance of unconditional hospitality, dissolves, despite requiring this recognition for hospitable acts to occur. Derrida's deconstruction of the distinction between animal and human and conditional/unconditional hospitality results in an *aporia* that cannot be overcome.

Those distinguishing between humans and animals have often predicated the distinction upon the latter's lack of reason and speech. However, such a distinction is difficult to defend. There are many examples that demonstrate that animals *do* have reason: the complexity of whale speech, the use of tools by crows, and the way that rats display their strong memory and capacity for spatial learning through the radial arm maze test. Further, a team of researchers recently observed an ape using a plant solely for its medicinal properties (Laumer et al. 2024). Given this evidence of animal reason, it seems arbitrary to exclude animals from hospitality on account of their supposed lack of reason or speech. Recognizing the similarity or the lack of difference between animals and humans is perhaps not enough to grant hospitality, for if it were, no human would be denied hospitality. And one should be wary of granting an animal hospitality on human terms:

> So already this idea of human hospitality is a very problematic idea because, just to remain with what is the most plausible—because I imagine that the idea of being hospitable to plants may surprise here or there, in certain cases, perhaps not in every case, but the idea of being hospitable to animals is less surprising—how am I going to justify the fact of welcoming into my house, my domesticity, my very home, even to the extent of feeding it, caring for it, offering it a sepulchre even, some domestic animal or another, rather than some other human? To have a cat, a dog, from birth to death, one that bears a name, that I bury, is that hospitality or not? Is that anthropomorphism or not? (Derrida 2023, 133).

The fear of anthropomorphism that is raised here seems to rely on an implicit hierarchy that it is wrong to give human traits to a non-human animal, pessimistically because to assign human traits to an animal is to degrade humans, more optimistically because it holds animals to an unfair standard of human reason and morality. In the case Derrida mentions, namely, bringing a domesticated animal into one's home, naming the animal, burying her, etc., the concern appears less about the moral judgments people make about animal behavior, which comprise most of the negative critique of anthropomorphism, and more about the ethics involved in offering hospitality to a non-human animal rather than a human, along with the embedded contradictions within the structure of hospitality itself. The most emblematic example of this form of anthropomorphism is likely that of the evil serpent, the corrupter of humanity. Snakes are seen as malicious, and many snake species have been hunted into extinction because of this moral judgment; or the contemporary example of seal culling in Canada, where fisheries have blamed seals for the low population of certain fish species, and now there are yearly sanctioned culls of baby seals in an effort to save the dwindling fish population from the savage and evil seals. The absurdity of the anthropomorphism is that the fish population decrease is almost certainly due to human overfishing, pollution, and the acidification of the ocean from global warming. It seems less the case that sheltering and naming an animal is anthropomorphic; rather, it is a mere recognition of that animal, an act of empathy towards another living creature. To be hospitable is a kind of empathy, as it recognizes the stranger in need of shelter and companionship, a need not unique to any being or species. If, as Thomas Nagel says, the experience of being a bat is inaccessible to a human, one can at least say that the experience of *being* is one we share, and universal hospitality aims at encompassing all of being, not that of humanity alone (Nagel 1974). Perhaps it is not anthropomorphism of the animal, but instead a recognition that what we consider human is not necessarily contained within a boundary. The hen that hatches a duck egg placed there by the farmer does not reject the duck but welcomes the duck into the world as her own, despite the duck's strangeness. The hen shows, in this way, that the distinctness of the duck from her other children does not limit the hospitality she offers.

The deconstruction of hospitality results in an experience of *aporia* as the attempt at hospitality undermines its very conception. Questioning the distinction between inside and outside reveals that their boundary is undefined. This uncertain boundary extends to the idea of the host, an individual who invites someone inside, as the host's sovereignty over the inside relies on the sovereignty of the self, which is phantasmal, and of alterity, which, since the self is phantasmal, is also questioned. The invitation of the guest is conditioned by their being a potential enemy, a possibility that limits the host's capacity to offer unconditional hospitality. Hospitality is also deconstructed in that it is thought of as limited to the human, despite an unconditioned hospitality necessitating the welcoming of plants, animals, gods, and the dead. With reason as logos crowned as sovereign and that which determines sovereignty, those beings lacking speech become subjects, guests in the kingdom of humanity, and yet, as hosts of these guests, to be hospitable to them is to erode the sovereignty of the host. Hospitality is thus offered with conditions, conditions which signify hospitality's autoimmunity. And yet, with this risk, and with the unattainability of true unconditioned hospitality, to offer hospitality, despite its limitations, is better than nothing.

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Elliott Austin | *Reflection* | Medium format film photography

The 1979 Sino-Vietnamese Border War: Unveiling Strategic Motivations and Excusatory Reasons*

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Introduction

The Second Indochina War, also called the Vietnam War, was fought between the communist Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) and the US-backed Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) and its allies. This Cold War military conflict happened on the Indochina Peninsula, which nowadays consists of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. In the war, North Vietnam received support mainly from the Soviet Union and neighboring China. Notably, from 1956 to 1963, China provided significant aid to North Vietnam, with the total equal to 320 million yuan.[1] Chinese support included military, material, and logistical aid, as well as appointed engineering and anti-aircraft artillery servicemen.[2] In fact, the relationship between Vietnam and China during the Second Indochina War was declared as "close as lips and teeth" by both governments.[3] In 2019, Major General Nguyen Hong Quan, former Deputy Director of the Institute of National Defense Strategy in Vietnam, called the 1950–1964 period the "honeymoon" phase of Sino-Vietnamese relations.[4]

Given this close cooperation between the "comrades plus brothers," it is understandable for one to feel surprised when the Sino-Vietnamese War broke out in 1979, only seven years after the last significant military support by China to North Vietnam in May 1972.[5] On February 17, 1979, China launched an offensive to the northern border of Vietnam, the part of its shared border with China—today, not a single paragraph about the war can be found in Chinese history textbooks.[6] One of the reasons why the conflict was intentionally deleted "from China's modern history" by the government is their fear of open discussion leading to scrutiny of their motivations and decisions.[7]

What were the real reasons for China's decision to end its friendly relations with Vietnam with such a short but costly war? This paper argues that China's brief invasion of Vietnam in 1979 was motivated by the desire to weaken encirclements from the USSR's bloc and to tighten relations with the US. Moreover, commanding the war, the Chinese "paramount leader," Deng Xiaoping, had his own domestic goals of strengthening his power. This essay also addresses and rebuts alternative explanations for the war, including the mass expulsion of ethnic Chinese, also called Hoa people, from Vietnam; Vietnam's attack on the Chinese-backed Cambodian regime of the Khmer Rouge; and the Sino-Vietnamese historical hostility.

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2 Ibid., 371.

3 Hung M. Nguyen, "The Sino-Vietnamese Conflict: Power Play among Communist Neighbors," *Asian Survey* 19, no. 11 (November 1979): 1037, https://doi.org/10.2307/2643953.

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5 Jian, "China's Involvement," 385.

6 Xiaoliang Li, "Legacies of China's Forgotten War: The Sino-Vietnam Conflict of 1979," *American Journal of Chinese Studies* 14, no. 1 (April 2007): 26, https://www.jstor.org/stable/44289247.

7 Ibid., 28–29

A Purposeful Move on the International Political Chessboard

Weakening the Encirclements by the USSR and Its Allies

After Joseph Stalin died and China started asserting its desire to be the "big brother" in the Communist bloc in the 1950s, China and the USSR experienced a split in their relations, which was worsened after their border disputes in the late 1960s.[8] The conflicts along the part of their shared border, which is a section of the Chinese northern border and the Russian Far East, concerned military deployment from both sides. From 1978, there was a strengthening of Soviet military disposition aimed at China. Particularly, the USSR replaced the immobile SS-4 and SS-5 missiles with the SS-20 Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles in the Russian Far East. While the old SS-4 had a maximum range of only 2,000 kilometers and 4,100 kilometers for that of the SS-5 missiles, each of the new mobile SS-20 missiles had a 5,000-kilometer maximum range and three Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry vehicle (MIRV) warheads.[9] This remarkable technological improvement in military readiness and destructive power from the Soviets in this area placed China in an uncomfortably insecure position.

Besides such border tensions directly between the USSR and China, they also competed with each other in influencing other, less powerful countries.[10] The Soviet Union began to extensively send support to more traditional Marxist-Leninist regimes of Third World countries in Africa. Alliance treaties were signed between the USSR and Somalia in 1974, Angola in 1976, Mozambique in 1977, and Ethiopia in 1978. The Soviets' support for these countries included military equipment, Soviet advisers, and Soviet-sponsored Cuban troops. From the late 1960s throughout the 1970s, there were Cuban troops in a total of 16 African and Middle Eastern states.[11] Deng Xiaoping viewed these Soviet aids as an enticement to unify other countries against China.[12] On July 15, 1977, the Peking Review published an article that proclaimed "Soviet social-imperialism" was "the most dangerous source of world war."[13] In February 1978, China did not renew the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance and rejected all advances from Moscow for fear that the treaty would reduce China's influence in Asia.[14] In Asia, no other developing country had more potential than Vietnam to be the battleground for the two communist powers to compete for their influence on Third World countries.

The USSR's active effort in strengthening ties with Vietnam to drive a rift between Hanoi and Beijing was also a component of its encirclement tactic against China. The Soviets had already launched alliances with two crucial neighbors of China: Mongolia to the north and India to the southwest, in 1966 and 1971, respectively.[15] The deterioration of Sino-Vietnam relations started when Vietnam decided to lean toward the USSR amidst the Sino-Soviet split, even before Vietnam's unification. Preference for the Soviets by Vietnam, the southern neighbor of China, proved that the encirclement strategy was potentially fruitful. North Vietnam's successful reunification of the country on April 30, 1975, also signaled Moscow's success in the Southeast Asian Third World: now the Soviets started to enjoy the rewards of their investment in Vietnam.[16]

On June 29, 1978, Vietnam officially joined the Soviet-led Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) and received more arms and up to 4,000 Soviet advisers.[17] However, China's worst fear was yet to come.

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10 Ibid., 322.

11 Ibid., 335–336.

12 Gompert, Binnendijk, and Lin, "China's Punitive War," 118.

13 Khoo, "Revisiting Termination," 339.

14 Gompert, Binnendijk, and Lin, "China's Punitive War," 118.

15 Khoo, "Revisiting Termination," 342.

16 Ibid., 335–336.

17 Ibid., 341.

Cam Ranh Bay, a deep-water bay, was an ideal natural harbor previously used by the US as a naval complex. Vietnam allowed the USSR to build a base that served as "a refueling stop for the Soviet Far Eastern Fleet between Vladivostok and the Indian Ocean," which would fortify the fleet's range and capacity in the critical waters south of China.[18] Undoubtedly, China felt encircled by the Soviet Union, its primary enemy, and the Soviets' allies, including the newly unified Vietnam. This insecurity was one of the main motivations for China to launch an offensive against the northern border of Vietnam, aiming to weaken the USSR's important ally and the bond between Hanoi and Moscow.

To prepare for the attack, China had to carefully calculate the possibility of a Soviet intervention in the war. China's goal was never to overthrow Hanoi or fully invade Vietnam. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) wanted to keep the offensive brief in order to limit the cost, use of the air force, and the possibility of Soviet retaliation to China's northern border.[19] As a preventative method, China relocated 300,000 Chinese civilians from the border shared with the USSR and arrayed their best troops there.[20] Additionally, intelligence activities also encouraged China's decision to launch the attack.

At the time, a Chinese intelligence report showed that among the 57 Soviet divisions along the shared border, only 30 percent of them were fully equipped, and 60 percent were prepared for swift deployment. The People's Liberation Army (PLA), also known as the army of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), calculated that it would take the USSR at least two months to adequately prepare for a retaliating attack, and the CCP did not plan to prolong the war in Vietnam to that length.[21] Moreover, intelligence collection from the US also contributed to China's confidence in attacking Vietnam. In January 1979, only one month before the war, Deng Xiaoping, the then Vice Premier, visited the United States. He met and discussed the war's plan with President Carter, who confirmed that US information collection indicated that there were no new Soviet military enhancements along the Sino-Soviet border.[22] A senior PLA officer who fought in the war also confirmed that, thanks to US intelligence, China was more confident before and during the war.[23] This evidence concerning intelligence activities indicates that, by attacking Vietnam, China not only wanted to weaken a USSR ally but also to undermine the Soviet-Vietnam alliance by conveying to Vietnam a message that even when it is devastated by China's offensive, its big brother does not care to help.

Tightening the Relationships with the United States

After the death of Mao Zedong, the founder of the CCP, Deng Xiaoping rose as a prominent figure in the CCP with the ambition of modernizing the economy and military. Deng observed that the two allies of the US in East Asia, South Korea and Japan, both benefited economically and militarily by supporting US security in the region.[24] Therefore, Deng contended that a normalized relationship with the US would be better for both China and the Americans. On one hand, the US would feel more secure in that area when the geographically huge China leaned more towards them instead of the Soviets. On the other hand, Deng viewed the US as the primary source of advanced technological ideas that were essential for his economic modernization plan.[25] Moreover, China siding with the anti-Soviet bloc would contain the Soviet expansionism. Coping with an aggressive adjacent Soviet Union, China would benefit from aligning with the US, the powerful opponent of

18 Les Buszynski, "Vietnam Confronts China," *Asian Survey* 20, no. 8 (August 1980): 832, https://doi.org/10.2307/2643637.

19 Gompert, Binnendijk, and Lin, "China's Punitive War," 122.

20 Ibid., 123.

21 Christopher M. Gin, *How China Wins: A Case Study of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War* (Kansas: The Army Press, 2016), 47, https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/combat-studies-institute/csi-books/how-china-wins.pdf.

22 Ibid., 36.

23 Ibid., 48

24 Gompert, Binnendijk, and Lin, "China's Punitive War," 120.

25 Xiaoming Zhang, "Deng Xiaoping and China's Decision to Go to War with Vietnam," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 12, no. 3 (Summer 2010): 15, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26923378.

the Soviets.[26] With that perspective, Deng Xiaoping zealously initiated the diplomatic normalization process. He directed the Chinese Foreign Ministry to investigate US needs and intentions to prepare his best negotiation strategy of highlighting the economic benefits of a closer relationship.[27]

What did all of these Sino-Soviet-American dynamics between the three giants have to do with the small, fresh-out-of-war Vietnam? The crucial goal Deng hoped to achieve through the offensive at Vietnam, a Soviet ally, was to show his firm stance against the USSR and, hence, strengthen China's relationship with the United States and lead to technological assistance.[28] Deng took his trip to the United States in late January and to Japan in early February 1979.[29] Only about ten days after Deng returned to China from the diplomatic trip, the war was started on Vietnam's northern border. This perfect timing was planned by Deng when he felt that right after the visits, he had gained enough international support for the attack.[30] Moreover, launching the offensive right after diplomatic normalization with Washington, D.C., China created the impression that the US supported the attack.[31]

Domestic Goals of the Rising Deng Xiaoping

To this point, the essay has mentioned the name Deng Xiaoping throughout the analysis of the international political situation at that time, indicating his important role in this period of Chinese politics. Under Mao's era, Deng soon rose to power and served in high-ranking positions, such as the General Secretary of the CCP's Central Committee in 1954.[32] However, by 1965, Deng's power was so prominent that Mao became afraid of his bright, powerful potential, which could be threatening to Mao's own power. As a result of Mao's purge during the Cultural Revolution, Deng had all of his titles taken away and was forced to work in a tractor repair factory for political "rehabilitation."[33] In 1973, Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai realized the need for a "competent leader" when Zhou's health significantly deteriorated. It was not until then that they thought about allowing Deng's return to the political arena. By 1975, Deng re-entered the Politburo's Standing Committee and assumed the roles of Vice Chairman of the Party's Military Commission and Chief of Staff of the PLA.[34]

Returning to power, Deng became worried about the quality and reputation of the PLA, which had decreased due to the political turmoil in the Cultural Revolution. According to Deng's argument, Chinese leaders could not verify if the PLA's combat capability still qualified, since they had not experienced a proper war in thirty years.[35] In Deng's view, the PLA was inexpert and indolent, and he wanted to develop a well-trained and professional army.[36] Deng believed that a successful war with Vietnam would be beneficial for the PLA to regain its reputation and gather combat experience.[37]

Deng Xiaoping's concerns also expanded to the loyalty of senior military officers.[38] From December 20, 1978, to January 3, 1979, a meeting of the Central Military Commission (CMC) of China took place with the participation of senior officers from three headquarters from all services and military regions. The meeting collapsed into chaotic conflict when the officers only focused on throwing "bitter accusations" at each other.[39] Clearly, the division within the Chinese military at that time was alarming, and Deng was worried about a looming scenario when PLA generals would fragment China into "military fiefdoms."[40] It is logical for Deng to want a war with a mutual foreign enemy, Vietnam, to consolidate the

26 Ibid., 17.
27 Ibid., 15.
28 Gompert, Binnendijk, and Lin, "China's Punitive War," 120.
29 Ibid., 123.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
32 Gin, *How China Wins*, 30.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid., 31.
35 Zhang, "Deng Xiaoping," 19.
36 Gompert, Binnendijk, and Lin, "China's Punitive War," 119.
37 Zhang, "Deng Xiaoping," 19.
38 Ibid., 20.
39 Ibid.
40 Gompert, Binnendijk, and Lin, "China's Punitive War," 119.

PLA's loyalty and Deng's own power. By commanding the war, Deng gained control over the military by appointing his close officers to important positions.[41] For example, at an expanded CCP Politburo meeting on December 31, 1978, Deng appointed Xu Shiyou to be in charge of operations from Guangxi in the east and Yang Dezhi to command operations from Yunnan in the west.[42]

When Deng re-entered the Chinese political landscape in 1977, there was a power struggle between him and another prominent figure: Hua Guofeng. The competition lasted fiercely from August 1977 to December 1978.[43] There was unsurprisingly an imbalance of power between Hua, the appointed successor of Mao, and Deng, who had just returned to power after being purged by Mao in the Cultural Revolution. Hua, at the time, was the Chairman of both the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the Central Military Commission (CMC). He committed to continuing Mao's ideologies and policies and held full control of the Communist Party and military affairs. Newly rejoining the domestic political battleground, Deng's power was still limited, despite holding some vice chairman positions under Hua.[44] With his position at that time, the border war with Vietnam was motivated even more by his hope to strengthen his importance and authority through the modernization of the military.

In April–June 1978, at the "all-Army Political Work Conference," a debate on military modernization broke out between two groups: the pro-modernizers and the "veteran fighters" who opposed that priority.[45] In the meeting, Deng highlighted the importance of adjusting military development to "new historical conditions" to adapt to the modern, technological advancement of the world.[46] The "military modernizers" group, which included some key military personnel, such as Defense Minister Xu Xiangqian, Deputy Commandant of the PLA Military Academy Tao Hanzhang, Commander of the North Sea Fleet Rao Shoukun and Air Force Commander Zhang Tingfa, strongly followed Deng's leadership and modernization goal.[47] The modernizers group supported equipping the force with technologically advanced weaponry and command systems. They also viewed the traditional doctrine of "people's war," which focused on guerrilla warfare, as outdated and disadvantageous in modern warfare.[48]

The opposite side of the debate, called the Resistance Force, mostly consisted of veteran fighters.[49] This team strongly believed in traditional "people's war" and prioritized "men over weaponry," which had been central to Mao's established military doctrine and the PLA's past successes.[50] The veteran fighters' resistance to modernization was criticized by Deng's pro-modernizers as "ossification of thinking."[51] The fact that Hua Guofeng was on the Resistance Force side and emphasized that "revolutionization commands modernization" directly placed Hua and Deng in opposite directions.

With the debate overview and a "punitive war" with Vietnam ahead, the critical question here is "which strategy will be used in the war?" With Deng Xiaoping named as the overall commander of the war, while Hua was the "nominal leader" of the CCP, Deng was more influential in the 1979 border war.[52] It is understandable for one to predict that the strategy used in the war would never be the outdated "manpower." However, reality was the opposite: the main tactic, which was also the most critical weakness of the war, was "men over weaponry."[53] This tactical shortcoming led to an unexpectedly costly war for China. After the war, China recognized the military

41 Ibid.
42 Zhang, "Deng Xiaoping," 20.
43 Ibid., 10.
44 Ibid., 9.
45 Chen C. King, "China's War Against Vietnam, 1979: A Military Analysis," *The Journal of East Asian Affairs* 3, no. 1 (1983): 238, https://www.jstor.org/stable/23253977.
46 Ibid.

47 Ibid., 238–239
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid., 239
51 Ibid.
52 Ibid., 243
53 Li, "Legacies of China's," 260.

weakness and underwent a decade of modernization following Deng's leadership. This path, together with the pre-war military debate, suggests that Deng managed to use the war against Vietnam to prove the wisdom of his proposal of modernization and undermine Hua's support for the wrong belief of manpower in warfare. Hence, Deng successfully used the tactical failure and casualties of the war to improve his credibility and damage Hua's authority.

Addressing Alternative Explanations

Retaliation for the Khmer Rouge

One main pretext given by China to justify its invasion of Vietnam's northern border was that Hanoi needed to be punished for invading and overthrowing the China-backed Cambodian regime of the Khmer Rouge.[54] However, to understand why Vietnam's intervention in Cambodia was only a pretext and not the actual motivation for China's invasion, we need to examine China's goal in supporting the Khmer Rouge.

When the Khmer Rouge successfully took over Cambodia in 1975, the Cultural Revolution was facing obstacles and downgrades in mainland China. Meanwhile, the Khmer Rouge's path and policies resonated with Mao's revolutionary theories, emphasizing armed struggle, anti-revisionism, and continuous revolution.[55] Therefore, the Khmer Rouge's radical revolution and victory were viewed by Mao as an ideological validation, the evidence for his wisdom. By supporting the Khmer Rouge, China under Mao's rule wanted to show, domestically and internationally, that his path was still the right and feasible path to follow. Aid for Cambodia, though material, yielded a crucial intangible, ideological reward for him to maintain his legitimacy at home and protect the Cultural Revolution, which Mao personally perceived as his greatest achievement.[56]

However, after Mao's death, this ideological motivation also disappeared. Support for such an extreme regime with the goal of an agricultural society would be a financial burden for Deng's modernization plan. Moreover, Deng Xiaoping was well aware of the importance of international support and reputation. Continued support for the Khmer Rouge, a troublesome ally that was causing brutal genocide and regional instability, would be disadvantageous for China. Therefore, there was no legitimate reason for China to initiate an aggressive move, also a costly war, against Vietnam to retaliate for the aggressive and costly Khmer Rouge.

Mistreatment of the Hoa People in Vietnam

China's declared reasons for punishing Vietnam in 1979 also included the "mistreatment of ethnic Chinese living in Vietnam."[57] To evaluate this alternative explanation, we need to examine the actual actions of China regarding overseas Chinese.

After unifying in 1975, Vietnam faced a threat to its national security: the Chinese ethnic, or Hoa people, demanded to keep Chinese citizenship while living and holding a large amount of private property in Vietnam. The Vietnamese government, particularly Le Duan, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, then had a tough and decisive ultimatum: forcing the Hoa people to either renounce their Chinese citizenship and adopt Vietnamese nationality or leave Vietnam. Then, in the spring of 1978, a mass exodus of Chinese people out of Vietnam started.[58] On May 26, 1978, China announced that it would send ships to welcome the "victimized Chinese residents" home.[59] Vietnam also

54 Gin, *How China Wins*, 21.

55 Chenyi Wang, "The Chinese Communist Party's Relationship with the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s: An Ideological Victory and a Strategic Failure," *Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars*, December 2018, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/the-chinese-communist-partys-relationship-the-khmer-rouge-the-1970s-ideological-victory.

56 Ibid.

57 Xiaoming Zhang, "China's 1979 War with Vietnam: A Reassessment," *The China Quarterly* 184 (December 2005): 855, https://www.jstor.org/stable/20192542.

58 Gareth Porter, "Vietnam's Ethnic Chinese and the Sino-Vietnamese Conflict," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 12, no. 4 (1980): 56, https://doi.org/10.1080/14672715.1980.10405230.

59 Ibid., 57.

recognized that China did open welcoming gates for these Hoa people along the shared border between the two countries.[60] However, on July 12, 1978, China suddenly closed its border and refused to take in any Hoa people. Beijing also insisted that Vietnam take back these people and called them "Vietnamese citizens."[61] The reason for this U-turn was that after just two months of arriving "home," thousands of Chinese people refused Chinese citizenship and exacted to be relocated to another country, usually the US.[62]

Looking at China's response to the overseas Hoa people coming back to their own land, one can conclude that China did not genuinely care for these people, and the accused mistreatment by Vietnam was not a real motivation for China to invade in 1979. This claim is even reinforced when we compare China's two different responses to the same issue of the Chinese diaspora in Vietnam and Cambodia. The Chinese diaspora in Cambodia, under the Khmer Rouge's inhumane rule, was treated horribly and suffered mass killings.[63] They were forced to do hard labor and live in concentration camps.[64] Approximately 50% of 430,000 ethnic Chinese in Cambodia in 1975 died in the following four years under the Khmer Rouge's rule.[65] However, as opposed to the case of Vietnam, China did not raise its voice or take any actions regarding the fact that hundreds of thousands of Hoa people in Cambodia were killed by its ally.[66] This clearly shows that the mistreatment of overseas Hoa people in Vietnam was only an excuse for China to attack Vietnam.

Historical Hostility between China and Vietnam

Burton's article "Contending Explanations of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War" also addressed an alternative explanation for the war, which was the "two thousand years of unfriendly relations." He rebutted this idea by arguing that if historical hostility automatically resulted in military conflicts, the international system would be full of wars all over the globe.[67]

However, his rebuttal argument was not effective in falsifying the alternative explanation. Burton essentially argued that past animosity may or may not lead to wars—the probability in his claim was not strong enough. On the other hand, to adequately reject the alternative explanation of historical aversion between China and Vietnam, the argument needed is that the mutual hatred is highly unlikely to result in the small-scale, short offensive in 1979. In fact, throughout the unfriendly history of the two neighbors, the majority of military conflicts between them were full-scale attacks from China with the goal of totally conquering and assimilating Vietnam, such as the Ming conquest of Đại Ngu in 1406 and the Qing invasion of Đại Việt in 1788. Therefore, the brief attack in 1979 did not stem from the age-old hostility between Vietnam and China.

Conclusion

To determine the true motivations and goals of China in attacking Vietnam's northern border and provinces in 1979, we need to understand the then dynamics between China, the USSR, Vietnam, Cambodia, and even the US. China, under Deng Xiaoping's era, with the goal of modernizing economically and militarily, needed a secure international environment.[68] Therefore, China was motivated to weaken the Moscow-Hanoi alliance and encirclements, as well as gather affinity from the US. Moreover, a domestic political arena that was advantageous for Deng was also a goal for him to launch the offensive. In addition, the alternative explanations regarding the Khmer Rouge, the Hoa people in Vietnam, and long-lasting hostility between China and Vietnam have been researched and refuted through an analysis of the historical context.

60 Viết Tuân, "Trung Quốc"

61 Porter, "Vietnam's Ethnic," 57.

62 Ibid.

63 Khoo, "Revisiting Termination," 326.

64 Wang, "Ideological Victory."

65 Ibid.

66 Khoo, "Revisiting Termination," 326.

67 Bruce Burton, "Contending Explanations of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War," *International Journal* 34, no. 4 (1979): 702, https://doi.org/10.2307/40201820.

68 Gompert, Binnendijk, and Lin, "China's Punitive War," 120.

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An Analysis of Three Proposed Chicagoland Mega-Projects and Early Signs of Gentrification and Community Resistance*

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Introduction

This research will present three different cases of "mega-projects" across the Chicago, Illinois metropolitan area to examine how communities of various social and economic demographics react when these economic development projects are announced and their courses of action. Gellert and Lynch (2003) broadly define mega-projects as "Projects which transform landscapes rapidly, intentionally, and profoundly in very visible ways, and require coordinated applications of capital and state power" (pp.15–16). Historically, mega-projects bring outside investors and residents into a community which can increase its cost of living and displace native residents. This process of displacement and gentrification is common with mega-projects across Chicago, such as the relocation of University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) to Chicago's low-income Little Italy community, which is estimated to have displaced 5,000 Italian, Mexican, and Greek residents (Okai et al., 2022).

Gentrification is explained by Neil Smith (1979) as a rent gap where there is a disparity between the present ground rent level and the potential ground rent level if the land were redeveloped. He explains, "Gentrification occurs when the gap is wide enough that developers can purchase … profit for rehabilitation … and can then sell the end product for a sale price that leaves a satisfactory return to the developer" (p. 545). These three examples are encouraged by the third-wave of gentrification in the United States, where developers and investors strive to redevelop disinvested neighborhoods and communities for profit, often through subsidies from local and state governments. With a rise of neoliberalism in the U.S. throughout the 1970s and a decline in federal funding to urban areas, cities have transitioned from a model of managerial governance to one of entrepreneurial governance, which pits city against city in a competition to win private dollars, economic development, and jobs (Hackworth & Smith, 2001; Harvey, 1989). Typically, cities attempt to lure these private development opportunities with the promise of tax breaks, infrastructure improvements, and economic subsidies; in one recent case, 238 North American cities submitted pitches of various economic subsidies to lure the development of Amazon's second corporate headquarters (Wingfield, 2018). These projects are seen by city leaders and governments as make-or-break attempts to bring much needed economic development and tax dollars to faltering and ever-unaffordable cities. Additionally, these projects bring the potential for developers and businesses to profit off of the redevelopment of industrial, commercial, and residential urban spaces. However, as is common with mega-project developments, especially those centered in low-income communities of color, community pushback often follows their pronouncements. At the same time, these projects have high visibility to outsiders, as they are covered by national news media and are paraded around by government officials. Therefore, it is important to ask a dual question: How do both those inside and outside a community react to the announcement of mega-project developments, and how do the characteristics of communities change accordingly?

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This research will look at three recent case studies of mega-project developments across the Chicagoland area, each in different stages of development and in different types of communities, to detail if the population characteristics and economic demographics of a community are changing soon after the announcement of these projects. This research will look at the proposed construction of a Chicago Bears stadium in Arlington Heights, Illinois; the ongoing construction of the Barack Obama Presidential Center in Chicago's Woodlawn/Jackson Park neighborhood; and the proposed redevelopment of Chicago's South Works vacant, former steel factory land into the Illinois Quantum and Microelectronics Park (IQMP).

Explanation of Gentrification

Gentrification is a nuanced issue that has dominated much of 21st-century urban policy and government. On one hand, city leaders want to constantly expand their city economically, socially, and culturally through the development of new universities, housing, economic areas, and attractions into underdeveloped/deteriorated parts of a city, classified as part of the third-wave of gentrification in the United States (Hackworth & Smith, 2001). Examples in Chicago include the chartering of the University of Illinois Chicago in Little Italy, the 606 trail, and the redevelopment of Fulton Market. On the other hand, the communities that are being "redeveloped" oftentimes are low-income communities of color that typically have lower economic and political capital. Therefore, they get pushed out due to new residents moving in and increased housing costs. This displacement can be more direct, through the destruction of public housing, as seen through the "urban renewal" movement of the 1990s and HOPE VI programs. These programs were meant to "demolish public housing developments and to create new mixed-income communities in their place" (Goetz 2010, p.1582). Oftentimes, "Displaced residents typically move to other disadvantaged neighborhoods" and only "14% to 25%" of the original residents return to the redeveloped site (pp.1584–5). These residents are typically African-American, where "In half of the demolished projects, African Americans were 95% or more of the households" (Goetz, 2010, p. 1588). Additionally, displacing residents results in a loss of culture. "Movers report difficulty in establishing new social ties, they miss their social milieu from the old neighborhood and worry about isolation in their new places" (p. 1585). A loss of culture is a worry for all three case studies.

Both the Obama Presidential Center and South Works' IQMP have populations that are 75% or more African-American. Additionally, the development of the Bears stadium sits on top of the demolished former Arlington International Racecourse, which was built in 1927 and, as recently as 2021, had over 10,000 fans in attendance in its last season (Rumore & Mather, 2023). As currently proposed, the new Arlington Heights stadium would include a massive "domed stadium" surrounded with space for "tailgating" and "an expansive entertainment district nearby" that hopes to be a year-round destination for concerts and sporting events (McCoppin et al., 2025). This would be a dramatic change for the culture and population of Arlington Heights. However, research has shown that gentrification can also be a boon for local residents. A common concern for local residents, particularly communities of color, is that they will be priced out and forced to move to another neighborhood. Some research has shown positive effects among homeowners in increasing home values and median home equity; however, two studies find that the percentage of Black and Latino households decreases substantially over time in a gentrifying area (Glick, 2008; Brummet & Reed, 2019). Gentrification is a complex and nuanced issue, and its impacts can be severely different from community to community. This research only seeks to analyze if these three communities are experiencing indicators of gentrification in the early stages of these mega-projects.

Methods

To compare these three case studies, I use data from the American Community Survey (ACS) of the U.S. Census Bureau, aggregated from Data Commons. To determine if gentrification is impacting these three communities, I use indicators based on Chapple and Zuk's (2016) research on neighborhood early warning systems for gentrification and displacement. They contend that changes in demographics, including income, race, and age are common indicators of gentrification/displacement (Chapple & Zuk, 2016, p. 114). Additionally, Brummet and Reed (2019) conceptualize gentrification by an increase in the amount of population with bachelor's degrees (p. 9). Based on the available data from the American Community Survey, I analyze each community's median population, median household income, median population income, population with bachelor's degrees, the number of housing units, Hispanic population, White population, Black population, and Asian population to determine the percentage change from 2015 to 2023 within these variables. I use Cook County and Chicago, Illinois, as control observations accordingly. Each community is defined by the zip codes most adjacent to the community and mega-project. Arlington Heights is defined as the zip codes 60074, 60004, 60005, and 60008; Jackson Park as 60615 and 60637; and South Works as 60049 and 60617.

Because recent data is limited, and because these three mega-projects are either in the planning stage or the construction stage, conclusions drawn from this analysis will be centered around if these communities are facing pre- or early-stage gentrification.

Arlington Heights: Bears Stadium

Arlington Heights is a suburban community of 74,000 residents with a median household income of $62,000 and a poverty rate of 5.7%. 74.8% of Arlington Heights' population is white, 64.1% of its homes are single-family, and 72.7% of its residences are owner-occupied. For almost 100 years, Arlington Heights was home to the Arlington Park Horse Racetrack, which was built in 1927 but was shut down by owner Churchill Downs in 2021.

They sold the 326 acres of land in February 2023 to the NFL franchise for $197.2 million. For the Chicago Bears, who currently play at Soldier Field on Chicago's lakefront, the land is an opportunity to build a much larger and privately-owned stadium for their franchise. Bears President Kevin Warren dreams "about building a world-class, fixed-roof stadium to host Chicago Bears games ... Super Bowls... And then you start weaving in mixed-use development-hotels, housing, restaurants—it does really create a destination" (Mayer, 2025). The team has said that the project will "Create more than 48,000 jobs, generate $9.4 billion in economic impact and provide $3.9 billion in new labor income to workers across the region" (Ponce & Chronis, 2022). However, many barriers stand in the way of beginning construction, including agreements with school boards on property tax assessments, environmental reviews, and funding from the state government.

Nevertheless, residents are awaiting its construction and have reacted in various ways. A poll by Illinois' Chapter of Americans for Prosperity, a libertarian political organization, surveyed 300 Arlington Heights residents and found that 71% approved of the decision to create a new stadium in the community (Garcia, 2022). Additionally, interviews conducted by CBS News Chicago found that residents were excited about the development, with one resident saying, "I live just about a mile from here [Arlington Park]... and I think it's a good opportunity for the Bears and for us" (Terry, 2022).

While this research is not nearly enough to grasp the full opinion of Arlington Heights' residents, initial opinions are backed by similar situations within the United States. Neidt (2006) describes the case of Dundalk, Maryland, and how its majority-white community has supported plans for a waterfront luxury housing development as a way to reclaim decayed, industrial space and to rebirth the community. "The industrial suburbs, in short, present a new challenge ... that of residents who face gentrification, not with rebellion or resignation but with hope" (p.118). Another example is a state-led casino development in majority-white Fishtown, Pennsylvania, which was supported by long-time residents of the community, as they saw the development as an opportunity for jobs and tax money from the development (Balzarini & Shlay, 2017). Finally, closely related to the Bears stadium in Arlington Heights, both Camden Yards and M&T Bank Stadium (home to the Baltimore Orioles and Baltimore Ravens, respectively) were projects specifically to benefit white residents and reverse the impact of white flight. "The city's reinvestments created further opportunities for young, affluent, White individuals to move in… Investment made in improving environmental resources in the benefit of sport prioritizes White residents, both current and future" (Kellison, 2022, pp.113–14).

TABLE 1

Arlington Heights vs Cook County Change 2015–2023

	Cook County	Arlington Heights
Median Population	-1.91%	-1.55%
Median Household Income	48.05%	45.34%
Median Population Income	51.06%	42.32%
Population with a Bachelor's Degree	16.49%	9.30%
Housing Units	4.31%	3.20%
Hispanic Population	6.10%	24.94%
White Monoracial Population	-19.08%	-12.43%
Population Asian Alone	13.50%	-2.02%
Black Monoracial Population	-7.17%	23.79%

From these examples, it seems that Arlington Heights' residents may be justified in their support of the Bears stadium and their lack of concerns around gentrification or displacement. Their support is also justified by the data analysis conducted for this research (see Table 1). Of all the variables from 2015 to 2023, compared to the control group of Cook County, Arlington Heights has had greater growth in its Hispanic and Black populations, a decrease in its Asian population, and a smaller decrease in its White population. Compared to Cook County, it has had a smaller growth in median household income, population income, population with a bachelor's degree, and the number of housing units. It has also faced a smaller decrease in median population than Cook County. All of this tied together, it does not seem that the possible development of the Chicago Bears Stadium in Arlington Heights has, yet, produced significant indications of gentrification occurring within the community.

Jackson Park: Barack Obama Presidential Center

Jackson Park (also known as Woodlawn) is a neighborhood on Chicago's Southeast side with 25,000 residents who are 78% African-American, with a median household income of $43,000, a poverty rate of 30.2%, and housing which is 8.5% single-family homes and 26% owner-occupied. Announced in May 2015 was the construction of former President Barack Obama's Presidential Center in partnership with the University of Chicago, placed on Jackson Park land. This project started construction in 2021 and hopes to bring an eight-story museum, a winter garden, auditorium, recording studios, a community space, a new Chicago Public Library branch, and various infrastructure improvements to nearby roads and Jackson Park. The "complex is estimated to generate 700,000 annual visitors, a long-term economic impact of more than $3 billion, and more than 5,000 direct, indirect, and induced jobs" (Obama Presidential Center, 2025). Set to complete construction in spring of 2026, this economic and cultural project could have immense benefits for Chicago's historically underinvested and discriminated-against South Side.

However, communities have expressed opposition rather than support for the development. Starting in 2018, various nearby organizations created a coalition for the development and a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) between the nearby communities and the Obama Foundation. However, President Obama has opposed a CBA and instead has issued a number of "promises… about jobs, affordable housing, economic development, and more" (Sweet, 2018). These agreements are non-enforceable and have been severely criticized by local community groups. Two years later, the Chicago City Council "unanimously backed a $4.5 million package designed to prevent the presidential center … from supercharging gentrification in Woodlawn" (Cherone, 2023). And in 2024, 80% of residents in two precincts near the Presidential Center voted to pass a referendum demanding that Chicago pass protections for longtime residents and affordable housing in the community (Quigley, 2024). Despite community criticism and concern, the Obama Foundation has continued to oppose a Community Benefits Agreement.

The development of this Presidential Center as a place to spur economic investment in Chicago's South Side and bring much-needed community space is very much rooted in Richard Florida's idea of a creative class. This idea, "proposed that urban policies should be designed to generate creative cities and argued that a vibrant cultural sense is essential to revitalizing both neighborhoods and economic development" (Hague, 2017, pp.1–2). This once prominent idea has been blamed for widespread gentrification across North America and Europe (Wainwright, 2017).

Developments in this vein have popped up across the United States and have caused drastic gentrification and displacement. One development in Cleveland, Ohio, is the improvement of Edgewater Park. "The improvements transformed the park once riddled with crime—to one of the city's main attractions ... nowadays, new luxury housing is being built in front of Edgewater Park" (Cole et al, 2021, p.160). These similar types of projects have been coined as "green gentrification," which is the improvement or creation of park space that rapidly brings gentrification and displacement (Jelks et al., 2021).

Despite oftentimes being marketed as improvements for underinvested communities, like the racially diverse neighborhood of Detroit Shoreway (home to Edgewater Park), studies show that the "benefit of living in areas with more greenspace was experienced primarily by residents of gentrifying neighborhoods with high levels of education and income" (Cole et al., 2021, p.160). Additionally, "green gentrification contributes to a lower sense of community and sense of belonging among lifetime, low-income BIPOC residents... Long-time, low-income residents often reap fewer health benefits from new and renovated green spaces than that of wealthier and White newcomers to gentrifying neighborhoods" (Jelks et al, 2021, p. 19). One example is the NYC High Line, "where the transformation of an abandoned rail line into a park resulted in large increases in property values, real estate speculation, tourism, luxury commercial development, and clientele unrepresentative of nearby residents" (Mullenbach & Baker, 2020, p. 433). While more similar to Chicago's own 606 trail, it is hard to ignore the possibility of new green, community, and amenity space causing drastic gentrification in communities adjacent to this new development.

However, despite severe opposition and concerns from local groups about gentrification and displacement, it does not seem that the data confirms their worries so far (see Table 2). While median population change in Jackson Park is higher compared to the rest of Chicago, changes in median household income, median population income, population with a bachelor's degree, number of housing units, and Asian population are all lower than city-wide averages. Jackson Park is experiencing a lower decline in its White and Black population, but a large increase in its Hispanic population (possibly because of immigration). Despite the construction of the Obama Presidential Center being almost completed, Jackson Park has yet to exhibit widespread indicators of gentrification.

TABLE 2

Jackson Park vs. Chicago Change 2015–2023

	Chicago	Jackson Park
Median Population	-2.19%	3.97%
Median Household Income	54.85%	53.32%
Median Population Income	59.81%	54.98%
Population with a Bachelor's Degree	23.11%	20.09%
Housing Units	6.34%	3.55%
Hispanic Population	1.42%	10.93%
White Monoracial Population	-20.12%	-3.66%
Population Asian Alone	19.24%	11.01%
Black Monoracial Population	-9.57%	-5.24%

South Works: Illinois Quantum and Microelectronics Park

Chicago's South Works neighborhood (also known as South Chicago) is a neighborhood on Chicago's far Southeast side. South Works is a neighborhood of around 27,000 residents, of whom 75% are African-American, with a median household income of $30,000. Its housing stock is 32.1% single-family and 43.2% is owner-occupied. It is bordered to the east with Metra's electric rail line and with DuSable Lake Shore Drive. Before its closure in 1992, the South Works steel factory employed upwards of 30,000 workers. Since then, this land (which borders Lake Michigan) has been environmentally remediated and has been the subject of a number of redevelopment plans, including a Solo Cup Factory, a large mixed-use district, and 20,000 "Barcelona-style superblocks" in 2018 (Mortice, 2025).

All projects have failed, but a new development titled "Illinois Quantum and Microelectronics Park" (IQMP) has the backing of Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker. This new development will be a research campus home to the PsiQuantum company, IBM, the University of Chicago, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and others, all with the goal of building the world's first quantum computer. The State of Illinois, the City of Chicago, and Cook County have all pledged millions in tax breaks, and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity has said that the park is "projected to generate $20 billion in economic impact and create thousands of jobs" (Department of Commerce, 2024). The land will also be home to a single-family home development and a new Advocate Hospital.

While construction has yet to start, community pushback has already started. "Neighbors with the Coalition for a South Works CBA have demanded a community benefits agreement" to ensure the community benefits from the project and is not harmed by potential contaminants around the former steel site (Evans, 2024). While the land for the IQMP has yet to be sold to its developer, Related Midwest, residents' concerns are justified as these projects are a part of a broader trend across the United States for cities to bring in outside investment and tax dollars. Chicago alone is attempting multiple mega-projects, including Lincoln Yards, the 78 neighborhood, and Bronzeville's Lakefront.

While not a mega-project, the residents of Fishtown, Pennsylvania, secured a CBA with the casino's developer, Sugarhouse, to "prioritize the hiring of local residents for construction jobs and permanent positions at the casino, provide training programs … and college internship programs to students of the community … pay an annual sum of $1 million to the Penn Treaty Special Services District" (Balzarini & Shlay, 2017, p. 79). While this was a positive for both parties, mega-projects usually are not. One mega-project, the redevelopment of Detroit's downtown area after the city's 2013 bankruptcy into "District Detroit," increased rent in 2017 "by 46.2, from $831 to $1,215" and "in 2021 … 60% of Detroiters spent more than 30% of their income on rent, and 34% spent more than half of their income on rent" (Neavling, 2023). Another example is the $1 billion Barclays Center development in Brooklyn. "The arena, which opened in 2012, is the centerpiece of a $6 billion redevelopment that was the subject of years of protests and lawsuits aimed at preventing it from getting built at all" (Newman, 2020). The project stands fully completed but has severely displaced and increased the rents of original, low-income, African-American residents of Prospect Heights. Mega-projects have proven to become bastions of gentrification in the communities they are placed in.

However, the data analysis conducted for this study does not back up that common result (see Table 3). While population growth in South Works has dramatically increased and Chicago's has declined, their median household income, median population income, population with a bachelor's degree, and the number of housing units lag behind. Additionally, it has seen a larger decrease in its White population, but increases in its Hispanic and Asian populations. While the project is still in its early stages, gentrification has yet to occur.

TABLE 3

South Works vs Chicago Change 2015–2023

	Chicago	South Works
Median Population	-2%	12.75%
Median Household	55%	39.30%
Median Population Income	60%	54.75%
Population with a Bachelor's Degree	23%	21.78%
Housing Units	6%	3.44%
Hispanic Population	1%	12.15%
White Monoracial Population	-20%	-48.02%
Population Asian Alone	19%	43.14%
Black Monoracial Population	-10%	-3.59%

Discussion

The analysis of nine gentrification indicators across Arlington Heights, Jackson Park, and South Works has presented little evidence of early-stage gentrification or displacement due to their proposed mega-projects. However, these results are in direct opposition to the community feedback or community opposition these projects are experiencing. I believe these indicators have not shown clear signs of gentrification yet because developers are uncertain if these projects will actually be built. Over the last few years, the Chicago Bears have swapped their preference for a new stadium location countless times, and in South Works, multiple projects have been announced but failed in the planning stages. Additionally, future research can place a greater emphasis on changes in rental units and homes across these areas. Data on the purchasing of single-family homes and rental properties may be a key indicator of gentrification/displacement, but the data that does exist is limited and only goes to 2023.

In both Jackson Park and South Works, residents have pursued CBAs due to their concerns around gentrification, and these have historically proven beneficial to communities facing gentrification (Wolf-Powers, 2010). I believe this CBA-centered approach is occurring because these communities believe in the prospects of these mega-projects for their communities but are wary of gentrification/displacement that has occurred in the past with Chicago's 606 trail, UIC, and Fulton Market. On the opposite side, Arlington Heights residents are positive about the development, I believe, because they were once home to the large Arlington Park. Additionally, visibility and research around gentrification in suburbs and predominantly white communities is sparse. Gentrification-causing developments and mega-projects, historically, are almost exclusively in minority communities and there is little national attention or media of gentrification in white communities.

One thing is certain: without community protections in place, residents face a greater chance of gentrification and displacement. Chicago legislators and policymakers need to promote policy that will limit the displacement of these individuals and protect affordable housing. Two emerging political movements in the United States, Abundance and YIMBY (Yes In My Backyard), offer a potential policy solution to gentrification: build more housing. Abundance emerged from a recent book by Ezra Klein and Derek Thompson, and YIMBY, which has grown in opposition to local-NIMBY groups, advocates for widespread economic development, construction, and housing developments (Klein & Thompson, 2025). While research is limited on the impacts of building more housing on gentrification, expanding housing supply, especially in gentrifying areas, could help ease rising rents and home prices, potentially reducing the displacement of existing residents.

Conclusion

All things considered, the future of these communities remains uncertain as these mega-projects move forward. In Jackson Park and South Works, the failure to ascertain Community Benefit Agreements could lead to the displacement of its low-income residents. In Arlington Heights, the Bears stadium faces major hurdles before construction can begin. One thing is for certain, these three mega-projects across the Chicagoland area have the potential to cause gentrification of these communities and the displacement of their residents.

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Gay or Nay: The United States Supreme Court's Impact on Current LGBTQ+ Rights*

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Introduction

LGBTQ+ rights have long been contested in American history, notably propelled by the Stonewall riots alongside the Civil Rights Movement. While the community's protest efforts proved effective in gaining majority public support, litigation more recently supported queer rights with the Supreme Court declaring LGBTQ+ marriage, employment anti-discrimination, and privacy constitutional. Legal rulings can send cultural messages to American citizens about current events, with the legal field holding symbolic power (Scheingold 2004:15–18). The community has made significant strides, yet public support is still not fully swayed, as queer people face implicit modern prejudice when denied the informal privileges of their heterosexual counterparts (Doan, Loehr, and Miller 2014:1174).

This research aims to answer the question: What is the impact of Supreme Court decisions on how LGBTQ+ rights are currently socialized/perceived in America, specifically from the perspective of LGBTQ+ Americans? For the sake of the research, the terms LGBTQ+ and queer are interchangeable. This research focuses on the concepts of queer people and rights violations. Queer people are conceptualized as those not identifying with cisgender heterosexual (cishet) ideals cast onto them by society. Rights violations are conceptualized as constitutional rights historically intended for property-owning white men, leading to the current systemic oppression of minority groups, resulting in discrimination, inequality of opportunity, prejudice, and economic, social, and political disparities.

Literature review

LGBTQ+ Rights Movement

Rights are an ambiguous concept. Natural rights refer to religion and how rights derive from a higher power, often casting an umbrella over universal rights like freedom of speech and equality (Cranston 1983:3). Alternatively, positive rights developed during the Enlightenment Era in protest of naturalists and are codified rights derived from written law and legal systems. These date back to the Middle Ages, in which different men among ranks were prescribed different sets of rights (Cranston 1983:2). Historically, these positive rights systemically oppress minorities, as more rights were granted to property-owning white men. Over time, other men, people of color, women, and queer folks slowly received codified rights, though less all-encompassing. Religious conservatives often argue that natural rights do not extend to "sinners" such as those in the LGBTQ+ community. Queer people have always been ostracized in American colonial history, consequently.

The law actively worked against homosexual and transgender people in the 1950s–60s by outlawing public same-sex affection and cross-dressing, causing legally justified violence and explicit queerphobia toward those visibly in the community, especially during police raids of gay bars like the Stonewall Inn (Carter 2025:31). The infamous 1969 Stonewall riot skyrocketed the Gay Liberation Movement alongside the Civil Rights

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Movement, as Black trans people were at the forefront of the riots (McCarthy et al. 2019:17–19). The annual pride parade protests gained support of those across the nation for the LGBTQ+ community, though not a majority.

Sociolegal Theory

When protests and other social mobilization efforts fall short, the legal field can bridge gaps in a movement. Sociolegal theory acknowledges the symbiotic relationship that the courts and legislation have with social movements and analyzes how the two influence one another. The Court lacks the sword and the purse of the Executive and Legislative Branches, which prevents them from enforcing their rulings. Because they lack substantial authority, the Supreme Court's power is constructed to the extent that the public and organizations accept and implement their decisions. This gives the Court a significant incentive to follow the public mood, for the most part, in order to keep their constructed status (Calavita 2016). "'Courts do not have the capacity to produce social change when their decisions diverge too radically from the values and expectations of the other two branches of government,' but… 'litigation [has] produced some favorable shifts in the legal and cultural frames surrounding gay rights'" (Keck 2009:155). Thus, the perceived social norm has an influence on how radical the Court's decisions can be. In turn, Court decisions can signal to the public how social norms are adapting or evolving. This is seen directly in public opinion poll shifts before and after major Supreme Court rulings, such as declaring same-sex marriage laws constitutional in *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015) and declaring sexual-orientation discrimination unconstitutional in employment settings in *Bostock v. Clayton County* (2020).

Supreme Court Rulings

The Supreme Court historically rules inconsistently with LGBTQ+ cases, often making reversals. *One, Inc. v. Olesen* (1958), one of the first LGBTQ+ cases, gave media outlets the right to publish content in favor of homosexuals, as the Court ruled the First Amendment's freedom of speech clause protects this not-inherently-obscene speech, which helped normalize same-sex affection and non-traditional gender presentation in media representation.

In *Bowers v. Hardwick* (1986), the Court upheld anti-sodomy laws, declaring that the 14th Amendment's due process clause did not extend to the privacy of same-sex intimacy. However, in *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), the Court decided the clause applies to the right to engage in private conduct without government intervention, declaring anti-sodomy laws unconstitutional.

In *Baker v. Nelson* (1972), the Court refused to rule on the constitutionality of same-sex marriage. In *United States v. Windsor* (2013), the Court required an amendment of the Defense of Marriage Act, which declared marriage to be a legal union between a man and a woman. The Court finally determined federal same-sex marriage constitutional in *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015).

In *Romer v. Evans* (1996), the Court ruled it unconstitutional for states to create statutes denying gay people protections that straight people receive. Furthermore, in *Bostock v. Clayton County* (2020), the Court extended Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Title VII outlaws "an employer to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual… because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin" (U.S. Congress 1964). The Court decided that discrimination based on sexual orientation or transgender status is inherently discrimination based on sex, which Title VII prevents.

In *Boy Scouts of America v. Dale* (1996), the Court found that the First Amendment's freedom of association clause allows private businesses to discriminate against queer people if they so choose. Similarly, in *Masterpiece Cakeshop, Ltd. v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission* (2018), the Court found that the First Amendment's religious protections allow business owners to refuse service to LGBTQ+ patrons.

These cases show how LGBTQ+ rights in the Court have long been contested, leaving queer people uncertain as to whether they can rely on legal methods for security and equality.

Public Opinion

Minimal studies have been conducted investigating the Court's impact on perceptions of LGBTQ+ rights. Most studies take into account one specific case ruling, like *Obergefell* or *Bostock*, and its effects.

Obergefell was one of the most impactful rulings for the LGBTQ+ community by granting gay people the right to marry and influencing how the country perceives queer people as equal to cishet people. One study split its focus group in half and presented each half with a fake scholarly article predicting the outcome of *Obergefell* (Tankard and Paluck 2017:1336). One group's article predicted a positive ruling, saying it was extremely likely the Court would rule in favor of same-sex marriage. The other article predicted a negative ruling, saying it was extremely unlikely. This study also followed a different group of participants and recorded their attitudes before and after the Court's hearing of *Obergefell*. The results were "significantly more positive among participants in the positive-ruling condition than among participants in the negative-ruling condition" in feelings toward gay people/gay marriage and perceived status quo or directional norms (Tankard and Paluck 2017:1337). When following participants' reactions to the actual ruling of *Obergefell*, "the Supreme Court ruling was associated with a significant shift in perceived (present and future) social norms in support of gay marriage. We did not find evidence of change in personal attitudes toward gay marriage or in rating of gay people" (Tankard and Paluck 2017:1339). Those two studies suggest the Court has strong power over people's public perceptions of social norms, but not always in shifting people's personal beliefs. This is important because the rulings can impact individuals' understandings of society and, therefore, impact their behavior around others.

A separate study interviewed Americans' views on LGBTQ+ marriage, legal protections, and religious exemptions post-Obergefell with an independent variable of attitudes toward the Trump administration (Kaufman and Compton 2021:324). This study finds a strong correlation between supporting Trump and opposing gay marriage, and vice versa (Kaufman and Compton 2021:325–6). The study also found after the *Obergefell* ruling "that attitudes are generally positive with a majority of American adults in favor of allowing gay and lesbian couples to marry legally and laws that would protect [LGBT] people against discrimination, while a majority oppose allowing a small business owner to refuse to provide products or services" based on religious conflict (Kaufman and Compton 2021:327).

A similar study was done when analyzing participants' exposures to *Bostock v. Clayton County*, securing LGBTQ+ employment rights (Thompson 2022). The study found that "it was not altogether clear whether we might have observed similar effects when it came to a case on LGBT employment rights" than same-sex marriage with *Obergefell*; when controlling for political ideology, the *Bostock* ruling had a strong correlation with increased favorability of homosexuals among Democrats and decreased favorability of homosexuals among Republicans (Thompson 2022:1381). This is due to the correlation that "heterosexuals do not favor heterosexual couples over same-sex couples when it comes to formal rights, but they are less approving of informal privileges for same-sex couples" (Doan et al. 2014:1188). While heterosexuals, predominantly Republicans, are approving of same-sex marriage as a formal right, they are unapproving of same-sex affection in public.

These studies are exclusively quantitative and analyze only one case each. While these studies answer similar questions to mine, my research takes a nuanced qualitative approach and fills any research gaps by synthesizing several recent LGBTQ+ cases. I also narrow in on how Supreme Court cases impact perceptions of queer rights.

Methods

To gain current perspectives from members of the LGBTQ+ community, interviews were conducted. Given the time constraint of DePaul's quarter system, I created a Google Survey for participants to answer at their own leisure. This was more convenient than scheduling in-person interviews or online video chat interviews. The responses were open-ended, and respondents were encouraged to use voice-to-text in order to share as much as possible.

To gain a representative sample, I gathered a non-random snowball sample. I sent the form to my queer friends, who are predominantly homosexual or bisexual, white, and early 20s in Illinois. I also sent the form to my queer friends who are people of color and/or reside in other states across the country. I requested each respondent to send the online interview survey to friends of various demographics, especially different ages and from different states. This was in an effort to receive a variety of intersectional perspectives from members within the LGBTQ+ community in the United States.

The interview questions are comprised of two sections. The first section was demographic questions, asking for name, age, and identities held. The second section inquired about the most recent Supreme Court cases in the 21st century with verbatim rulings on LGBTQ+ issues. The four cases (*Lawrence*, *Obergefell*, *Masterpiece Cakeshop*, and *Bostock*) are all shortly summarized, with one or two sentences on the facts of the case and one or two sentences on the ruling of the case. After each case summary, the respondent was asked how the case impacts LGBTQ+ rights, perceptions of LGBTQ+ Americans, and any personal experiences they have had because of the ruling. Lastly, they were asked as an overview of all four cases on how effective they believe the Supreme Court is in aiding the LGBTQ+ Rights Movement (Appendix).

Findings & Results

Seven people took the online interview survey. As far as age, two respondents were 20 years old, four were 21 years old, and one was 22 years old. When asked for LGBTQ+ affiliation, two respondents identified as bisexual, one identified as gay, one identified as pansexual, three identified as lesbian, two identified as cisgender, and one identified as gender non-conforming (while these add up to over seven, some respondents shared both their sexual orientation and gender identity, while others did not). When asked for race/ethnicity, six respondents identified as white, one identified as Latina, one identified as Jewish, and two identified as Italian. When asked about religious identity, one respondent identified as an atheist, one identified as Catholic, one identified as Christian, and one identified as not religious.

The survey was sent to over 30 individuals of different LGBTQ+ identities, religions, and races/ethnicities; however, many could not respond due to the time restraint. Most individuals were in their early 20s and in Illinois, though several were from other US regions. Those who responded were from the Chicagoland area or currently reside there. Ideally, this snowball sampling would have resulted in more demographic diversity. This study would be strengthened by extending the interview to other generations, people from each US region, more queer people of color, more religious identities, and more LGBTQ+ identities. This would ensure a representative opinion was gathered from LGBTQ+ Americans and prevent bias.

Several themes on the Court's impact were brought up across survey responses, such as tangible protections, social equality, and religious dominance.

Tangible Protections

First, respondents saw a pattern with rulings providing tangible rights that offer legal protections to queer people. Respondents noted that *Lawrence* affected LGBTQ+ rights by federally legalizing sodomy and ensuring the right to privacy for queer people, with one person stating, "LGBTQ relationships were given the same right to privacy that heterosexual couples receive." When asked if they have seen any direct impacts of the *Lawrence* ruling, one respondent shared it would significantly impact their future relationships because "denying that I be intimate with some of them based on sex is a complete violation of my privacy and autonomy." Another respondent shared a similar sentiment: "I am not scared to engage in sexual activities because it is my right."

Respondents note how *Obergefell* ensures the right to same-sex marriage, saying "it became federal" and "recognized across state lines... every state must allow gay marriage." One respondent expressed gratitude that this ruling impacts their future decision to marry a partner regardless of sex, and they feel at ease having "the right to marry who I choose." A few others note this ruling indirectly aids perceived rights to family rearing, safety, love, and protection from prejudice. Several respondents saw a direct impact from having attended same-sex weddings.

Respondents all acknowledged *Bostock* gave the formal right to employment anti-discrimination. When asked if they have seen first-hand impacts of the ruling, one respondent notes, "In the workplace, it's common to be shown training videos that help get rid of bias and discrimination." Another respondent shared:

> "One of my friends in Indiana actually had to hide her relationship to another woman because she feared that, and she would be fired for it as we live in a very conservative town. Once this ruling occurred, it created a sense of security as she knew that while people might not accept who she is and her relationship, they cannot fire her for it. Therefore, she was able to start posting on social media and publicize her relationship rather than keeping it secret and hidden behind closed doors."

Social Equality

Moving to social equality, respondents noticed themes across Court rulings that gave additional representation to the queer community and allowed them further assimilation into society, normalizing their existence.

When asked about how *Lawrence* affects LGBTQ+ rights, respondents felt that it adversely "brought us closer to equality." By the Court solidifying queer people the right to privacy, respondents feel the positive codified rights shift the perceived social norm to increased favorability of queer people, more equal to their cishet counterparts. All respondents agreed that the ruling impacted perceptions of LGBTQ+ Americans by creating more of a tolerance or normalization of queer people, shifting people's opinions to be more accepting of queer people. Consequently, "queer people felt more comfortable sharing their identities... showing affection in public, being transgender became more normalized, and queer people started to be shown by the media," and in a broader sense, "allows gay people to feel like they can be themselves."

However, one respondent does say that "I worry that with every win minorities face, their opposers hate them more and more." To an extent, Thompson's research backs this sentiment up regarding how *Bostock* led to Republicans feeling even less favorable towards gay and lesbian people. Two respondents, when asked if they have seen any direct first-hand impacts, shared that the *Lawrence* ruling indirectly normalized queerness through representation in the public or media, leading to self-acceptance.

When asked about how *Obergefell* affects LGBTQ+ rights, respondents say how impactful the case is on American queer history by extending this right on a federal level: "huge win for the LGBTQ+ community" and "doesn't confine queer married couples to the single state they were married in." Two respondents note some indirect effects of the ruling, like "legalization allows for change and the LGBTQ community to be seen as more of equals" and "they are allowed to build a life where they choose." When asked how the ruling impacts perceptions of LGBTQ+ people, there is an outstanding, nearly unanimous response of how it makes queer people seen as equals in comparison to heterosexuals or the rest of society, as well as aiding acceptance of the community and normalization, such as "more well represented in the media." Most respondents experienced direct first-hand accounts of the ruling, having seen queer families in public/mass media.

When asked how *Bostock* affects LGBTQ+ rights, respondents believe the ruling extends to preventing discrimination of queer people in general, "live their lives... without the fear of being fired. Therefore, they don't feel the need to hide," and holds society "accountable for their prejudices against queer people... gives protection to those in the community... pursuing their dreams." Respondents feel this case impacts the perception of LGBTQ+ Americans in a favorable way, like *Lawrence* and *Obergefell*, allowing queer people to be seen as normal/equal and safe in the workplace to show their true selves.

Religious Dominance

Third and finally, respondents noticed that the Court seemed to favor religious identities over sexual and gender identities. When asked how *Masterpiece* affects LGBTQ+ rights, many respondents note that the Court allows discrimination and places religion on a higher pedestal than sexuality and gender identity. Consequently, "LGBTQ+ feel unwelcome and like they are doing something wrong and therefore are isolated and cannot get services in society," and "send the message that queer people are undeserving of basic rights and respect."

Applying the literature, this ruling lets the public perceive that social norms toward queer people are negative, which can influence their behavior to treat queer people negatively. One respondent importantly notes that this ruling would be further protected/enforced by our current SCOTUS, which was established through the Trump administration. We know from Thompson's work that political ideology can have a strong correlation with how Americans react to a Court ruling and that it can increase their polarized perception of queer people.

When asked how this ruling impacted perceptions of LGBTQ+ people, respondents felt it "gave the bigots more to say," "feels like a step back in time for the LGBTQ+ community," "religious beliefs outweigh someone's sexuality," "you can use religion as a reason to hate or harm others," "a lot of Americans are only tolerable of LGBTQ+ people because they still believe there is a fundamental issue with queerness" (going back to the naturalist argument made earlier), "creates more oppression against LGBTQ people," and "society still separates and demonizes people that are part of our community."

When asked if the respondents have seen any direct first-hand accounts of the ruling, two said no, while the other five had anecdotes. One respondent shares a touching personal story:

> "Christian hate has always been there and probably always will be. I experience it frequently. I am a masculine-presenting person so there is no hiding from those people. Everything from weird looks and comments in the bathroom to people asking if they can pray for my queerness to go away. My dentist made many inappropriate comments on my sexuality while her hands and dental tools were actively in my mouth (aka when I was vulnerable and unable to leave) about how I wouldn't be gay anymore if I met the right Christian man, her husband being so religious he would hate me, she would not be okay with her daughter dating girls, etc. and it's court cases like these that give hateful people the courage to speak their minds."

Another shared that "I have experienced homophobia because of religion, as growing up a lesbian in a southern Baptist church leads to a lot of it... I have seen instances of discrimination against my friends." The last two respondents do not have a direct personal story, but one has seen adverse effects of "a lot of businesses that won't necessarily not provide service to LGBTQ+ individuals, but they're very unwelcoming, rude, and make the experience in the restaurant club, or other business very uncomfortable. Then, LGBTQ+ individuals won't go back to this business and will warn other people not to go because they had such a bad experience."

Respondents interpret *Masterpiece* as the Court establishing a dangerous hierarchy, privileging religious identities with the ability to cause harm to queer people. This makes respondents feel as though their LGBTQ+ status is second-class, in which their rights and existence are illegitimate in the eyes of the law. They feel this ruling that removes LGBTQ+ protections sends mixed messages compared to the other rulings that instill LGBTQ+ protections, making respondents feel their rights are conditional or negotiable, and allows individuals the social power to discriminate against them.

Overall Impact

When asked how effective the Supreme Court is for the current LGBTQ+ Rights Movement overall, respondents had mixed feelings. "America is a melting pot… that doesn't mean I think religious people have the facts and logical reasons to hate queer people… there's not much we can do about that." This respondent brings up an interesting point about balancing government interests and opposing values. Many respondents note that there are some huge wins and the Supreme Court has been effective in a positive way the majority of the time recently for the LGBTQ+ community, but "it is still the bare minimum," and "they're amazing until someone wants to take them away… the main issue is the fluidity of these decisions in the context today." One respondent said, "I think we are going backwards at this point." This hints at an uncontrolled variable that is our current political atmosphere, which can impact how the Court rules based on judges' affiliations or public mood of the country's ideological leaning (changes about every four years in the opposite direction of the sitting administration).

A majority of respondents (five out of seven) note the nuance of the current Trump administration and SCOTUS seats: "Despite the positive rulings… the current administration is kind of encouraging this homophobic rhetoric… I hope that we don't go backwards in the upcoming four years," "I hope to see that these cases are upheld," and "I do not believe the current Supreme Court would make the same decisions." However, the respondents believe the rulings presented to them were effective ones on part of the Supreme Court overall.

Conclusions

Supreme Court decisions significantly shape how LGBTQ+ rights are perceived and socialized in America. From the perspective of LGBTQ+ Americans, these rulings can offer tangible security and signal progress toward social equality by affirming the legitimacy of their identities within the legal system. However, when the Court privileges religious liberty over sexual and gender identity, it reinforces a harmful hierarchy that legitimizes heteronormativity and abnormalizes or demoralizes queerness. This dual impact means that while some rulings expand rights, others contribute to an environment in which queer existence remains fragile—especially within a broader political culture that continues to prioritize white, cishet, patriarchal, and Christian norms.

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APPENDIX: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your name? (Optional, your answers will be anonymous either way)
2. What is your age?
3. What is your LGBTQ+ identity/identities (sexuality, gender, etc.)?
4. Please self-identify your race, ethnicity, and religion (or any other intersectional identities you hold).
5. Questions following each case description:
   a. How did this ruling affect LGBTQ+ rights?
   b. How has this case impacted how people view LGBTQ+ Americans?
   c. Have you seen any direct impacts of this case ruling first-hand? If so, please describe that experience (if comfortable doing so).
6. *Lawrence v. Texas (2003): Houston police receive a complaint and [legally] enter a private residence. They stumble upon Lawrence and Garner engaging in consensual homosexual intercourse. The two are arrested for violating Texas anti-sodomy laws, preventing two people of the same sex to engage in sexual/intimate conduct. The Court ruled in favor of Lawrence and Garner, declaring the Texas anti-sodomy laws unconstitutional under the Due Process clause. Adults have the right to engage in private conduct and exercise that liberty without government intervention.*
7. *Obergefell v. Hodges (2015): Groups of same-sex couples sued states for not recognizing their marriages across state borders (ex, a same-sex couple married in Illinois would not be recognized as married in Kentucky, where same-sex marriage was banned). The Court ruled in favor of the couples and declared that marriage between two people of the same sex is protected by the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection and due process clauses. Same-sex marriage must be recognized on a national/federal level across state lines. The Court rules marriage as a fundamental liberty essential to individual autonomy in our current society (i.e., to raise a family, have kids, etc. and does not notably differ from opposite-sex marriage).*
8. *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission (2018): Craig and Mullins, a gay couple, went to Masterpiece Cakeshop to purchase a cake for their wedding. The owner, Phillips, refused on the grounds of his religious beliefs. He believes decorating cakes is an art form in which he honors God, and God would be displeased with a cake decorated for a same-sex couple. The Court ruled in favor of Masterpiece Cakeshop, declaring that Phillips' decision was protected under the First Amendment's free speech/free exercise of religion clauses. While queer people are entitled to their civil rights, so are religious individuals.*
9. *Bostock v. Clayton County (2020): Bostock worked for a decade for Clayton County and received many positive performance reviews and praise for his work. However, Bostock became heavily criticized at work and fired after joining a gay softball league. The Court ruled in favor of Bostock, declaring that sexual orientation employment discrimination violates Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Title VII outlaws discrimination based on "race, color, religion, sex, or national origin." To discriminate against someone based on sexual orientation is inherently to discriminate based on their sex, or rather, treating a homosexual or transgender individual differently than heterosexual and cisgender individuals is to treat them differently based on their sex.*
10. How effective do you believe the Supreme Court is in regard to the LGBTQ+ Rights Movement, after reflecting on these recent benchmark cases?

8M: La importancia de protestar contra la violencia de género en México*

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ENGLISH ABSTRACT This piece explores the social impact of the "8M" protests in the fight against gender-based violence and policy implications in Mexico. Femicide is a prevalent epidemic of fatal consequences on women and girls all around the world. I first address its history and current state in Mexico, emphasizing a landmark case that ignited the pursuit of justice for victims of gender-based violence. My thesis centers on how social and cultural elements (protests and performative and visual arts) have amplified the movement against gender-based violence and made it one of the largest and most significant globally. This movement has led Mexico to create legislation that contributes to the just investigation and penalization of femicides. "8M" protests in Mexico are at the core of sociocultural issues demanding gender equity and human rights. They have become inclusive public spaces to denounce and seek justice for all women, all girls, and every victim of gender-based violence.

El término *feminicidio* en México es relativamente nuevo. Este delito grave llega al código penal mexicano hasta 2012 como consecuencia del incremento de crímenes violentos contra las mujeres en todo el país. Específicamente, el caso de Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, es un parteaguas en la historia de las protecciones legales de la mujer en México. En muy pocos años (1993–2006), Ciudad Juárez registró cientos de casos de homicidios y desapariciones de mujeres. Aun así, desafortunadamente cada año se documentan cifras alarmantes de feminicidios o intentos de ello. Asimismo, la llamada guerra contra el narcotráfico ha dado un nuevo camino para la violencia desde su comienzo a finales de 2006. Los crímenes de esta guerra son variados, pero es imposible pasar por alto las cifras de feminicidio documentadas año tras año. Es por esto por lo que hoy en día se ha intensificado la lucha contra la violencia hacia la mujer.

Sin embargo, aún hay personas que prefieren no relacionarse con el tema ya que no han sufrido un hecho de esta gravedad, ya sea personalmente o mediante algún ser querido. Entonces, ¿cómo hacer que las personas se interesen en ser parte de la lucha a favor del reconocimiento del derecho de la mujer a una vida sin violencia? Una manera de lograr este objetivo es con ayuda de las expresiones culturales. El arte, la literatura, la cinematografía y las manifestaciones públicas (en las cuales se unen protesta, música y otras representaciones culturales) son algunos ejemplos de expresiones culturales poderosas que pueden lograr el objetivo: que más personas se unan, se interesen y comprendan el panorama al que se enfrentan las mujeres y las niñas mexicanas en la actualidad.

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Sobre este aspecto de la lucha, una de las protestas más grandes del mundo que logra unir a cientos de miles de personas en contra de la violencia hacia las mujeres es el 8M (8 de Marzo). En México, como en muchos otros países de Latinoamérica y de todo el mundo, esta protesta anual en el Día Internacional de la Mujer une a diferentes sectores y colectivos. En este espacio multitudinario y público, algo que resalta es el uso de varias expresiones artísticas como forma de protesta. Con esta idea, el objetivo de esta investigación es comprender cómo la dimensión cultural contribuye a la protesta 8M en la lucha contra el feminicidio y la violencia contra la mujer en México. Para esto, primero partiré de las definiciones legales del feminicidio, así como su historia reciente en México en dos periodos: el caso de Ciudad Juárez y la guerra contra el narcotráfico. Posteriormente presentaré un notado caso de feminicidio en México para ejemplificar las circunstancias de perpetración y justicia. Finalmente, partiendo de este contexto, analizaré la relevancia del 8M en la actualidad.

¿Qué es el feminicidio y cuáles son sus características en el caso mexicano?

El feminicidio es un concepto relativamente nuevo en México. De acuerdo con la Organización de las Naciones Unidas (ONU), el feminicidio se define como un tipo de asesinato intencional por motivos de género. Este puede hacerse presente por discriminación hacia las mujeres y niñas, por desequilibrios en relaciones de poder y por estereotipos o normas sociales perjudiciales. El feminicidio difiere del homicidio ya que éste es un término general en el que la motivación no es el género (ONU Mujeres). Asimismo, el feminicidio se considera un crimen de lesa humanidad dado que es un ataque generalizado y dirigido hacia un grupo social, en este caso, a las mujeres. Por su parte, el gobierno mexicano reconoce el delito grave de feminicidio como la muerte violenta de las mujeres por motivos de género y como la forma más extrema de violencia y discriminación hacia la mujer. El feminicidio es reconocido en el artículo 325 del Código Penal Federal, el cual se tipificó en el año 2012. Para identificar y penar este crimen, el gobierno mexicano toma en cuenta siete circunstancias que se pueden presentar. Éstas incluyen: signos de violencia sexual, lesiones o mutilaciones infamantes o degradantes, antecedentes de cualquier tipo de violencia en el caso, la existencia de una relación emocional o de confianza, amenazas o acoso previo, el que la víctima haya sido incomunicada, o que el cuerpo de la víctima haya sido expuesto en un lugar público. Al evidenciar una o más de estas circunstancias, el crimen se considera un feminicidio (Comisión Nacional para Prevenir y Erradicar la Violencia Contra las Mujeres).

El feminicidio viola varios derechos humanos mencionados en la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos. Estos son los artículos 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 12, 22, 25, 28, 29 y 30.[1] Específicamente, el artículo tres menciona que "todo individuo tiene derecho a la vida, a la libertad y a la seguridad de su persona" (Organización de las Naciones Unidas). Esta implementación en México toma lugar después del caso de Ciudad Juárez entre los años de 1993 y 2006. En estos años se registraron más de 300 asesinatos y 500 desapariciones de mujeres en la ciudad fronteriza (Nuestras Hijas de Regreso a Casa). Algunas de las causas de feminicidio en este contexto incluyeron la desigualdad y discriminación de género y el desequilibrio en relaciones de poder. Por estos motivos, las mujeres y las niñas fueron el grupo de más alto riesgo. En el caso de Ciudad Juárez, la mayoría de las víctimas tenían entre 15

1 Artículo 1. Todos los seres humanos nacen libres e iguales.
Artículo 2. Todas las personas son iguales independientemente de su raza, color, sexo, idioma, religión, política o el lugar donde haya nacido.
Artículo 3. Derecho a la vida, a la libertad y a la seguridad.
Artículo 5. Derecho a no ser sometido a tortura ni penas o tratos crueles, inhumanos o degradantes.
Artículo 6. Derecho a ser reconocido ante la ley.
Artículo 7. Todas las personas son iguales ante la ley.
Artículo 12. Derecho a la privacidad y a no sufrir ataques a la honra o a la reputación.
Artículo 22. Derecho a la seguridad social.
Artículo 25. Derecho a un nivel de vida digno; alimentación, vivienda, asistencia médica y servicios sociales.
Artículo 28. Derecho a un orden social e internacional en el que se hagan efectivos los derechos de la declaración.
Artículo 29. Tenemos deberes respecto a las demás personas.
Artículo 30. Nadie puede arrebatarnos estos derechos y libertades.
(Amnistía Internacional)

y 25 años, eran de bajos recursos económicos, trabajaban en maquiladoras, habían migrado a Ciudad Juárez buscando mejores condiciones de vida, y la mayoría de los cuerpos encontrados exhibían signos de violencia sexual (Nuestras Hijas de Regreso a Casa).

A partir del 2007, cuando da inicio la guerra contra el narcotráfico, los casos de feminicidios cambiaron (aunque es importante notar que esta guerra es a nivel nacional). Antes del 2007, el feminicidio ocurría principalmente dentro de los hogares; después de esta fecha se cometen con mayor frecuencia en la vía pública. Asimismo, después del 2007 se incrementó el número de feminicidios con armas de fuego. Finalmente, las mujeres de 20 a 24 años se convirtieron en las víctimas principales de este crimen (Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres). Hasta diciembre del 2024 existían 8391 casos de feminicidio en México (Secretariado Ejecutivo del Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública).

Además de las víctimas, es importante comprender quiénes son los perpetradores principales de estos crímenes. En México, existen dos periodos clave para el feminicidio. En primer lugar, está el caso de Ciudad Juárez. A partir de la década de 1980, México implementó políticas neoliberales. A partir de esto empieza a subir la demanda de trabajadores de maquiladoras en Ciudad Juárez. Las mujeres de zonas rurales de Chihuahua y de otros estados del país empiezan a migrar hacia Ciudad Juárez buscando oportunidades de trabajo. Es así como, a partir del año 1993, coincide la llegada de cientos de mujeres con el inicio de múltiples registros de casos de mujeres desaparecidas y asesinadas en Ciudad Juárez con las características presentadas previamente en este informe.

En este caso se considera que hubo múltiples perpetradores, que incluyen individuos, agentes del gobierno y miembros del crimen organizado y del narcotráfico (Mandolessi 13–15). El gobierno del estado de Chihuahua intentó disminuir la gravedad de estos crímenes con varias estrategias. Éstas incluyeron: culpabilizar a las víctimas, obstaculizar las investigaciones, amenazar a familiares de las víctimas, activistas, periodistas y abogados que se relacionaran en los casos, y utilizar la palabra *secuestro* en lugar de *desaparición*. Esto se debe a que, al usar la palabra *secuestro*, el gobierno se libra (hasta cierto punto) de la responsabilidad de estos crímenes y puede negar el papel que tuvo en estos. Sin embargo, es importante notar que, a raíz de estos crímenes y del impacto social que tuvieron, el gobierno federal intervino para intentar disminuir la violencia. Por ejemplo, en 1998 la Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos realizó un informe sobre el caso de Ciudad Juárez e hizo recomendaciones al gobierno de Chihuahua (Nuestras Hijas de Regreso a Casa). Asimismo, la tipificación del crimen de feminicidio se realizó en parte como respuesta al caso de Ciudad Juárez (Comisión Nacional para Prevenir y Erradicar la Violencia Contra las Mujeres).

Durante estos años, los familiares de las víctimas lucharon contra estos crímenes. Se crearon múltiples tipos de expresiones culturales con el objetivo de dar a conocer estos crímenes contra las mujeres en Ciudad Juárez. Asimismo, los medios de comunicación hicieron su parte para difundir a nivel nacional e internacional la información de estos casos. Además, en 2009, México fue sentenciado por la Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (CIDH) por la violación a los artículos 4, 5, 7, 8, 19 y 25[2] de la Convención Americana sobre Derechos Humanos (Tiroch). La sentencia de la CIDH en el caso "González y otras vs. México" encontró al Estado mexicano responsable por la desaparición y muerte de Claudia Ivette González, Esmeralda Herrera Monreal y Laura Berenice Ramos Monárrez, cuyos cuerpos fueron encontrados en un campo algodonero en Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, el 6 de noviembre del 2001 (Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos, "La

2 Artículo 4. Derecho a la vida.
Artículo 5. Derecho a la integridad personal y al trato humanitario.
Artículo 7. Derecho a la libertad personal.
Artículo 8. Derecho a un juicio justo.
Artículo 19. Derechos de los niños.
Artículo 25. Derecho a la protección judicial. (Convención Americana sobre Derechos Humanos)

Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos sentencia"). Debido a esto, el gobierno mexicano tipificó el crimen de feminicidio en el artículo 325 del Código Penal Federal en el 2012.

Como queda indicado, en un nuevo escenario en que siguen los feminicidios, pero a una escala nacional, la guerra contra el narcotráfico comienza en el año 2006 con el inicio del sexenio del presidente Felipe Calderón Hinojosa. Este periodo se caracteriza por el aumento en la violencia en México. El registro de personas desaparecidas y no localizadas verá un incremento a partir del año 2007. Las mujeres de 10 a 24 años serán las que tendrán mayor riesgo de desaparecer (Comisión Nacional de Búsqueda). Estos crímenes fueron atribuidos a la guerra contra el narcotráfico y específicamente desde el inicio del conflicto se atribuyó al llamado *narco* la perpetración de desapariciones y otras violaciones a los derechos humanos. De acuerdo con Silvana Mandolessi, el gobierno, a su vez, desde el comienzo de la guerra difundió la idea de que las personas asesinadas y desaparecidas tenían relaciones con el narcotráfico, de manera que se cuestiona su categoría como *víctimas*. Entonces, se pasaron por alto muchos casos de feminicidio durante el inicio de este periodo. Aun así, varios grupos de personas han luchado para detener la violencia contra la mujer. Las familias, activistas de derechos humanos, periodistas y algunas autoridades forman parte del grupo que lucha contra la violencia.

Un caso de feminicidio en México

Para ilustrar mejor el feminicidio en México, presentaré aquí el caso de Marisela Escobedo Ortiz, la madre de una víctima de feminicidio, Rubí Frayre Escobedo. Marisela Escobedo luchó por conseguir justicia en el caso desde agosto del 2008 (cuando asesinaron a su hija) hasta su muerte, también por asesinato, el 16 de diciembre del 2016. En este hecho, un miembro de la organización criminal conocida como "los Zetas" le disparó a Marisela Escobedo mientras ella protestaba por la impunidad del perpetrador del feminicidio de su hija en el propio frente del Palacio de Gobierno en Chihuahua, Chihuahua.

Desde el momento de la desaparición de su hija, Marisela la buscó sin parar. Sin embargo, no fue hasta que Ángel Valles llamó a Marisela atestiguando que había escuchado a Sergio Barraza confesar que él había asesinado a Rubí que no se averiguó la verdad. Sergio confesó el crimen ante las autoridades, e incluso indicó el lugar en donde se encontraban los restos de Rubí. A pesar de su confesión, Sergio fue liberado porque la fiscalía no tenía evidencia suficiente para comprobar el crimen. Esta decisión motivó a Marisela a presentar una queja ante la Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos. Como resultado, un tribunal cambió la sentencia de Sergio, declarándolo culpable, pero él ya había escapado. Marisela y su familia iniciaron una serie de protestas para exigir la captura de Sergio, pero él murió en 2012 (*Las tres muertes de Marisela Escobedo*). Este caso llegó hasta la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos en 2020, la cual notificó a México de la existencia de una denuncia por el feminicidio de Rubí y el asesinato de Marisela (CNDH, "Marisela Escobedo activista social"). El caso de Marisela Escobedo es uno de los más conocidos en Latinoamérica, y fue éste el que abrió paso a protestas organizadas contra la impunidad en otros casos de feminicidio y violencia de género.

Fue tanto el eco que produjo esta historia que, en 2020, Netflix estrena a nivel mundial el documental *Las tres muertes de Marisela Escobedo*. Siguiendo el concepto de Jacques Rancière, una de las principales contribuciones de este documental es que crea una imagen intolerable sobre el feminicidio. De acuerdo con Rancière, una imagen intolerable es aquella que, en el arte, es imposible de mirar sin sufrir dolor o un sentido de intolerabilidad hacia lo mostrado (83–84). De esta manera, a partir de su transmisión, la imagen puede llevar a la reflexión, acción e incluso, a efectos políticos (Taccetta). Por ejemplo, en el documental se muestra un video real dentro del tribunal cuando Sergio Barraza es absuelto por el feminicidio de Rubí Frayre Escobedo. La reacción corporal y sonora de Marisela a través de un grito transmite un horror que provoca en el espectador malestar, rabia y empatía con el dolor de la familia de Rubí. *Las tres muertes de Marisela*

Escobedo y otros casos históricos amplifican el alcance del problema y lo hace más relevante ante el ojo público. Este caso es un parteaguas en la lucha contra la violencia hacia las mujeres. En primer lugar, el hecho de que el documental exista da paso a un discurso a mayor escala ya que es una manera más accesible para que el público esté informado sobre la epidemia de feminicidio en México. Este caso en particular se hizo bastante conocido por la lucha y la resiliencia de la señora Marisela y su familia en busca de justicia para Rubí. Aunque esto es algo positivo, es importante recordar que la mayoría de los casos se mantienen en las noticias locales y nunca llegan a la atención pública.

La Marcha del 8M y sus implicaciones

Una de las razones por las que el movimiento en contra de la violencia hacia las mujeres ha sido uno de los que más ha crecido en México en los últimos años es el *boom* de expresiones culturales que se utilizan para protestar. La Marcha del 8M es una de las protestas sociales más grandes en México. Ésta se lleva a cabo anualmente el 8 de Marzo, en el Día Internacional de la Mujer. La Marcha de la Ciudad de México es la más grande del país. En 2025 rompió el récord de asistencia con aproximadamente 200 000 personas (Secretaría de Seguridad y Protección Ciudadana de la CDMX).

Sin embargo, es importante mencionar que esta marcha no sólo existe en la Ciudad de México, sino en todo el país. Por ejemplo, en ciudades como Tijuana, Monterrey, Guadalajara y Querétaro, así como en estados como Tamaulipas, Veracruz, Guanajuato, Colima, Morelia, Estado de México, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Puebla y muchos otros lugares en México se organizan marchas del 8M. Desafortunadamente, la violencia contra la mujer existe en todo el mundo, así que esta marcha alcanza niveles internacionales en países como Colombia, Chile, Perú, Bolivia, Guatemala, Ecuador, Argentina, Brasil, España, Canadá, Estados Unidos, Francia, Italia y muchos más.

La Marcha es organizada por varios contingentes con diferentes propósitos. Hay grupos de familias buscadoras, familias de víctimas de feminicidio, víctimas de violación y de violencia doméstica, desapariciones, desigualdad social, activistas de los derechos de las mujeres trans y muchos otros contingentes. Hay varios elementos importantes que hacen que la marcha tenga un mayor impacto. La cantidad de participantes es uno de ellos pues ver a tantas personas unidas por una causa es impresionante, ya sea para una niña viendo desde su balcón, o para una abuelita viendo la marcha en las noticias.

Otro elemento importante es la vestimenta de las personas que se lanzan a la calle en protesta, la cual puede considerarse como una expresión cultural que implica la pertenencia a un grupo. A pesar de que hay una gran variedad de contingentes en la marcha, cada uno es fácilmente reconocible gracias a su vestimenta. La mayoría usa ropa de color morado, la cual simboliza la lucha por los derechos e igualdad de la mujer, y verde, símbolo de la lucha por la legalización del aborto seguro, legal y gratuito, y la defensa por los derechos sexuales y reproductivos. A pesar de que es recomendable el uso de vestimenta cómoda y resistente (ya que la marcha abarca una gran distancia), es importante para quienes protestan el crear un sentido de unidad y poder visibilizar la marcha en las calles (ver Figura 1 y 2).

FIGURA 1

Nota. Carteles y vestimenta de las participantes durante la Marcha 8M en Ciudad de México en 2023. Tomada de *WikimediaCommons* [fotografía], por Solange, T., 2023.

FIGURA 2

Nota. Marcha 8M de 2023 en avenida Paseo de la Reforma, Ciudad de México. Tomada de *WikimediaCommons* [fotografía], por Solange, T., 2023.

FIGURA 3

Nota. Carteles utilizados en la Marcha del 8M de 2025 en Quito, Ecuador. Tomada de *WikimediaCommons* [fotografía], por Sotomayor, D., 2025.

La idea de "asamblea feminista" propuesta por Verónica Gago (179–180) se puede relacionar a la marcha del 8M. Ésta hace referencia a una forma específica de organización política y social dentro del feminismo que desafía las formas tradicionales de representación política. Este es un espacio donde se escuchan todas las voces, incluyendo las que han sido silenciadas históricamente, se comparten experiencias y se construyen alianzas.

Los carteles también son una parte importante de la Marcha ya que la mayoría de las participantes lleva uno. Todas estas mujeres hacen carteles que simbolizan su lucha personal, lo cual visualiza que cada una de ellas tiene una historia de violencia que contar. Estos evidencian la realidad de las mujeres que de otra manera no pueden o no desean hablar sobre sus experiencias, además de promover la sororidad entre ellas. Algunas frases en los carteles son tan impactantes que llegan a los medios de comunicación. De esta manera, los carteles amplifican las voces de las manifestantes, permitiendo que sus historias y demandas sean escuchadas a nivel local, nacional y global. Frases como "¡Libres, vivas y sin miedo!", "No estás sola" y "Yo quiero vivir, no sobrevivir" son algunos ejemplos del mensaje que quieren transmitir por medio de la Marcha (ver Figura 3).

De igual manera, las frases que se dicen también dan voz a las causas de la Marcha. Ejemplos como "no estás sola", "y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba, ni cómo vestía" y "si tocan a una respondemos todas" son frases que se escuchan durante toda la marcha y muchas de ellas hacen referencia a *performance* y canciones que se han convertido en himnos feministas. Específicamente, la frase "si tocan a una respondemos todas" proviene de la canción titulada "Canción sin miedo" de Vivir Quintana. Esta canción transmite el mensaje de sororidad, empoderamiento y resistencia ante la violencia de género y el feminicidio, además de denunciar la violencia, llamar a la justicia y honrar a las víctimas. Esta canción se ha convertido en un himno feminista en México y otros países de habla hispana. De manera similar, la frase "y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba, ni cómo vestía" proviene del *performance* titulado "Un violador en tu camino" de Las Tesis, un colectivo feminista chileno (Rodríguez). Aunque este *performance* en específico inició en Chile en 2019, fue reinterpretado por colectivos en múltiples países y hoy en día la frase del coro ya mencionada es bastante común en las marchas del 8M en México y otros países de habla hispana.
Todos estos son ejemplos de la representación colectiva a través de varias formas de arte, las cuales llegan a todas partes del mundo y les dan a las mujeres un sentido de comunidad y unión. Estos elementos simbolizan el hecho de que la lucha contra la violencia de género

es interdisciplinaria, desde el activismo hasta el arte. Asimismo, algunos contingentes organizan coreografías y tocan música como representación de que el movimiento es grande y estruendoso, y que no se puede silenciar.

De esta forma, la Marcha del 8M ha sido una parte esencial de la lucha para erradicar la violencia contra la mujer. Gracias al apoyo significativo de miles de mujeres, se han implementado varias leyes para proteger sus derechos. Por ejemplo, la ley Olimpia, promulgada en 2014, sanciona la violencia digital, incluyendo la difusión no consentida de material íntimo y el ciberacoso (Procuraduría Federal del Consumidor). La ley Ingrid, promulgada en 2021, sanciona con prisión a los que difunden imágenes o información sensible de víctimas (Senado de la República). La ley Monzón, implementada en Sinaloa en 2023, asegura que los, las y les hijos de víctimas de feminicidio ya no tendrán que quedarse con los agresores de sus madres (Comisión Estatal de los Derechos Humanos de Sinaloa). La ley Malena, promulgada en 2024, sanciona los ataques con ácido como tentativa de feminicidio con hasta 40 años de prisión (Gobierno de la Ciudad de México). Estos son sólo algunos ejemplos del impacto de la Marcha del 8M, que es más relevante que nunca en la actualidad.

Conclusión

La violencia contra las mujeres es un problema grave y prevalente en México. El feminicidio, el acto más extremo de violencia de género, sigue en aumento. Aunque es cierto que el gobierno mexicano ha tomado varias acciones para mejorar la situación, también es cierto que hay un largo camino por recorrer. Desde hace décadas el feminicidio empezó a mostrar cifras alarmantes, las cuales sólo han aumentado con los años. Hay varios casos históricos tan famosos que no pudieron pasar desapercibidos por su naturaleza, como es el de Marisela Escobedo. Sin embargo, la gran mayoría de casos de feminicidios se quedan como un número más en las estadísticas nacionales. Las expresiones culturales han jugado un rol clave en la lucha en contra de la violencia de género, como es el caso de la Marcha del 8M. Es por esto por lo que, hoy en día, estas expresiones son más importantes que nunca ya que ayudan a que más personas comprendan la gravedad de la epidemia de feminicidios en México.

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Delaney Kibler | *Catcher* | Digital photography

The Intersection and Powers of Gender, Disability, and Music*

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Introduction

Performers with disabilities, particularly women and nonbinary artists, use music as a tool for empowerment, which challenges ableism and gendered expectations while navigating the intersection of feminism, disability, and the music industry. The relationships between gender, ability, and popular culture are important for understanding cultural representation in the popular music industry, particularly how marginalized groups navigate these ableist and gendered spaces. The music industry, while it has made strides toward accessibility and inclusion, continues to present significant barriers for queer disabled musicians based on discrimination in the popular music industry and general lack of representation (Hull 2021). The physical, logistical, and financial challenges that queer artists with disabilities encounter hinder their ability to fulfill the rigorous demands imposed by a capitalism-driven industry. The result is a form of cultural and economic exclusion, where disabled individuals are often invisible in the job market and are unable to access the same resources and recognition as their non-disabled counterparts. From discrimination and ableism in production to limited representation and opportunities in mainstream media, there is still a long way to go in making the industry truly inclusive for people with disabilities. I challenge us to rethink the accessibility of the spaces where music is created, shared, and celebrated.

The intersection of queerness and disability is often overlooked, and disabled musicians who do not fit neatly into cis-normative, heteronormative, or able-bodied boxes face compounded forms of exclusion. Queer music culture challenges normative assumptions and binary thinking, giving opportunities for performative expressions of gender and sexuality that resist hegemonic power structures within both music and broader society (Leibetseder 2022). These artists often navigate both ableism and gendered expectations, resisting traditional norms of gender and ability that attempt to limit their potential. The intersectionality of disability, gender, and music offers a unique lens through which we can examine the complex ways in which these artists create spaces of resistance and advocacy both within their art and in broader cultural conversations. This analysis will explore how the industry can change by critiquing its capitalistic system, general music creation and event space accessibility, and representation in the workplace and media, while giving the reader a foundation to expand their knowledge of music culture and disability studies in order to support queer and/or disabled artists' platforms. Key frameworks embedded in this work are feminist theory, intersectionality, queer theory, queer of color critique, social model of disability, crip theory, political economy of disability, and popular music studies.

Frameworks

As discussed in *Queer (In)Justice*, aligning with the critical perspectives of intersectionality, the authors address how systems of oppression, including racism, homophobia, and misogyny, disproportionately affect queer people of color (Mogul et al. 2021). Mogul et al. (2021) explore the archetypes of queer criminals and draw from feminist theory to critique how the criminal justice system is used

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to control and punish queer bodies, particularly those related to the experiences of marginalized women and LGBTQ+, with an emphasis on individuals who are a person of color and/or gender nonconforming (Mogul et al. 2021, 48). This offers a useful lens for understanding how dominant narratives about justice challenge the ways the legal system and broader society tend to marginalize nonconforming people, which also extends to the music industry and media representation.

In *Capitalism and Disability*, Russell (2019) offers a critical perspective on how capitalism pushes disabled individuals to the margins by labeling them as "unproductive" or lacking economic value. They define disability as "a socially created category derived from labor relations" and "a product of the exploitative economic structure of capitalist society" (Russell 2019, 87). The popular music industry tends to prioritize marketable and "ideal" bodies and performances, reinforcing capitalistic ideals of economic output and productivity. Disabled musicians may not fit this narrow vision of success, both in terms of physical ability and their perceived contribution to economic gain. Russell's (2019) critique highlights how capitalism structures the exclusion of disabled people not only economically, but ideologically as well. The capitalist drive for profit and high output ultimately marginalizes disabled musicians, reducing their opportunities for mainstream success and limiting their presence in the industry. The capitalist emphasis on high productivity, which entails continuous touring, regular album releases, and ongoing promotion, creates a framework that often sidelines disabled musicians. This exclusion reflects broader societal trends, where disabled individuals are valued less due to their perceived lack of economic utility, further reinforcing their societal marginalization.

In *Intersectionality in Third-Wave Popular Music: Sexuality, Race, and Class*, Keenan explores how race, sexuality, and class intersect to shape experiences within the popular music industry (2015, 12). This framework of intersectionality can be applied to understanding how disabled musicians are further marginalized within the capitalist-driven music industry. Keenan's (2015) call for a more comprehensive view of intersectionality within popular music studies mirrors Russell's (2019) critique of how capitalism fails to address the complex, interlocking forms of oppression that disabled people face, like racism, homophobia, transphobia, and more. In both music studies and disability studies, there is a common practice for the media and industry to focus on a narrow set of white people's experiences and white spaces that ignore the experiences of marginalized groups—thus plainly revealing how capitalism amplifies the marginalization of disabled artists in a multi-layered way. Just as mainstream promoters and the music industry must broaden their understanding of intersectionality beyond the white, middle-class feminist lens, the field of disability studies must similarly expand its focus to account for the diverse, intersecting identities of disabled individuals. Keenan (2015) argues that intersectionality can provide a deeper understanding of the varying ways in which race, class, and gender interact with feminism in popular music; Russell (2019) emphasizes that understanding disability in the context of capitalism requires acknowledging how it intersects with multi-layered identities. Keenan (2015) analyzes how overlapping identities shape new opportunities and challenges for musicians while considering their disability within a broader intersectional context. By adopting an intersectional approach, the music industry and the broader capitalist system can be critiqued more effectively.

In *Feminist, Queer, Crip*, Kafer (2013) provides a critical framework for analyzing the intersection of feminism, queerness, and disability. Their concept of "crip futurity" is a transformative framework that challenges dominant cultural and societal perceptions of disability. From this perspective, disability is not viewed as a problem to be fixed or a negative condition to be avoided. In Kafer's (2013) view, "crip futurity" is not only about disability, but also a broader critique of how we organize society, culture, and systems of care. Kafer writes, "Crip time is flex time not just expanded but exploded; it requires reimagining our notions of what can and should happen in time, or recognizing how expectations of 'how long things take' are based on very particular minds and bodies … Rather than bend disabled bodies and minds to meet the clock, crip time bends the clock to meet disabled bodies and minds" (2013, 27). Using this lens, Kafer's (2013) concept of "crip time" challenges normative understandings of time, bodies, and productivity, emphasizing the lived experiences of disabled individuals who exist outside of societal expectations. Applying this to the music industry, particularly for disabled women and nonbinary musicians, Kafer's (2013) work illuminates the ways in which these artists resist not only ableism but also the rigid gendered and heteronormative expectations that shape the industry. This is especially relevant in the music industry, where disability and queerness are often marginalized or erased. Kafer (2013) critiques the limitations of mainstream white feminist and queer movements, which often fail to fully account for disability and the embodied experiences of disabled individuals. Disabled musicians, particularly those who also identify as queer or nonbinary, find themselves navigating a complex matrix of oppression that is compounded by the industry's lack of inclusivity and representation.

Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (2018) and Alison Kafer's (2013) *Feminist, Queer, Crip* provide complementary frameworks for understanding how disability, gender, and queerness intersect in the music industry. Piepzna-Samarasinha's (2018) work focuses on the challenges of accessibility, representation, and the normalization of disability within the music world. She stresses the importance of accessible venues, accommodations, and financial support, ensuring disabled artists have equal opportunities to succeed. She also supports creating an approach that aids disability justice. They critique the limited opportunities available to disabled artists and the lack of accommodations in concert venues, media, and music production environments. In the music industry, there is a strong emphasis on continuous productivity, output, and the ability to meet deadlines for recordings, tours, press, and performances. This standard is often rooted in ableist assumptions where the expectation is that musicians can work at a consistent pace without interruption. Piepzna-Samarasinha argues that this unyielding pressure for rapid productivity creates a hostile and unmanageable environment for artists (2018, 76). Cultural accessibility redefines participation in the music space, which ultimately benefits audience members, performers, and staff and leadership. By failing to accommodate various working speeds or alternative creative processes, the industry reinforces the idea that disabled musicians are less capable, pushing them to the margins. She advocates for the dismantling of these productivity norms, calling for a more flexible approach that allows disabled musicians to work in a way that honors their needs and abilities.

Both Kafer (2013) and Piepzna-Samarasinha (2019) highlight how the structures of the music world are shaped by ableism, homophobia, transphobia, and rigid productivity expectations that marginalize disabled musicians, especially those who identify as women, nonbinary, or queer. Piepzna-Samarasinha's (2019) suggestions for more flexible working conditions echo Kafer's (2013) critique of the rigid, able-bodied expectations that dominate the industry. By combining Kafer's (2013) concept of "crip time" and crip theory with Piepzna-Samarasinha's (2019) queer of color critique of the music industry, we can better understand how systemic barriers can be dismantled to create a more inclusive space for disabled musicians.

Critiquing the Music Industry

To show the diverse experiences of disabled musicians, we must first understand how they are navigating an ableist and gendered industry. Specific barriers that disabled musicians face in the music industry, such as limited access to resources and representation, are also compounded by gender since the industry is controlled by white, affluent men. This causes a significant pay gap, especially for women. It is important to note that leadership in the music industry remains overwhelmingly dominated by men, who hold 86.1% of the highest-paid positions, such as CEO and President, with the same percentage identifying as white. Women of color are almost entirely absent from top leadership, holding only 3% of top executive roles like CEO (Smith et al. 2021, 7). Black executives make up just 7.5% of the 4,060 executives studied. Only 10% of those were women of color. “Put differently, there were 17.7 white male executives to every 1 Black female executive” (Smith et al. 2021, 2). We lack the data for transgender and non-binary individuals of all races in these roles, which I would estimate to be around the 1–4% range. Additionally, the majority of agents, managers, and publicists, especially those working with Billboard-charting artists, are white, despite black artists dominating music charts. Critiquing accessibility in the industry is only the beginning, because without inclusive leadership roles, we cannot achieve change to better highlight queer artists with disabilities. The popular music industry needs to improve its hiring accessibility in order for the highest paid positions to properly represent the diverse groups of clientele and performers they serve.

Venue accessibility is crucial in ensuring that the music industry is inclusive for disabled musicians, behind-the-scenes staff, and audience members. To accommodate individuals with mobility devices, entrances and exits should be clearly marked and wide enough to accommodate mobility aids. For artists, crew, and attendees, elevators and ramps inside and outside the venue must meet accessibility standards, with gentle slopes and sufficient space for different assistive devices. Similarly, the stage should also have all of these functions for staff and performers. Festivals can implement all of this in their stage planning for outdoor events. Accessible bathrooms are also a basic right. These private restrooms should be equipped with features like grab bars positioned near toilets, sinks, and other critical areas to provide support and safety. The doorways should be wide enough to allow easy entry for people using wheelchairs or other aids, and the door handles should be easy to operate, likely with lockable lever-style handles that are more accessible than round knobs. It is also important for the bathrooms to be well-maintained. Accessible seating and stage accommodation should be available throughout the venue, especially in prime viewing areas. There have been various instances where the viewing area is far away from the stage or has an obstructed view. Audience members deserve the right to be at the barricade or an unobstructed viewing area for the best visual and/or sound quality.

Accessible venues should go beyond basic requirements like ramps and elevators, embracing a holistic approach to ensure comfort and equity for people with various disabilities. Considering the needs of people with sensory sensitivities, venues could ensure that lighting and sounds within bathrooms do not cause discomfort or overwhelm individuals with neurodivergent needs. Another opportunity for venues to be inclusive is hosting sensory-friendly events. These are designed to reduce sensory overload and provide a more comfortable experience for attendees who may be sensitive to loud sounds, bright lights, or large crowds. It is ideal to have a private, quiet space to escape from the noise and crowds. The lighting at these events may be dimmer or less intense, avoiding strobe lights that can cause discomfort for neurodivergent people. The idea of this space being inclusive is not only for all abilities but for all ages (based on the performers’ content).

Sign language interpreters at live performances should not be confined to large-scale events or high-profile performances like the Super Bowl halftime show, where interpreters are often placed far from the action or obscured from view. For artists who use sign language, this is essential for their job function to interact with other industry professionals and the crowd. For deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals, the presence of skilled interpreters allows them to fully engage with the performance or continue to work functionally. Interpreters should be strategically positioned to ensure that both the performer and the interpreter can be seen clearly.

Ensuring that all videos, regardless of whether they are aimed specifically at disabled audiences, include accurate captions and subtitles should be standard practice in the industry. Captioning and subtitles can be the most nuanced change yet by making music videos, promotional materials, and live streams accessible to a wider audience. Music platforms and software providers must also ensure that their products comply with accessibility standards to support individuals with disabilities. I am referring specifically to Spotify and YouTube. This includes adhering to web accessibility guidelines and offering customizable options within the software, such as adjustable font sizes, read-out-loud technology, access to edit visual themes, or simplified interfaces for users with cognitive disabilities. Captions provide the audience with an opportunity to understand the lyrics, dialogue, and any additional on-screen text. Similarly, in promotional materials or advertisements, captions help convey crucial information, such as event details, artist names, dates, and locations, which can be especially important for those who may have difficulty hearing or processing audio content. The broader music industry should work towards creating a standard where all digital music platforms, from streaming services to production tools, are accessible by design. Captions are helpful not only for individuals with hearing impairments but also for those in noisy environments, people who speak different languages, and viewers who are non-native speakers of the language used in the video. This practice not only fosters greater inclusivity but also demonstrates a commitment to accessibility across all forms of content. This helps make the music listening experience more equitable and allows people to engage with content in a meaningful way, regardless of their abilities.

Accessible music creation tools can empower disabled musicians and producers, enabling them to fully participate in the creation and production of music. These could include custom-designed interfaces or adaptive controllers that make it easier for individuals to play instruments or interact with digital audio workstations. This may look like touchpads, foot-controlled devices, and even voice-command systems, allowing them to control music production programs or instruments through spoken commands rather than relying on physical touch or complex gestures. For visually impaired or blind musicians and producers, screen readers and voice feedback systems are essential in navigating music production environments. Screen readers can read aloud menus, track names, and note other vital information within music production software, allowing visually impaired producers to work seamlessly. Adaptive instruments can be customized to meet the needs of disabled musicians. Instruments such as drum kits, string instruments, and synthesizers can be adapted for the needs of one user or be entirely interchangeable to account for different users. Devices like these can be implemented to benefit students in grammar school music classes (Draper 2024). Allowing instruments to be adaptable for disabled students to participate equitably with their non-disabled peers would ultimately aid our future population of performers with disabilities and improve the cultural accessibility of music in early development. It is important to note that all of these cost a significant amount of money. Up-to-date software, adaptive instruments, and accessible tools are costly and often depend on the performers' or the institution's financial abilities. Financial ability, from a capitalistic perspective, can be limited due to multiple factors and may offer limited options for artists with disabilities in these cases. By changing music creation tools to be accessible for people with disabilities, the industry can unlock new talent and support a diverse range of artists.

Stepping away from practical changes to accessibility, the cultural accessibility of music lies in, in multiple ways, proper representation. By representation, I don't mean just another white, cisgender, straight pop artist, but rather the visibility of diverse sexualities, gender identities, races, languages, cultural expressions, body types, and people with disabilities across all genres. Representation in these spaces matters because it sends a message that queer and disabled people are integral parts of the music community and deserve to be seen and celebrated alongside their non-disabled, non-queer counterparts.

Some ways to achieve proper representation are through inclusive marketing and social media strategies. Production companies, mainstream media, and popular artists need to promote and support these musicians, offering them platforms where their talents and stories can be showcased in ways that challenge existing stereotypes. By incorporating these artists into high-profile projects, major advertisements, and press campaigns, the music industry can normalize their presence in all areas of music and entertainment. Queer and disabled artists often face compounded marginalization, so without intentional representation, their voices may remain overlooked. Representation in behind-the-scenes roles is just as important as onstage and media representation. Industry professionals play a crucial role in shaping cultural production and distribution. Beyond visibility, the inclusion of diverse bodies and experiences fosters a more dynamic and representative music culture. We must create more opportunities for queer disabled people to take on roles in concerts, music production, promotion, sound engineering, and event management. These roles often determine the logistics, technical aspects, and outreach of events, and having queer disabled individuals in these positions ensures that their voices are heard—not only in front of audiences, but in the decision-making processes that affect the entire industry. Inclusive hiring practices within the music industry must evolve to intentionally create opportunities for queer disabled individuals to enter and thrive in industry roles. Their presence in these spaces helps challenge the notion that certain roles or creative fields are "reserved" for specific groups, pushing the industry toward broader inclusivity across all levels.

Artists to Support

Artists like Demi Lovato, who lives with several chronic illnesses, and Lady Gaga, living with PTSD and chronic pain, are both bisexual, white, cisgender women who have publicly discussed being pressured to hide their health struggles to maintain mainstream success (Franssen 2019; Smit 2014). Their experiences reflect how even privileged identities within the industry are told to suppress aspects of disability, reinforcing the urgent need for more inclusive and honest representations of what it means to be an artist. While mainstream narratives often frame disabled and queer artists as exceptions or overlook them entirely, it's important to recognize that many disabled and queer artists are not only present in the music industry but are actively producing powerful work both within and outside traditional industry structures. Eliza Hull, Gaelynn Lea, Tanya Tagaq, Desmond Luis Edwards, and Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha are all influential disabled artists who use their music and creative platforms to resist marginalization, challenge ableism, and empower themselves and others. Each of them embodies the intersection of disability, queerness, and gender, demonstrating how these identities can be used as tools of resistance and empowerment in the industry world.

Eliza Hull is an Australian singer-songwriter who uses her music to advocate for disability rights and awareness. Born with a genetic condition called Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease, which causes muscle weakness and loss of sensation in the limbs, Eliza uses her music to reflect on her personal experiences with disability. In addition to her music career, Hull (2021) is also the host of *Access All Areas*, where she interviews other disabled artists about their experiences and challenges in the industry. She is a strong advocate for accessibility in the music industry and has worked to create more inclusive spaces for disabled musicians to discuss their careers, while also uplifting and/or critiquing some of our favorite performers and the industry. Through her platform, Hull works to dismantle stereotypes about disability, showing that it doesn't limit one's creative or professional potential.

Gaelynn Lea, a violinist and singer with a disability, gained widespread recognition after winning NPR's 2016 Tiny Desk Contest (Boilen 2016). She also co-founded *Recording Artists and Music Professionals with Disabilities* (RAMPD), a non-profit organization that works to create equal opportunities for disabled musicians. Gaelynn and Hull's (2021) conversation on *Access All Areas* dove into their personal experiences as queer and disabled performers, that is directly a form of empowerment. Gaelynn's work not only challenges the barriers in the music industry but also provides crucial resources for disabled artists to navigate their careers. Gaelynn uses adaptive music instruments to perform and is an advocate for advancement in music technology. Gaelynn uses her platform to speak about the intersection of disability and music, showing how these artists can use their art to resist marginalization.

Tanya Tagaq is an Inuit throat singer and activist and incorporates her experiences as a disabled artist into her music. Over the past decade, she has been amplifying indigenous issues and advocating for both cultural and physical accessibility. In her memoir, she discussed how Fibromyalgia can be debilitating, affecting her physical and mental well-being (Tagaq 2014). Tagaq has used her platform to raise awareness about performing with a disability and its impact on both personal and professional life. Despite the challenges, she continues to perform and advocate for greater representation of indigenous and disabled people in the arts. Tagaq's approach highlights how disability intersects with race and culture, offering a powerful example of how music can be used as both resistance to hate and empowerment of cultural expression.

Desmond Luis Edwards is a black, non-binary actor who was one of the first openly autistic actors to appear in a Broadway musical, as well as one of the first autistic actors to play an autistic character on Broadway. Their work as a disabled artist on Broadway brings attention to the need for greater representation and accessibility within the performing arts as well as non-binary stage representation, especially for non-binary people to exclusively be cast in non-binary roles. This aligns with broader conversations about the intersection of disability, gender, and artistic expression, showing how disabled artists in all genres, including theater, can challenge stereotypes and create space for new narratives.

Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, a queer disabled writer, performer, and activist, uses her voice to challenge ableism and other forms of oppression. While she is widely recognized for her work as a writer, her performances incorporate music and spoken word to advocate for the rights of disabled people, particularly within queer and feminist communities. Piepzna-Samarasinha's work emphasizes the need for solidarity and mutual support between disabled and other marginalized groups. Their one-person show, *Grown Woman Show*, has performed all over the U.S. Piepzna-Samarasinha is of Berber and Tamil Sri Lankan, Irish, and Galician Roma heritage. She is also the author and/or editor of over a dozen books about the lived experiences of people with disabilities. Specifically, their book, *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*, explores the politics and realities of disability justice (Piepzna-Samarasinha 2018). They promote this as a movement that centers the lives and leadership of sick and disabled queer, trans, black, and brown people. Piepzna-Samarasinha writes passionately and personally about creating spaces by and for sick and disabled queer POC, and access not as a chore but as a collective responsibility in politics and our communities.

Through their work, these performers defy societal norms, using their creativity to resist oppression and advocate for disability rights, while also exploring the intersections of disability, gender, and queer artistic expression. Their music and performances serve as powerful tools for challenging ableism and gendered expectations, while simultaneously creating spaces for empowerment, visibility, and collective action.

Call for Action

Queer and Crip frameworks offer a unique and critical perspective when analyzing disabled musicians within the industry by highlighting the intersectionality of gender, disability, and social inequalities. These frameworks question power dynamics in order to challenge and dismantle them. They encourage a broader understanding of music production, performance, and consumption, which includes the voices and contributions of disabled musicians who have historically been underrepresented. By focusing on the experiences of disabled women and non-binary individuals, feminist disability theory brings attention to the ways in which both ableism and sexism intersect, often compounding barriers to access, pay, visibility, and recognition. Today, I challenge you to rethink the music industry and the barriers that limit its potential. It is imperative that we push for greater awareness and systemic change. It is time for us to challenge outdated representation, fight for accessible spaces and tools, push for queer disabled people to have more opportunities, and demand that music venues, festivals, and production studios accommodate and embrace the diverse talent that queer and disabled musicians bring to the stage.

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FURTHER RESOURCES

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https://brownstargirl.org

Starbucks' Racial Bias Crisis and the Consideration of Lasting Impact*

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On April 12, 2018, Donte Robinson and Rashon Nelson, two black men, went to a Philadelphia Starbucks to meet with a business partner with the aim of discussing a real estate opportunity. The two were denied access to the Starbucks' restroom, as company policy stated that a purchase must be made before guests receive access to the restroom (Gayle). They sat down to wait for their friend, and shortly after, were asked to leave. The store manager called the police, and the two were arrested ("Social Media Video Shows Arrests"). Robinson and Nelson were later released without charges.

This incident was caught on camera, and it went viral (Blumenthal). The video ignited a discourse surrounding unconscious racial biases and the often-imposing nature of the police force towards black and brown people in America. Starbucks received tidal waves of backlash and scrutiny for the incident; Starbucks CEO Kevin Johnson and founder Howard Schultz were notably present in the company's response (Hauser). The pair were outspoken against both the action taken by the store manager and the police response invoked by the call. In a public statement, CEO Kevin Johnson said, "We apologize to the two individuals and our customers and are disappointed this led to an arrest. We take these matters seriously and clearly have more work to do when it comes to how we handle incidents in our stores. We are reviewing our policies and will continue to engage with the community and the police department to try to ensure these types of situations never happen in any of our stores" ("Starbucks CEO Issues Apology").

Johnson and Schultz took several steps, including company-wide training, non-profit donations, and a new open-door policy at its cafes. First, Starbucks implemented a nationwide closure of Starbucks' 8,000-plus locations for a half day on May 29, 2018, to lead its 175,000 employees through unconscious-bias training curated by civil rights experts Sherrilyn Ifill and Director of the NAACP's legal defense fund, Eric Holder (Held). Second, Starbucks also pledged over $200,000 to a non-profit program that teaches young entrepreneurs in public high schools (Pomrenze and Simon). Third, Starbucks also created an official "open-door policy," stating that anyone, regardless of purchasing intent, would be allowed to use Starbucks' amenities ("New Starbucks Policy"). Furthermore, Johnson travelled to Pennsylvania to meet with the men to offer a face-to-face apology.

Since the protests of 2020, catalyzed by the killing of George Floyd, we in America have seen a plethora of companies construct hollow brand campaigns surrounding racial justice, causing many to question both the intentions and the efficacy of these campaigns. Many critics and social commentators, like Allison R. Peiritsch, received Starbucks' gestures positively, offering little criticism and quickly praising these companies before we were able to see the effects of their actions. What I believe to be missing from Peiritsch's interpretation and analysis of Starbucks' response is a consideration of the lasting impact of corporate policy reform. While I do understand the importance of timing and sequence in

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handling a crisis, I fear that those variables do not matter in comparison to a policy's lasting impact.

I wish to investigate the specific ways in which Starbucks failed to uphold Brian Bolton and Jung Park's concept of corporate social responsibility: the consideration for lasting impact when incorporating societal concerns into business models (2). I will contend with assertions made by Peiritsch that Starbucks was acting on a moral imperative by implementing their unconscious bias training. I will discuss the open-door policy reversal that came in January 2025 as evidence that Starbucks' actions were more in line with the concept of corporate social opportunity, or the ways in which companies use social issues to bolster their ethos through symbolic gestures (Bolton and Park 1). I will also examine several types of crisis management scholarship to help relate Starbucks' crisis to other contemporaneous crises.

Public Reactions to Starbucks' Handling of the 2018 Philadelphia Crisis

Allison R. Peiritsch in her 2019 article, "Starbucks Racial Bias Crisis: Towards a Rhetoric of Renewal," described Starbucks rhetoric following the crisis as a "discourse of renewal," stating that Starbucks was acting on a "corporate communicator's fundamental ethical responsibility to harness and communicate crises as moments for organizational change and course correction despite fear of potential backlash and scrutiny" (216). Starbucks' response to the crisis was viewed as an exemplar of crisis management. Shep Hyken, a contributor to *Forbes*, described the handling as "textbook crisis management." An academic study by Avila et. al also agreed that Starbucks handled the situation well.

Peiritsch asserts that Starbucks' crisis response incorporated four principal communication tactics, the first being *organizational learning*: building on the point of crisis through the framework of education (218). In the case of Starbucks, they educated their executives, management, employees, and the greater public. The second tactic is *ethical value-based communication*: building on previous ethical commitments made by the company (Peiritsch 219). Starbucks used the crisis as an opportunity to rearticulate one of its core values: being a welcoming and inviting third space for all. The third tactic is prospective vision: focusing on how the company plans to correct the wrongdoing, not on the damage done (Peiritsch 224). The last pillar is *effective organizational rhetoric*: visible, open engagement from corporate leaders, having those who are systemically responsible for the crisis be those who speak on it (Peiritsch 225). Peiritsch connects Starbucks' response to Emmanuel Kant's theory of the 'ethical imperative,' stating that Starbucks' series of actions were duty-driven and performed without consideration for any potential negative consequences, therefore making the actions morally good. "Starbucks management communicated a deep sense of accountability to get involved because it was the right thing to do—something that any organization in that situation should feel compelled to address ... Starbucks closed its doors for a day of racial bias training even if it meant a loss of sales" (224). Peiritsch reflected on Starbucks' brand of crisis management brightly and with little scrutiny. Peiritsch's take on the matter aligned with several contemporaneous articles.

While some spoke praises of the handling, others were critical. Feldberg and Kim, in their 2018 *New York Times* op-ed "Beyond Starbucks: How Racism Shapes Customer Service," said, "racial bias training for employees is not enough to address the epidemic of discrimination by American companies." Feldberg and Kim stress the importance of structural changes within companies in addition to racial bias training, as they see racial bias training as an incomplete remedy.

After the Dust Cleared...

Following the arrest of Robinson and Nelson, Shannon Phillips, a former regional manager of Starbucks in Pennsylvania, was fired in connection with the incident. The BBC reported that while Phillips was fired, the

African-American store manager at the location of the incident kept his job ("Starbucks Closes US Stores"). In 2019, Phillips sued Starbucks for wrongful termination and unfair punishment. On June 14, 2023, jurors awarded Phillips $600,000 in compensatory damages and $25 million in punitive damages after they concluded that race was a determining factor in her firing (El-Bawab). In the case's closing statements, Phillips' lawyer Laura Mattiacci claimed that Starbucks used Phillips as a "sacrificial lamb" in order to displace blame for the incident. Starbucks outspokenly denied these allegations, stating that the company needed a regional manager with a track record of "strength and resolution" ("Jury Awards $25.6 Million").

On January 15, 2025, Starbucks' new leadership announced that it would be reversing its open-door policy, stating that if customers wanted to use their services, they must make a purchase first ("Starbucks Now Requires"). This change in policy came after Starbucks found itself struggling with unruly and threatening behavior in stores, according to CBS News ("Starbucks Changes Open-Door Policy"). According to this same CBS source, Starbucks closed 16 of its locations in 2022, citing "repeated safety issues, including drug use and other disruptive behaviors that threatened staff." The CBS article notes that this shift in policy came under new leadership: former CEO of Chipotle Brian Niccol began his tenure as Starbucks CEO in September 2024 (Haddon). Starbucks spokesperson Jaci Anderson said in the CBS article that the new rule is to help prioritize paying customers. Starbucks has long strived to be a third space, a term coined by sociologist Ray Oldenburg in 1989's *The Great, Good Place*, meaning a place to go other than work and home to foster community and social connections ("Ray Oldenburg"); however, this shift in Starbucks' policy reflects a shift in values. It removes the instrumental policy changes Starbucks implemented to avoid a similar, serious crisis. Instead, the provisions have been drawn back, leaving room for the same thing to happen again.

Since 2019, I have noticed increasing skepticism surrounding companies that engage with social issues. For example, I believe that Peiritsch treats Starbucks' crisis response to calling the police on Robinson and Nelson in 2018 with too much leniency. I don't believe that the impact of Starbucks' actions following their public relations crisis have stood the test of time, and I think that the 2025 reversal of their open-door policy is evidence of the fact that Starbucks is guided by what Bolton and Park term corporate social opportunity: companies using social issues to beautify their brand image through symbolic action (1).

Existing Scholarship on Crisis Management and Emotion-based Responses to It

Fink offers a framework for crises that effectively summarizes the stages of a particular kind of crisis: a public health crisis rather than a public relations crisis. Public health crises scholarship differs from public relations crises in many ways, but a comparison of the two helps us understand how crises tend to move in and out of public perception. In looking at various countries' responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, which happened only a few years after the Starbucks crisis, Zheng et al. call attention to Fink's framework, which dismantles crisis response into four stages: the prodromal stage, acute stage, chronic stage, and the resolution stage. The prodromal stage involves the acknowledgement of a crisis on hand, typically through preventive measures that are taken before the crisis begins. The acute stage marks when a crisis starts to occur. This is when destruction and loss are felt most intensely. The chronic stage is defined by Fink as the point where the constituency feels the sustained impact of the crisis. Finally, the resolution stage marks the "definitive end" of the crisis event.

I think that it is rather clear that Starbucks' situation falls under a completely different framework and lifecycle than the one discussed by Fink. Public health crises are typically crises imposed on cities or countries and are more or less unavoidable. Public health crises like pandemics stem from a force that is beyond the governance's locus of control; the root causes of the crisis are often not the fault of the governing body. Crises like

Starbucks' typically point to areas in company policy that need fortification. While crises of public health are society-threatening, Starbucks' crisis is self-threatening: the threat to the corporation's sustained profitability stems from consumers' ability to decide where they take their business. As crises like Starbucks' tend to point out flaws within corporate policy, crises like what happened to Robinson and Nelson are more self-imposed than externally imposed.

The perceived successes of Starbucks' crisis management align with conclusions drawn by Zheng et al. regarding the importance of timing, tempo, and sequence (286). Zhang et al.'s study found a close correlation with crisis response efficacy and timing, sequence, and tempo. The study shows that strict direction also contributes to response efficacy, demonstrating that pre-emptive and prompt crisis responses are often the most effective. This study, in particular, is notable because the bulk of existing literature and research on crisis management tends to focus on pillars like tone and delivery. Zheng et al. show that timing and sequence are of rival importance to tone and delivery (306). Starbucks' swift and proactive response seemed to move with an acute understanding of timing: the then Starbucks administrators Schultz and Johnson made statements on the 2018 incident almost immediately after. The timing and tempo of the response contributed mostly to public perception of the company, not the lasting impact of their policy.

In terms of public relations-related research, Lee et al. conducted a 2019 study examining the ways in which consumer perception changes based on the nature of the crisis and who the crisis directly affects. They theorized and proved that crises that are self-threatening (posing a direct threat to consumers, e.g., a car company recalling its vehicles) are understood at a lower construal or perception level, meaning that customers tend to absorb the crisis with acute attention to small details (803). Additionally, they found a correlation between apology type (informational vs. emotional) and crisis type (self-threatening vs. society-threatening) (796). They found that in society-threatening crises, informational responses are received more favorably than emotional responses. In the case of self-threatening crises, Lee et al. found that emotional responses were slightly more effective than informational responses.

It is difficult for me to claim that Starbucks falls neatly into an emotional or informational response; I believe that crises are a bit more complex than the ways that the study describes. Starbucks' racial bias crisis was an incident that brought attention to the hegemonic structure of race in America; it demonstrated how unconscious biases have the potential to manifest into overt displays of racism. While the effects of the incident were isolated and principally affected Starbucks employees, chairmen, and shareholders, the incident was a demonstration of America's systemic, generational history of racism, which I identify as something that is also threatening to society.

However, with the framework given by Lee et al., I understand that they would likely classify Starbucks' racial bias crisis as a self-threatening crisis, the type that "directly affect individual consumers' interests, product usage, or daily lives" (795). In Starbucks' response, CEO Kevin Johnson employed lots of apologetic language. In a video statement, Johnson said, "I want to begin by offering a personal apology to the two gentlemen arrested in our store. What happened and the way that incident escalated, and the outcome was nothing but reprehensible and I'm sorry. I want to apologize to the community in Philadelphia and to all my Starbucks partners, this is not who we are and it's not who we are going to be" (Avila et al. 28). This response is in line with Lee et al.'s finding that emotional language typically contributes to positive reception while considering self-threatening crises.

The Consideration of Time and Lasting Impact When Evaluating a Crisis

Starbucks' response needs to be analyzed and understood as an approach far more dimensional than language; crisis responses encompass not just language (and the tone, timing, tempo, delivery, emotional appeal, and the informative nature of such language), but also continued action. In "Starbucks' Racial Bias Crisis: Towards a Rhetoric of Renewal," Allison R. Peiritsch discusses how corporate apologia (tactics by companies that focus on upholding their image at the expense of revealing truth and recognizing root causes) is often found in crisis responses. Corporate apologia tactics can involve denial of acts and failure to take adequate action and responsibility. Peiritsch's article talks about how, instead of focusing exclusively on image restoration, companies should take a more open approach: they should consider the systemic problems that led up to the crisis. The article describes this act of paying attention to root causes as "renewal discourse" (219), which emphasizes organizational learning, full truth-telling, and corrective action. Peiritsch asserts that by practicing renewal discourse, Starbucks adequately handled its crisis at hand by implementing racial-bias training, closing its 8,000-plus locations for a half day, using prospective rhetoric focused on addressing wrongdoings in statements, and acknowledging systemic racism as a root cause.

We are at a point in time where the impact of these corporate apologia tactics and rhetorics is less evident. Since 2019, Starbucks has failed to uphold several of its political undertakings, the most glaring one being the reversal of its nationwide open-door policy in January 2025. Starbucks continues to center itself as a shared space where all are welcome, and no one is denied respite under new CEO Brian Niccol. In 2018, Schutlz said, "We don't want to become a public bathroom, but we're going to make the right decision a hundred percent of the time and give people the key" (Alter). While this prospective rhetoric makes a declaration, it is not backed up by anything tangible. Additionally, Starbucks' shift in policy states that the store "may call law enforcement" if violators don't leave after a verbal warning ("Starbucks Changes Open-Door Policy"). This is a complete disregard for all the alleged renewal that has been birthed from the 2018 crisis. Starbucks continues to claim it is committed to proactive behavior in an effort to remain America's third space, but their new policies directly contradict that. What I believe to be missing from Peiritsch's analysis is a consideration of lasting impact. In "Social Impact as Corporate Strategy: Responsibility and Opportunity," Bolton and Park assert that many companies in the contemporary corporate landscape use societal issues as short-term opportunities to create economic value. The authors introduce a three-prong framework for practicing corporate social responsibility, or the consideration for lasting impact when incorporating societal concerns into business models: Knowing, Doing, and Repeating. "Knowing" concerns how a company balances its commitments to its customers, its shareholders, and the planet (8). It considers the more intangible actions (things that don't show up on income statements) that prioritize societal progress. "Doing" is just what it sounds like, but more specifically, it is the consideration of positive externalities and how they interplay with short-term risks and benefits. "Repeating" is all about following through with commitments; it is the long-term promise to continue progressive policies as long as they are a part of the company's brand image. This framework adequately considers a dimension missing from all previous scholarship I've engaged with, the consideration of the long-term and lasting impact. While Starbucks' response partially considered the knowing and doing aspects, it failed to follow through, leaving the momentum of the response to stagnate.

Conclusion

While Starbucks leaned into prospective rhetorics focused on the underlying systemic causes following their 2018 incident of racial bias, their enactments and policies have failed to stick around. While Peiritsch's concepts of organizational learning, ethical value-based communication, prospective vision, and effective organizational rhetoric are undeniably valuable and important for companies to enact some forms of social change, the consideration for lasting impact is not to be ignored. Praise should not be given to companies taking progressive stances on societal issues only when it's timely. Instead, we should continue to check up on companies responding to self-inflicted crises, waiting to praise them until the lasting impact of such policies is cemented through repeated action.

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Contributors

Elliott Austin
Elliott Austin is a junior at DePaul studying Art and Photography. Originally interested in filmmaking, he gravitated towards still images after realizing the personal artistic freedom they granted, especially with the analog black and white process. His work often focuses on a youthful melancholy, inhabiting a pathos that is part self and part invention. He hopes to evolve this practice throughout the remainder of his undergraduate degree and beyond.

Zakaria (Zack) Azmy
Zack Azmy graduated summa cum laude from DePaul in June of 2025 with a major in History (pre-law concentration) and minors in Spanish and Economics. After completing his coursework at DePaul in three years, he is currently working for Gordon Rees in their Chicago office as a Case Assistant before continuing to law school in the future. Before law school, however, Zack aspires to gain experience understanding different areas of criminal law, with a specific focus on capital punishment cases. After law school he hopes to practice criminal law at the trial level.

Trey Baker
Trey Baker graduated summa cum laude from DePaul University in June of 2025, receiving his BA in Peace, Justice, and Conflict Studies. He is a 3x Emmy-nominated and award-winning spoken word artist. Additionally, he's performed for and been awarded by President Obama for his youth activism and leadership in storytelling. Trey has partnered with Scholastic to be a Rising Voices Mentor, the teaching artist for their featured spoken word programming, and the author of his first children's book, *When I Look Up*. He is pursuing his master's in Education Leadership, Organizations, and Entrepreneurship at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Julian Blair
Julian Blair is a fourth-year student at DePaul double majoring in International Studies and German Studies. Their main career aspiration is to push into museum work as an archivist while exploring the world. Growing up on the Southside of Chicago, Julian has a familiarity with industrialized zones. In Julian's free time, they currently work as an aftercare teacher at the German International School and play in a band with their co-author (Jimi Wexler) around Chicago.

Presley Blake
Presley Blake is a senior at DePaul double majoring in Political Science (Law & Theory concentration) and Sociology, and minoring in LGBTQ+ Studies. Presley plans on attending law school after graduating to practice constitutional or human rights law. She has worked in the New Student and Family Engagement office throughout her four years at DePaul. In her free time, Presley teaches and practices various styles of dance and yoga.

Grace Bradley
Grace Bradley is a senior in the Art School at DePaul, pursuing a degree in Art, Media, and Design with a double minor in Museum Studies and Applied Diplomacy. She also has a certificate in Global Fluency and studied abroad in Florence, Italy in Autumn 2024. Her specialty at the Art School is sculpture, where she has been working with fiber arts to explore textile and furniture design. Her professional goal is to work in an art museum or gallery. Outside of the classroom, Grace enjoys hosting her show "Record Roulette" on Radio DePaul, trying new restaurants, and visiting the Art Institute of Chicago.

Perry Burrell

Perry Burrell, a junior at DePaul University, is majoring in Art, Media, and Design. His most important art philosophy is to "have fun." He is a two-time Dean's List winner and prioritizes artistic and academic success. Throughout his time at the Art School, he grew a passion for visual media and a knack for color theory. Currently, he is working on comic ideas and creating new illustrations.

Virginia S. Derrick

Virginia Derrick graduated from DePaul University in June of 2025 with a BA in Anthropology and a minor in Creative Writing. She also completed the medical school pre-requisite requirements and has plans to go into healthcare. While at DePaul, Virginia received two awards from the Department of Anthropology for excellence in medical and cultural anthropology and was inducted into the Anthropology Honors Society. Virginia is interested in studying medical and political anthropology in the Americas and has plans to attend graduate school for anthropology in the Fall of 2026. She will also be pursuing a career in emergency medicine.

Timothy Duke

Timothy Duke graduated from DePaul in June of 2025, majoring in Psychology with a concentration in Developmental Psychology and a minor in Philosophy. In the fall, Timothy will be attending graduate school at University of Illinois Chicago's Jane Addams College of Social Work, pursuing a Master of Social Work. Timothy's goal is to work as a counselor who draws on critical theory to address the structural, political, and socioeconomic determinants of mental well-being.

Jessica Fischli

Jessica Fischli is a senior at DePaul majoring in Public History with a minor in German. She was recently inducted into the National History Honors Society, Phi Alpha Theta, and the National German Honors Society, Delta Phi Alpha. Jessica will be studying in Vienna, Austria in the fall and will participate in an internship at the Wien Museum. Jessica aspires to work in museums or cultural centers after completing a graduate degree in Museum Studies or Curation.

Matthew Garvey

Matthew Garvey is a senior at DePaul double majoring in Chinese Studies and Anthropology, and double minoring in Linguistics and History. He received the 2025 Outstanding Student Achievement in Cultural Anthropology Award and is a member of the National Anthropology Honors Society, Lambda Alpha. Matthew is DePaul's Linguistics Minor Student Representative and has presented research at a UBCO Linguistics Conference. As a Gilman Scholar, Fulbright-Hays Recipient, and DePaul Study Abroad Ambassador, he has passionately advocated for study abroad and international education. Matthew aspires to attend graduate school within linguistics to study international facets of second-language acquisition and global sociolinguistic education.

Jocelyn Gray
Jocelyn Gray is a senior at DePaul majoring in Studio Art and minoring in Film. With a studio concentration in sculpture, she has focused on studying and experimenting with all forms of mixed mediums. She specifically specializes in found object sculptures that are driven by collecting and repurposing organic materials while utilizing light. Jocelyn has showcased her work at DePaul's Juried Exhibitions and the Museum of Contemporary Art and aspires to continue to share her work with others.

Kyra Harrington
Kyra Harrington is a senior at DePaul majoring in Art with minors in Business and Graphic Design. Her future plans are to complete a program to become a professor in studio arts. During her time at DePaul, she has focused on painting and drawing as well as showing art in multiple publications, including *Crook & Folly* and the DePaul Art Museum Capstone show.

Emma Higgins
Emma Higgins is a Chicago native, a 2026 graduate with a Women's and Gender Studies major and Criminology minor, and has plans to complete her master's in 2027 at DePaul in the Women's and Gender Studies accelerated program. Her research interests include homelessness, poverty, the prison industrial complex, feminist ideologies, disability studies, and music. She also served as the Live Music Coordinator for Radio DePaul her junior and senior years.

Chi-Mai Ho
Chi-Mai Ho is a rising junior at DePaul majoring in Political Science with a research interest in 20th-century international relations history, specifically the Cold War and the three Indochina Wars. She is an international student from Vietnam, which has become her source of intellectual curiosity. Chi-Mai loves writing and enjoys her job as a writing tutor at the DePaul Writing Center. In her free time, she bakes and does handcraft projects.

Chloe Hodnett
Chloe Hodnett is a senior at DePaul majoring in Communications and Digital Media with a minor in Photography. Her photographic work was featured in this year's edition of *Crook & Folly*, DePaul's literary magazine. This past year, Chloe was selected for a DePaul study abroad program in Berlin, where she contributed to a group exhibition of risograph collage prints and developed a time-based piece that expanded the scope of the show. Though she primarily works with self-portraiture, she continues to evolve her craft, using humor and theatrics to explore the state of humanity in an increasingly inhuman world.

Sophie Hoffman
Sophie Hoffman is a junior at DePaul majoring in English (Creative Writing) with a minor in Philosophy. At the DePaul 2025 English Spring Conference she presented her essay, "Your Best Little Girl: Emily Dickinson's Love, Gender, & Female Poetics." She hopes to graduate with distinction in English and to one day publish a book. She writes poetry, fiction, and essays.

Elise Irvine
Elise Irvine is a senior at DePaul majoring in Secondary Education with a concentration in Visual Art. After graduating she plans to begin teaching art at the high school level in San Diego, California. During her academic career, she has enjoyed working with a variety of mediums, including stained glass, and has had artwork published in the DePaul publication *Crook & Folly* earlier this year.

Delaney Kibler

Delaney Kibler graduated with honors from DePaul in June of 2025, double majoring in Theatre Studies and Art, Media, and Design. Throughout her time at DePaul, she has worked on many plays and focused on the study of the human form and its intersection with shape and movement through photography and silk screens. Delaney will continue her work at Josue Pellot Studios as a studio assistant while working towards her aspiration of obtaining a graduate degree in Art Theory and Practice at Northwestern University. She will also continue her artistic studies through SubRosa Theatre Collective and MidWest Future.

Sebastian Kopec

Sebastian Kopec graduated from DePaul University summa cum laude in 2024 with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, a concentration in law and theory, and a minor in Economics. He will start attending DePaul University's College of Law in the fall of 2025, pursuing a Juris Doctorate. Outside the academic sphere, Sebastian is a clerk for a prominent Chicagoland law firm, focusing on corporate bankruptcy.

Chloe Kwasigroch

Chloe Kwasigroch graduated from DePaul in June of 2025, earning a BFA in Graphic Art with a concentration in Drawing, Painting, and Printmaking. Her senior capstone thesis was centered on dead birds around the city, and how she connects, relates, and sees herself within these animals. This is a topic which was explored in many different projects throughout her time at DePaul—conveying personal emotions and experiences through animal imagery. One of Chloe's other interests besides art is dancing, and she was a part of dance clubs at DePaul, including TCN Pulse and DePaul Dance Company.

Skylar Lim

Skylar Lim is a senior Egan Hope Scholar at DePaul majoring in English Literature with a minor in Philosophy. She has consistently made the Dean's List each quarter and received the Outstanding Academic Achievement Award in the Department of English. Skylar's research primarily focuses on love and relationships, race, and aestheticism. With her passion to serve her community, Skylar plans to pursue a Master of Library and Information Science to become a teen reference librarian at the Chicago Public Library.

Vanessa Mancera

Vanessa Mancera is a senior at DePaul majoring in Criminology with a minor in Spanish Translation. She has been on the Dean's List multiple times throughout her time at DePaul. Her main passion is learning about the impact of violence on society. She is looking to attend graduate school in the near future and ultimately earn a PhD. Her passion sparked from witnessing the intersectional stereotypes and injustices of our current world. Her ultimate career goal is to contribute to research to make a positive impact on legislation to help make our world a better place for everyone.

James Matthews

James Matthews is a senior at DePaul majoring in Writing, Rhetoric, and Discourse with a minor in Journalism. His writing reflects his interests in community spaces, music scenes, and the intersection of food and culture. Outside of the classroom, Matthews spends his free time playing drums in a rock band, cooking, and writing about local matters. After graduation, Matthews plans on pursuing journalism full-time.

Alaia Murúa

Alaia Murúa is a senior at DePaul majoring in Art with a minor in Latin American and Latino Studies. Throughout her time at DePaul, she has concentrated on studio art, specifically in painting and drawing. She plans on continuing to work in art outside of school within non-profits, combining her passions in art and community work. Since she began her education, she has shown at numerous local art events and galleries around Chicago, including Gallery 312, Agitator Gallery, and Gallery Wrightwood.

Simon Rafet

Simon Rafet is double major at DePaul in Anthropology and Latin American and Latino Studies. Born in Caracas, Venezuela, he moved to the United States at the start of the millennium and spent 20 years living in Miami before moving to Chicago in 2020. Simon would like to pursue a doctorate in History and plans to focus his research on militant groups organizing in contested spaces in Latin America. Simon would like to thank Maria Elena Rafet, Luis Rene Rafet, Peter Kropotkin Rafet, Rosa Luxemburg Rafet, Dr. Yoalli Rodríguez Aguilera, Dr. Kaveh Ehsani, Dr. Lourdes Torres, Camille Sanders, Sam Brown, Anthony Taylor-Davis, Imeña Valdes, and Tim, who said thank the Streets.

Alex Riccio

Alex Riccio graduated from DePaul with a bachelor's in the History of Art and Architecture. During her time at DePaul, she received the award of Outstanding Capstone Paper and was recognized as the 2025 Outstanding Senior in her department. She was also grateful for her opportunity to work as a research assistant and as a writing tutor at the Writing Center. She dreams of going on to graduate school with a focus in ancient art. Outside of her academic career, Alex enjoys reading books at local coffee shops and various crafty hobbies.

Mak Roban

Mak Roban is a senior at DePaul double majoring in History and American Studies. He was recognized as the Outstanding Senior of the American Studies Department in Spring Quarter 2025. After finishing their degree at DePaul, Mak plans to explore a career in archival work, as well as pursue graduate school in Minneapolis with a goal of eventually becoming a professor. Throughout his studies, he has focused on the intersections between social justice, historical events, and American institutions, which has informed his activism efforts on and off campus. When Mak is not working a part-time job or attending classes, he is making art and music inspired by queer studies.

Amber Rosegay

Amber Rosegay graduated summa cum laude from DePaul in March of 2025, double majoring in Political Science and Economics. During her undergraduate years, Amber founded Hygiene Operation to Inmates, a student-led organization that collects hygiene and feminine products for individuals incarcerated at Cook County Jail. Driven by a deep commitment to justice and advocacy, Amber will continue her education at the DePaul University College of Law this fall to pursue her dream of becoming an attorney. Amber wants to focus her career on helping to fight for those who are vulnerable in her community.

Zhe Shi

Zhe (Shawn) is a Bachelor of Fine Arts student currently living in Chicago, Illinois, and is set to graduate from DePaul in 2025. As an Art Education major, he has a strong background in art history, studio art practice, and multimedia art. His work spans a variety of media and disciplines, including drawing, painting, and architectural design. After graduation, his goal is to teach middle or high school art and develop a career as an arts educator.

Kei Smith
Kei Smith is a senior at DePaul majoring in International Studies. After transferring to DePaul, Kei became a 2025 Undergraduate Fellow with the Labor Education Center and the International Studies Department's senior student representative. Outside of school, she is a Director of Policy at Diversify Our Narrative and serves on the Japanese American Citizen League's Kansha Project Alumni Board. She is also an avid puzzler and writer. Kei has ambitions to attend graduate school in Japan to study international public policy and work towards making a meaningful impact through both scholarship and community engagement.

Spencer Sutherland
Spencer Sutherland graduated summa cum laude from DePaul in June of 2025 with a bachelor's degree in Public Policy and Economics. During his time at DePaul, he held multiple research assistant positions with faculty members, at the Chaddick Institute for Metropolitan Development, and at the Student Urban Research Corps. As a freshman, he interned for U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth and in his junior year was selected for the highly competitive PPIA Junior Summer Institute Fellowship. Spencer plans to pursue a master's in Public Policy or Public Administration in the near future.

Joelle (Jo) Trasowech
Joelle Trasowech graduated summa cum laude from DePaul in June of 2025 with a double major in International Studies and Criminology, and a minor in Global Asian Studies. Jo previously published in *Creating Knowledge* 2023: "The Value of Invisible Work: Women and the Double Burden." Since then, Jo has taken a committed interest in writing and research, participating in both the Social Transformation Research College summer undergraduate fellowship and the College of LAS's annual summer undergraduate research grant project. In the future, Jo aspires to attend graduate school.

Sean Weber
Sean Weber is a senior at DePaul majoring in Art, Media, and Design with a concentration in Intermedia Practices. His academic work explores the intersections of digital media, web development, and immersive design, with particular interests in VR production, spatial video, and static website architecture. Sean has extensive experience managing digital communities and content across platforms, and he is a certified FAA Part 107 drone pilot. He has led creative teams in both legal and commercial production settings. Outside of academics, Sean enjoys experimenting with aerial photography and curating behind-the-scenes content for live events and VR walkthroughs.

Jimi Wexler
Jimi Wexler graduated from the DePaul School of Music and has recently begun a master's program in Guitar at Northwestern University. At DePaul, he minored in Photography, allowing him to capture Chicago on film. One of his film series consists of different stills of industrialized areas of Chicago, which have been included in his published paper. Outside of academics, Jimi works as a mechanic at Big City Bikes and plays in a band with his co-author (Julian Blair) around Chicago.

Lauren Wiggins
Lauren Wiggins graduated magna cum laude from DePaul with a bachelor's in History and a minor in Classical Studies. She is a member of Phi Alpha Theta and received the 2025 James P. Krokar Award for "Best Paper in an Advanced Undergraduate Level Course" for her senior research capstone on the schism in black intellectual thought triggered by the First World War. She hopes to one day attend law school, earn her JD, and practice corporate law. She now works in the financial department of O'Hagan Meyer, a law firm based in Chicago.

Maryam Williams

Maryam Williams is a Chicago-based artist specializing in mixed media, blending acrylics, photography, printmaking, and found materials. Maryam obtained her Bachelor of Fine Arts at DePaul in Art, Media, and Design in June of 2025. During her time at DePaul, she served as the President of the DePaul Artists Collective. Maryam's artistic practice focuses on exploring textures and fluidity within conventional and unconventional physical spaces. Her work aims to challenge racial and mental barriers, inviting viewers to engage with pieces that evoke diverse interpretations and perspectives. The unpredictability of what she will create keeps her excited for future projects.

Mads Wren

Mads Wren is a senior at DePaul double majoring in Theatre Arts and Applied Diplomacy. Currently, they engage with the DePaul community through their work as a manager and tutor at the Writing Center. They recently had a short play published in the Writing Center's creative writing magazine, *The Orange Couch*. In the future, Mads hopes to have a career that combines their passion for theatre with their commitment to community-engaged citizen diplomacy. Outside of school, Mads enjoys playing Dungeons and Dragons and shamelessly reading YA novels.

Bella Zamudio

Bella Zamudio is a senior at DePaul double majoring in French and Psychology and minoring in English Literature and Fandom Studies. She has presented her writing at the Honors Conference, Spring English Conference, and First Year Writing Showcase at DePaul, as well as at the National Collegiate Honors Council. Her work is featured in *The Orange Couch*, and she was a technical editor and writer for the 2025 edition of DePaul's French literary magazine, *Mille Feuille*. Outside of writing, Bella enjoys knitting, rainy days, coming up with bad jokes, and experiencing art around the city.

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