

ATRIUM

STUDENT WRITING
FROM AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY'S WRITING
STUDIES PROGRAM



2020

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Introduction

“Social distancing.” “Black Lives Matter.” “In these uncertain times.”

Over the past few months, we’ve seen countless ways that words and rhetoric matter—personally, politically, and even commercially. Rhetoric influences our experiences of the world, and it helps us make meaning and knowledge within that world, too. Even three apparently simple words— “I can’t breathe”—can express centuries of oppression and the will to resist and effect change.

In analyses, summaries, arguments, proposals, blogs, websites, presentations, and videos, student writers in American University’s College Writing classes join ongoing conversations by reading critically, learning rhetorical strategies, practicing metacognition, and forming and communicating their own insights. The texts in this collection—selected from work in College Writing in the 2019-2020 academic year—reveal the experience and power of rhetoric. These writers demonstrate the necessity of listening to other perspectives before forming an argument. They explore the ways that rhetorical choices can persuade us, or fail to do so. They remind us that we can have intellectual arguments about topics that are both clearly significant, such as gun violence, and deceptively trivial, such as cheese. They use the power of words and rhetoric to find meaning in *Survivor*, periods, and housing in Berlin; they offer compelling insights into and new knowledge about African-American Vernacular English and diversity. And they reveal writers in the process of writing: choosing topics, inventing arguments, and reflecting on their own work.

This year's Atrium was compiled in a time of national upheaval, when students and faculty finished the school year from their homes because of a pandemic and when the country was caught up in outrage over extrajudicial police killings of African Americans. And yet this collection is fundamentally hopeful; it implicitly argues for argument and for engagement not as solutions in themselves but as avenues to understanding, solutions, and reform.

Language and rhetoric are powerful; these writers exemplify the positive deployment of that power.

Lacey Wootton
Director, Writing Studies Program

Atrium Selection Committee:

Chuck Cox
Caimeen Garrett
Stina Oakes (chair)
Naseh Nasrollahi Shahri
Allison Sparks

Working with Sources

In the process of rhetorical invention, writers engage with other perspectives, “listening to” sources and seeking connections to their own ideas—and thus creating new meaning and knowledge. In this section, writers reveal how they engage in the important work of rhetorical invention by summarizing, synthesizing, and responding to others’ ideas.

Annotated Bibliography: CRISPR

Andie Bisk

Part I: Source Analysis

Guerrini, Christi J., Evan Spencer, and Patricia J. Zettler. “DIY CRISPR.”
North Carolina Law Review, 2019, 8 May 2019.
https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3365421
#

1. This article is written by Christi J. Guerrini, Evan Spencer, and Patricia J. Zettler, and published in the *North Carolina Law Review*, student-operated academic journal that publishes “outstanding legal scholarship” to the Carolina Law community. While the journal does not publish only scholarly articles, this specific article is considered to be a scholarly source (I think it was published in a different academic journal that was peer reviewed but I could not find it, so I am not actually counting this source as one of my legit scholarly articles, and instead this will be considered as an “article of my choosing”).
2. The purpose of this article is to present qualitative interviews with 40 practitioners of “citizen science/DIY biology” which is a different terminology for biohacking. It also provides a detailed account of the government oversight (both internal and external) to regulate applications of CRISPR technology, and how citizen science tiptoes around these regulations by creating their own methods of self-regulation. The authors point out the concern that citizen scientists using CRISPR for human applications is potentially very risky (and often times illegal) due to its nature of

human experimentation for results. Because it is an article written by people with a background in law, they offer insight on how to improve oversight capacities of the government to crack down on illegal citizen science.

3. This source lends credibility to my argument on government regulation of the sciences with regards to biohacking and CRISPR technology because it was written by professors who teach law and have experience in navigating how government regulation works and how it can be used to curb the dangers included under the umbrella of citizen science. This article is important because it will act as a bridge between my first and second conversations, and provides me with information regarding government procedures (which I lack a background in). Because the article was written by experts in the field of law, I can trust that their information and research presented is reputable and accurate.
4. The main limitation I found within the source is not being able to deduce whether it is truly a peer-reviewed scholarly article, or whether it is simply an academic paper written by experienced professionals in the field. While I do not deny that the authors can be considered credible sources, there are limits with which I can claim accuracy within the paper as I cannot confirm that it has been peer reviewed or not. Additionally, the article itself mentions that its analysis has several limitations regarding its focus on citizen science, and points out that it only discusses applications of DIY CRISPR, and does not go into any other type of citizen science, and the topic of CRISPR in this article is limited only to its possible human applications and cannot be applied to another

field of usage. It also discusses that it is only focused on US laws and scientific regulations, and this cannot be applied to another country's scientific norms and institutional rules. However, I plan to discuss biohacking solely in the US, so this limitation will not have an effect on the information I present.

Article Information page from Database

The screenshot shows the SSRN article page for "DIY CRISPR". The article is by Christi J. Guerrini, Evan Spencer, and Patricia J. Zettler, published in the *North Carolina Law Review* in 2019. The page includes a navigation bar with options like "Browse", "Subscriptions", and "Create account". Below the article title, there are buttons for "Download This Paper" and "Open PDF in Browser". The abstract text is visible, discussing the use of CRISPR technology. On the right side, there are sections for "Paper statistics" (Downloads: 117, Abstract Views: 985, Rank: 250,535), "References" (54), and "PlumX Metrics". A "Related eJournals" section is also present at the bottom right.

Hather, Gregory J., et al. "The United States of America and Scientific Research." *PLoS ONE*, vol. 5, no. 8, Public Library of Science, 16 Aug 2010, p. e12203, doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0012203.

1. This source is a scholarly article written by Gregory J. Hather, et al. and was published in the *PLoS ONE* journal, which is an open-access peer reviewed academic journal.
2. The purpose of this article is to provide an objective analysis utilizing solely quantitative research to measure the state of scientific research in the US (from the 1960s to the present) in comparison to the EU and China (since 1996)— with regards to

federal research funding (FRF) and with US gross domestic product (GDP), as well as industry research spending. This article provides concrete evidence that US federal contributions to scientific research has slowed in recent years, and continues to generate most of its funding towards basic research, while the actual industry is shifting towards a focus in developing products that years of research have gone into. The article points out that although the US has a strong system of university-backed research compared to the EU and China, it is falling behind to China and the EU in the race to create new scientific innovations that have the potential to improve the lives of the public. The article points out that it is important for the US government to consider how the US will continue to excel in the sciences, and continue to produce exceptional research in the years to come (without increasing the allotted federal budget— which will most likely not change in the near future).

3. I chose this source due to its detailed research on US federal spending specifically on scientific research, and its decline in the past couple of decades. This idea is important as it fits into my second conversation explaining why many non-scientists (and even some accredited scientists) are turning to biohacking as a way to test extreme experiments that would generally not get approval by the government, nor would they ever receive funding for such experiments (although the article never mentions biohacking). I plan to use this information to formulate my argument that decreasing federal spending and high levels of regulation are causing people to turn to extreme measures in

order to test questions we have about the extent one can go to achieve perfection through body augmentation and DNA editing technology. Additionally, because this is a scholarly article written by authors affiliated with top research institutes (such as the Seattle Children's Research Institute and the Natural Environmental Research Council, as well as several top universities like McGill University and the University of Washington), I can trust that the information is provided by experts in the field, and is accurate, reliable, and has been peer reviewed (because it was published in an academic journal, and explicitly states that it was peer reviewed) by other experts in the field. The article's research was also funded by the NIH, which is a highly credible research facility in the US.

4. The authors point out that there are limitations within the data analysis due to issues with the comparability across regions. They point out that the data does not measure the skill level necessary to acquire a doctoral degree, the value of the patents granted, or the actual originality of the papers published in the various regions studied, and that these qualities will differ between the US, EU, and China. They also mention that the data is purely qualitative because qualitative data provided for this study would be too subjective to be considered an accurate measure to be used for analysis. This article also holds limitations for me because it is a piece that is solely concerned with federal spending comparisons between the US, EU, and China, and can only be used for data about these issues. However, it will still be a valuable

resource that will allow me to explore the challenges of needing federal funding and regulation to go through with a legal scientific study, and why biohackers are straying away from this.

Article Information Page from Database

The screenshot shows the PLOS ONE article page for "The United States of America and Scientific Research". The page includes the PLOS ONE logo, navigation links (PUBLISH, ABOUT, BROWSE), a search bar, and a "RESEARCH ARTICLE" label. The article title is prominently displayed, followed by the authors' names: Gregory J. Hather, Winston Haynes, Roger Higdon, Natali Kolker, Elizabeth A. Stewart, Peter Arzberger, Patrick Chain, Dawn Field, B. Robert Franza, Biaoyang Lin, Folker Meyer, Vural Ozdemir, Charles V. Smith, et al., and Eugene Kolker. The publication date is August 16, 2010, with a DOI link. On the right side, there are statistics: 53 Saves, 21 Citations, 14,290 Views, and 22 Shares. Below the statistics are buttons for "Download PDF", "Print", and "Share". A "Check for updates" button is also present. The main content area shows the "Abstract" section, which begins with "To gauge the current commitment to scientific research in the United States of America (US), we compared federal research funding (FRF) with the US gross domestic product (GDP) and industry research spending during the past six decades." The abstract continues to discuss research and development (R&D) funding, total science and engineering doctoral degrees, patents, and scientific publications across three major population and economic regions: the US, the European Union (EU), and the People's Republic of China (China). The abstract concludes by stating that the study's aim is to facilitate a serious discussion of key questions by the research community and federal policy makers.

Riley, Margaret Foster. "Federal Funding and the Institutional Evolution of Federal Regulation of Biomedical Research." *Harvard Law & Policy Review*, vol. 5, no. 2, July 2011, pp. 265-287. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=67026608&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

1. This source is a scholarly article written by Margaret Foster Riley, and was published in the *Harvard Law & Policy Review* journal, which is a peer reviewed academic journal.
2. The purpose of this article is to examine the institutional evolution of government regulation of biomedical research and innovation, and whether federal funds allotted to the industry

have caused this evolution to occur. Riley explains that federal funding has played a vital role in the (recent) eventual dominance of academics in the industry, and that regulations have not changed to accommodate for this new influx, even though the current academic model for research has been modified. Riley exhibits the gaps in government oversight and works to prove that the current IRB model is not as effective in regulating biomedical research as it once was because it does not deal with many of the new conflicts of interest that have appeared in recent years. In addition, incentives for research are becoming more profit based rather than based on science.

3. This source is credible in its explanations of law and government oversight because it was written by a professor of law who has experience and expertise in the field and is knowledgeable on the given subject. While many sources may touch on the idea of how government regulation and federal funding affects how biomedical science is researched and treatments are approved, because this was written by an expert of law, Riley is able to offer valuable insight that is not present in sources written by someone without this level of expertise. Because she is an expert in the field, her paper is considered highly reputable and can be trusted to provide accurate and reliable information.
4. Because this article was written by a professor of law, the article is filled with advanced law jargon that I (a freshman with absolutely no experience studying law) do not completely understand. Scholarly articles are written for other scholars in the field, so Riley does not need to address jargon utilized because she

assumes that anyone reading her article has the necessary background to comprehend her paper and understand her main argument. Because I lack this background in law (and my paper is not a piece that focuses strictly on government oversight procedures), I am limited in what I am able to use in my paper from this source. However, it provides excellent background in how federal funding is regulated in the biomedical industry, and how it has acted as the basis of authority in what can constitute an experiment and what is considered to adhere to appropriate ethical standards.

Article Information Page from Database

Federal Funding and the Institutional Evolution of Federal Regulation of Biomedical Research.	
Authors:	Riley, Margaret Foster ¹
Source:	Harvard Law & Policy Review . Jul2011, Vol. 5 Issue 2, p265-287. 23p.
Document Type:	Article
Subject Terms:	*MEDICAL research *FEDERAL regulation *EVOLUTIONARY theories *FEDERAL aid to medical research *FINANCE *HUMAN biology *LEGISLATIVE oversight *RESEARCH
Geographic Terms:	UNITED States
NAICS/Industry Codes:	541712 Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Biotechnology)
Abstract:	The article focuses on the institutional evolution of the federal regulation of biomedical research in the U.S., as well as the federal funding on the evolution. It defines biomedical research as a basic scientific research into human biology and its applications in clinical treatments and medical procedures. It explores the history and evolution of the biomedical research enterprise in the United States through the 1970s. It examines the effect of the Bayh-Dole Act on the enterprise and how funding has been refocused. More specifically, it describes the gaps and functioning of federal oversight over medical research.
Author Affiliations:	¹ Professor of Law, University of Virginia School of Law
ISSN:	1935-2077
Accession Number:	67026608

Samuel, Sigal. "How Biohackers are Trying to Upgrade their Brains, their Bodies— and Human Nature." *Vox*, 15 Nov 2019,

<https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2019/6/25/18682583/biohacking-transhumanism-human-augmentation-genetic-engineering-crispr>.

1. This source is a current popular article published online by *Vox*, written by Sigal Samuel.
2. The purpose of this article is to inform the public about what biohacking is, and the various reasons why people from all walks of life are gravitating towards the movement. The article is formatted to include “9 questions about biohacking you were too embarrassed to ask,” a common formula that *Vox* writers use to present novel ideas and events in a way that directly connects with their audience. This format assures them that they are not the first to have basic questions about popular topics such as this, and thoroughly answers these questions in a way that makes sense and stays away from subject-specific jargon that may complicate the piece. This article provides an introductory explanation of what biohacking is, as well as providing several concrete examples of ways people are carrying out these experiments. It also touches on the fact that it is not always backed by strong scientific research, is completely unregulated by the government (which can be considered a pro or con depending on whom you ask), and has the potential to be incredibly dangerous. This article is important because it provides a decent (but basic) introduction to a multifaceted and polarizing topic that much of the public may know very little— if anything at all— about.
3. Samuel’s article is valuable towards my argument because it provides a decent explanation on the basics of biohacking

technology and discusses both the arguments of supporters and critics. Additionally, Samuel is a credible, educated, and award-winning author who has been published numerous times in other popular news outlets such as *The Atlantic* and has made appearances on BBC and CBC, which are championed as reputable media corporations. Due to her experience in the field of journalism, I can trust that she reports facts that have been thoroughly researched (although her piece is not supposed to be completely objective), and can ensure that her article's purpose is not supposed to push one sort of ideal, but rather is supposed to introduce a topic from all angles. I chose this source due to its comprehensive explanation of the ins and outs of biohacking, as well as its potential to bring me into my second conversation detailing why one may turn to biohacking rather than relying on government-regulated scientific research done by an accredited scientist.

4. This source is limited, however, due to the article not being a totally objective piece, and Samuel often subtly inserts her opinion into the article (mainly through her word choice in how she chooses to explain various ideas). By introducing biohacking experimentation using defamiliarization techniques to present these concepts in an unfamiliar way, she moderately explains the information in a way that makes the audience lean towards her side of the argument (that paints biohacking as unusual and dangerous) without even realizing that they are doing so. While I do actually agree with her argument, the purpose of my piece is not to paint biohacking as a terrible effect of unregulated science, but rather as an uncouth new facet of

biotechnological innovation that has come about due to scientific experiments taking decades to be approved, and the overall extreme expenses of life-saving medicines developed— although it is important that I recognize and explain the dangers of biohacking.

First Page of Article

How biohackers are trying to upgrade their brains, their bodies — and human nature

9 questions about biohacking you were too embarrassed to ask.

By Sigal Samuel | Updated Nov 15, 2019, 12:10pm EST

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**FUTURE
PERFECT**

Finding the best ways to do good.

Even if you haven't heard the term "biohacking" before, you've probably encountered some version of it. Maybe you've seen Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey extolling the benefits of **fasting intermittently and drinking "salt juice" each morning.**

Maybe you've read about former NASA employee Josiah Zayner **injecting himself with DNA using the gene-editing technology CRISPR.** Maybe you've heard of Bay Area folks engaging in **"dopamine fasting."**

Maybe you, like me, have a colleague who's **had a chip implanted in their hand.**

These are all types of biohacking, a broad term for a lifestyle that's growing increasingly popular, and not just in **Silicon Valley**, where it really took off.

Biohacking — also known as DIY biology — is an extremely broad and amorphous term that can cover a huge range of activities, from performing science experiments on yeast or other organisms to tracking your own sleep and diet to changing your own biology by pumping a

Zhang, Sarah. "A Biohacker Regrets Publicly Injecting Himself with CRISPR." *The Atlantic*, 20 Feb 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/02/biohacking-stunts-crispr/553511/>.

1. This source is a current news article published online by *The Atlantic* and was written by Sarah Zhang.
2. The purpose of the article is to exhibit how the biohacking movement is creating waves in the realm of biological innovation and research and the dangers that lurk behind these experiments. The article is formatted into an interview transcript with one of the infamous and notoriously polarizing leaders of the biohacking movement: Josiah Zayner. Zhang uses guiding questions to probe Zayner for the types of responses that will give her audience a more comprehensive look into why these biohacking experiments are taking place, and what sort of role Zayner has played in order to push the movement into the extremes that subsequently led to an Ascendance Biomedical CEO injecting himself with an untested Herpes treatment over Facebook Live. This article is important because it showcases Zayner's reasonings behind why he still sells DIY-CRISPR kits to the public despite expressing fears over how the biohacking movement is spiraling out of control and has the potential to seriously injure someone. Zayner's biohacking experiments include such stunts as injecting himself with CRISPR to theoretically enhance his muscles in front of a live-streamed event. Before the article's publication, the public had little knowledge on Zayner's motivations behind his publicity stunts, or on his opinions of the biohacking movement.
3. Zhang's article is valuable towards my argument due to her

credibility as a writer for *The Atlantic*. Because *The Atlantic* is a popular (and credible) news source, its writers are educated (and surely have a college degree), although they may lack the subject expertise about a given topic. While *The Atlantic* tends to have liberal leanings, I found that this article was objective, and Zhang focused the interview solely on Zayner's opinions rather than inserting her own opinion into the matter. I chose this article because Zhang's interview allows for a never-before-seen insider-view on Zayner's motivations and reasoning for his viral experiments. It addresses many of the questions I have about why biohacking exists and what the implications of their unregulated experiments may be from the point of view from a scientist on the forefront of the movement.

4. The limitations of the article surround the fact that the article is a popular news article that was not peer reviewed, and was published by media cooperation that tends to lean toward the liberal ideology. Additionally, while Zhang has experience writing articles detailing new scientific breakthroughs (as well as providing scientific news such as current COVID-19 pandemic), she is not a scientist and (most likely) does not have any educational expertise in the field, despite being an experienced writer who tends to cover scientific stories. Therefore, I plan to use this source specifically for Zayner's perspectives on the biohacking movement, and the ethical and safety concerns that have arisen, rather than using it for its limited scientific explanations of CRISPR technology and the methodology of the experiments being done.

Q Popular Latest *The Atlantic*

SCIENCE

A Biohacker Regrets Publicly Injecting Himself With CRISPR

“There’s no doubt in my mind that somebody is going to end up hurt eventually.”

SARAH ZHANG FEBRUARY 20, 2018



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Part II: Response

I began my research process by recalling a multi-episode Netflix documentary called *Unnatural Selection* that introduced me into the world of CRISPR-Cas9. The technology is used both as a facet for valuable gene therapy research, as well as a potentially dangerous technology to hypothetically create a better human and to perfect the imperfect. The compounds can be readily purchased by just about anyone with \$2000 dollars to spare. I remembered that this documentary followed and interviewed ex-NASA scientist Josiah Zayner who created a website that sells biological equipment, samples, and DIY-CRISPR kits for very low prices on

the website *the-odin.com*. I became incredibly uncomfortable and concerned when I learned that one could purchase an entire “genetic engineering home lab kit” for only \$2000, with no college degree or scientific accreditations required.

This brought me to several important questions that I needed to research. First: “what is biohacking?” Second: “why has biohacking become a popular trend?” Third: “why are people turning to biohacking rather than trusting the research done by scientists at credible universities and research institutes (that are often backed by federal funding)? What was the draw towards biohacking?” The easiest part of the research process was simply researching all there was to know about the biohacking movement and learning about some of the planned medical innovations (such as cures for deadly diseases like HIV). I found tons of information that discussed biohacking. I also discovered several sources detailing how scary Josiah Zayner’s experiments are and how they tend to be a provocative publicity stunt in order to get people talking about the potential of biohacking to create scientific change.

The most difficult part of the research process, however, was trying to find scholarly articles about my topic. Because biohacking is such a new movement, and scholarly articles can take years to get peer reviewed and published, I was unable to find actual academic journal articles about the topic. However, I instead turned to academic journals as a source for a second conversation. I researched how science is regulated and funded by the US Government. I used this information to create and support an argument to justify why people are turning to biohacking for

answers to medical and medicinal questions, and why this has the potential to be incredibly dangerous to those involved. It opened up the important philosophical question of who should have access to this technology, and whether an educational degree truly equates to natural intelligence.

Through this research, my perspective on the topic has shifted from being completely against and disgusted with biohacking experiments (and perplexed with Josiah Zayner's ideologies), to trying to bridge an understanding as someone who is very pro-regulation and ethics into the reasoning of why people are turning to biohacking, and the future implications of such actions. I have gained insight into Zayner's beliefs, and although I do not agree with his actions, I can understand and respect why he wants to push these provocative experiments as a wake-up call to the government to push scientific experiments to be faster and approve more experiments that test the bounds of human intelligence in the realm of scientific research. It also helped me to understand that there are people who cannot afford a college education and are frustrated with the slow-paced experimentation and testing processes of novel biotechnologies and have decided to take these methods into their own hands (despite not having the educational background). Biohackers are not always doing these experiments for personal gain but are trying to prove that the tools necessary to create medicines for deadly illnesses are out there. By not being bound to ethical codes and stuffy corporate procedures, they are able to develop these products faster than the NIH and FDA ever could. While I still do not agree with their unwillingness

to adhere to ethical codes, and the dangerous (and often lack of scientific research of their experiments), I can appreciate why biohackers do what they do.

The popular conversations I have explored mainly touch on the biohacking movement and the reasoning for creating an underground subculture that goes against the status quo of needing federal funding and regulation in order to create scientific innovations. The scholarly conversations about my topic stem from how federal regulation slows the process of scientific innovation, and how the US is falling behind to other countries due to our government's unwillingness to increase funding and speed up clinical trials for lifesaving medications. These two ideas fit together because it shows a direct cause and effect relationship. Due to the slow pace of regulated scientific research, this biohacking movement has surfaced where common people (who often do not have a scientific educational background) are taking matters into their own hands in order to try to produce innovations that either have the potential to cure deadly diseases, or for unethical personal gain to correct the imperfect— under the guise of wanting to create a better human.

Rhetorical Analysis/Proposal

Caeden Cloud

The homosexual agenda: a crisis that has gotten thrown around by people of the religious right and by right-wing media pundits to try to discredit the LGBTQ rights movement. The guiding ideology spread by people on the right is that the gay rights movement is actually a front for gay people to promote “unhealthy, immoral lifestyles” and recruit new people to their culture. While this crisis is in no way a real thing, the fact that so many people believe in it is an issue and hurts the progress of gay rights. Three key stakeholders are right-wing Christians who create the propaganda, far-right media outlets that perpetuate this “crisis,” and LGBTQ people who are victimized as a result of it. Each one of these stakeholders uses different rhetorical strategies as a part of this discussion: both groups on the far right that spread this information use fear tactics, which forces queer people to go on the defensive.

The stakeholder with the strongest voice regarding this “crisis” is the right-wing media. The right-wing media perpetuates the idea of the homosexual agenda in an effort to delegitimize the LGBTQ rights movement and spread fear about gay people. “The Real Homosexual Agenda,” from the conservative media site TrueNews.org, is a good example of a right-wing media organization expressing their beliefs about the gay agenda. The article has no listed authors and is more or less stylized as a list of incidents that support their claim that the homosexual agenda is a real thing, that radicals in the gay-rights

movement are attempting to convert people to “immoral” lifestyles, and that gay people view themselves as enemies to Christianity. At the top of the article, there is a box with a lengthy quote claiming to be stated by a gay-rights activist. The article uses it to stir fear in its readers: “we shall sodomize your sons... we shall seduce them... wherever men are with men together. Your sons shall become our minions and do our bidding. They will be recast in our image. They will come to crave and adore us. All churches who condemn us will be closed” (“Real Homosexual Agenda”). The language in this quote is striking and graphic; it portrays homosexual men as a wicked and evil force. It also outlines all of the claims made by conservatives about the dangers of the homosexual agenda. This quote was claimed to be reported in a gay community newspaper; however, it is instead linked to another conservative propaganda site, “Traditional Values Coalition.” Within the same header box is a link that says: “Find out about the homosexual movement and its link to pedophilia.” Under the first box is a list of “downloads” giving more information about homosexuality; however, one must request that information from a site moderator. These downloads include “homosexual lifestyle comparisons,” implying that being gay is unsafe; “homosexual propaganda”; “gays and pedophilia,” implying that gay men are pedophiles; and “causes of homosexuality,” which implies that sexuality is a choice; and others (“Real Homosexual Agenda”).

After the quote and downloads at the head of the article, the unnamed author begins his/her article. The author starts with a statement: “clearly not everyone in the homosexual movement is an extremist... However, many militant homosexuals and their

supporters have different beliefs” (“Real Homosexual Agenda”). The “not all...but many” structure of the phrase suggests that “extremist homosexuals” are a very widespread issue. The choice of words is also a noticeable rhetorical strategy in this article. The author uses the word “militant” to describe queer people. This implies that gay people are an organized, massive, planned coalition preparing some type of attack. The author then lists the “tactics” with which gays “force their beliefs on society” (“Real Homosexual Agenda”). It’s structured into an easy-to-read bullet-point list, but the choice of wording is also striking. Some of the words the author writes in this list to describe the actions of the gay-rights movement include “harassing,” “preying on children,” “destroying and undermining,” “annihilating,” and “deceptively” (“Real Homosexual Agenda”). This wording implies violence, deceit, and hatred to describe an entire group of people. This rhetorical strategy is meant to stir immense fear in the reader, and this is only in the first two paragraphs of an article that is about 1000 words long. The usage of violent and fearful rhetorical language continues throughout the entire article and is used in almost every single sentence.

The author also uses ethos to gain credibility. As the author is unnamed, there is no mention of expertise in the field. However, he or she may be perceived as such with the aforementioned list of downloads. These downloads are supposed to give more information about the gay agenda; therefore, the implication is that the writer knows much more than is being presented in the article. There are also multiple links to other sources throughout the article. This certainly gives the author more credibility. However, there are far too few links

presented for all of the information that is given. Any time the author presents statistics that should be cited, there is no citation. At one point a reference is simply, “ask those who have walked away from that lifestyle” (“Real Homosexual Agenda”). There are times when a credible source such as the Associated Press will be mentioned in the writing, but without link or reference. Additionally, all of the formally referenced sources are not credible, and almost all of them are links to right-wing propaganda sites. Despite the fact that this article is obviously unreliable to people who are privileged enough to receive a college education, the visitors of TrueNews.org who will be reading this article most likely will find it credible. The fact that the article even lists sources in the first place is quite an improvement from the other blogs that toss around the idea of a homosexual agenda. And even though the sources are untrustworthy, chances are someone who is interested in this article will only agree with all of the other references in the article and interpret them as reliable sources. This writing is dangerous. It spreads false, uncorroborated evidence as truth and creates fear at the expense of a marginalized group of people, just to further right-wing interests.

GLAAD, formerly the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, is a watchdog organization devoted to making sure that queer people are accurately represented in the media. Their article, “GLAAD Media Reference Guide - Terms To Avoid” represents a key stakeholder in the issue of the gay agenda: the LGBTQ people who are targeted by the homophobic rhetoric. The article is a list of terms that media should try to avoid using in reference to LGBTQ people. One of the terms they list is “homosexual agenda.” According to GLAAD,

making claims about a homosexual agenda is bad because it hurts the gay-rights movement, and “notions of a so-called ‘homosexual agenda’ are rhetorical inventions of anti-gay extremists seeking to create a climate of fear by portraying the pursuit of equal opportunity for LGBT people as sinister” (“GLAAD”). Each section of the list is bolded with a group of offensive terms and with more appropriate alternatives to those terms below, also in bold. Each of these is followed by one or two paragraphs explaining the history of the term, why it is offensive, and how one can avoid using it. The second part of the article is subtitled “DEFAMATORY LANGUAGE.” This is a list of words and slurs that are offensive. Similar to the first part, lists of specific words to avoid are followed by a paragraph about why these terms should be avoided (“GLAAD”).

Unlike the more conservative article by TrueNews.org, the language has a much more professional and easy-to-read tone. Each paragraph contains only a few sentences, making it as simple and clear as possible. It also remains politically correct in its use of language. Many of the words and actions the article lists as offensive are given in quotation marks to suggest that the language used is incorrect: “The term ‘sexual preference’ is typically used to suggest that being lesbian, gay or bisexual is a choice and therefore can and should be ‘cured’” (“GLAAD”). The specific term that this part of the article talks about is “sexual preference,” and putting this in quotes emphasizes that it is something that is not politically correct or appropriate to use, and therefore tends to be used by people who are trying to demonize gay people. Putting “cured” in quotes shows that the idea of curing someone’s sexuality is also only used by homophobic people. The

professionalism and careful use of language is quite different from the tone and language used in the TrueNews article.

While the language is much more professional, the GLAAD article uses some similarly strong language as the conservative article, primarily in calling the other side “extremists” (“GLAAD”). However, even though “extremist” is a strong word, the GLAAD article uses it to provide context, while TrueNews.org uses it as an attack. When GLAAD says a term is used by an extremist, they are being truthful in that these are terms used by anti-gay activists. Meanwhile, TrueNews.org calls all gay-rights activists extremists in an attack on the group of people in general. The usage of this language by LGBTQ people is defensive in response to those who attack them. Another similarity is the usage of links within the article. GLAAD’s article has multiple links to another one of their articles that provides more information and examples, but it does not link to outside sources in the same way TrueNews.org does. However, GLAAD does not need to do this, as they are already a well-established media-monitoring organization and does not need those outside sources to establish their credibility. But a reader who is unaware of GLAAD may interpret this as a lack of credibility and may not take the article seriously.

The final stakeholder in this crisis are the (primarily evangelical) religious organizations that created the idea of the homosexual agenda in the first place. According to Christian blogger James R. Aist in his article, “The Gay Agenda: What in the World Is Going On?” the homosexual agenda was a term coined originally by evangelicals as a way to describe the motives of the gay-rights movement (Aist, “Gay Agenda”). Despite this admission, the article is

still written to “alert born-again Christians about aspects of homosexuality that they really should know in order to be able to perceive and understand the culture war that’s underway in today’s world” (Aist, “Gay Agenda”). This choice of language is very strong, as at the very beginning of the article it addresses the conflict between LGBTQ people and the religious right as a “war.” This is very similar to the conservative news site in that it uses war language to spread fear about queer people. The article repeatedly uses this language, as well as trying to accuse gay people of trying to dismantle churches and religious organizations, as it is written from a conservative Christian perspective.

The article is divided into different sections: first an introduction, which is followed by a list of 21 reasons why Christians should be concerned about the gay-rights movement. Some of these reasons are extreme and even go so far to say that hate crimes against gay people should be legal. The third section is about how Christians should respond to the homosexual agenda. In this section, he suggests that anybody “who even approves of or encourages the sins of homosexuality will, someday, have to answer to God for it” (Aist, “Gay Agenda”). This is implying that even simple acceptance of LGBTQ people will send someone to hell. However, he urges kindness toward gay people in an effort to convert them to Christian lifestyles. He also argues for the election of outwardly anti-gay politicians and for preachers to more aggressively attack gay people in their messages. Throughout this final section, he quotes from the Bible and lists many verses as references (Aist, “Gay Agenda”). This is to make a further appeal to Christian readers.

Aist tries to establish credibility in several ways. The final section is a list of sources he used; however, not a single one of these references is from a trustworthy source. One of the listed sources is even “Conservipedia,” basically Wikipedia for right-wing conspiracy theories. The end of the article mentions that he is a professor and links to his website, which certainly makes him seem credible. I followed the link, and on his website, he claims to be a professor at Cornell who has written multiple books and peer-reviewed articles and is an expert on issues of religion and sexuality (Aist, “ABOUT”). I went to Cornell’s website and searched for him, and it turns out that he does not specialize in any of the issues he writes about, but in Plant Pathology and Plant Microbe Biology (“Emeriti Faculty”). It then may seem confusing that a professor at Cornell who boasts about his experience in peer-reviewed sources would write articles based on such untrustworthy information. But it makes sense that even scholars cannot base their arguments in real facts, as there is no real scientific basis for the gay agenda.

The homosexual agenda was used primarily to discredit the LGBTQ rights movement by spreading fear and panic about the motivations of gay people. This ideology was perpetuated primarily by the religious right and today is generally thought to be incorrect. The term was popularized in 1993 with a video used as right-wing propaganda to prevent gay people from serving in the military (Carpenter). It gained the most recent attention when the gay-rights movement focused on same-sex marriage as more states were legalizing it at the start of the 2000s. However, after marriage was legalized nationwide, much of the rhetoric stopped, and the idea of a

homosexual agenda was thrown around much less. Many people still believe this is a crisis, however. It is very hard as a queer person to read the types of blatantly homophobic things that are being said, and many other LGBTQ people have trouble with this rhetoric as well. But overall, the homosexual agenda is not a real crisis and was created as a method for the religious right to spread fear and panic in response to the gay-rights movement and the growing acceptance of homosexuality; however, this rhetoric is inherently flawed and dangerous to queer people.

I plan to explore the rhetoric used on either side of this issue to show that the gay agenda is not a real crisis by any means. I have yet to find a credible source that explicitly refers to the gay agenda as a real phenomenon. I plan to pick apart the arguments made by the right by their sources in order to prove that the “crisis” is inherently flawed. I will accomplish this by disproving the ethos of conservative sources that make the claim that the gay agenda is a real crisis, both through analyses of references and author credibility. I also will do my own separate research about the claims some of these articles are making about the “dangers of homosexual lifestyles,” on topics such as HIV, pedophilia, factors that contribute to sexuality, and the purpose and effects of prosecuting hate crimes.

I also will examine how the aggressive language surrounding the issue is very problematic and how the two sides are framed as being adamantly opposed to one another. I will explore how language and propaganda have perpetuated the issue and also how this affects people outside of the mentioned stakeholders. Will they be more swayed by pro-LGBT+ or anti-LGBT+ arguments, and what factors

determine what they believe? Are outsider opinions of this “crisis” more influenced by more exposure to LGBTQ people, education, or simply political leaning? Additionally, for context and further discussion, I will research the history of this “crisis,” why it gained so much attention at the time it did, and why the term is not used as much anymore. I will analyze how much of the language about the homosexual agenda hurts the progress of the gay rights movement.

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Superiority Through Inferiority: Articulations of Power in Hybrid Masculinity

Olivia Gauvin

In 2001, Demetrakis Z. Demetriou published “Connell’s Concept of Hegemonic Masculinity: A Critique” in which Demetriou addressed Robert W. Connell’s hegemonic masculinity (“The Concept of ‘Role’ and What to Do with It”) in regards to contemporary gender role theory. Connell defines hegemonic masculine traits as “white, Western, rational, calculative, individualistic, violent, and heterosexual” (Connell; Demetriou 347). Demetriou critiqued the underdevelopment in the theory of hegemonic masculinity, arguing that Connell’s concept fails to recognize different masculinity performances that also contribute to upholding the patriarchy’s power.

Demetriou instead introduced the concept of hybridity among masculine performance, specifically within the male gender identity. He notes that hegemonic masculinity (a) is inflexible in its interpretation of masculinity, thus extremely limited in its application, (b) fails to address power struggles among different masculine expressions, including race, and (c) makes hybrid masculinities appear as powerless opponents to the patriarchy, rather than capable contributors to it (Demetriou, 340-48). It’s important to note that hegemonic masculinity is understood among gender scholars as a negative practice, as it perpetuates harmful oppression of subordinate

groups (Connell); moreover, Demetriou does not deny the perpetuated oppression.

Demetriou's critique formulated the primary concept of "hybrid masculinity" (347) which refers to selective adoption of culturally subordinate and/or marginalized masculinities into privileged men's gender expressions, performances, and identities (Arxer 396-99; Bridges 247; Demetriou). Today, hybrid masculinity is recognized as common among young-adult men from privileged upbringings (Bridges and Pascoe 248; Schmitz 282). To provide evidence to his theory of hybridity, Demetriou conducts a case study regarding homosexual masculinities in comparison to male hegemonic bloc; maintaining that both masculinities uphold patriarchal standards despite feminine attributes (349). Evidence has since expanded, and today hybridity is not limited to homosexual masculinities, and now encompasses all varying expressions of masculinity. Hybrid masculinities, while not universally applied among gender theorists and scholars, are integral in understanding changes from traditional to contemporary gender roles, and expectations (Bridges 246). The concept of hybrid masculinity in contrast to hegemonic masculinity has opened scholarly discussions that further develop the theory as well as its implications.

Most research underlines the authority that the "individual" has on his own masculinity and sequential masculine performance (Bridges 247; Connell and Messerschmidt 844). Demetriou's data was collected through interviews conducted with individual men, rather than in groups. Studies following the publication of his concept of hybridity in masculinities presented research almost exclusively

through individual interviews, as well as meta-analyses on data collected prior to the 2001. In response, scholars such as Robert W. Connell and Janell Watson instead argue that for the theory of hybrid masculinity to be consistent, it must be studied through the lens of masculinity assemblage (Connell and Messerschmidt 844-45; Evers 894; Watson 110) — a concept that stresses the influence a man’s sociological environment has on his performance of masculinity (Watson 107-09). Scholarship from both research methods are presented¹.

Outward Appearance

A man’s outward appearance, such as his choice of dress, profoundly reinforces his power in the surrounding environment. Numerous scholars such as Ben Barry concluded that the manner in which men express themselves through fashion may not be the most overt nor intentional, yet is one of the clearest articulations of hybrid masculinity (658). For example, stereotyped feminine performances in shopping, such as spending great amounts of money and time, wearing feminine styles and/or patterns, grooming habits, tailoring clothing, or shopping exclusively at luxury name-brand stores are observed to be increasingly mainstream among professional male identities (Barber 40-42; Barry 648; Edward; Scheibling 225-27). Multiple studies regarding hybrid masculinity’s connection to fashion have gathered that men adopt societally perceived subordinate traits

¹Please note that individual perspectives dominate much of the research on hybrid masculinity; masculinity studied through the lens of assemblage is, on balance, far less common. Thus, proportions of differing research methods in this literature review are not equal.

(Barry 648-50; Eisen 809) to create a sense of authenticity in their attire, and overall appearance (Eisen 809-10). This sense of authenticity differentiates hybrid masculinities from hegemonic masculinities, therefore the men are able to acquire a sense of maturity and superiority in comparison (Buerkle 176; Eisen 816-17).

The incorporation of traditional feminine fashion as a method of reinforcing dominant and subordinate masculinities has only recently been considered by gender performance scholars (Barry 648; Buerkle 172-73; Eisen 809) and thus, developed theories are limited in scope. However, of the prominent literature that currently exists, the findings have consistently revealed that men who adopt hybrid masculine traits (like feminine or non-hegemonic traits) into their physical appearances and social performances use these traits to claim superiority over traditional hegemonic masculinities (Barber 42-43; Barry 651-53). Thus, a paradox is created, in which the men who reject inferiority of their feminine dress actually re-establish superiority over feminine traits while adopting them for their appearance's benefit.

Voices of Hierarchy

In contrast to conclusions regarding subconscious or covert articulation of masculinity through attire (Barry 658), the identification of hegemonic masculine traits as an "out-group" is, for most scholars, the epitome of hybrid masculine performance. In 2009, Richard O. de Visser emphasized that performances of hybrid masculine behaviors are often conscious, with the overt intention of countering societal expectations of hegemonic masculine traits (368).

Moreover, de Visser did not observe articulations of hybrid masculinities through appearance, instead he noted that the most overt behaviors were literally voiced by the subjects (367-68).

Following his article, studies focusing on men's consciousness of their non-hegemonic masculinities were published. Interpretations of masculine behaviors were reshaped, as the concept of intentional behavior was applied to hybrid masculinities. In 2017, Rachel M. Schmitz furthered de Visser's argument. Schmitz concluded that not only do men purposefully perform hybrid masculinities to counter unfavorable hegemonic traits — they also use their defiance of said traits to identify as the morally "just" bloc (292).

Scholars accept both de Visser's theory and Schmitz's succeeding assertions, and many further note that hybrid masculinity cannot be properly studied without recognizing the positions of social power that are enjoyed by hybrid masculine traits (Bridges and Pascoe 250-53; Eisen 812; Watson 115). The suggestion of power being overtly reinforced *and* enjoyed by hybrid masculinities enabled significant developments in masculine studies. Notable observations were presented by Tristan Bridges and C.J. Pascoe; Bridges and Pascoe argue that men who communicate through non-hegemonic methods, such as public emotional vulnerability and social sensitivity, do little to dismantle patriarchal standards, thus instead producing hybrid forms of inequality (249-53). There are two notable hybrid masculinities observed by scholars that significantly reinforce gender inequalities.

Entitled Speech

Numerous studies concerning hybridity reveal masculine entitlement, in which the communication methods of hybrid masculine men are rarely for exchanges of knowledge, but instead are used to enforce dominance in their environment. Schmitz found that men who recognize and consequently “reject” oppressiveness upheld by hegemonic masculinities often feel entitled in gender discussions, specifically regarding men’s roles in feminist movements (284-85). These findings stand in agreement with newly published scholarship: identifying hegemonic traits as the “out-group” thus enables the in-group’s (being hybrid masculinities) entitlement in holistic gender discussions — not just those limited to hegemonic masculinities (Buerkle 171-72; Eisen 816; Schmitz 292).

Scholars point to hybrid entitled speech because it reveals that these particular masculinities benefit from existing patriarchal structures. Through this phenomenon, hybrid masculine privilege is upheld; men’s overt rejections of hegemonic masculinities do not dismantle patriarchal structures. Instead, hybrid masculine traits create a paradox in which male dominance is gained, and gender inequalities are not only maintained, but made more flexible, thus allowing inequalities to become increasingly pervasive in society (Bridges and Pascoe 247).

Power of Vulnerability

Male emotional vulnerability is closely observed by scholars because it produces similar social inequalities as hybrid entitled speech, despite the seemingly different masculine articulations. Daniel B. Eisen defines this phenomenon as the “Caring Man,” in which men portray hybrid masculinities through traditionally feminine

forms of emotional expression (804). These men actively promote their perceived vulnerability and emphasize that their behaviors are often misunderstood among hegemonic masculinities because said behaviors are recognized as feminine (de Visser and McDonnell; Eisen 804).

Men performing these hybrid masculinities again place hegemonic masculinities into an inferior “out-group.” And so, masculine vulnerability exists not with the intention of dismantling patriarchal systems (Eisen 816), but instead with the intention of benefiting specifically because their masculinities are not societally recognized to be hegemonic (Bridges 254; de Visser 370; de Visser and McDonnell 22). Moreover, societal animosity towards female/feminine emotional vulnerability does not progress/improve — instead it is only welcomed if performed by men (Bridges and Pascoe 254; Schmitz 283). Gender scholars emphasize that hybrid masculine vulnerability (a) is not actually vulnerability, as the men demonstrate no accountability nor sensitivity, and (b) bolsters systems of male dominance, as emotional vulnerability is only performed if, on balance, men benefit socially.

Conclusion

An abundance of research has been conducted since Demetriou first proposed the concept of hybridity among masculine performance. Most notably, research has developed far beyond the bounds of Demetriou’s initial case study regarding hybridity among homosexual masculinities. Such developments have enabled in-depth research regarding common traits among hybrid gender performance,

cultural shifts in performed feminine traits, and variations in modern patriarchal systems. Furthermore, scholarship emphasized that hegemonic masculinity encompasses both masculine dominance enforced upon females *as well as* masculine dominance enforced upon hybrid masculine traits; thus, hegemonic masculinity can maintain power over subordinate masculinities, and is not just limited to patriarchal dominance over women.

Regarding research, I was able to find abundant studies discussing hybrid masculinity. However, I am still unable to conclude that the concept of hybrid masculinity is universally recognized in the same manner as Robert W. Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity. Simply put, hybrid masculinity is, still today, not universally recognized among gender scholars. One concern regarding research of hybrid masculinity was voiced by Janell Watson. Watson emphasized that the theory of hybrid masculinity is not fully developed, as there is limited research studying hybridity through the lens of masculinity assemblage. The lens of assemblage is not the only concept left unexplored. A substantial factor of Demetriou's theory that remains unexplored is that of internal masculinity versus external masculinity. There is limited research detailing internal masculinity, such as men's internal processing, interpretation, and subsequent performance of masculinity. Research regarding external masculinity was clearly abundant, as represented through Barry's study regarding expression through fashion, as well as Eisen's and Schmitz's studies regarding expressions through communication.

Another question raised by the hybrid masculine performance is its variance within different cultures, non-binary orientations, religions, and races. As the presented research clearly reveals, hybrid masculinities depend heavily on social interpretations of masculine performances. Because of the different masculine roles men adhere to across cultures, I feel that research regarding different cultures' performances of masculinity is necessary. Current research addresses hybrid masculinity through many independent observations, such as dress or communication of one's emotions. However, research addressing the intersectionality of masculine performances are limited. In other words, for the theory of hybrid masculinity to be validated among gender scholars, I feel it is vital for theorists to bridge the gap between masculine performances and cultural contexts.

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Bertram, Christine and Katrin Rehdanz. "The Role of Urban Greenspace for Human Well-being." *Ecological Economics*, vol. 120, 2015, pp. 139-152, doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2015.10.013.

This scholarly article quantifies the benefit of urban greenspace for the well-being of an individual, using Berlin as the test case. To do this, a survey was conducted in Berlin's inner districts to determine the impact green space has on an individual's subjective well-being. When adjusted for other factors, the study found that there is a significant benefit of certain levels of greenspace with a U-shaped pattern (benefits highest at a discovered midpoint). In discussing the implications of the amount of greenspace in Berlin, the authors write, "As three-quarters of the respondents have less than this [calculated ideal] amount of urban greenspace available in their living environments, green space is, overall, in insufficient supply in the case study area in Berlin" (Bertram and Rehdanz 149). This article could work well as an exhibit source, as it quantitatively shows the value of urban greenspace for individuals and gives a prescriptive amount of what is ideal for Berlin specifically, meaning it can be contrasted with demands for construction on green space.

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Analysis

The role of urban green space for human well-being

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ABSTRACT

Most people in Europe live in urban environments. For these people, urban green space is an important element of well-being, but it is scarce in most regions. We use self-reported information on life satisfaction and two satellite-based green space measures to explore how urban green space affects the well-being of the residents of Berlin, the capital city of Germany. We combine spatially explicit survey data with spatially highly disaggregated GIS data on urban green space. We observe a significant, inverted U-shaped effect of the amount of and distance to urban green space on life satisfaction. According to our results, the amount of green space in a 1 km buffer that leads to the largest positive effect on life satisfaction is 25 to 40% of the buffer area. In our sample, 75% of the respondents have less than their optimal amount.

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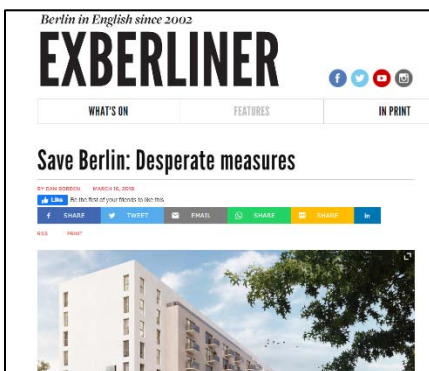
1. Introduction

Approximately 75% of the people in Europe live in urban areas (World Bank, 2013). One important element for their well-being and quality of life is the availability of urban green space. There are differences (BMU, 2007).¹ At the city level, some German cities have defined minimum targets for per capita supply of urban green space.² City development, however, always has to address trade-offs and conflicting interests between inner development, e.g., for housing, and the development or preservation of urban green space and other spaces.

Article Information Page from Database

Borden, Dan. "Save Berlin: Desperate Measures." *EXBERLINER*, Iomauna Media, 16 March 2018, www.exberliner.com/features/zeitgeist/save-berlin-desperate-measures/.

This popular article explores the strange ways public and private groups are attempting to provide more housing in Berlin. Borden writes about hated buildings being turned into apartments and grocery store Aldi building low-rent apartment blocks above its stores. The author also discusses distasteful apartment construction, including on sites of concentration camps or the Berlin Wall. Borden concludes on the somber note that "As our own real estate values rise, expect to see more Berlin history trampled to put roofs over our heads." This source could be used as a background source, as it provides an argument regarding what is happening in Berlin that may not necessarily be the most useful to integrate into the rest of the paper. However, the overall value of this source is likely limited as it only introduces a couple of provoking points.



First Page of Article

Coppel, Gero and Henry Wüstemann. “The impact of urban green space on health in Berlin, Germany: Empirical findings and implications for urban planning.” *Landscape and Urban Planning*, vol. 167, 2017, pp. 410-418, doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2017.06.015.

This scholarly article looks at how urban green spaces in Berlin impact the self-reported health (SRH) of individuals as found through a survey. Supporting what has been found in other studies, the authors found that increasing green space/decreasing distance to it is beneficial for health and that lacking this access causes negative impacts on health. The authors point out that despite its relatively high amount of green space, Berlin’s overall level is still inadequate in most areas, causing harm to SRH of the individuals surveyed. The authors say that “Our results could provide useful information for policymakers and urban planners on how to increase SRH” (Coppel and Wüstemann 417). This article could be useful as an exhibit source because it provides empirical evidence regarding the lack of greenspaces in much of Berlin, which can be used to contrast with demands to build housing.



Article Information Page from Database

Kabisch, Nadja and Dagmar Haase. "Green justice or just green? Provision of urban green spaces in Berlin, Germany." *Landscape and Urban Planning*, vol. 122, Feb. 2014, pp. 129-139, doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2013.11.016.

This scholarly article explores the distribution of urban green spaces within the city of Berlin and whether these spaces are equitably accessed by all segments of the population. In their research, the authors found that while in general Berlin has large amounts of green space, it is concentrated in the outer ring of the city, leaving many people living in the dense city center with inadequate amounts of greenspace, particularly immigrant groups. To demonstrate this, the authors use a survey conducted at Tempelhofer Feld, where the elderly and immigrant populations are underrepresented, posing questions about how parks should be integrated into dense areas. Considering how on a per capita level, Berlin has enough green space, "the general provision of UGS seems to be sufficient for most of the inhabitants. However, it is not enough to only examine per capita values as evidence of distributive injustice was identified at the sub-district level" (Kabisch and Haase 136). This article could potentially be used as an argument or exhibit source, as it provides some statistical evidence that may be useful, including the case study of Tempelhof, along with some maps that could be analyzed, which would place it in the exhibit category. It might, however, be used instead as an argument source, should the focus be on engaging with the authors' points about the need

to focus on justice when looking at urban planning and green space.





Article Information Page from Database

Nasr, Joseph and Holger Hansen. "UPDATE 2-Berlin's ballooning rents to be frozen for five years." *Reuters*, Reuters, 18 June 2019, www.reuters.com/article/germany-housing-rent-cap/update-1-berlins-ballooning-rents-to-be-frozen-for-five-years-idUSL8N23P3WO.

This popular source summarizes some of the efforts that Berlin and Germany are undertaking to quell the growing housing affordability crisis, including a five-year rent freeze in Berlin, a major policy given that a vast majority of Berliners rent. However, the authors point out that analysts have questioned whether this is effective policy, given the potential implications for future construction, which the authors say is ultimately needed to solve the crisis. The authors also explain that while Berlin has seen rents rapidly grow, "they are still cheap compared with London or Paris. A two-bedroom apartment in Berlin's trendy Prenzlauer Berg neighborhood costs about 1,500 euros (\$1,700) a month, about half the cost of a similar flat in London's Primrose Hill" (Nasr and Hansen). This article might be useful as a

background source, because it provides a lens into how contentious Berlin's housing politics are and how difficult it is for the city to address these issues, though this article's overall usage would likely be quite narrow or brief, especially as it is not very quotable.

UPDATE 2-Berlin's ballooning rents to be frozen for five years

Joseph Nasr, Holger Hansen 5 MIN READ  

- * Analysts say freeze won't solve housing crisis
- * Germany not building enough new units
- * Rent freeze could be applied elsewhere (Adds analyst, Deutsche Wohnen CEO, background)

By Joseph Nasr and Holger Hansen

BERLIN, June 18 (Reuters) - Berlin's city government decided on Tuesday to freeze rents for five years, heeding complaints from residents that their once famously affordable city was pricing them out.

For decades after German unification in 1990, the capital was a magnet for artists, musicians and students drawn by housing far cheaper than in other major European cities - partly the legacy of Berlin's decades marooned inside Communist East Germany

First Page of Article

O'Sullivan, Feargus. "Berlin's Massive Housing Push Sparks a Debate About the City's Future." *CityLab*, Bloomberg, 27 Nov. 2018, www.citylab.com/equity/2018/11/berlin-germany-affordable-housing-construction-rents/576469/.

This article gives an overview of Berlin's housing crisis and some of the possible ways to address it. O'Sullivan explains that many people are moving to Berlin, pushing the city's rents and land costs up, while building has been unable to keep up. To counter this, the city wishes to construct vast amounts of new housing, including affordable housing through government-subsidized construction. Yet Berlin has run into the issue of where to build, with options including greenspace and unused areas, "But deciding which space to prioritize for development has turned the city's greenfield and brownfield sites into

battlegrounds on which the future shape of the city will be thrashed out” (O’Sullivan). This article could be useful as an exhibit source, as it provides a motivating issue with the shortage of housing units as well as providing several important statistics on housing in Berlin, like on rent price and affordable housing.



First Page of Article

Schönball, Ralf. “Bauen für die Ärmsten [Building for the Poorest].” *Der Tagesspiegel*, Der Tagesspiegel, 3 Jan. 2019, www.tagesspiegel.de/berlin/wohnungsnot-in-berlin-bauen-fuer-die-aermsten/24051386.html.

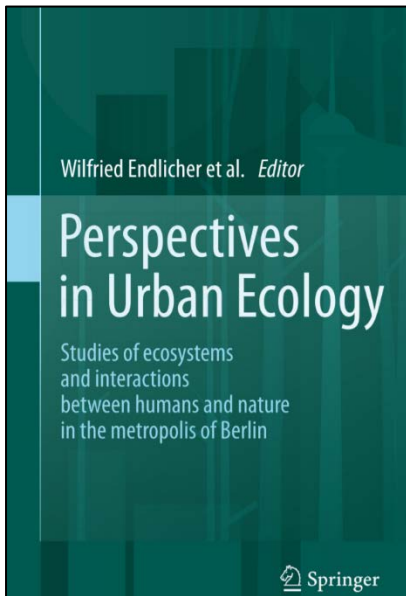
This popular source from a local newspaper argues for new construction on open space in order to alleviate Berlin’s housing crisis. Schönball calls for leaders to have courage to push for new building, as he claims other measures like rent control are easy to circumvent for landlords and do nothing to solve the actual problem. However, he resists building on Tempelhof, since that was already rejected by voters and there are other available sites. A concluding point is made that “The

fight against the housing crisis is only won with new construction, also and particularly for the weakest” (Schönball, translation mine). This article could be used as an argument source, as Schönball makes a clear proposal of how he thinks Berlin’s problems should be addressed, meaning that I could use his arguments to either support or contrast with my argument.

Van der Meer, Elke, et al. “Chapter 11: Human Perception of Urban Environment and Consequences for its Design.” *Perspectives in Urban Ecology*, edited by Wilfried Endlicher, et al., Springer, 2011, pp. 305-331.

This book chapter looks at a variety of different urban planning decisions that have impacts on life satisfaction in Berlin and uses this information to argue regarding how urban environments should be crafted. Issues raised include crowding and the impact of building height and several studies done on satisfaction related to greenspace, finding that the citizens of Berlin are equally approving of natural greenspace and brownfield sites converted into greenspace. The authors also looked at the best ways to plan these spaces and urban forests. Summarizing their findings, the authors claim that “well-founded changes in the urban design or in current city planning like, for example, keeping wide streets and the inner city’s restriction of the building height... and structured urban wasteland areas... can lead to increased quality of life” (van der Meer et al. 327). This chapter could potentially be useful either as an exhibit or argument source, as it provides statistics that can be used to make arguments about certain possible solutions to housing problems in Berlin, while also providing

clear arguments that can be interlaced with my argument to refute or for support.



Book Cover

Wetzstein, Steffen. "Comparative housing, urban crisis and political economy: an ethnographically based 'long view' from Auckland, Singapore and Berlin." *Housing Studies*, vol. 32, 2019, DOI: 10.1080/02673037.2018.1487038.

This scholarly source details what the author contends are a new form of housing crises occurring in the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis. To explore this issue, Wetzstein looks at three different cities, including Berlin, and examines how they have come to their current situations regarding their housing. With Berlin, Wetzstein discusses the implications of the sale of public housing stock and how it plays a role in real estate speculation. Considering all the problems facing Berlin, Wetzstein argues that "As an historical outlier and latecomer at

the global stage of attractive, international cities, the future of housing in Berlin and its impact seem hard to predict” (288). This article could either be used as a background or exhibit source. For background, it could provide an overview of what has led to Berlin’s current circumstances without necessarily being analyzed, while as an exhibit, it can be analyzed to make arguments for how Berlin could address housing problems outside of land development, though its overall usefulness in this paper is likely limited as it does not heavily address construction.



The image shows a screenshot of an article information page from the journal *Housing Studies*. The page includes the journal's logo, ISSN information, and the title of the article: "Comparative housing, urban crisis and political economy: an ethnographically based 'long view' from Auckland, Singapore and Berlin" by Steffen Wetzstein. It also provides citation information, a link to the article, and options to submit an article, view article statistics, and view related articles.

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Comparative housing, urban crisis and political economy: an ethnographically based 'long view' from Auckland, Singapore and Berlin

Steffen Wetzstein

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Practicing Metacognition

Metacognition – reflection on your own thinking – is essential for any writer. After all, writing and research are about rhetorical choices, and we make the best choices when we are aware of how we think and learn. Whether to look back at what you’ve done and see how to improve, or to look ahead to strategize the best way to approach your work, thinking about writing starts before you begin and ends after you finish any one piece of work. The authors in this section show metacognition in action.

Semester Reflection: Fightin' with My Head

Natalie Harder

What do I want to say? *How* do I want to say it? *Why* do I want to say it? These questions kept echoing in my head as I sat down to outline my end-of-semester reflection. As I thought about where I was as a writer at the beginning of the semester in comparison to where I am now, I realized that these questions in my head were new. This intentionality in my writing has completely enhanced the way that I think, read, and write; all of the enhancements to my rhetorical tools, research skills, and editing processes fall under the umbrella of intentionality. Everything that Harper Lee wrote was intentional. Everything that Bryan Stevenson wrote was intentional. It was this intentionality that had me reading for hours in my dorm room before I realized that I was four chapters past what was due for next class. It was this intentionality that made me put down *Just Mercy*, and say “I want to fight these injustices for the rest of my life!”

It is this intentionality that makes me more proud of the writing I completed in this class than any other writing I have produced in my academic career. No sentence in my Bildungsroman narrative was just a sentence. They were emotional pleas, plot enhancers, connections to my audience and our universal emotions, conveyers of the truth. I edited sentence by sentence asking myself, “What am I trying to say? Is this the best, most compelling way that I can portray it?” I found that including more figurative language, intentionally incorporating it into my writing, always made my writing significantly more compelling.

Instead of just discussing heartbreak, I drew an allusion to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, imploring "when had I been written into sour misfortune's book?" Instead of just identifying as a classical dancer, I also identified with the dance-like alliteration of "*pirouettes* and pointe shoes, *tendus* and blistered toes, *sous-sous* and so much sweat." It was understanding that Tom Robinson and Emmett Till died riddled with the same number of bullet wounds that tells me everything I write has the potential to mean so much more. So my challenge is continually asking myself "which of the tools that I have learned am I going to use to make my writing more intentional?"

The questions of intentionality followed me to my research paper as well. The bright purple sticky note on my computer read, "Why is this here? How does it relate to my thesis?" After asking myself, "What am I trying to say? Where are the holes in this argument? How can I say it better?" again and again and again, I found myself writing and rewriting again and again and again. I rewrote paragraphs and sentences and theses. I reordered my initial outline and my detailed outline and my essay. I reworked four different introductions and five different conclusions. I started by basing my thesis on the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, but eventually reworked the framework of my entire essay so that the Declaration more truthfully and intentionally served as a guideline for my essay rather than the proof. At first, it was frustrating. It was really frustrating. I just spent all this time, energy, and effort and now I was going to have to do it again? But after a few re-dos, I realized that I wasn't doing it again, per se. Each attempt was just another step closer to writing what I wanted to say in the most intentional way possible.

What do I want to say? I want to say that not only has my writing— my finished product— improved, but my writing process has as well. The intentionality that now drives my writing process (my outlines, rhetorical choices, edits) not only makes my writing better, but has brought back my love for writing. My previous need for my writing to be perfect choked the joy out of writing and replaced it with self-imposed limitations and anxiety. But now that I realize my writing doesn't have to be perfect and, instead, finds its perfection through its intentionality. I have re-found the joy in writing.

When I read *To Kill a Mockingbird* in high school, I thought that with my color-coded highlighting *and* my notes in the margins *and* my notes in my notebook *and* my commentary on my notes, I was well-prepared to analyze this text again in college. And then... bam! The professor asked, "What's in a name?" and I didn't know. What does "Atticus" mean? What does "Dill" mean? I didn't know. How did I not know the answer after all of the highlighting and note taking that I did? In retrospect the answer is simple. I didn't know and I didn't try to know. I didn't even bother to look it up. That's such a limited way to understand the world around me. I have since come to realize that I shouldn't just take what I am consuming at face value. I gain so much more by opening my computer and looking it up. Only by incorporating what I don't know will I ever expand my worldview. Only by looking it up, will I understand the gut-wrenching impact of Brent Staples' cowbells in bear country. Only by looking it up, will I understand that Atticus is not only a godlike figure to Scout Finch and many Americans,

but the father of laws in Ancient Greece. Only by looking it up, will I ever be able to walk around in someone else's skin.

It was this mindset that drove my reading and evaluation of research sources. Previously, I had been under the impression that effective research papers meant evidence from scholarly articles. Point blank. The end. I have subsequently learned that this approach is also detrimental to my worldview. A good research paper means that you are sharing a new, or at least somewhat unique contribution to the existing narrative. That means that no scholarly article is going to say what you want to say, the way you want to say it, because then, by definition, your contribution is no longer an addition to the conversation. With this new understanding of scholarly sources, I have learned that scholarly articles can be skimmed. In retrospect, I realize I didn't need to read a whole article about the HIV implications for sex workers. I could have read the introduction and conclusion and jumped right into the sections about human rights violations in healthcare, which directly related to and supported my thesis. Scholarly articles can serve as treasure maps leading to the buried treasure, rather than the whole tale. My new approach to research sources has shown me that scholars know and provide a truth, but that truth isn't *the* truth or at least isn't the whole truth. The information scholarly sources provide is important, but it is certainly not omniscient.

I found that some of the truths that scholarly sources lack can be found in newspapers and magazines. There is a concept in community-based research (which emphasizes partnerships between researchers and the communities their research is aiming to benefit) that says something along the lines of researchers being research experts and

members of the community being community issue experts. Most of the community experts I cited in my research paper came from newspapers and magazines: an article written by Melissa Grant (a former sex worker) in *Reason Magazine*, an interview with two sex workers (Adrian and SX) for *Vice*, a profile on dominatrix Karmenife for *Paper Magazine*. I found that these sources which gave voice to sex workers were jackpots for providing effective quotes. In the past, I had avoided newspapers and magazines due to the seemingly inherent biases and lack of expertise that reporters brought to their writing. However, now I have come to realize that, yes, reporters are biased and so are their interviewees. But as long as I acknowledge and appropriately address these biases, the biases of my community experts *should* influence my writing. They certainly know more about the topic than I do.

These potential biases are even more pertinent in internet sources. You can find something to prove anything on the internet. That is both a blessing and a curse. As with any source though, I was able to adequately accommodate for biases by confirming the credibility of my source. In this case, credibility wasn't just the qualifications of those writing the articles, but whether their values seemed to align with the other sources backing my thesis. I found a plethora of websites that provided arguments supporting a plethora of stances regarding sex workers and sex work regulation. However, upon further investigation, I found that many of these sources had sexist values and arguments. This made these internet sources significantly less credible as they pertained to my thesis, which argued for feminist means of protection for sex workers.

Overall, I found that my argument, essay, and personal worldview were only enhanced by expanding my understanding through more information, more distinct sources, and more types of sources. My argument was only strengthened by corroborating evidence, proof, and arguments among the different sources. If one source proves something, finding another source, or type of source that proves the same thing allowed my argument to strengthen its footing. The more voices that contributed to my understanding, conclusions, and theses, the more in-depth and encompassing my contributions to the conversation were. The more credible I became.

When I signed up for my WRTG-101 class, I expected to learn more about writing. What I didn't expect was to learn more about speaking and listening and the subsequent understanding of my own thinking. For better or for worse, I'm a perfectionist. But I already knew that. What I didn't know is that speaking instead of writing lets my thoughts flow without being inhibited by my need for them (or the way I communicate them) to be perfect. When I was writing my Bildungsroman, I talked through my thoughts and emotions with classmates in order to turn my ideas into a narrative that wasn't hindered by my need to formulate them perfectly or fit them into a specific format. When I was writing my research paper, I talked through my thoughts with friends to formulate an effective argument and thesis from my tangled web of thoughts. When we were reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Just Mercy*, or any supplemental readings, I found it very helpful to share my thoughts with my classmates to help me construct my thoughts in a logical framework. I also found it helpful to hear the points that either contradicted or piggybacked off my

own thoughts. This insight into others' perspectives allowed me to challenge and expand my own.

My worldview, without the insight of others, is limited. I view the world through a white, cis, straight, socioeconomically privileged, traditionally Western educated perspective. I also view it from a Jewish, disabled, female perspective. I don't know how people of color who are transgender, queer, socioeconomically disadvantaged, non-traditionally Western educated, Christian, able-bodied, and male (or any other variation of identities that I am not) view the world. My peers' insights challenged me to acknowledge my biases and widen my worldview. Statistically speaking, I am more likely to be sexually assaulted than my male classmates. And demographically speaking, they are more likely to be accused of sexual assault than I am. Thus, it was really interesting to hear their inputs into the conversation regarding the Title IX process. This gained insight helps make me a little more understanding, a little more just, and, hopefully, a little more merciful. From these seeds of genuine conversation, I have not only grown but have sown the seeds for future growth.

On the first day of class, I wrote on the green get-to-know-you handout that I would contribute to class once I am comfortable with the people in the classroom. The last statement I have since recognized to be inaccurate. It is not my classmates that make me comfortable enough to contribute in class, it is my confidence in my own voice that allows me to go from silent discomfort to confidently stepping outside of my comfort zone.

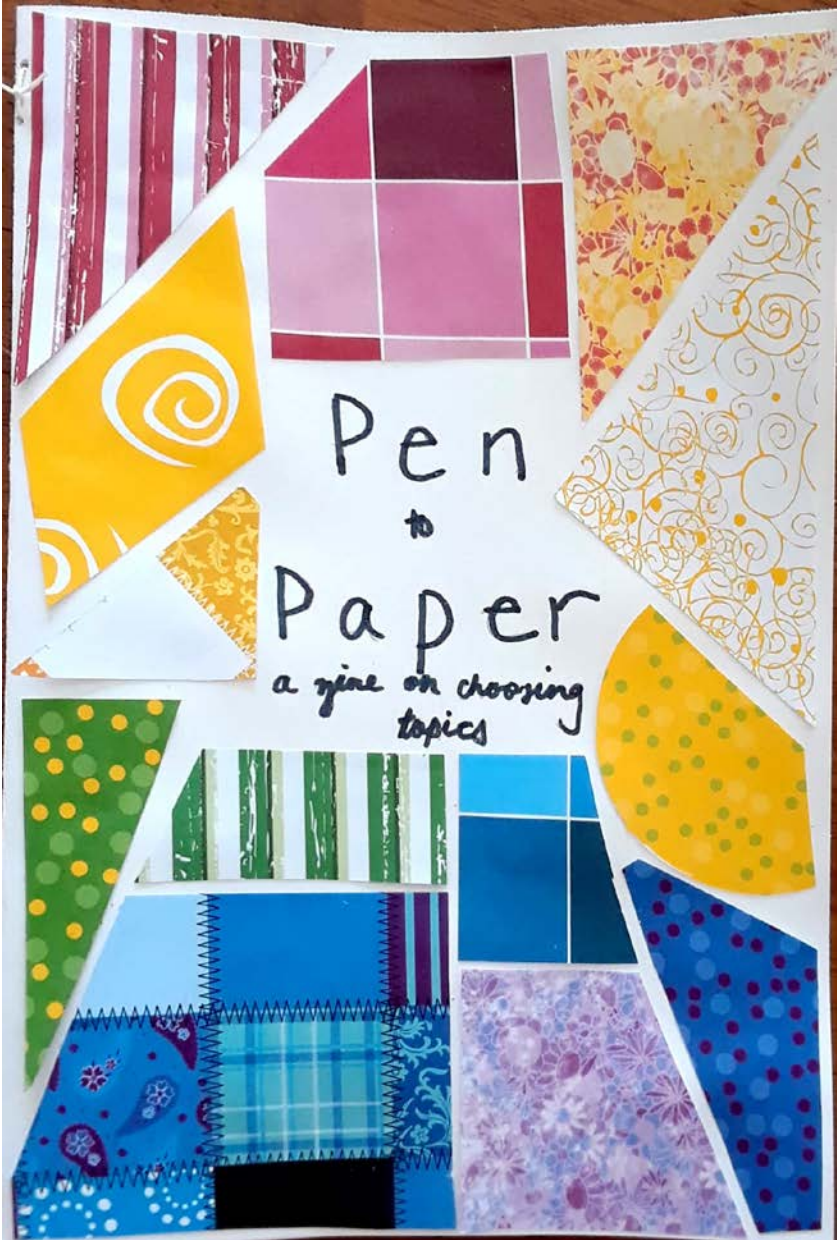
The most powerful voice I will ever speak in is my own voice. After spending the semester becoming more and more comfortable

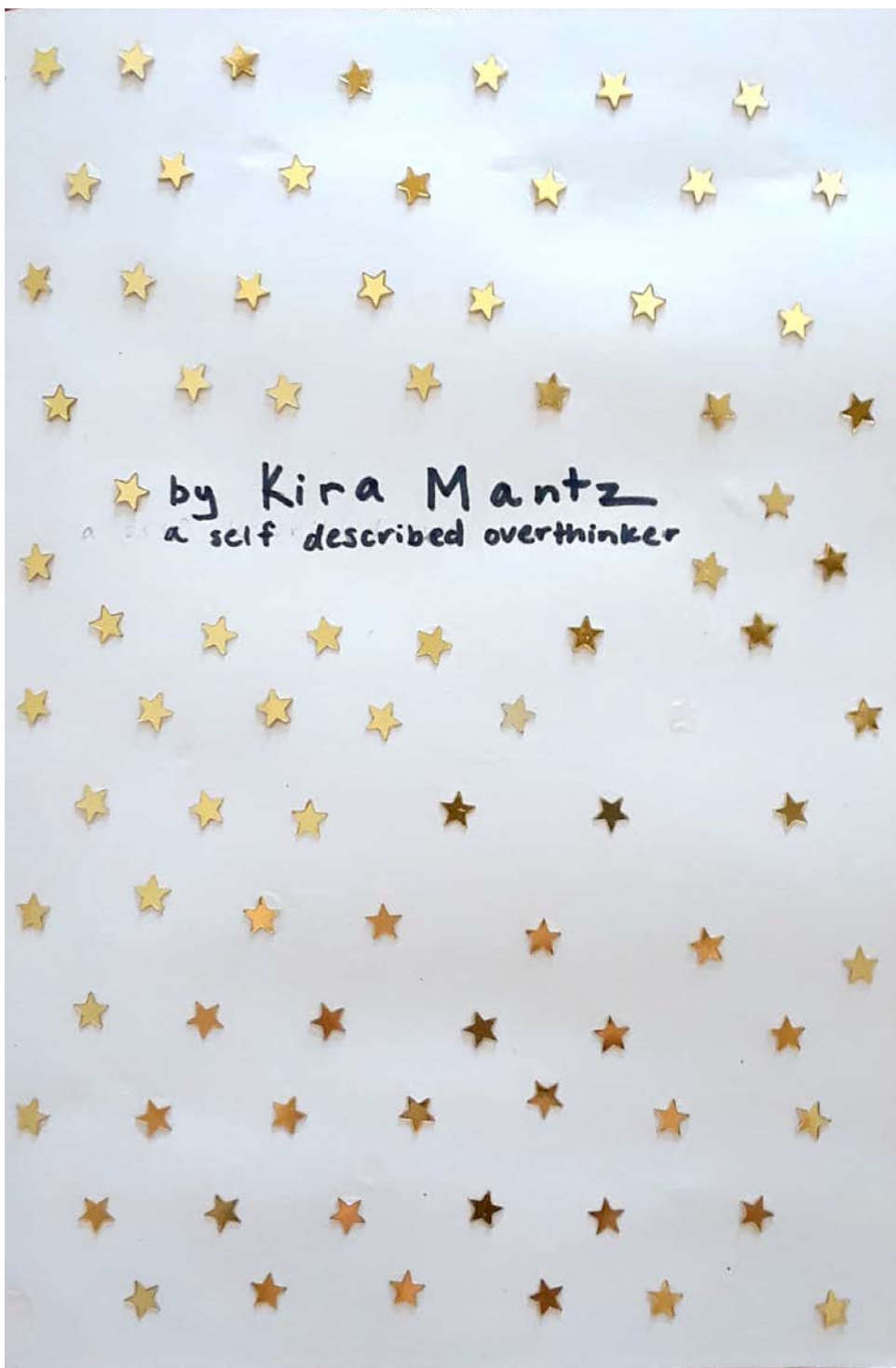
with my own voice, I have realized that this confidence translates to my voice in my writing as well. Just like when I am actually speaking, my voice changes depending on my purpose and my audience. I wanted my Bildungsroman to read like a story, my research paper to read like a speech or presentation, and my end-of-year reflection to read more like a conversation. I have realized yet again that one of the best ways I am able to express this voice, no matter the audience, is through anaphora. Before this semester, repetition felt like a waste of breath. Before this semester, I wrote with little regard to my rhetorical choices. Before this semester, I had never even heard of anaphora; now I feel like it's my best friend.

As I submit my final WRTG-101 assignment, I realize that I have so much more to learn about writing. My voice will change. My vocabulary will change. My understanding of the world in which I am writing will change and grow and be challenged time and time again. However, the foundations for my future writing and learning and growth that I have gained in this class are priceless. The understanding of intentionality, growth, and obligation to my own voice that I have gained this semester will help guide me and my writing as I continue to learn and change as a person and as a writer.

Pen to Paper

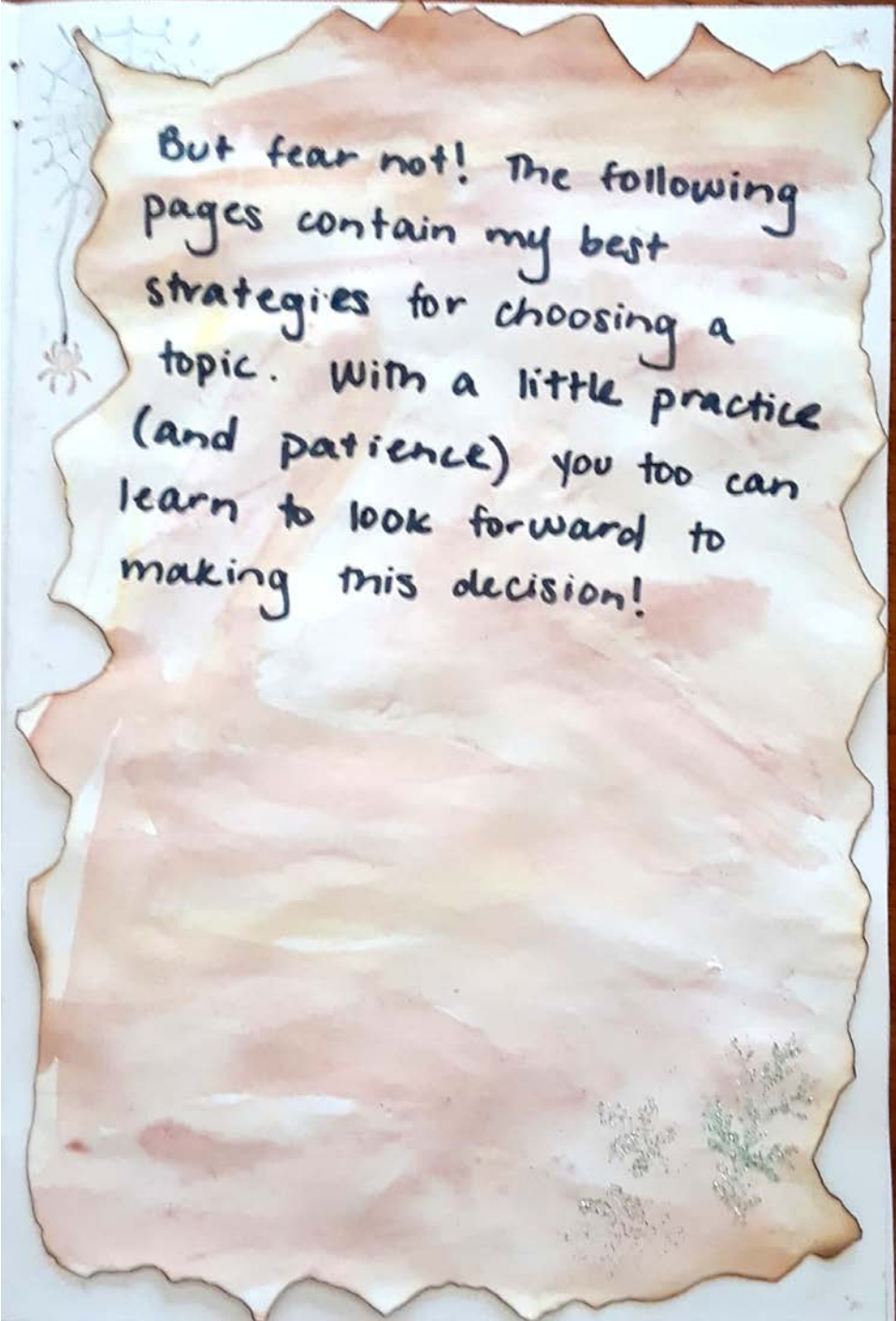
K Mantz





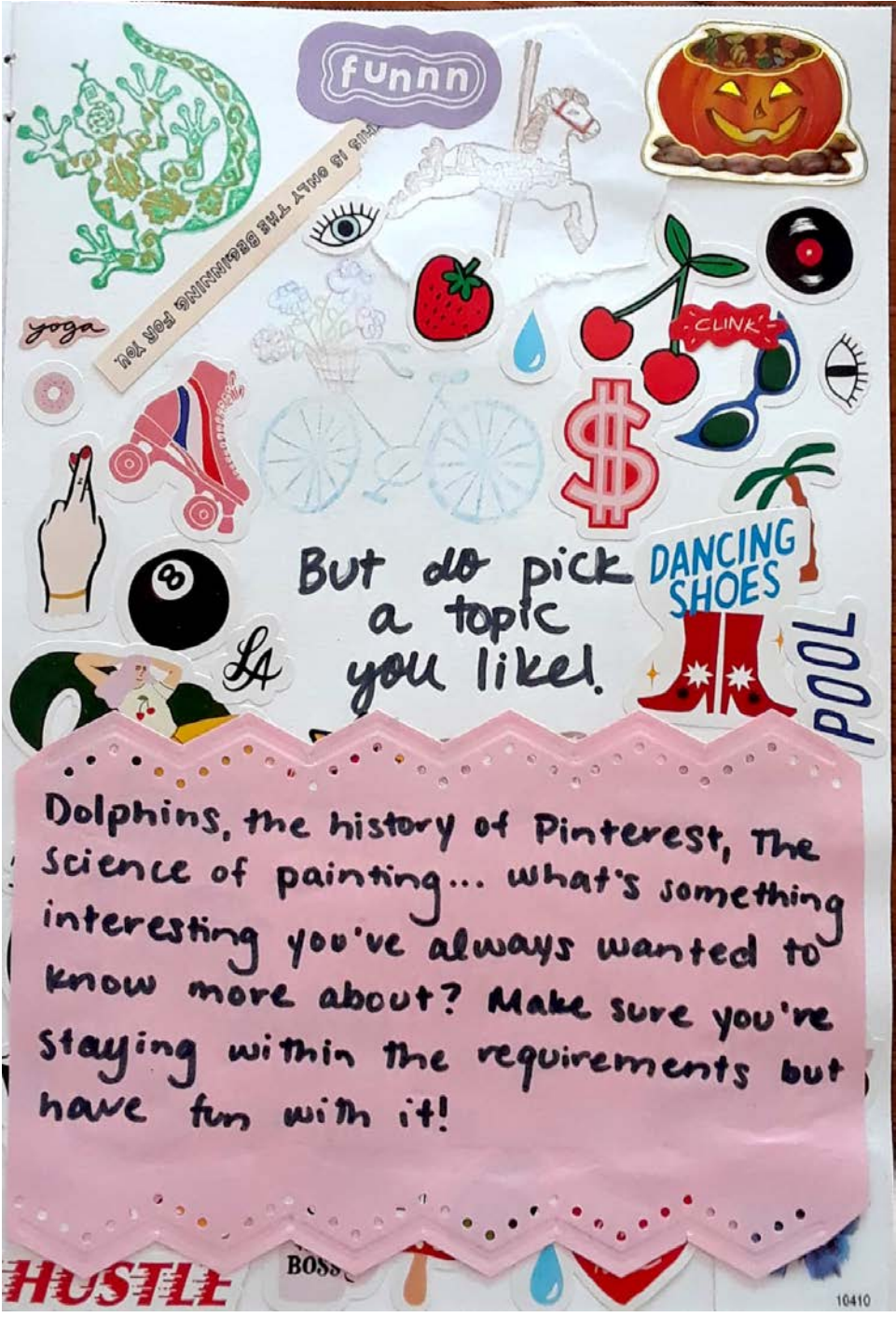
X
Perhaps you're also feeling
lost on the very first step
of writing a paper: choosing
a topic. Luckily you've come
to the right place! This zine was
born when I was sitting in the
same position as you. As a
commitment-phobe and
perfectionist, choosing the best
topic seemed more
daunting than writing
the actual paper





But fear not! The following pages contain my best strategies for choosing a topic. With a little practice (and patience) you too can learn to look forward to making this decision!





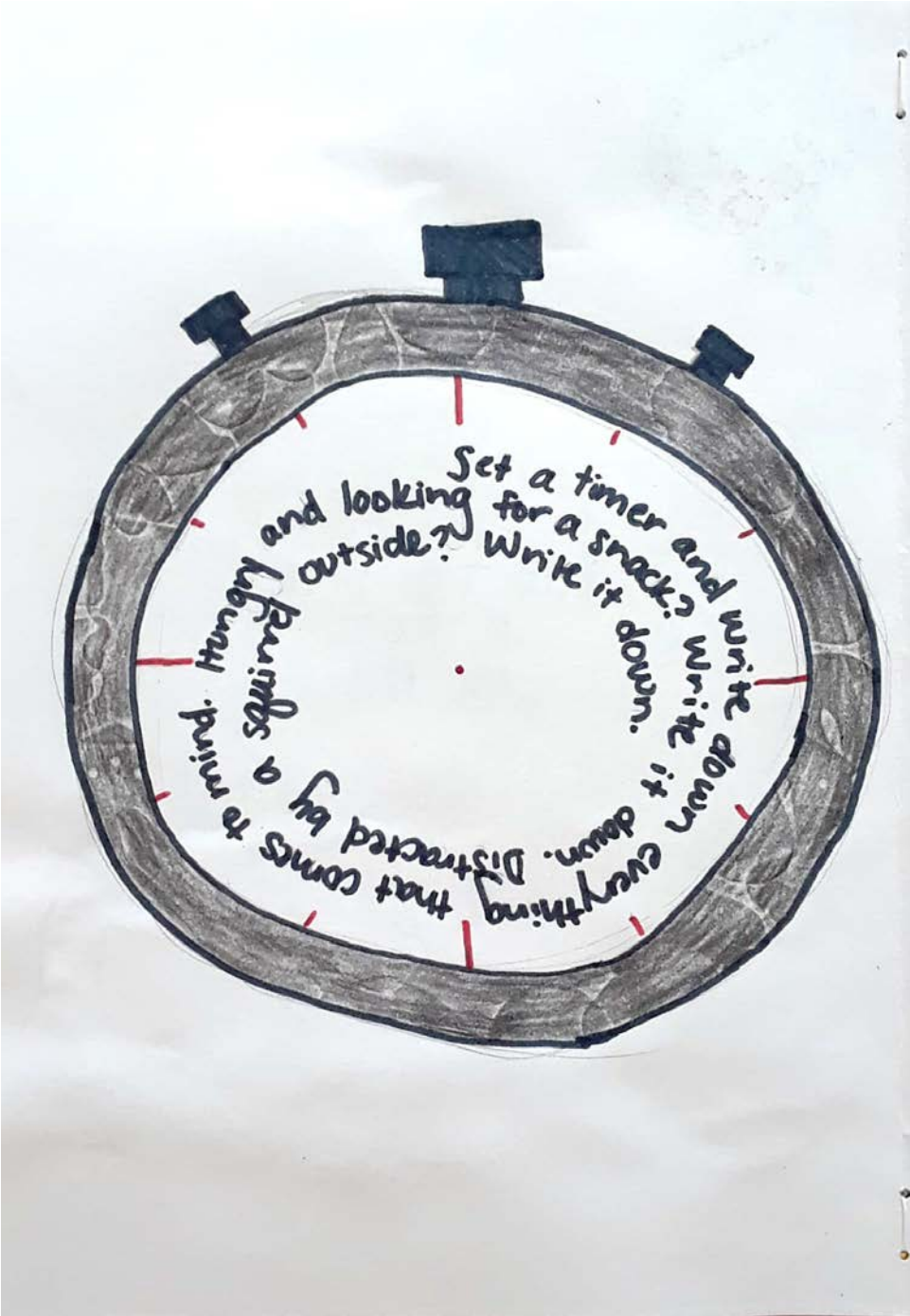
But do pick
a topic
you like!

Dolphins, the history of Pinterest, The science of painting... what's something interesting you've always wanted to know more about? Make sure you're staying within the requirements but have fun with it!

HUSTLE

BOSS

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Often times one thought
will lead to the next and
a topic will fall out some-
where in the middle!

So we want your brainstorm
to look less like this...

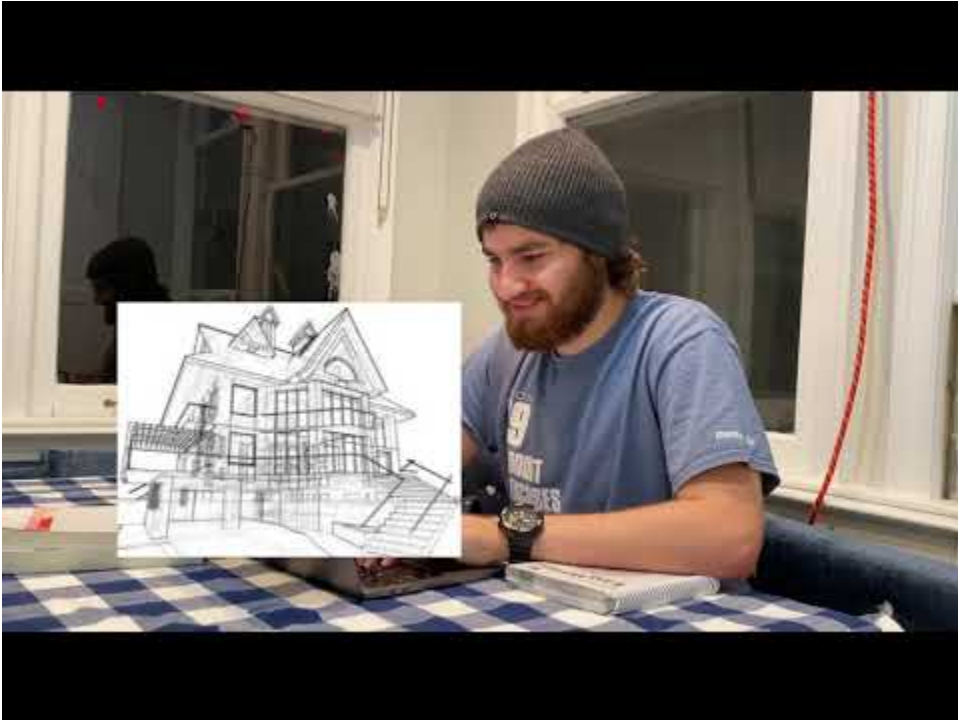


Does
anything
pop out at
you?

Final Reflective Presentation:

WRTG 102 and 103

Alex Tamari



Developing Intellectual Curiosity

In developing intellectual curiosity these essays go beyond established ideas, engaging in inquiry that brings a new understanding of existing evidence. These writers raise meaningful questions about their world, and through the discovery of insight, come to new conclusions.

A Diamond Is(n't) Forever

Grace Barry

I want you to imagine your favorite couple on *The Bachelor* or *Bachelorette*. You spend a whole season rooting for these two (almost obnoxiously) beautiful people to finally acknowledge that they're soulmates, destined to get married and grow old together. You've completely ransacked your snack cabinet and gone through tubs of ice cream while anxiously watching your other favorites get eliminated, one by one, until your all-time favorite contestant is in the finals. I want you to imagine that one of them takes the other to the spot that holds special significance for the both of them, gets down on one knee, and pulls out the most beautiful diamond engagement ring that you've ever seen. It goes on their left ring finger, they embrace, the music swells, and the moment is nothing less than perfect. The season ends full of love, joy, and victory for the new couple.

It's a perfect moment, right? It's everything you've dreamed of finally coming true for these two people you've watched for months. What's responsible for this moment? You might think their completely unbreakable magnetic connection as seen from the hours that they appeared on screen together (maybe, just a guess). Maybe you call on fate or destiny. I really don't want to burst your bubble here, but there's more to it than just the sparkly ring and happy music that stays stuck in your head for hours. That ring that goes on the lucky lady's finger? They only get to keep it if the couple gets married and stays married for a specified number of years, as said in the lengthy contract that they sign, according to a piece by the Uneek Jewelry Blog. And, not to burst

your bubble further, but this monumental moment of becoming engaged is actually all a marketing ploy made by one of the biggest competitors in the diamond industry. The ring itself, though shiny and pretty and bound to get some exclamations from family and friends, means nothing and has no value unless it is given value. In fact, as we'll get into, diamonds are actually not rare at all. The diamond engagement ring alone is nothing, but once brought into the proposal situation becomes seen as a symbol for the love between two people and a promise of their joint future.

Diamond engagement rings haven't been around forever. In fact, the craze all began because of a company known as DeBeers. Here's the story, as summarized by Uri Friedman in his article about DeBeers and the engagement ring: in the late 1800s, a whole bunch of diamond mines appeared in South Africa. The British who were responsible for these mines realized that they've got all these diamonds that could make them a ton of money, but with all these diamonds suddenly making an appearance, they had literally no way of preventing the world from getting their hands on them. Therefore, the diamonds would lose all value with how many had been uncovered in the mines. They had to, essentially, create a big lie that diamonds were still incredibly rare and valuable to maintain the status that they had before the mines were discovered. So, they created this cartel, which is now known as DeBeers, and became kings of the diamond industry.

It's not really a new thing for people to get greedy and capitalize off of a lie. Greed plays a big role in business in all aspects. But what does that have to do with engagement rings now? Well, DeBeers became the dominant player in the diamond industry and (still is today,

controlling $\frac{2}{3}$ of the diamond market, according to a study conducted by Fram and Baron in the *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*). Then, after the Great Depression had taken its course, DeBeers found themselves in a bit of a predicament. According to Friedman's article, Harry Oppenheimer hired ad agency N.W. Ayer to help bolster sales in the U.S. to convince men that the bigger the diamond, the bigger his love and level of commitment, and women that diamonds were the only way to seal the deal on a relationship. With this came the iconic phrase, "A Diamond is Forever."

It should be noted that, obviously, a pretty engagement ring that makes people say something along the lines of "Look at that rock!" doesn't guarantee a happy relationship. Far from it, actually, according to a study conducted by Francis-Tan and Mialon published in *Economic Inquiry*. There's no concrete evidence found in the study that an expensive diamond engagement ring, nor a fancy wedding ceremony, does anything at all for the lifespan of a marriage. So why do we give it all this weight?

Rings are symbolic of something greater. Before these diamond rings even existed, humans had a way of making symbols for love. For example, Melanie Nathan explores the legend of cavemen wrapping grass ropes around their partner's hands or feet to signify their connection (the birth of the phrase "tying the knot", which makes it that much sweeter). Even way back millions of years ago, our ancestors understood the importance of the symbol of the grass rope. As we've evolved from cavemen, our culture and society has evolved in tandem. DeBeers convinced the public that the bigger the engagement ring, the more valuable the love that it symbolized. But standing alone, that

diamond ring was just that: a diamond ring. It means nothing. It only has the meaning that we interpret and believe, because humans have given it that meaning over the years of its existence. But why? Why does it still have that meaning? As said in the article on Medium by Daniel Goldman: “The question is then, ***who gives a symbol its meaning?*** And my answer is ‘the one who uses it’”. The diamond engagement ring only has meaning because the one proposing and the one receiving the ring make it so. DeBeers certainly influenced that meaning, but it has only grown since that marketing campaign was launched. If it hadn’t resonated with the public, the diamond engagement ring would have gone out of style as quickly as it came into style. But the diamond engagement ring is still around and thriving. But giving something that is as superficial as a piece of jewelry the weight of carrying an entire marriage, or even the love that preceded it, isn’t the way to prove that you love somebody else. It’s sweet, sure, that can’t be denied. But we, as human beings who so crave that companionship, need to rethink what’s most important. It’s not a diamond engagement ring that drains your entire bank account. It’s the person that you’re committing to spending the rest of your life to.

Let’s go back to that *Bachelor/Bachelorette* couple in the beginning. It’s that special night. You and the entire audience have been waiting anxiously for the question to be popped. This time, as he begins to give his speech about how the woman before him has changed his life and perspective on love, he doesn’t get on one knee. There’s no felt-covered box in his pocket that holds a massive diamond ring. He has only his truth and his word to promise to love her for the rest of his life. And for her, that is more than enough. She doesn’t need that shiny

diamond engagement ring. Once again, they embrace, the music swells, and the moment is nothing less than perfect. You, the viewer, are still brought to tears and feel the same surge of joy you felt for previous contestants with their shiny diamond rings. But this one is different. This one is special, because they have nothing to prove to each other. They only have their mutually shared love and the promise of their future. And they lived happily ever after.

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A Passion for Cheese

Alexandra Rainis

I hate cheese. I do not like the taste or smell, and I will continue to not like it even if you put it on bread with nuts and jam. Many hypothesize that I do not care for it because I am lactose intolerant and somehow that has affected my taste buds. I, on the other hand, believe I am a part of a small population of people who do not favor cheese. As I have grown up over the years watching cheese eaters rave about virtually stale milk, I always wondered why they were so passionate about cheese. Was it because it just tasted good, or was there a deeper meaning behind the infatuation? I knew other foods tasted great, too, but the intense interest that surrounded cheese was undeniable, and thus, I went down the shockingly emotional rabbit hole of cheese.

Taste, as I suspected, does play a part in the passion for cheese. When I asked one cheese company worker from Blue Ridge Co. why he thinks people are so passionate about cheese, he plainly stated, "It's delicious. That's it." While the answer was blunt, I agreed with him due to the assumption that if cheese tasted terrible, the connection many experience to it would cease to exist. This connection to taste is further expressed by my three interviewees: Thalia Tossetti (student), Yasmin Assef (mother), and Justin Horwitz (President of the American University Cheese Club). When asked what their favorite cheese was, all interviewees referred to taste to determine their answer. Thalia voiced, "I like Havarti because it's creamy and goes perfect on any sandwich." Yasmin followed the theme of creaminess when she

answered, “I like Stilton Blue a lot, that’s a really good cheese, and San Andre, it’s like a brie, creamy and smooth.” Justin may stray from the creamy cheeses, but he does factor in taste when explaining his favorite cheese. “My favorite cheese is called BellaVitano. It originates from Plymouth, Wisconsin, and is aged 10-12 months to create a semi-hard texture. While I don’t drink, I respect wine as a way to enhance food, which it does for this cheese! Vitiano wine is infused into this cheese, and its taste is nutty and rich,” he explained. These different flavors, such as “nutty,” “smooth,” and “creamy,” come from different types of bacteria present in the cheese. As dairy scientist Michael Tunick explains, “It’s because the bacteria breaks down the proteins and especially the fats into...quite a large number of molecules that have flavors” (Ramsey). While taste does initiate the love for cheese, the flavor is only one piece of the story.

Many cheese lovers describe cheese as addictive, and there is a biological reason behind the need for cheese. When I asked, “Why are people so passionate about cheese?” one of the owners of Spring Gap Mountain Creamery said, “Cheese is a comfort food. Whatever your craving, it satisfies that need, it can fill voids.” This filling of voids occurs because cheese produces a chemical reaction in the body that makes one feel so ecstatic they become addicted to the feeling. The chemical casein causes this addictive quality of the cheese. When the cheese is digested, casein breaks down, releasing casomorphins. These opiates react to opioid receptors and dopamine receptors, which control pain, reward, and addiction in the brain. Since casomorphins affect opioid receptors and dopamine receptors, it releases the chemical dopamine, which makes someone feel happy. Cheese becomes addictive because

people become addicted to the high of happiness cheese creates (Danovich).

Although cheese may seem trivial, it is, in fact, crucial in terms of today's concern over economics. Cheese companies are aware of this phenomenon and view it as a bonus to the great taste. For instance, Kraft makes millions a year off their cheese and cheese products (Mueller and Marion 185). They have so much influence in the cheese market that they were able to manipulate the market to gain more money:

When Kraft increased its prices and gross profit margins, other cheese companies followed, albeit by smaller amounts. Not only did retailers pass on to consumers the higher prices, but added to them by widening their margins. The result was a large increase in the gross margin...In summary, the increase in the gross profit margins of Kraft, other cheese marketers, and food retailers resulted in higher prices to consumers, lower prices to bulk cheesemakers and their dairy farmer suppliers, and caused CCC to spend millions of dollars in cheese purchases. (Mueller and Marion 186 & 189).

Kraft manipulated their prices of making the cheese and then made consumers pay more for their products, influencing the cheese economy (Mueller and Marion 185). These large companies who monopolize the industry know how to target their consumers (Mueller and Marion 185) with the understanding that people do in fact have a passion for cheese and thus will pay to fulfill their needs.

The smaller creameries are aware of the addictive qualities of cheese but are not as cutthroat with their consumers. They understand

the passion for cheese in a more intimate way. Head cheesemaker from Keswick Creamery responded to my question of “why are people so passionate about cheese?” by touching upon the addictive qualities: “Cheese releases dopamine like chocolate. It makes you happy — that’s the biological response.” She then looked up and said, “But cheese also has an identity in a world of fast food like McDonalds. It’s one of the last foods with identity. You can trace it to childhood, it reminds someone of home like a memento cheese or places like Wisconsin. They try to mass-produce cheese, but it has become a thing of home.” This is where the story of cheese changes. It leaves behind its physical qualities that draw people in and enters the realm of history, culture, and memory. Cheese tastes fantastic (from what I hear) and is, in fact, addictive, but I have learned that it is so much more than just a food item.

Cheese was first created in the Neolithic Period (9000 BCE) when hunter-gatherer communities started to make permanent residences, farming and herding goats and sheep. Since its appearance in the Fertile Crescent, cheese has integrated itself into many cultures (Kindstedt 6-7). I first heard about cheese being a cultural item from one of the owners of Spring Gap Mountain Creamery. After his partner talked about how cheese “fills voids,” he took a breath and said, “The culture. It’s a cultural item with many deep cultural ties. If someone cannot travel to a place where the culture originated or is present, then cheese serves as a gateway into that new experience.” This societal bond can be identified in many cultures, such as Italian heritage and more prominently French culture.

The study “Le Fromage As Life: French Attitudes and Behavior Toward Cheese,” conducted by researchers Scott D. Roberts and

Kathleen S. Micken, investigates the cultural ties the French have to cheese. For the French, cheese is a part of their identity. It is a symbol of the French people and must be kept pure. This idea of purity can be seen in the utter refusal to put processed or foreign cheeses on a cheese board in one's house. To do this would be insulting to one's family and the people who have come to the home. Furthermore, for one to genuinely be considered French, they must like cheese and must be educated on the various types of cheeses: "the French attitude toward cheese includes strong agreement that it is a person's 'duty' to be educated about cheese and to understand the proper ways of consuming cheese" (Roberts and Micken). This education of cheese also indicates the social class structure in France. For instance, "pink collar" workers expressed that

the texture of the cheese was important (there were no other differences among the occupation groups). They also expressed more disagreement than self-employed professionals in that they would eat the cheese they want without regard to price...Self-employed professionals, on the other hand, expressed more agreement than pink-collar workers that they could 'describe in detail ten different kinds of cheeses'. . . .

(Roberts and Micken)

The difference in social classes enables one to see cheese differently and have different opinions on what cheese is the best and why. Cheese transcends the meaning of identity because for the French cheese is an active part of life and dictates who one truly is regardless of who one wants to be. French cheese is a crucial aspect of life, and as one person interviewed in the study fervently stated: "wine provides for

enjoyment in life (*savoir vivre*), but cheese is life (*la vie*)” (Roberts and Micken). France may take a passion for cheese to another level, but cheese is embedded in people’s everyday lives all over the world.

Cheese has cultural meaning, but the passion for cheese also arises from memory. The memory of cheese, especially memories of when one was growing up, also creates a love for cheese. Justin, when asked what fostered his intensity for cheese, recalled his childhood: “During Thanksgiving dinners, my family made a separate pot of mac & cheese for me to eat since I didn’t want any other food at the time. Now I like a lot more food but that love for all forms of cheese has always remained. Some of my best memories growing up through now involves going to sample fancy cheese platters at restaurants, and explore all sorts of cheese from all around the world.” Thalia agreed with Justin: “Cooking and childhood definitely fostered my passion for cheese. I grew up in an Italian house that put cheese on everything.” Cheese is not only a food, but an item of nostalgia. For Thalia and Justin, it brings them back to happy times and reminds them of home.

They are not the only ones who hold cheese as an item of nostalgia. In the 1980s, America went through an economic recession because the workforce shifted from “heavy industry . . . to more knowledge and service-based work . . .” (Lucas and Buzanell 96). The “Rust Belt” of America (the Northeast to the Upper Midwest) was one of the regions hit hardest by the downturn. The government, to help families whose parents lost their jobs or suffered wage reductions, gave out “begging boxes” to the children for lunch and dinner. In these boxes were processed, bright orange cheese blocks (Lucas and Buzanell 106). Kristen Lucas and Patrice M. Buzanell interviewed adults who

were children aged 8-17 from 62 families from “Irontown” (a fake name given to the town out of respect by Lucas and Buzzanell). For the children going through that time, the one thing that stood out to them was the cheese: “Nearly 30 years later, these kids, who are now midlife adults, spontaneously and consistently brought up ‘the cheese’ during interviews about life during the 1980 recession” (Lucas and Buzzanell 96). Cheese for the children became a “symbol of a daily struggle” (103) “that parents were out of work and unable to provide for the same lifestyle as they had in the past. The children used the cheese as a type of shorthand to identify that there were significant financial struggles at home without having to describe them in-depth” (110). The cheese also was a “symbol of camaraderie” (105); “it normalized the experience of family job loss for the kids. Rather than feeling like a stigmatized ‘Other,’ they felt normal because they were not alone” (110). The cheese given to the children during one of the hardest times for their families became a collective memory. It shielded them from the hardships and enabled them to fit into their community. Cheese is a comfort food, and it may taste unbelievable to some, but the head cheesemaker from Keswick Creamery was sincere when she said, “It has become a thing of home.” Cheese in “Irontown,” for Justin, Thalia, and many more, is not just a dairy product. Cheese is loved by many because it reminds people of where they come from.

The passion for cheese is a complex and individual journey. Every person’s relationship to cheese is different, but the origins of the passion have four consistent characteristics: taste, addictive quality, cultural identity, and memory. As a person who has successfully avoided cheese my whole life, I was unaware of the impact cheese

would have on me. I now respect cheese and understand why people have a deep connection. Cheese is not just a food to me anymore; it is a symbol of people and history. So next time you're at a restaurant, and they ask, "Do you want cheese on that?" say yes and remember the importance that cheese has for humanity.

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A Masking of Menses

Sophia Thomas

Because I'd woken up with that familiar ache in my stomach, I slipped on my rainboots and a few tampons into my backpack as I got dressed. Later at school when it finally hit me, I'd wait for the moment when no one was looking and tuck a tampon inside my rainboot. As I walked down the hall, I'd feel the small plastic cylinder pressing into my ankle. My classmates walked by and smiled at me, unaware of the secret I had in my boot and in my uterus. It was a secret, after all. And that's the way I liked it. Period.

That time of the month brought out my stealthy side. I had all sorts of hiding spots: my rainboots, my bra, my sleeve, an empty water bottle. My friends were secretive too. If one of us forgot a pad or tampon, we'd give each other "the look," mouthing, *Do you have a pad?* I'd sometimes unwrap my pad or tampon in advance just to avoid the noise the package would make in the bathroom. God forbid an artificial crinkle. We treated our menstruation like an undercover operation, to be kept hidden at all costs. Our reputations depended on it.

I am 19 now. It has been six years since I started menstruating. If you asked me to describe myself, I would use words like *confident, feminist, advocate*. Outwardly, I am a passionate champion of women's rights. Nonetheless, you'd better believe that in certain situations, I wouldn't be caught dead with a pad or tampon visibly on me. I see this gap in myself and my fellow menstruators. We're all sorts of fearless until it comes time to do the dreaded walk of shame to the bathroom. We hide period products because the language we use to discuss

menstruation reaffirms and reflects stigmatization of menstruation. Given the option of coming forward and facing ridicule or hiding and avoiding shame, most would choose the latter.

If you Google “menstrual products,” one of the first definitions that comes up is, “**Sanitary** napkins, tampons, and pantyliners are disposable feminine **hygiene** products. Menstrual cups, cloth menstrual pads and period panties are the major categories of reusable feminine hygiene products” (Nicole, emphasis mine). Two words jump out here: “sanitary” and “hygiene.” On their own, these words are associated with cleanliness. In relation to menstruation, these words indicate that there is something unsanitary and unhygienic about period “blood” (the lining of the uterus).

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines a tampon as, “A plug or tent inserted tightly into a wound, orifice, etc. to arrest hemorrhage, or used as a pessary (*Surgery*). Esp. one inserted into the vagina; now *spec.* one made commercially and bought to provide sanitary protection during menstruation” (“Tampon”). Again, we see the word “sanitary” cropping up in relation to menstruation, implying that menstruation itself is unsanitary. Moreover, this definition puts menstrual “blood” on par with blood that would exit a wound. While blood shed as a result of injury should be blocked to prevent major blood loss, menstruation is a natural process to expel “blood” that is no longer needed. Therefore, by comparing menstrual “blood” to blood resulting from a wound, it’s insinuated that menstruation is something to be blocked rather than allowed to occur naturally. The language used in these definitions perpetuates the idea that menstruation is unsanitary and that it should be “plugged” up or stopped. In digging deeper into the linguistics used

to describe menstruation and menstrual products, it becomes increasingly transparent that this type of covertly derogatory language is everywhere. After all, the very creation of pads and tampons was built on the concept that menstruation is inherently dirty.

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, many doctors began advising menstruators on how to care for themselves during their period. Unsurprisingly, their guidance was often laden with clandestinely toxic language. Physician Mary Wood-Allen recommended “a frequent change of napkins, in order to remove those which are soiled from their irritating contact with the body” (Farrell-Beck 329-330). Wood-Allen explains here that due to the napkin’s “irritating” contact with the body, it is soiled, a word synonymous with “dirty” (“Soiled”). Wood-Allen’s use of the word “soiled” implies that the napkins, or menstrual pads, were “dirty” from period blood; hence, that period “blood” itself is dirty. Furthermore, the word “irritating” is futile in this context. Irritating is, by definition, unpleasurable (“Irritate”). In this situation, “irritating” implies that the napkin’s contact with the body is somehow unpleasurable. By employing this adjective, the overall negative connotations of menstruation are furthered in this sentence. It was this erroneous ideology that medical practitioners embraced when constructing precursory pads and tampons.

As doctors started to explore the world of menstruation, they began creating various rudimentary menstrual products. In 1866, Dr. Joseph C. Benzinger created a “pad,” complete with a sponge and a leather girdle. Benzinger’s intent was to “maintain the person of the patient in a cleanly condition” (Farrell-Beck 336). The word “cleanly”

suggests that without this contraption, the menstruator would be left dirty. Benzinger wasn't the only one disseminating this idea. In 1899, Dr. Albert Gray of St. Louis created the catamenial sac. This consisted of a rubber sack connected to a belt. The sack held an absorbent material, such as sponge or cotton, and a pocket on the belt contained disinfectant or carbolic acid (Farrell-Beck 337). The inclusion of disinfectant is present as Dr. Gray believed that there was something to disinfect. Not only may this have been detrimental to the user's reproductive organs, but it's yet another example of menstruation being displayed as tainted. Gray advertised this product in newspapers, coining it "Dr. Gray's Monthly Friend." Gray's use of the word "friend" is deceptively cordial. "Friend" is defined as "one attached to another by affection or esteem" (Friend). By referring to the catamenial sac as his friend, Gray communicated that he held affection and esteem for this creation, and thus that it must be reliable. Ironically, Gray feasibly didn't hold the agency, as a man, to coin a menstrual product his monthly friend. Regardless, readers likely took this title to intimate reliability and thus accepted that their period required disinfectant because it is innately dirty.

In the wider scheme of vaginal care, practices reflected the belief that vaginal discharge, whether menstrual "blood" or not, is contaminated. In 1890, nurses at the Woman's Hospital of Philadelphia treated birthing women by covering their vulva with a napkin saturated in bichloride of mercury, letting them sit for hours before burning immediately after (Farrell-Beck 343). Today, bichloride of mercury is considered very toxic to humans. Still, this practice was religiously studied and replicated under the belief that a woman's

vagina and the secretions it produces are, themselves, toxic. The burning of the napkin directly after removal only further supports this assertion. Inventors of pads and tampons borrowed from this ideology, creating products with an emphasis on cleanliness to combat the “dirtiness” of menstrual blood. While the products on the market today are without bichloride of mercury or carbolic acid, the underlying stigmatization of menstruation perseveres. Sure, the denunciation may not appear as obvious. You might have to read between the lines, rethink the nuance of commonplace language. Nevertheless, the stain on menstruation persists, and it is ever-present in the jargon cropping up in modern day descriptions of menstruation and menstrual products.

In an ad titled “Style,” fashion blogger Christina Caradona dances across the screen in a neon skirt and heart-shaped sunglasses, towing a rack of clothes. Fun music thumps in the background as a narrator describes Tampax’s new Radiant line of tampons. With a resealable wrapper for discreet disposal, they prevent periods from cramping users’ style. (“Tampax Radiant TV Commercial.”) Although the ad lasts a mere 15 seconds, there is a lot to unpack here. For one, the title alone encapsulates the overall message propagated in the ad. “Style” positions menstruation as a hindrance of fashion, in that menstruation and style may not coexist, and one must be sacrificed for the other. This idea is furthered by the choice to feature Caradona as the main actress. With her expertise in fashion, she wields the power to dictate what is “in.” Her endorsement of Tampax Radiant tampons communicates that concealing menstruation allows you to remain stylish. The title and presence of Caradona alike communicates the

need for menstruators to suppress their menstruation for the sake of maintaining their flair and confidence. Arguably the most important detail to note is the language used to describe the tampons. The word “discreet” is used to describe the disposable packaging and posed as a positive aspect of the tampon’s design. This linguistic choice concedes the idea that like a used tampon, periods should be discreetly disposed of, out of the eye of the public. Perhaps this discreteness is fundamentally what menstruators are meant to strive for as a whole-hiding. It should also be noted that the overall look of the ad, with bright visuals and blaring music, are meant to serve as a stark contrast to what life would be like if menstruation weren’t hidden; awkward and meek. Ironically, while the language used in this ad promises style and confidence with the concealment of menstruation, the act of hiding is often anxiety-inducing in itself. There is hypocrisy intertwined with the outcome that words like “discreet” promise.

While researching the “Style” ad, I got my period. Digging into my closet, I reached for an unopened box of tampons that I had bought weeks prior. Lo and behold, they were Tampax Radiant tampons. I found it comical that I’d fallen for the trap. I could see myself in the “feminine hygiene” aisle of the grocery store, reading “discreet” and “resealable wrapper” and being wooed by this innovative tampon. I had read these words but the implications of their meanings in relation to menstruation had never sunk in. My blunder, I believe, is indicative of how easy it is to soak in language when we are not hypervigilant. If we neglect to consider the meaning of language *and* the context of how it is being presented, we allow it to dictate our beliefs and behavior,

including hiding pads and tampons. Simply put, language has the power to shape and reflect how we think and our subsequent actions.

The connection between language and thought can be tied back to a hypothesis formulated in 1929 by Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf, justly coined the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. It asserts that “the particular language one speaks influences the way one thinks about reality” (Lucy). Depending on the type of language used, reality can shift and take on new meanings. Like our unconscious use of words like “discreet” and “sanitary” to describe menstrual products, much of the language we speak is so ingrained in society that it goes unquestioned. Factoring in the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, by using certain language subliminally, we are creating our understanding of reality *without even realizing it*. Possibly the most alarming consequence of this unintentional production is that we fail to recognize our role in creating the reality which we criticize. Take the menstrual movement, for example. Many people attend women’s marches, sign petitions, and post on social media in an attempt to promote the menstrual movement, or the fight for menstrual equity and advocacy. Hashtags such as #periodpower and #menstruationmatters circulate the web and are reposted by thousands. However, many will continue to refer to pads and tampons as “feminine hygiene products” and purchase tampons advertised as “discreet” and with a “resealable wrapper.” By employing this language, we are upholding the very inequality which we are working to tear down. I am not immune to this hypocrisy; my purchase of Tampax Radiant tampons while writing this essay is evident of just how easy it is to unintentionally speak stigma into

existence. This discrepancy is emblematic of the perilous undercurrent of overlooked prose.

Not only does language influence our perception of reality, but it dictates our role within that reality. When a man and a woman get married, writes J. Samuel Bois in his article "The Power of Words," they are pronounced husband and wife. These words, Bois argues, "establish a new set of relations between the man and woman." They will likely "cohabit, enjoy the possession of each other's bodies, share a common name, and begin to weave a joint pattern of life made of experiences, aspirations, purposes, and responsibilities" (Bois). Due to the connotations these words carry, the bearer of the title "husband" or "wife" steps into the role that the word implies, thus taking on the meaning of the word. How does this corroboration crop up outside of matrimony? On a general scale, we are inclined to accept and exemplify the language we use. For instance, when we discuss menstrual products as "sanitary," "hygienic," and "discreet," we're prone to believing that menstruation itself is unsanitary, unhygienic, and should be kept hidden. From this creed, we are then more apt to attempt to conceal our menstruation because our language is telling us that this is what menstruators should do. Nevertheless, we can use this penchant to our advantage. Bois states, "This projecting mechanism keeps functioning all by itself, whether we are aware of it or not. It does too often reinforce the hold of cultural shibboleths that we repeat without questioning them, but it will just as easily make possible new orientations, observations, and transactions, if we are wise enough to use it in a creative manner." In other words, this linguistic self-fulfilling prophecy can redefine our actions and the roles we fill if only we

recognize its existence and capitalize on it. Through the lens of menstruation, we have the power to change our actions if we change the language we use to discuss it. If we abandon words that frame menstruation as dirty and shameful for those which convey its normalcy, we might reject the notion that we must hide our menstruation. How does widespread semantic change occur? History marries it with concurring social change.

In 2018, a group of Stanford researchers wanted to study how gender and ethnic biases have changed over time in the US. They created an algorithm that would analyze “relationships and associations between words” from 1900 to present day. Poring over countless texts from this period, they compared changes in language to major social changes occurring during this time, from the women’s movement to the rise in Asian immigration (Shashkevich). Ultimately, the researchers found that changes in language directly correlated to demographic shifts in the US. As the women’s movement gained momentum and more Asian people entered the country, language changed to reveal a decline in negative stereotypes about these groups and an upsurge in positive wording. Their findings are telling of the link between language and social movements. When change occurs in society, so does popular vernacular. Vice versa, when language usage changes, social movements are further advanced. This symbiotic relationship suggests that language and societal change feed into one another. Without linguistic change, societal movements would likely fall flat. Without social change, language would likely remain stagnant. This codependence could be the ticket to advancing the menstrual

movement. To see the destigmatization of menstruation, we need to change the language we use to describe it.

When I get my period now, I'll admit that the idea of noticeably carrying my tampon to the bathroom still isn't appealing. I simply do not always need others knowing what is going on with my body. Still, I am entitled to the option of brandishing my tampon proudly as I promenade to the bathroom. The freedom to make a choice, unencumbered by potential humiliation, is what the end goal of linguistic alteration should be. When pads and tampons are not defined as "sanitary" or "hygiene" products, menstruation will not be associated with uncleanness. When menstruation is not perceived as uncleanly, menstrual products might not be geared towards concealing menstruation. When a menstruator can walk down the period product aisle at the grocery store and not be bombarded with the words "discreet" and "resealable wrapper," perhaps they won't believe their menstruation is something to hide. One small change in our language has the potential to ignite destigmatization, which in turn further transforms our discourse. This is how hiding becomes not an obligation, but a choice.

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What to Do with a Magic Green Lamp

Joshua Sucec

If an environmental genie appeared and offered us a wish, we might pull out our copy of *The Sixth Extinction* by Elizabeth Kolbert and ask the oceans to be deacidified, the Amazon Rainforest to be saved, or the obvious, to stop climate change. But if I'm being honest, I'd ask the genie to make mosquitoes extinct (at least the ones that feed on us). Sure, the coral may die and Benadryl sticks will sell a lot less, but at least we won't have to deal with the bloodthirsty suckers.

There are only a few species of mosquitoes that feed on humans out of hundreds and, according to many ecologists, the environment would function fine without them. Observing their existence truly illustrates their appendix-like place in the ecosystem. I can attest; on an unusually hot and muggy summer day, right after one of Mother Nature's storms, Houston (where I previously contributed to the mosquito diet) becomes a breeding and feeding ground for vampires. Except unlike 'real' vampires, silver, garlic, and crosses don't ward them away, and, for that matter, neither does anything except bathing yourself in DEET. Without the fear of G-d or garlic and plenty of small pools of water ripe for egg-laying, female mosquitoes go out on a hunt. These tiny vampires go out in hordes searching for the smell of iron, the smell of blood. When they find it, nothing can stop them. Like the bald eagles in *John James Audubon's "Ornithological Biography"* on White-Headed Eagles, mosquitoes have an air of arrogance, which is normally only found in apex predators (Audubon 120). Unlike their eagle counterparts, their size doesn't scare potential predators away;

instead, they are so small that almost nothing eats them, so they have nothing to fear. They fearlessly divebomb towards our arms, our legs, to any open piece of skin with a buzz reminiscent of a kamikaze pilot, and if there isn't any available, they'll try to drill through our clothes like an oil rig in search of their red gold. Even when chased away from the well, barely escaping death by giant hands, they insistently go back time after time until they are dead or have had their fill. After getting their fill, the females lay their eggs in those small puddles and give rise to the next generation of blood-sucking vampires.

What is very evident is the lack of utility that mosquitoes provide to other animals. Sure, in their larval stage some dragonflies eat them, but other than that, they are the 40-year-old unemployed son living in the basement of the animal kingdom. Except they are far worse. When going from well to well, they cross-contaminate water, spreading horrific diseases such as West Nile virus, malaria, and Zika. To prevent the diseases from spreading, in the past and to a lesser degree to this day, we have declared war against mosquitos and sprayed chemicals into the air in unimaginable quantities. Unfortunately, not only is it noxious to us, but it is deadly to many other creatures that are productive, necessary elements of the food web. A group of scientists calculated the amount of DEET it would take to kill all mosquitoes and determined enough to end all life, which would be the sixth and last extinction. There are currently fewer atomic approaches to controlling mosquito populations, such as a program based in Brazil where they are genetically altering male mosquitoes to only fertilize females with other males who carry the same genetic mutation. Unfortunately, scientists have only lessened populations and

quite obviously haven't killed all mosquitoes as it takes time to have a significant effect.

So with my wish to the genie, I need to be careful and ask for a Thanos-ian snap, so I don't inadvertently cause the last age. Doing so would not only save us from the irritant of an itch but would save thousands of lives by adding West Nile virus and others to the list headed by smallpox. It would also stop us from having to spray chemicals into the air and DEET onto our skin. Excessive use of DEET has been correlated to cancer. Thus, ending mosquitoes would decrease the amount of diseases in multiple ways.

We aren't the only things harmed by chemicals. Many bugs are already going extinct due to deforestation, Elizabeth Kolbert in her book *The Sixth Extinction*, places the extinction rate of bugs due to deforestation to be "roughly fourteen species a day" (Kolbert 186). While that number is already unimaginable, it doesn't even account for other bugs dying from insecticides and DEET. Bugs are a pillar of the world's ecosystem. For example, a single species of ant supports at least 300 other species in the rainforest (Kolbert 184). Thus, their extinction would lead to an "insectagedon" that would lead us down a path far worse than even Kolbert could imagine. While DEET isn't the only chemical that kills insects, without mosquitoes, it wouldn't be as widely used and would allow bugs populations to recuperate. Foresight isn't twenty-twenty though; Wyatt Williams explicates this in his news article "When the National Bird is a Burden," in which he explains how bald eagle conservationists didn't expect the new eagles to treat chicken farms like an all-you-can-eat buffet and to drop their leftovers

from the sky. But it is still safe to say that any unlikely risks such as raining chicken are heavily outweighed by the certain benefits.

While my ideology may sound idyllic and selfless, it is anything but. It is quite morbid to exterminate a species that is only trying to survive and can only do it through us. It is no different than killing all mole rats for being ugly. Except for one thing: our reason for wanting to kill all mosquitoes is one of self-preservation, which is as inherent and necessary to life as carbon. We want to kill mosquitoes because they kill us, which is an acceptable act because if we don't preserve and protect our species, we won't have anything left to protect.

We, in a general sense, don't act to preserve things that aren't us and always act to preserve ourselves. It is why, in truth, most people don't care about the extinction of the Hawaiian crow (Kolbert 263) because we can easily live without them, and it's why farmers are butchering wild horses that destroy their land, quite literally killing a symbol of American freedom. If followed properly, self-preservation can be good. It can protect the Hawaiian crows and wild horses, and it can keep nature in equilibrium. (While "good" isn't necessarily the proper word here, as it is akin to saying Jupiter is "good," it just is, the fact that self-preservation can comparatively make the world a better place necessitates it. Self-preservation is not a real moral philosophy.) We disturbed the equilibrium when we veered off the road of self-preservation to one of self-gratification that lead us to wanting mahogany chairs without regard for the rainforest and lead multiple generations to hunt the auk into extinction (Kolbert 65). We have obliterated the natural balance of life, and it will not only harm the animals lost, but also threaten our very existence. Self-preservation can

no longer be misconstrued as directly preserving just us: we need to preserve our legs, we need to preserve our world. If we go back to acting like every other living thing and act out of true self-preservation, we might just live long enough to get a second wish.

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Critically Analyzing Texts

Perceptive readers question what they read, interrogating a work's meanings, its claims, and the quality of its evidence. A critical analysis may draw on the writer's personal experiences or knowledge of other works, yet the foundation of the essay is grounded in the text itself. These essays help the reader understand the merits and limits of their examined texts, and also how individual elements contribute to their power and significance.

Stonewall, S.T.A.R. and Roosevelt: Why Teaching Intersectional LGBTQ History is Important

Julianna Boyson

The history of queer people in the United States is a long and comprehensive one that is not known by many, as history textbooks seldom mention it. When LGBT+ history is mentioned in textbooks, it is usually a small portion on the start of the movement in the 1970s and then a section on the AIDS crisis. The 2017 Openstax textbook *U.S. History* contains sections like these ones, as well as a brief mention of Don't Ask Don't Tell and LGBTQ rights under the Obama administration. With New Jersey, Colorado and Illinois passing laws in the past year requiring LGBTQ history to be taught in schools, joining California which passed a similar law in 2011, it is more vital than ever that LGBTQ history is taught in a comprehensive, intersectional and above all, accurate way (Leins). While *U.S History* does include a section on LGBTQ advocacy, specifically a fairly accurate but slightly limited account of the Stonewall Riots, it is still inadequate in its portrayal of the different types of advocacy from members of the LGBTQ community. The textbook fails to mention important advocates and groups that fought for LGBTQ rights, and instead focuses on advocacy groups that were more limited to advancing the rights of gay men, instead of all members of the LGBTQ community. Textbooks should focus on the many different parts of the LGBTQ movement including different sects that were made during the gay rights movement, the interaction of the gay rights movement with other social movements, and should stop erasing the fact that certain historical figures were queer.

U.S. History gives a brief overview of the LGBTQ rights movement in the 1970s. The section describes the advent of the gay rights movement, as well as the Stonewall Riots and the aftereffects of it. The section starts off by mentioning that the gay rights movement was established mainly in cities like Los Angeles and San Francisco, both a hotspot for former military members who were discharged for being gay (Corbett). The textbook then goes on to talk about one of the most important moments in LGBTQ history: the Stonewall Riots. The Stonewall Riots took place “early in the morning of June 28, 1969” when “police raided a ... gay bar called the Stonewall inn” and “prepared to arrest many of the customers, especially transsexuals and cross-dressers, who were particular targets for police harassment.” While raids like this one were commonplace, that night the patrons of the bar fought back against the police, throwing “beer bottles and bricks” at them, and causing them to “barricade themselves inside the bar and wait for reinforcements.” The riots continued throughout the night and were “resumed the following night” (Corbett 891).

U.S. History does a good job of describing the Stonewall Riots as an isolated event, but does fail to mention a key instigator in the riots, Marsha P. Johnson, a transgender woman of color who was well known throughout her lifetime for her advocacy for gay and transgender rights. At Stonewall, she was said to be “organizing, agitating, and resisting” during the multi-night riots and some sources said that she was even the instigator of the entire affair (Hunter; Brown). The erasure of this important figure in LGBTQ history is harmful because it makes the discussion of LGBTQ rights Eurocentric, or focused mainly on white members of the LGBTQ community, which is inadequate when

the LGBTQ community is made up of a diverse range of people of all races. This erasure is especially harmful as violence against transgender people, particularly transgender women of color, persists as an issue in current day America.

The textbook then goes on to discuss the formation of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) and Gay Activists' Alliance (GAA) saying they were founded to “protest discrimination, homophobia, and violence against gay people” (Corbett 891). While these two groups were important in bringing attention to LGBTQ rights, there were many more organizations that were founded, on the basis of intersectionality, or making sure every member of the LGBTQ community was represented, not just white gay men. One of these organizations was founded by the previously mentioned transgender activist Marsha P. Johnson. She, along with Sylvia Rivera, formed the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR) which “worked to end homelessness among young queens, trans, and gay people, organizing for space, advocacy, and survival” (Hunter). Both of them left the Gay Activists' Alliance to form STAR because they “found themselves, and issues of gender identity, excluded” (Bronski 211).

Although they originally left to help transgender people — a group they did not feel like was being adequately represented — they ended up also helping gay individuals. Instead of STAR being an organization for transgender people and the Gay Activists' Alliance being one for gay people, STAR aimed to be an organization for every member of the LGBTQ community. This important and intersectional group being left out of history textbooks, in favor of one that did not advocate for every member of the LGBTQ community, shows the

shortcomings of textbooks representing the LGBTQ community. *U.S. History* fails to mention the shortcomings of these more mainstream groups, mainly their lack of intersectionality. Additionally, the textbook has the same issues that these groups did by not including transgender activists in their discussion of the LGBTQ rights movement. By not mentioning transgender people or the organizations founded by transgender people, *U.S. History* limits its scope to a narrow sect of the LGBTQ community that is not truly demonstrative of the entire community. The LGBTQ community is made up of more than just gay people — hence the “T” in LGBTQ — and has advocates of people from different races. Therefore, by excluding both Marsha P. Johnson and STAR in its discussion of LGBTQ people *U.S. History* fails in its discussion of the LGBTQ rights movement.

Another group that felt disenfranchised with groups like GFL and GAA were women. Lesbian women not only felt excluded from gay rights organizations, but also from feminist movements. The National Organization of Women (NOW) led by Betty Friedan, in 1971 claimed that “lesbian rights were a legitimate concern for feminism” meaning that she believed lesbian women advocating for lesbian rights would be a threat for straight women advocating for women’s rights (207). In gay rights groups headed by men, women felt excluded because “their actions, even after lesbians confronted them, often reflected their upbringing, which was not to take women and their concerns seriously” (212). Being too female for gay rights groups and too gay for women’s groups, lesbian activists had no choice but to form their own separate movement advocating for both feminist and lesbian rights.

Lesbian feminist groups like The Lavender Menace, whose name later changed to Radicalesbians, led the movement for this type of change. This group in particular focused on working from within the women's rights movement with other lesbians to advocate for their needs as gay women (Rapp). More broadly, lesbian feminists worked on issues relating to gay rights including trying to change the idea that being attracted to one's own gender was a mental illness, and fighting the legal discrimination of lesbian relationship as compared to heterosexual relationships. On the issue of women's rights advocacy, lesbian feminists "set up health clinics, created grassroots political organizations, and instituted a widespread national network of communal living collectives that, although unaffiliated, saw themselves as part of a movement" (Bronski 213). All of these contributions that women made to the gay rights movement are not included in *U.S History*. Additionally, the work of lesbian feminists are not included in its discussion of the women's rights movement the 1970s. Once again this textbook fails to include discussion of all members of the LGBT community, and instead falls into a male-centric version of history. It is important to note that many gay rights advocacy groups were not perfect in their promotion of LGBT rights. Even groups like Radicalesbians were not perfect in their intersection, claiming that bisexuality was not real and hindered the type of advocacy lesbian feminists were trying to fight for (Bronski). The idea that any social group was perfect in their fight for equal rights is untrue, and these shortcomings, as well as the people and groups who tried to address these shortcoming, should be acknowledged in textbooks in their discussion of gay rights.

Another fact omitted in *U.S History* is how different social movements of the 70s interacted either to advocate for or dismiss other groups. Additionally, issues traditionally associated with only one social movement group had unintended reactions of helping other social groups. For example, the invention of the birth control pill is widely regarded as helping the cause of women's rights because it gave women control over their ability to reproduce, which furthermore helped them gain control of their sexual, personal and economic freedom. However, as Bronski points out in *A Queer History of the United States*, it also led to more social acceptance of same sex couples. Because birth control "made the operation between sex and reproduction socially acceptable" (207), it negated the point that homosexual activity was wrong because it does not lead to reproduction. Although the invention of the birth control pill did not help LGBTQ people gain more legal rights, the impact it had on the way people viewed sex ended up laying the grounds for homosexuality to be more socially accepted. This example is just one of many of when new advocacy groups interacted during the major social changes in the 1970s, and new social views impacted multiple disadvantaged groups.

The gay rights movement and Black liberation groups also interacted and sometimes supported each other, with the Black Panthers Party specifically interacting with gay rights organizations. One of these interactions occurred when the GLF discussed donating money to the Black Panthers Party, causing a split between the GLF and GAA (Bronski). In response to the GLF's support, the chairman of the Black Panther Party, Huey Newton, called for "form[ing] a working coalition with the gay liberation and women's liberation groups" (216).

Bronski notes that this “comprehensive vision of social justice was mired in Martin Luther King Jr.’s ‘no one is free, until everyone is free’” (212). These types of interactions are important to note in textbooks, as without them we tend to think of the gay rights movement as all male and white, the civil rights movement as all male and straight, and the women’s rights movement all white and straight. In reality, there were interacting identities in all of these movements, as there is today, which *U.S History* fails to recognize.

Another way that *U.S History* fails to adequately discuss queer history is in its erasure of the sexuality of prominent historical figures. The textbook mentions that Franklin Delano Roosevelt had an affair with his secretary (Corbett 781), but fails to mention that Eleanor Roosevelt, his wife, also had extramarital affairs, including one with a woman named Lorena Hickok (Bronski 149). Literary journalist Claire Nichols claims that “in media reports and history books, the two women have often been described as ‘close friends’” but then goes on to cite author Amy Bloom as saying “there is no doubt they were in love.” Bloom, who has read the 3,000 public letters Eleanor and Lorena sent to each other throughout their lives, believes that historians fail to bring up this affair because “it might be that what we find very hard to believe is the idea that if you are an important and iconic female figure ... it is impossible to think that you would have any other interests except being a good mother to the entire nation” (qtd. in Nichols). The idea of Eleanor Roosevelt having interests besides serving the country would be a transformative one, and if those interests were to additionally break the mold of heteronormativity, they would be even less likely to be put in a textbook.

We often see historical writings and biographies as stagnant and set in stone, but in reality people learn new information every day; records are released, wills containing historical artifacts give information to a whole new group of people and researchers come across sources previously skipped over. It makes sense that it was not public knowledge that Eleanor Roosevelt had an affair with another woman in the 40s when it was happening, or even up until the 1970s when the letters were made public (Nichols), but since then there has been primary source documents that show the romantic relationship between Roosevelt and Hickok. When letters with excerpts like “I ache to hold you close. Your ring is of great comfort. I look at it and think she does love me, or I wouldn’t be wearing it” or “I want to put my arms around you and kiss you at the corner of your mouth” are easily available to the public, it seems like it should be more common knowledge that Eleanor Roosevelt had this same sex affair (Nichols).

Although it might not seem necessary to talk about Eleanor Roosevelt’s sexuality if she were to be discussed only in terms of her political career, the textbook goes into the personal and romantic life of the Roosevelts, so it seems strange that this fact is omitted. This omission seems to be driven by heterocentrism, or the idea of omitting facts about queer people either because it is uncomfortable to talk about, or because of plain homophobia. Similar views can be seen with the portrayal of James Buchanan, who is often referred to as America’s only unmarried president, though scholars who have read personal letters he sent think that he was our first gay president (Balcerski). Additionally, when textbooks fail to address that historical figures were in same sex relationships, they promote the idea that being gay or

transgender is a phenomenon that has only occurred recently. This fact is blatantly untrue, as evident by these two figures, and can make it seem like people recently have chosen to be gay, when in reality people have chosen to be *open* about being gay.

The inclusion of any type of queer history is important, so *U.S. History* does exceed expectations in that way; however, it fails to portray different types of identities among members of the LGBTQ community, and tends to ignore lesbian women and transgender people in favor of gay men. Moving forward, textbooks should try to approach the LGBTQ movement in the 70s from a more intersectional point of view, and discuss the different interactions of all of the social movements in the 70s. In addition to this change, textbooks should stop erasing the fact that important historical figures were part of the LGBTQ community, especially in instances where they discuss the figure's personal and romantic life.

One way authors should approach writing about the LGBTQ rights movement is to look at the acronym and make sure that they are including discussion about all the types of people that are mentioned in that acronym: lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. It is very easy to overlook the contributions of one of these groups of people, and instead fall into only discussing the contributions that gay men made to the LGBTQ rights movement. However, with this check in place authors can be more aware of whose perspective they are prioritizing when writing about the movement. Although sometimes any portrayal of queer history can feel like a win, it must be insured that the discussion of LGBTQ people is done in a way as not to exclude different members of the community.

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The End of the F***ing World's Powerful Portrayal of Gender, Sex, and Consent

Julia Krebs

Writer Charlie Covell's teen comedy drama *The End of the F***ing World* has received a lot of buzz for its pitch-black humor, complex characters, and fast paced plot of love and murder. A British TV show based off of the graphic novel by Charles S. Forman, originally airing on Channel 4 in the UK, *TEOTFW* reached the screens of US teens in a massive way when it aired on Netflix in January of 2018. The first season featured eight episodes, each 20 minutes in length, making the show highly "bingeable" and more movie-like in character than most TV series. *TEOTFW* is more than just a murderous teen love story with a quick plot and fantastically dark humor; it is a complex coming of age story with its most notable breakout moments in scenes that honestly and powerfully use the relationship between sex and consent to explore and demonstrate the complexities of gender.

The first scene that deals with the issue of consent appears in Episode 3 of the series. Main characters and complicated love interests James (played by Alex Lawther) and Alyssa (played by Jessica Barden) find themselves squatting in an empty house while on the run together. Alyssa becomes angry with James and decides to go out for a walk, stumbling into Topher (played by Alex Sawyer), and invites him back to the house to have sex. As the viewer we are aware of a few things as this scene plays out before us: 1) Alyssa has never had sex before, 2) She is quickly falling for James, 3) It is safe to assume Alyssa is only bringing Topher back to the house to make James jealous. Upon arriving back to the house Alyssa starts to hook up with Topher

upstairs while James sits quietly downstairs on the couch. As Topher aggressively kisses Alyssa, she quickly becomes disinterested, even blaming James for her inability to enjoy it, “It’s no good. Thanks, James” (“Episode 3”). Alyssa pushes Topher off of her offering the simple statement, “I changed my mind ... I’m not into this.” Topher does not respond well to this and offers a last-ditch effort to guilt Alyssa saying, “It’s not fair.” Alyssa responds matter-of-factly, “Yes it is.” Upon realizing his first effort of coercion failed he resorts to flattery, “I think you’re amazing.” Alyssa then responds back with the most powerful response of the encounter, “Well, then respect me changing my mind and f**k off, please (“Episode 3”). The scene offers a realistic look into a situation that so many inexperienced teens have found themselves in. A lot of teenagers do not understand that consent can be given or taken back at any second, even if the sexual encounter has already started.

This scene is also thematically important in its portrayal of Alyssa as a character. It builds on her complexity. While on one hand she is a powerful teenager who handled an escalating sexual situation in a really mature way that many teenagers don’t find themselves capable of doing, she was also the one who invited Topher back with the intentions of using him sexually to anger James. When interviewed about the scene, Jessica Barden made this important point about being a woman, “You see men being the people who lead women on in pop culture, but she did that to Topher. She uses him ... Women are like men as well, we make mistakes, but then you can fix it just as quickly. You don’t have to go along with it” (qtd. in Romero 3). Throughout the series Alyssa could be described as sexually aggressive, however, it is the desire to love and be loved that motivates her. Unfortunately, even in

the age of more complex female leads, it can still be hard to find a realistic portrayal of what it means to be a young woman, both confident and insecure, sure and unsure, mean and vulnerable, but *TEOTFW* does Alyssa's character justice in showing her complexity in an honest way.

It is not just through Alyssa's character that we see the themes of sex and consent played out, but also through James's character. While on their journey of running away together, James and Alyssa are hitchhiking when they catch a ride with a man named Martin. The group makes a pit stop at a diner and when James goes into the bathroom, Martin forces James to touch him at the urinals. It is a painful scene to watch but wildly important. Sexual assault experienced by men is largely underrepresented in media. However, this scene does not only give representation to that issue, it also heavily plays around with gender roles and the concept of masculinity itself. James's assaulter is a veteran. The show makes a point to place a small storyline or at least an identity to the man to demonstrate how male homosexuality is often placed in contrast to the ideas of traditional masculinity, especially in an environment like the army, and how the fact that parts of this man's identity have only ever been allowed to exist in secret endangers people left vulnerable around him.

The conversation on gender does not end there with this scene but is made even more complex when it is Alyssa who suspects something is off, rushes into the bathroom, catches them, and "saves James." The trope of a woman being saved from a creepy man by another man is so common in media, it seems like it is featured in every other movie, but I cannot think of a single time I have seen a male saved

from a predatory situation by a female on TV or on any other form of media other than on this TV show. All James needed in that moment was for someone to speak up for him as the act had left him speechless and powerless and that is what Alyssa did. The situation had nothing to do with physical strength or being overpowered physically, but instead it was about power dynamics and vulnerability. Alyssa provided the strength James did not have when she screamed at Martin, grabbed James's hand, and ran them out of the diner. Upon leaving the diner, Alyssa offers this simple yet powerful piece of advice to James, "You know that if people want to do stuff to you, you don't have to let them" ("Episode 2").

I mentioned earlier the interesting dynamic the viewer finds themselves in when relating to and appreciating the characters of this series as they are, of course, murderers. In the episodes leading up to the murder, the teens are seen squatting in a man's (later identified as Professor Clive Koch) home when they find video tapes recorded by the professor of himself violently abusing young women. Unbeknownst to the teens, the professor arrives home to find Alyssa asleep in his bed. He is about to violently rape her when James runs into the room and stabs him. The murder scene pries at some complex and conflicting emotions for the viewer. On one hand, the murder is arguably unnecessarily gruesome, but on the other hand it is obvious that the gruesomeness of the scene is a product of the palpable rage inspired in James in response to the professor's attempt to commit sexual violence against Alyssa. This scene occurs chronologically after the other two sexual encounters we see the two characters go through and at this point in the show there has been a strategic build-up of both anger and

dismay, felt both by the audience and by the main characters, at the frequency of which humans in this world have to deal with sexual violence. I say the build-up is strategic because the timing of the rape/murder scene within the series is at a point where the audience is prompted, as uncomfortable as it may feel, to say things like, “Good, the world is better off without people like that man” or “I can’t believe I am thinking this but that murder may have actually been a noble act” or even just simply “Enough! I cannot see, or hear, or experience anymore sexual violence.” It is natural to want to see serial perpetrators of this kind of violence be brought to justice and although this is a dark and morally unjust way to do so, there is also something about it that feels kind of fair and satisfying.

Season 2 of TEOTFW follows the characters in the aftermath of the murder, the focus of the season, however, is not the murder but instead, “Season 2 of *The End of the F***ing World* is a more meditative piece on the spanning effect of Professor Koch’s abusive behavior. This is how the world feels in the Post-#MeToo movement” (Whyte 4). The season received more negative reviews than positive because people missed the excitement and romance of the first season:

Sadly, that plot is largely redundant, reworking the story beats from Season 1 to make explicit everything that was implied. What happened before may have been ugly, sad, and awful, but all of those emotions were used to highlight the love these two messed up kids discovered — which was truly special. (Travers 2)

I really respect the writers of the series for taking this angle, however. It is an important message to get across in this era of #MeToo: the

effects of sexual violence do not end with the ends of the perpetrators. I completely agree with Travers that the love story between James and Alyssa is the highlight of the series but to say it is the only thing that makes the series special is seriously underselling it. The way *TEOTFW* uses the conversation around sexual assault and consent to display complexities in gender is “truly special.” The way the series highlights the aftermath of sexual violence is “truly special.” Alyssa’s character in Season 2 is seen spiraling after the incident, and her past spills into all aspects of her life, including her relationship with James and others. It is a timely and seriously relevant concept: While there may be justice, there is also still pain. A character in the second season asks Alyssa an emotional question upon reflecting on the death of the professor, “But what do I do with all of the pain?” (“Episode 4”) Alyssa doesn’t have an answer for her because she is just trying to figure that out for herself.

The show also does a really good job of displaying how James and Alyssa’s own sexual relationship has been shaped by the sexual trauma they have each experienced and been witness to in each other’s lives. In the final episode, James and Alyssa have significantly progressed in their relationship and they are laying together on the beach when they start to make out. Alyssa has a flashback to the sexual violence she experienced in an earlier episode and asks James if they can wait, “Just for a bit, I don’t know. A few days. Is that ok?” James simply responds, “Yeah, of course.” This scene shows the writers’ dedication to highlighting, through this series, not only what it looks like to get consent *wrong* (which they do often) but also what it looks like to get consent *right*, which may be even more powerful.

Charlie Covell and the producers of *TEOTFW* series prove revolutionary in their investigation of gender through several powerful scenes tackling sexual assault and consent. It is clear how intentional they are when crafting dialogue, chronologizing the events of the series, and portraying complex multi-dimensional characters in order to elicit a whole gamut of emotions from the audience from anger to sadness to happiness. Above all, the writers somehow manage to create relatable characters in a seemingly relatable storyline, when in reality the main event of the series (murder) is highly unrelatable to its viewers. *TEOTFW* fosters empathy and awareness around the unfortunately ever-present theme of sexual assault and urges viewers to love, hate, and ultimately relate to two complex and very human characters with nuanced perspectives on gender.

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ART REVIEW: Dewing's Poetic World

Alexandra Plummer

Thomas Wilmer Dewing is not a household name. When one thinks of the great Impressionists of the mid-19th century— Monet, Degas, Renoir, Manet — Dewing does not come to mind. Before deciding to visit his exhibition, I had never even heard of him.

Dewing was born into a modest milieu in Boston in 1851. At age 14, he was apprenticed to a lithographer to support his mother and siblings, after the death of his alcoholic father (Smithsonian American Art Museum). Despite his circumstances, he left for Paris to study at the Académie Julian in 1876. The Académie, founded in 1868 by Rodolphe Julian, was an alternative training center to the Ecole des Beaux Arts, where students were encouraged to explore without fear of, “...drudgery, uncaring or outdated teaching, and strenuous career-oriented rivalry, with a make-or-break situation at the end of three or four years” (Russell). Unlike the Ecole des Beaux Arts, the Académie welcomed male and female students alike. After moving to New York City, upon his return, he spent his summers at an artist colony in Cornish, New Hampshire — frequented by the likes of Isadora Duncan and Charles Adams Platt. It is there that he established a friendship with Charles Lang Freer, who found refuge in Dewing's friendship and gorgeous paintings, and whose gallery now features Dewing's most famous works (Dewing's Poetic World).



“Before Sunrise,” Thomas Wilmer Dewing

One painting featured in the exhibition, “Before Sunrise,” particularly nods toward Dewing’s training at the Académie Julian at the height of Impressionism. Two women, one holding a paper lantern, seemingly glide through an amorphous green meadow — barely visible, as the sun has yet to fully rise. The piece is the very definition of Impressionism: utterly imperfect. It is an open composition, comprised of thin, visible brushstrokes, and puts emphasis on the ever-changing quality of light. The rosy pink sky makes it seem as though the sun could rise at any moment, and looking at it, I found myself waiting for the sky to change from pink to red to orange to yellow to blue. The painting’s, “...quickly applied brush strokes give that painterly illusion of movement and spontaneity” (Caves). Dewing was a master of light play, and made a series of paintings depicting the different times of day; characterized by light and the color of the sky.

Dewing once described his artistic sphere as a, “poetic and imaginative world where a few choice spirits live” (Dewing’s Poetic

World). That world features gorgeous landscapes and spare interiors alike, and the few choice spirits that inhabit it appear in the form of tall, long-necked, tiny-waisted women — his “Dewing Girls” (Lawrence). Though occasionally depicted reading, painting, or playing musical instruments, the majority of them simply stare off into space, giving them an enigmatic edge. Dewing claimed that as an artist, it was important that his models have “brains” (*Dewing’s Poetic World*), which some attribute to his wife’s influence. A fellow artist, Maria Oakey Dewing, helped promote her husband’s career and some say, “...influenced the style and subject of his art, perhaps even to the point of painting parts of his large commissioned works” (Smith).

However, that is not to say that Dewing’s works bear any type of feminist significance. Though he did not objectify women to the extent of his contemporaries, he painted quite a few nude paintings from the perspective of a very male gaze, and portrayed women as, “...beautiful symbols of an aesthetically oriented inner life that was separate from the world of commerce and social interaction” (Brooklyn Museum). While Renoir was painting his voluptuous models with breasts falling out of their tunics, Manet his “Olympia,” and Degas his models emerging from the bath, Dewing was painting his beautiful ghosts — his own breed of objectification.

Dewing’s summers in New Hampshire inspired his more ethereal works, featuring lush landscapes and his “Dewing Girls” (Lawrence) dressed in off-the-shoulder gowns — often resembling Greek robes — assuming artful poses, often with lanterns, garlands or musical instruments. Many of these works suggest a slight flirtation with abstraction, as landscape starts to blend with model — adding to

the dreamlike quality of Dewing's paintings. He mounted these works in striking gilded frames, designed by his friend and patron, architect Stanford White (Smith).

My favorite painting featured in the exhibition is entitled "The Lute." It was one of the final landscapes that Dewing painted in Cornish, and is a kind of compilation of all his creative influences — the Tonalist movement, Japanese Ukiyo-e, and Johannes Vermeer. It features four of his "Dewing Girls" (Lawrence) set against a green gossamer backdrop; one of them holding a lute. Three of the women are situated in a kind of (I say "kind of" as they do not interact with one another) group at one side of the painting, as the lute player sits by herself on the other.



"The Lute," Thomas Wilmer Dewing, 1904

This painting is a prime example of Dewing's work with Tonalism — "an American art movement of the 1880s in which artists painted landscapes with an overall tone of color, spread over the entire surface like an atmosphere of mist" (Jordan) — as there appears to be a layer of mist spanning the width of the canvas. The oil on wood panel only adds to this illusion, to the point that when I first approached the painting, I thought it was dripping. Though the painting gives the

impression of a lush landscape, its foliage has no real definition, and were it not for the four tiny, white flowers in the bottom right corner and the outline of a bench that two of the four women sit on, the women would appear floating in a sea of green.

One can certainly draw parallels between Ukiyo-e — “a Japanese art movement that flourished from the 17th to the 19th century and produced paintings and prints depicting the everyday life and interests of the common people” (Merriam-Webster) — and Dewing’s work, especially considering his training at the Académie Julian at the height of Japonisme. Traditional Ukiyo-e, “was not meant to portray real life but rather the artist’s viewpoint” (ITravelWithArt). That is true for Dewing’s art, as well. Why his paintings are referred to as “dreamscapes” (Lawrence) — they are not realistic depictions, but simply figments of his poetic world.



“Girl with Lute,” Thomas Wilmer Dewing, 1904-05

Dewing was greatly influenced by Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer — another fan of depicting thoughtful women. The lute was one of his favorite instruments to portray in paintings for its vast

symbolic purposes (Rech). It is the key to understanding this painting, which is so frustrating because there are so many possibilities as to its significance. However, I have narrowed it down to two: love and misfortune. There is more evidence to speak to the former as the likely solution, as Dewing made art to transport audiences out of their everyday lives and into his poetic world — his utopia. If so, maybe the lute is an instrument of the divine. However, I get the feeling that this lute is not symbolic for love and harmony. Why is one of the women unable to look up from the ground? Why is another peering at the lute player; hands on hips? She must be doing something wrong, no? Maybe, if the lute player plucks a string, all earthly misfortunes will come streaming back. Maybe, she is tempting fate.

Though I adore “The Lute,” and now consider Dewing as one of my favorite Impressionists, I cannot say that I agree with his concept of utopia and cannot see any kind of underlying feminist agenda to his work. Do not get me wrong, his landscapes take my breath away, and his portrayal of women is more intriguing than most — he allows them a mind of their own — however he does not give them a voice. In fact, he actively takes it away by portraying his subjects as solitary mutes who stare off into space. It is clear that they have “brains” (*Dewing’s Poetic World*), they just are not allowed to use them. And though it may be overshadowed by beautiful landscapes and flowing gowns, there is sadness and fear in many of their eyes. One of the figures in “The Lute” exudes that sadness — eyes fixed on the ground, unable to look up — as if what lies ahead is just too painful. But, what is she so afraid of? We will never know. She is not allowed to tell us.

I do not blame Dewing for his depiction of women. He was only creating in the style of his time. He believed that that ideal woman was beautiful and silent because that is what he had been taught. However, had he been born today, when women are anything but silent — when they are reclaiming their objectified bodies and establishing their own gaze — I think his depiction of them would look very different. I believe that was the underlying message of this exhibition. The art world has silenced and objectified women for so long, that now it is time for women to reclaim the voice that was stolen from them...it is time to give the “Dewing Girls” (Lawrence) a voice.

“Dewing’s Poetic World” remains at the Freer Gallery of Art, within the Smithsonian National Museum of Asian Art, through November 2020.

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Blending Personal and Research

When writing academic texts or doing academic research, it is easy to forget that personal experiences are always present in various ways, whether it be their inspirational effect or the insights they generate. However, writers vary in the extent to which they allow the personal to manifest in the written products of their research. That said, bringing the personal to research, if done adeptly, is an effective way of not only making one's work more convincing, but also boosting one's own motivation for doing research. The pieces that follow entwine the two in engaging ways that foreground the role of the personal in serving as a springboard for research.

More Than Just an Animation

Melanie Collins Diaz

Shouting, fighting, incomprehensible dialogue, exaggerated behaviors. A strange cartoon had just come on the TV, catching me by surprise. Intrigued by the unusual animation, I let it play. I was only a few minutes into the episode before I turned the TV off. Something about the cartoon was just too different. Maybe it was the characters with the big eyes or the strange graphics. Whatever it was, I did not like it. It wasn't long before I learned that what had appeared on my TV that day was a Japanese animation called anime. Knowing this, I tried giving it another chance. I felt guilty for having judged it too quickly. Nevertheless, just like the first time, I was unable to get through it. It was unbearable.

It came as a surprise to me when I learned that some of my friends liked anime. I wondered how they, or anyone for that matter, could like such an odd cartoon. Afraid of coming across as critical, I refrained from asking them this question. Instead, I asked those who shared the same perspective as me. More often than not, they would shrug and say, "Everyone to his own taste". A reasonable answer, I thought; everyone is entitled to their own interests and tastes. Still, I believed there was something deeper. Something about this foreign animation was appealing to Americans in a way US cartoons were not. Yet, I did not understand why. Growing up watching US cartoons, I became accustomed to seeing cute characters going on adventures, singing, and teaching life lessons. Anime, on the other hand, had a very different style, including complex storylines and Japanese dialogue. I

assumed the disparities between the two types of animation would discourage other Americans who, like myself, were brought up watching US cartoons. Nevertheless, I was wrong. The Japanese art took many Americans by storm, thereby making the US the country with the highest demand for anime, right after Japan (“The Global Content”). How could something so culturally and stylistically different appeal to such a large American audience? What was it that set it apart from US cartoons?

I contacted a long-time friend of mine who I thought could shed some light on the issue. Ricardo Rodríguez, a current film student, has always had a passion for film. Throughout his life, he has learned to critically engage with movies by reflecting on the aspects few people tend to consider. With such seriousness towards movies, I was shocked to learn that he was an avid anime fan. According to him, he has been watching anime for most of his life. As a kid, he just watched anime for fun. “I really didn’t understand what was going on. I just liked all the action, the fights and the colors.” It was fairly recent when he began looking at anime as more than just entertainment. “I liked watching anime because I found it entertaining. It wasn’t until some friends recommended certain movies that I started to look at anime from a whole other perspective.” As a kid, he had limited himself to watching series like *Dragon Ball Z* and *Naruto* where action and fighting scenes were frequent. But, when his friends recommended films that had less to do with fighting sequences and more with drama, he developed a new appreciation for anime. In our conversation, he mentioned three of his favorite movies. The first one he mentioned was *Your Name*. As he explained it, the movie is about two people who are connected by a

red string of fate, even though they are thousands of miles apart. They switch bodies and slowly get to know one another by experiencing each other's lives. This ultimately leads to them falling in love and looking for ways to meet. This complex story was one of the many things Ricardo admired from this movie. Moreover, he found the visuals presented throughout aesthetically pleasing.

Just as he did with *Your Name*, Ricardo continued detailing other anime movies and series with tremendous passion. "After watching these movies, I never saw anime the same way again. You definitely can't compare American cartoons to it," he said matter-of-factly. "The only thing they have in common is that both are animated. That's it." Needless to say, Ricardo prefers anime over US cartoons. Although he grew up watching US cartoons, he resonated more with anime. When I asked him why that was, he said, "US cartoons are meant for kids. After growing up, I didn't want to keep watching childish cartoons, though I still wanted to see animated films. Anime allowed me to do this." For Ricardo, anime was a solution to a personal dilemma.

I noticed that other American anime fans struggled with the same problem. Kess, the founder of *Techanimate*, is another example. In one of her blog posts, Kess explains that one of the reasons she loves anime is because it allows her to indulge in animated films without having to worry about them being childish. Like Ricardo, she says that she had outgrown US cartoons but did not necessarily want to stop watching animated films. For her, US cartoons "were just full of jokes and didn't have much behind its story." She wanted cartoons with more substance, which she found when she stumbled upon anime. She wrote, "I could never have imagined animation could handle any type of tone

or genre. From light-hearted comedies to stories of darkness and betrayal. From soft, soothing romance to a gory horror that even rivaled Hollywood..." (Kess). Anime provided her a variety of options, all including the seriousness she hoped for in animated films.

Evidently, a recurring argument among anime fans was that US cartoons were not mature enough for older audiences. The US film industry has, in fact, neglected a large population by directing its animation to children. Yet, after anime entered the US market, many production companies sought to follow its example and appeal to a larger audience (Daliot-Bul 85). They began including mature themes in family films in order to engage older audiences. But, as Ryan Walsh – a writer for *The Artifice* – points out, US animation is still deemed childish by American society, regardless of companies' attempts to make them more mature. He says, "Every time a film tries to be more adult in a film that is aimed towards families, it makes the film much more childish in the end." Walsh argues that this is due to the fact that animation cannot be realistically compared to live-action films. Anime, however, proves his assumption wrong. Since its inception, anime has been produced for all audiences (Chambers). For this reason, animators produced films and series that fit within many of the subgenres that are present in live-action films. In short, the seriousness American film producers dedicate to live-action films is the same one Japanese animators dedicate to their animations.

So, why don't Americans just watch live-action movies? As Ricardo explained to me, "The things that happen in these [anime] movies are only possible through anime. It would be too expensive for production companies to produce the same film as a live-action movie."

Anime can be more imaginative and over-the-top because it is cheap to make, whereas live-action films are limited by funding. Not only does anime's distinctive style, its 2-D animation, make it cheaper than other mediums, but it also allows animators' imaginations to run wild (Mahinder). As Mahinder suggests, 2-D animation is less complex than other mediums, therefore making it easier for animators to create unimaginable worlds and characters. Animation is not exclusive to anime, though; US cartoons can also introduce viewers to fictitious worlds and characters. However, anime does it in a way that US animation does not.

US cartoons may be funny and entertaining, but they will never have you wishing to be part of their universe. Or, at least, not for many adults. Anime, on the other hand, does. Shinobu Price, a Japanese media expert, explains, "Americans are seeing an inventive worldview filtered through a Japanese perspective. This creates a realm that is doubly removed from Western reality, and therefore, doubly mysterious and enticing" (166). This "realm" Shinobu mentions seems so distant from reality that it becomes a form of escapism for American fans. Viewers become immersed in the worlds they see in films and find themselves wishing to be a part of them. This tendency is particularly common among those who are seen as outcasts or who have a difficult time fitting in their communities ("Fandom and Participatory"). Typically, they find solace in anime's fictitious worlds because they envision their best selves through characters living in alternative worlds. Unlike US cartoons, anime provides a gateway into people's ideal worlds.

Seeking to understand the effects of escapism, Patricia Hernández – the deputy editor of a gaming website – conducted various

interviews with anime fans. One particular interviewee, Kat Elisabeth admitted to being “teased pretty badly growing up because of her interest in games, anime and sci-fi” (Hernández). As someone who was constantly excluded in her community, she found comfort in the imaginary worlds found in anime. Within these worlds, she felt safe and included. In fact, Elisabeth developed “such ‘a love and connection to [characters]’ that was strong enough to want to bring said character into our world” (Hernández). Elisabeth, like many other anime fans, sought to include their ideal worlds and characters into the real world. By doing this, their sense of escapism impacted modern American society.

Currently, there are many ways in which anime fans have incorporated the fictitious world of anime into the real world. This is done through physical encounters or virtual channels. A common physical interaction among fans are conventions. They have become very popular in the US. In fact, Nissim Otmazgin, a senior lecturer at the Department of East Asian Studies in The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, says that “over 200 fan gatherings [take place] every year in the United States, where anime takes on a central role” (64). One of the largest anime conventions in the world is Anime Expo, which takes place in Los Angeles, California. It is so popular that, in 2017, they reached over 108,000 attendees (“Largest North”). Most fans, if not all, usually partake in cosplay when attending these conventions. Fans dress up as their favorite characters and behave as though they were them. This activity has become a key part of the anime community. So much so that Nicolle Lamerichs, a scholar in Media Studies at Maastricht University, argues that “characters are used as signifiers of

the fan's own identity" (8). She suggests that not only are fans dressing up, but they are embodying characters whom they personally identify with. This way, fans leave out their real-world selves and become their ideal selves through anime.

The anime community has not stopped there. They have also found ways to live their alternate reality through the internet. Through activities such as role-playing and *fansubbing*, fans live out their desired lives. Role-playing, much like cosplay, allows fans to embrace a character and behave like them virtually, either through a game or a forum (McCain et al. 5). On the other hand, *fansubbing* is when fans prepare their own subtitles for films or episodes where they feel is appropriate (Lee 1132). These are very common practices done by anime fans in order to participate in the community. However, there is an even greater practice that has surged from social media. The growing communication among fans has led to the rise of fandoms. Tsay-Vogel and Sanders define fandoms as a "phenomenon that encourages individuals to collectively and socially unite within a subculture based on shared interests or appreciation" (33). Through these fandoms, fans generate a variety of creations based off of the film or series they are interested in. Fans either write their own stories using anime characters, create short films by mashing up bits of films and series, or write songs about anime ("Fandom and Participatory"). Evidently, once fans find their place in the anime community, they do as much as they can to contribute to it.

As the anime community continues to grow, these activities are becoming more popular than ever. This has had a particularly deep impact on American society because a community, which was excluded

for many years, is now becoming socially acceptable. Jessica McCain, a psychologist from the University of Georgia, and her peers refer to this as the rise of the geek culture (1). She explains that “specific geek interests were too small to independently support a large convention” (McCain et al. 2). Nevertheless, that is no longer the case. Social media have helped unite a community, and ultimately make it attractive for other people to join. This is not to say that the stigma given to anime has disappeared. Talking to Ricardo, he mentioned how people tend to react when they learn he is an anime fan. “I may be meeting a person and somehow the topic comes up. I tell them that I like anime and all I receive is a disgusted look.” However, he has seen a change. “Recently, I have met a lot of anime fans. I was surprised by how many people were telling me they saw anime, even those who did not seem like people who would like it. Clearly, anime is becoming more popular.” Whether it is because of the Japanese animation or the community that backs it, people are giving anime a chance. Its growing popularity suggests that anime fans will no longer be marginalized from society. Instead, geek culture will become prevalent.

Never did I imagine that the strange cartoon that once appeared on my television would have had such great implications on people. Anime was not just an animation, as I came to understand. Anime was a solution to Americans’ problem with the US film industry. Anime was also a breath of fresh air for those who needed a distraction from their problems. Anime created an inclusive environment which spurred into a global community. It changed and helped many Americans. Something in me will always prefer US animations over that of the

Japanese, but I will no longer see anime as a strange cartoon. Instead, I will see it as the influential force it is.

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Code Switching: An Exploration of African Americans in the STEM field

Marie Hayes

My father was smart to join the STEM field in the 80s as it became one of the largest and most profitable industries of the past 20 years. His hard work proved fruitful in his future career, but other African American people are not as fortunate. Similar to my father, African Americans are pressed to prove their worth and spot within college institutions. This pressure is a deterrent to people of color who wish to pursue higher education. Because of these hurdles, many students of color are discouraged and therefore do not pursue their projected career path. This paradigm has resulted in little representation of African Americans in the tech industry.

My dad's experience in the tech field was far more advanced than many of his peers. He first began programming when he was in high school and quickly excelled in the field. As a junior in high school he began working for Chicago's Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering, Technical Computing Section processing the coding cards. While processing the cards he would notice mistakes and began to correct the codes. His higher-ups noticed and gave him a code-writing position. My father attended Purdue University, which was located in Indiana, to be closer to my grandmother. Despite the proximity to Chicago, conservative Indiana proved to be a great contrast when compared to the liberal urban environment he was raised in. The culture shock came with its own difficulties. When my father went to

college he found that he had to prove himself, despite his extensive experience and knowledge in electrical engineering.

His first experience with prejudice within the STEM field was with his roommate. When my father first moved into his room, his roommate, Richard Falwell, was incredibly hostile. My dad learned later on that Richard had never met a Black man before. My father's ethnicity was a shock to him. Due to his lack of exposure, my dad's roommate relied on stereotypes that were ingrained in his head. Richard assumed my dad was a thug and uneducated, which is the opposite of my nerdy and soft-spoken father. In the roommate's eyes, my dad was not qualified to be at the university. They both were majoring in Electrical Engineering, and Richard assumed that he would excel much quicker than my father. But, as the semester went on his roommate began to struggle with some of his classes, while my father breezed through. My dad offered to tutor Richard and they quickly became friends after. Richard was incredibly excited about his new friendship, so during Thanksgiving break, he decided to tell his family. Richard described my father as a helpful intellectual, who was in essence a subversion of most Black stereotypes. Richard's conservative family was not pleased. His father was so disappointed that he whipped him. The aggressive and violent reaction to a simple description of a new friend is an example of the deeply ingrained stereotypes that African Americans deal with in the STEM field.

According to a study done by *Brookings*, African Americans make up only 11.9% of the STEM workforce¹, with Hispanic workers making up only 7.9% of the workforce. The two groups make up only 19.8% of the workforce, but they make up 60% of the national

population at large. Both racial groups have been historically repressed, and this racial disparity is highlighted within STEM majors. The underrepresentation of repressed minorities, or minorities who have failed to achieve monetary success as a race, within the STEM field, highlights the larger problem within educational systems and their failure to mobilize and encourage African American and Hispanic individuals to join one of the largest industries. This failure has blocked a possible new pathway that could lead to economic growth within the Hispanic and African American communities.

The educational system plays a large role in the racial disparity and the systematic oppression begins at the early stages of schooling. P.L Thomas describes part of the difficulty: "...[African American] males are disproportionately targeted in disciplinary actions in schools, referred to law enforcement and suspended from schools" (75). According to Thomas, schools are perpetuating the same stereotypes that African Americans are thugs. By continuing penal punishment, as opposed to reformatory punishment, schools are perpetuating the societal expectations of African American boys, that they are nothing but thugs. Thomas outlines this prescribed role, despite little evidence of the stereotype's truth: "When [African American] males are seen in school, then, many must recognize that they are mostly viewed as misbehaving, as potential, if not already criminals" (75). The stereotype quickly becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. If there is no way to change societal perceptions, why not conform to them? This expectation is internalized by African American youth, who are subjected to these stereotypes, and deters any form of higher education as the only precedent set is a future of reform or imprisonment.

In more recent years, schools have begun to take action to counteract the discouragement that manifests within primary education. Brian L. Wright highlights the success of STEM programs within K-12 school. In summarizing a colleague's study he says:

...she found that when there is district and school-level support for diversity in curriculum implementation, which includes activity-based instruction in science and mathematics, science and mathematics clubs... career awareness education, self-esteem building efforts, professional development for teachers, and increased school instruction time in science and mathematics, student outcomes in science and mathematics are significantly improved. The success of these programs with African American students in science and mathematics is encouraging. (Wright 6)

The correlation may seem obvious: when you have good math and science, your students do better in those subjects. However, the implications are immense. African American youth, statistically speaking, seem to be behind their Caucasian counterparts. In a report published in *International Journal on New Trends in Education and Their Implications*, "White students had statistically significantly higher mean mathematics scores than Hispanic and African American students at the end of 9th grade" (Bicer et al. 146). Still, proficiency in these subjects is the most important that it has ever been; "the needs of the workforce in STEM associated jobs increased by 3.3%" (Bicer et al. 139). The new jobs provide a new pathway out of poverty, a large concern within the African American community. STEM programs give

African American youth the opportunity to excel in an untapped job resource.

Even if African American students do show promise in the field, there is a whole new set of obstacles that they must overcome in higher education. African Americans' roles within a university have become a paradox, with contradictory roles and responsibilities. A study done by *Communication Education* attempted to identify struggles of being an African American college student at a white institution. In order to identify these struggles the authors used Relational Dialectics Theory, "...a theory of relational meaning making-- that is, how the meanings surrounding individual and relationship identities are constructed through language use" (Simmons et. al.). The researchers found many different crucial contradictions within an African American's role as a college student. One such contradiction was the Blackness-Whiteness phenomena: "The Blackness-Whiteness dialectic indicates that some African American students struggle to maintain pride in their Blackness, while at the same time, learning and adopting White culture. This tension may force students to question their own abilities as they work to survive in a culture they fear they do not understand" (Simmons et.al.). The contradiction or contending identities highlight the challenge of being a POC in higher education. Throughout childhood, individuals have been socialized a certain way. They grow up among people of color. However, in the setting of higher education their former socialization becomes inadequate. Universities are known as predominantly white establishments and because of that demographic, white socialization is the standard. African Americans

are forced to assimilate to white culture. The forced assimilation leads to uncertainty and puts African Americans at a disadvantage.

African American college students are also faced with creating a network within the school community. Creating these networks brings about its own complications in the context of the research. The authors write, "As a group, African American students were conflicted as to when and how to infuse themselves into the university culture. In this discourse, integration denotes the desire by African American students for their cultural group to be accepted and included in the mainstream university culture as a viable, worthy, and important group. By contrast, segregation denotes the African American students' desire that their culture be seen as self-sustaining and separate from other cultures in the university setting" (Simmons et. al). In attempting to create a network, African American students are forced to choose again. There is a struggle to share culture with other students on campus, but there is also a worry about assimilation to the point of losing that culture. College campuses are often homogenous. African American individuals are forced to conform in many cases, molding culture and heritage to fit in or complement other cultures recognized on campus. The question becomes, "Do I want to embrace my heritage and culture, while isolating individuals who surround me, or should I assimilate repressing culture for the sake of a community?" The question is loaded and has no simple answer but is important to identify as it signifies the obstacles that are set ahead of African Americans.

It has been established how difficult the college experience is for an African American STEM student in general, but why is it so

important for there to be minority representation in the STEM work field? In the book *The Black Digital Elite*, many influential leaders in the STEM field offer multiple benefits of the technological community on the African American community. The electronic revolution has provided many possible improvements to communities and continues to have special implications for a brighter future. Many Black STEM workers believe that the involvement of minorities is imperative to improvements that technology have had and will have on society. For example, Dr. Alan Shaw, who developed software that was meant to help neighborhoods organize and collaborate, “...emphasizes that African Americans can be not only the consumers of the technology but also the users and developers who improve the Black community” (Barber 113). Minority representation is more than just representation, for representation’s sake. Getting minorities involved is essential in making technology accessible and helpful for all demographics. With a homogenous workforce, technology can not address any concerns outside of the standard demographic. How can technology be developed to solve minority issues if the developer has no experience or knowledge of the issue?

One of my dad’s current projects is a perfect example of the importance of representation. He and his team are working on improving the Google Home, a voice-activated A.I. machine. One of the largest and most important criticisms of A.I. is its inability to understand different accents. My dad says that without minority representation, the problem would not be addressed as it is not a concern for the majority of the STEM field. Most workers do not have accents and do not consider the implications of a machine that cannot

understand the owner. Hence, minority representation is integral to the progression of the technological field and the improvement of these technologies.

When my father first began working at *Google*, he was required to take special classes to update new employees on the uniform coding used throughout the company. The other class focuses on problems within the work space. These problems include: racism, sexism, and general discrimination. Essentially, my father had a Google version of AUX. When discussing racism, my father was able to tell the story of his freshman roommate. Through his experience, the class was able to discuss societal racism and its place in this society. The class is a step in the correct direction by calling to attention the lack of diversity. Although the STEM workforce has made great strides in increasing Hispanic and African American representation, there are still many obstacles that deter participation within the STEM field. In order to solve the issue within the field, there must be a systematic reform starting at the early stages of education, with programs that encourage repressed minorities to get involved in the emerging field.

African Americans within the STEM field are a largely ignored group, mainly because they are so small. However, minorities, especially African Americans, must be acknowledged. The lack of representation is a product of a broken schooling system that has repressed and hindered success in African American children. From a very early age they are set up to fail and generally do, perpetuating a cycle of poverty within the racial community. Certain schools have begun to make an effort by instituting STEM-based classes and activities. Even still, in higher education, African Americans are faced

with complex social phenomena that set them apart from their white counterparts. STEM careers should be encouraged, not only because of the economic advantages of being in STEM, but the advancement of technology in general. Minorities offer new perspectives and adjustments that can improve and optimize the use of certain technologies. Therefore, minority representation is not simply a moral high ground, but mutually beneficial relationship, that both improves the lives of minorities and the technological field.

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The Use and Cultural Appropriation of AAVE (Black Vernacular)

Makenna Lindsay



Sex, Drugs, and Rosh Hashanah: How *Broad City* Makes Young Jewish Women Feel Seen

Clare Wiesen

Nothing unites a group of millennial Jewish women like discussing their favorite moments on *Broad City*. The show is a favorite among young Jewish women who love comedy, and centers on two best friends, Abbi and Ilana, who live in New York City and are just trying to figure out their post-college lives through a mess of sex, weed, and odd jobs. The creators and stars of the show are Ilana Glazer and Abbi Jacobson, who play characters that are not so coincidentally named after themselves. While every fan has a different scene they call their favorite, there is one thing we can all agree on: *Broad City* is amazing because it is the first show that accurately represents us. There have been quite a few Jewish female characters in mainstream television, such as Rachel and Monica on *Friends*, but they all rarely, if ever, mention their Judaism. *Broad City* does the opposite. From the first episode, Ilana describes herself and Abbi as “two Jewesses just trying to make a buck” (“What a Wonderful World”). This embrace of Judaism is what makes *Broad City* successful, as it follows the tradition of female Jewish comedians using obscenity and brutal honesty to engage and shock their audiences and does not shy away from niche Jewish cultural references. These practices make it feel familiar yet contemporary and create a true representation of the lives of young Jewish women coming of age today which contributes to normalizing Jewish culture in a time of rising antisemitism.

Jewish female comedians established a tradition of bold and overtly sexual comedy that would have a legacy that continues in

contemporary comedy. The history of stand-up comedy as a whole is quite Jewish, with one of the most important figures of stand-up comedy, Lenny Bruce, being a Jew that frequently talked about being Jewish. The history of Jewish women doing comedy follows its own path. Working parallel to Lenny Bruce were Belle Barth and Pearl Williams, two Jewish women whose work continues to be influential. Known as the “Red Hot Mamas,” Barth and Williams worked as stand-up comedians in the 1960s whose routines often discussed sex as the women’s liberation movement progressed forward. These women were working at the same time as Bruce, who was often arrested on charges of obscenity, and while they were not often arrested, their jokes were certainly dirty. Grace Overbeke, a scholar on the intersection between Judaism and theatre who earned her Ph.D. at Northwestern University, notes in her article “Subversively Sexy: The Jewish ‘Red Hot Mamas’ Sophie Tucker, Belle Barth and Pearl Williams,” that “Barth and Williams intentionally delibidinize the female body as a way to refuse to conform to man's sexualized image of women” (48). This is exemplified by Pearl Williams’ joke in which she defines the term “indecent”: “If it's long enough, hard enough, and in far enough, it's in decent” (Williams qtd. in Overbeke 48). Barth and Williams both reduce sex down to the mechanics or turn men in the sex objects in order to talk about the taboo subject without ever appearing erotic.

While their jokes were shockingly sexual, Barth and Williams never neared appearing attractive, as the sex they talked about was aggressive and a method for these women to display their power. In their article titled “Obscenity, Dirtiness and License in Jewish Comedy,”

authors Debra Aarons, who specializes in the linguistic analysis of humor, and Marc Mierowsky, who holds a Ph.D. from Cambridge University in English Literature and Intellectual History, point out that Belle Barth's "routines were delivered in a husky, overtly coquettish way, throatily seductive, and the material was crude and direct. The effect on the audience was not titillating: rather than being sexually aroused, they guffawed" (168). While in another context, a woman talking so openly about sex might have been seen as sexually appealing, the manner in which they presented the jokes makes it clear that the comedians themselves are not sex objects to their audiences. Belle Barth and Pearl Williams both discussed sex and made crude jokes in a manner that was empowering, using their comedy to subvert the misogynistic gender roles that overly sexualized women.

This legacy of using dirty humor to rebel against the oppressive social norms of their time that was established by comedians like Barth and Williams has been continued by other Jewish female comedians, especially Glazer and Jacobson in *Broad City*. In her article, Overbeke writes, "Currently, female Jewish comedians like Sarah Silverman ... take advantage of this cultural tradition to broadcast their views on pressing social and political issues," but I argue that Ilana Glazer and Abbi Jacobson on *Broad City* are executing the strategy most successfully (Overbeke 55). The very first scene of the pilot shows Ilana facetimeing with Abbi as she has sex. When the computer fails to reveal that Ilana is on top of her partner, Lincoln, Abbi says "Oh my god... is he inside of you?" Lincoln responds "Yep," and Ilana states casually as if it is no big deal, "I'm just keeping him warm" ("What a Wonderful World"). Just as the Red Hot Mamas were overly sexual, but not sexual

objects, this scene portrays one of the show's main characters in the midst of having sex, but its goal is not to arouse its audience. The jokes of Barth and Williams broke down sex into the mechanics and turned men into the sex objects, which is precisely what this scene in *Broad City* does.

Broad City also uses sexual humor to subvert traditional gender roles through its depiction of Ilana's relationship with Lincoln. The scene continues by Lincoln asking Ilana to define their relationship, to which Ilana responds, "This is purely physical," to which Lincoln says, "Why does this always happen to me?" ("What a Wonderful World"). In this scenario, Ilana is the one who is only looking for a physical relationship, while Lincoln is the one who wants a real commitment. In popular media, the opposite story is often told with women wanting a man who is looking for more than just sex, but *Broad City* turns the man into the role the woman traditionally plays: someone who is looking for a real relationship but is reduced down to a sex object. This idea of Lincoln as a sex object is further supported by the fact that in the scene Ilana wears a long sleeve shirt, while Lincoln appears to be fully naked. In this scene Ilana assumes the "masculine" role, as she brushes off the sex as casual and is physically on top of her partner, enforcing the notion of what is behavior typical of men versus women is completely arbitrary and not substantiated by reality. In this scene that is less than two minutes, Glazer and Jacobson have already established themselves as comedians that are skilled in the techniques of Belle Barth and Pearl Williams as they subvert gender norms by using crude humor as a tool. This scene between Ilana, Abbi, and Lincoln is only the first scene in the

first episode of the show, but this continuation of the tradition established by Barth and Williams carries through the entire show.

By using the same techniques as their predecessors, Glazer and Jacobson make their show feel familiar, as these traditions have rooted themselves in the casual Jewish humor that exists among peers, but their explicit, unapologetically sexual humor feels contemporary, especially as it is used to challenge traditional gender roles. This treatment of sex is one of the most praised aspects of *Broad City*. To take a case in point, Caitlin Wolper writes in her piece “How *Broad City* Encouraged Women to Be Their Grossest, Truest Selves”: “For as much as *Broad City* hits on gross aspects of sex and the body, ... the show’s acceptance of gross as quotidian allows for a much larger message of self-love and body acceptance.” Wolper explains how the show’s embrace of sexual freedom resonates with its audience. Young women today relate to how the characters happily move through hook up culture, as the tired narrative of the woman looking to lock down a husband and get married in her early to mid-twenties becomes antiquated and distant to a young millennial audience. While the discussion of sex on *Broad City*, or even by Barth or Williams, does not pertain specifically to Jewish cultural practices, their use of sexual humor to disrupt societal norms is an inherently Jewish tradition, as it has been established by their Jewish predecessors.

Having shown that *Broad City* is overtly Jewish, I will now argue why this feels more important than ever due to our changing political state. The election of Donald Trump to the American Presidency in 2016 radically changed the status of antisemitism in the United States. While before his election, antisemitism still existed among certain

circles, it did not have national attention. Tony Michels, a Professor of American Jewish History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, writes in a 2017 article, “At worst, Trump has given encouragement to antisemitism; at best, he has tolerated it” (190). Trump’s “at best” tolerance of antisemitism gave modern day Nazis the courage to come out from the shadows, and shout their messages of hatred without fear, as exemplified by the long list of antisemitic acts that have occurred in the United States since Trump’s election. This list includes horrific and deadly events such as the 2017 Unite the Right March in Charlottesville, Virginia in which white supremacists marched down streets chanting “Jews will not replace us” and the 2018 shooting at the Tree of Life Synagogue in which the shooter killed eleven people. There is no question that antisemitism has once again become prominent, which only emphasizes the importance of positive Jewish narratives in the media. Lisa Liebman, a pop culture writer, writes in her piece titled “When Did TV Get So Jewish?” that “creators telling distinctly Jewish stories at a time when anti-Semitism poses an increasing worldwide threat have one more thing in common: they’re focused on what connects us, rather than what doesn’t.” While she is not explicitly referring to *Broad City*, her point applies to the proudly Jewish characters that Glazer and Jacobson create. Watching and making shows that celebrate Jewish culture help normalize Jewish traditions and work to counteract the spread of fear and hatred. Simply watching *Broad City* will not erase antisemitism, but it does help spread the idea that Jewish Americans have a place in this country.

In this time of rising anti-Jewish sentiments, making explicit Jewish references helps break down negative stereotypes, and no show

exemplifies this better than *Broad City*. Ilana and Abbi identify as secular Ashkenazi Jews, an identity that they lean into, instead of shying away from as previous Jewish characters have, such as Monica and Rachel on *Friends*. While there are a few references to Monica celebrating Hanukkah, Rachel's character is so ambiguous that culture writer Lindsey Weber asks in the title of her article "Is Rachel Green Jewish?" Only through lacing together tiny clues from the ten seasons and a former writer of *Friends* weighing in, can Weber say that yes, Rachel Green is Jewish. *Friends* may be one of the most beloved shows of all time, but compared to *Broad City*, the characters' Judaism is as avoided as gefilte fish. Conversely, *Broad City* leaves zero questions of the Jewishness of Abbi and Ilana. Throughout the entire show, the pair refer to themselves as "Jewesses" and make references to everything from DevaCurl to shiva to how many Ashkenazi Jews are lactose intolerant. These references always make me at least smile, but usually burst out laughing because they are so on the nose with how I experience my own Judaism. But this experience is not unique to me. In her article for *The Cut*, senior writer Anna Silman asks Jewish millennial women to share which scenes most resonated with them. All of these moments that are highlighted share one aspect in common: they are all explicitly Jewish. From the parody of Birthright to Ilana struggling to embrace her curls, the scenes these women singled out as some of the best of the series are all extremely Jewish in content, showing that representation of specifically Jewish experiences remain with and are not ignored by the audiences that they aim to represent.

Because *Broad City* is made by and for young Jewish people, they nail all of the details perfectly, making the representation feel

authentic. One of the most iconic scenes of the series also finds itself on Silman's list: Ilana's grandmother's shiva in the season two episode "Knockoffs." Jessica Goodman, an editor at Cosmopolitan, writes that she loves the scene because "it perfectly portrays all the tiny moments that have happened at, like, every single shiva [she's] ever been to" including the "somber prayer and song," the "uncomfortable family revelation," and the "cardboard-y shiva cookies that are sorta-tasteless but dipped in chocolate so you're like, sure." Another moment that should be added to this list is someone forgetting the solemn occasion and blurting out something inappropriate, such as when Ilana yells "this is the best day of my life" upon learning that Abbi pegged her hot neighbor ("Knockoffs"). My favorite aspect of this episode is that the tradition of shiva is never explained or simplified. It would have been much easier to label the event as a funeral, but Glazer and Jacobson stay true to themselves because in real life if a death in their families occurred, sitting shiva would be their reality. For non-Jewish audiences who are unfamiliar with the practice of sitting shiva, they might have had to look up what the term meant, *which is okay*. It is okay that not everyone will understand the niche Jewish references that are regularly made on *Broad City* because for their Jewish audience, those references make the characters they have constructed feel real. Ultimately, what is at stake here is recognizing that there is value in telling a story that is specifically Jewish.

The characters on *Broad City* are so proudly Jewish, that in celebrating their Judaism, they make Jewish members of their audience want to also celebrate their shared culture. In her essay for *Buzzfeed News* entitled "Goodbye To *Broad City*, Which Put Jewishness Front And

Center,” Randi Bergman, a writer that often covers pop culture and lifestyle, notes that seeing how the characters on the show embraced their Judaism made her want to do the same, especially considering the changing political landscape. Bergman reflects upon how the show affected her, writing “The pleasures and pitfalls of millennial Jewish women have never been so hilariously relatable through the eyes of Abbi and Ilana, and I’ve loved watching them celebrate our eccentricities in ways that breathe new life into one of comedy’s oldest tropes.” Bergman, like many other young Jewish women, myself included, felt *seen* by *Broad City* and all its Jewish references. There are moments in *Broad City* that feel like they must have listened in on conversations between my sister and me and jokes that I could swear I have heard from the mouth of my Jewish friends at temple. Young Jewish women do not just like *Broad City*, they love it because it reflects their real-life experiences.

While there is no shortage of Jewish women in comedy, *Broad City* stands out as one of the only shows that makes Judaism an integral part of the characters’ identities and continually makes references to Jewish culture. Other Jewish comedians such as Amy Schumer and Lena Dunham also have their own television shows, *Inside Amy Schumer* and *Girls*, but in neither program are there regular references to Judaism. In her chapter from the book *Shtetl to Stardom: Jews and Hollywood*, Shaina Hammerman, who holds a Ph.D. in Jewish History and Culture from the Graduate Theological Union, explains this pattern of Jewish female comedians neglecting Jewish humor. She writes, “When a Jewish woman employs Jewish men’s humor, she has gone too far. In being ‘too Jewish’ with her humor, she has betrayed her status as a woman. Jewish

men make Jewish jokes. (Jewish) women make women jokes” (64). With their intersecting identities of being a woman and being Jewish, comedians such as Schumer and Dunham make their gender the center of their comedy, but in turn, sacrifice using Jewish humor. Acknowledging this pattern makes it even more impressive that Glazer and Jacobson manage to consistently joke about Judaism and their gender in *Broad City*. Hammerman’s analysis of why Jewish female comedians often shy away from Jewish content also makes apparent the risk in appearing too Jewish, but Glazer and Jacobson take this risk in order to be authentic to themselves and their experiences. This authenticity comes through to their fans, making clear the risk paid off, as Jewish female viewers applaud them for making relatable content that is specifically Jewish.

Broad City holds a mirror up to the Jewish community, which most often makes us feel seen in a positive light, but on occasion also points out our flaws. While the show does not present the same unrealistic New York that shows such as *Sex and The City* do, it must be acknowledged that the two main characters are cisgender white women, but many of the supporting characters are people of color. One of the most controversial aspects of the show is Ilana’s appreciation of other cultures. Her appreciation often ends up on the wrong side of the line of cultural appropriation, and the other characters on the show are not afraid to call her out on it. In a scene from the first season, Abbi says to Ilana, “You know that you’re so anti-racist, sometimes, that you’re actually really racist” (“Stolen Phone”). Hannah Schwadron, a professor of Dance History at Florida State University, analyzes this scene, and other appropriative instances from the show, in her book *The Case of*

the Sexy Jewess: Dance, Gender and Jewish Joke-work in US Pop Culture. She explains “This lack of racial awareness plays out throughout the show’s multiple seasons as its unique brand of social conscience and self-consciousness... Writing this blind spot into [*Broad City*], the performers and collaborating writers of the show expose the asymmetry of white progressive maneuvers” (103). By acknowledging Ilana’s racist behavior, the writers of the show force viewers to address their own possible racial blind spots, as white Jewish people often use their Jewishness and status as a minority as a defense of their own racist behavior.

It cannot be debated that *Broad City* was a successful television show. It ran for five seasons and was featured on many lists in 2019 as one of the best television shows of the decade. The show has an incredibly loyal fan base that has most likely seen every episode three times, at a minimum. I argue that this success, at least in part, is due to its Jewishness. Its use of sexual humor to subvert gender roles is a Jewish practice based in the comedy of Belle Barth and Pearl Williams, and its embrace of niche Jewish references make it feel personal to every Jew that watches. It is important to acknowledge that *Broad City*’s Jewishness is a factor in why it was successful because for so long, television has resisted this exact notion that being successful and being overtly Jewish are mutually exclusive. Yes, *Seinfeld* was one of the most popular sitcoms of all time, but Jerry’s Judaism was rarely mentioned, and when it was, it was turned into a harmful caricature. On *Friends*, Rachel’s Judaism is reduced to flashbacks of her in high school with an abnormally large nose. It was accepted that the characters were not universal or relatable unless they celebrated Christmas, and Hollywood

stuck to that model. Especially in the modern political climate with rising antisemitism, positive representations of Jewish Americans are more important than ever. *Broad City* proves that being Jewish is not a character flaw that needs to be hidden in an ugly Christmas sweater, but that embracing Jewish humor and cultural references can actually make a program more successful and make its audiences feel authentically represented.

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Creating New Knowledge through Scholarship

It may sound challenging to craft original ideas so early in your academic career. Yet in this section, writers demonstrate how to engage scholarly research so thoroughly, they effectively engage the ongoing conversation. In doing so, they are able to generate new ways of thinking about their topics.

The Diversity Dilemma: Examining the Relationship Between Diversity and Racial Capitalism on U.S. College Campuses

Cheyenne Cabang

Picture the ideal American college campus: substantial resources that expand beyond academics, students that engage in respectful intellectual debate, and—of course—a high level of diversity. Racial diversity in particular is long sought after in a time where social justice efforts have focused on decreasing the achievement gap among races. We are seeing great results: according to the National Center for Education Statistics, total college enrollment notably increased for Blacks and Hispanics from 2000 to 2016 (de Brey et al.). Additionally, *U.S. News and World Report* gives top tier universities, such as Stanford University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Harvard University, and Columbia University, diversity index scores above 0.70 out of 1 (“Campus”). While minorities are increasingly enrolling in colleges, these institutions have been intensifying their efforts to address racial diversity.

However, despite the promising statistics, not all universities truthfully reflect diversity on their campuses. One of the most notorious incidents of this is the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s promotional admissions booklet in 2000, where a Black student was photoshopped onto the cover in a sore attempt to showcase diversity.

More recently, in a report by *Inside Higher Ed*, a similar incident happened in February 2019 when York College of Pennsylvania, a primarily white institution, Photoshopped a Muslim woman and Asian man onto a billboard with the headline, “Envision the Possibilities at York College,” in place of white students (see Fig. 1 below) (Jaschik). Outlined in that same report, in a study conducted of 371 college viewbooks, researchers found that “more than 75% of colleges overrepresent Black students in their viewbooks” (Jaschik). In both cases, students who are historically underrepresented became overrepresented as a consequence of college marketing tactics.

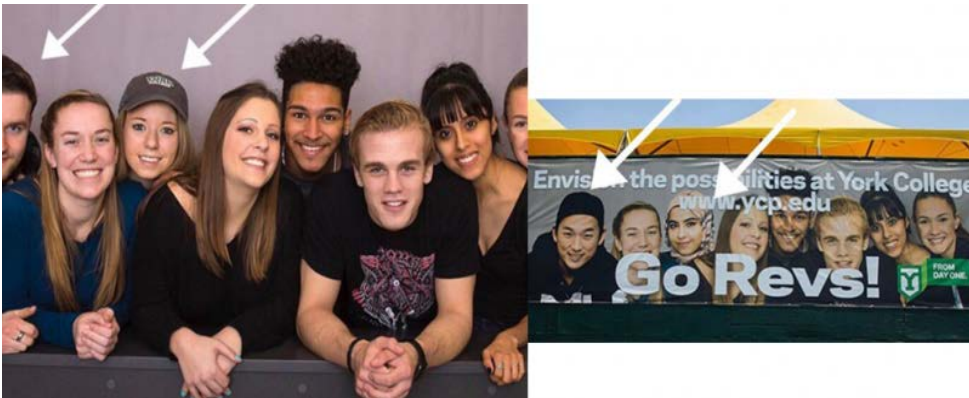


Figure 2 York College of Pennsylvania photoshopped billboard in 2019. Source: “When Colleges Seek Diversity Through Photoshop” (Jaschik)

In that case, where is the root of the problem? Why are colleges going through extreme, arguably unethical lengths to showcase diversity? How have national expectations and pressure for racial diversity in colleges affected the experiences of college communities? At what point does the desire for diversity and inclusion become thinly veiled racism?

While some believe that diversity in and of itself is a good thing, I assert that this is a problematic perception that fails to bridge the

inequalities between races in our current society. Additionally, there is a misguided belief that the enrollment of a diverse student body is akin to inclusion in universities and the eradication of racism.

In this essay, I will examine why diversity is important to the U.S. as well as race-conscious admissions policies. I will also introduce the concept of racial capitalism and its contribution to the oppression of minorities. I will argue that the movement for increased diversity has created an oppressive culture of racial capitalism or “fake diversity,” in which institutions aim to capitalize off of racial diversity. I will specifically focus on U.S. universities partaking in these practices. Furthermore, I contend that due to the presence of racial capitalism, a diverse environment does not equal an inclusive community for minorities to thrive in and thus hinders their overall success and experiences within their respective institutions.

1. Dimensions of Diversity: Importance of Diversity in Higher Education

In popular conversation, most Americans are united in understanding the value of diversity; it is recognized that the immense racial, political, and religious diversity of the U.S. are part of what makes it an attractive country. But what is diversity, exactly? In order to take a more systematic approach to this issue, diversity must be defined. Social psychologists Unzueta and Binning define diversity as, “consisting of at least two distinct dimensions... (a) the *numerical representation* of underrepresented minorities in an organization and (b) the *hierarchical representation* of underrepresented minorities at specific levels of the organization’s hierarchy” (27). By defining one of

diversity's dimensions as the numerical representation of underrepresented minorities in an organization, Unzueta and Binning are referring to the importance of seeing diversity in numbers relative to the population's percentages. Hierarchical representation refers to the various positions in which underrepresented minorities are represented in an organization. Both dimensions are equally important to consider. Diversity in the case of this essay refers to the first dimension of diversity: a proportionately diverse racial population, with a focus on diversity in higher education.

There are, of course, multiple and distinct parts of diversity such as socioeconomic status, cultural, religious, and political or ideological. However, racial/ethnic diversity is particularly important in higher education because of the correlation between race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. The American Psychological Association states, "Research has shown that race and ethnicity in terms of stratification often determine a person's socioeconomic status. Furthermore, communities are often segregated by [socioeconomic status], race, and ethnicity. These communities commonly share characteristics: low economic development; poor health conditions; and low levels of educational attainment." Socioeconomic status's large determination by race and ethnicity speaks to the continued widening of the race gap in the conversation on the relationship between poverty and race.

In the article, "Five Evils: Multidimensional Poverty and Race in America," Metropolitan Policy Program researchers Reeves, Rodrigue, and Kneebone examine poverty as multidimensional rather than being narrowly defined as a lack of income; multidimensional poverty encompasses low household income, limited education, no health

insurance, living in a high-poverty area, and unemployment (2). Reeves, Rodrigue, and Kneebone also found that racial minorities, specifically Blacks and Hispanics, are at a disadvantage and minorities are more likely to experience at least one dimension of poverty than their white counterparts (7).

According to the same study, Hispanic adults are four times more likely than whites to experience being both low-income and having no high school diploma (17 percent vs. 4 percent), while Black adults are more likely than whites to experience both low-income and unemployment (13 percent vs. 6 percent), or low-income and geographic poverty (16 percent vs. 3 percent) (Reeves, Rodrigue, and Kneebone 10). The racial disparities mentioned above are reflective of the inequalities that exist within the deeply stratified U.S. society. Thus, it is imperative that we bring race and ethnicity into the conversation, particularly within higher education as educational attainment serves as an indicator of upward social mobility and a lack of such serves as a dimension of poverty.

2. Higher Education and The Racial Dilemma

Now that there is an understanding of racial inequalities within the U.S. society, we must narrow the scope and examine the inequalities that exist in the university. The racial dilemma in education was not abolished when school segregation was. Although minorities are no longer separate from their white counterparts in terms of accessing a higher education, it does not mean that they are equal. Today, minority students continue to suffer from racially charged incidents,

discriminatory admissions practices, and alienation and subconscious segregation on college campuses across the nation.

In a *New Directions for Student Services* study conducted on campus racial climates, researchers Harper and Hurtado concluded that, “The themes of exclusion, institutional rhetoric rather than action, and marginality continue to emerge from student voices” (15). The article also touched on self-reports of racial segregation, notably among the fraternity row, where a Black student referred to his university’s fraternity row as the “Jim Crow Row” in which he was denied access to parties and other events on the probable basis of race (Harper and Hurtado 16). The university is often viewed as a microcosm of the larger society or communities they are a part of—if this is the case, race relations are of great concern as minorities are directly affected by campus racial climates.

However, race relations do not only affect minorities; they hold great potential to disrupt entire communities. Race on college campuses has served as a volatile and divisive issue for students, faculty, staff, and college culture at large. The most recent and notable racially polarizing event is the massive College Admissions Scandal. This scandal unveiled the powerful influence of wealth through the charging of high-profile, white celebrity parents who poured hundreds of thousands of dollars into forged extracurriculars and skewed test scores to buy seats into high-profile universities. The admissions scandal, coupled with Asian-American students filing a lawsuit against Harvard University to end affirmative action due to perceived discriminatory admissions policies, caused a nationwide spotlight to shine on the admissions practices of universities and the importance of

considering race. Racial tensions in higher education continue to divide the larger community beyond the microcosm of college.

Regarding diversity in higher education, findings from The American Freshman Survey indicate that, “[At four-year universities nationwide], 79 percent of college freshmen are white, 12 percent are Black, and the Asian and Hispanic shares are roughly 5 percent each” (Espenshade 21-22). For comparison’s sake, when

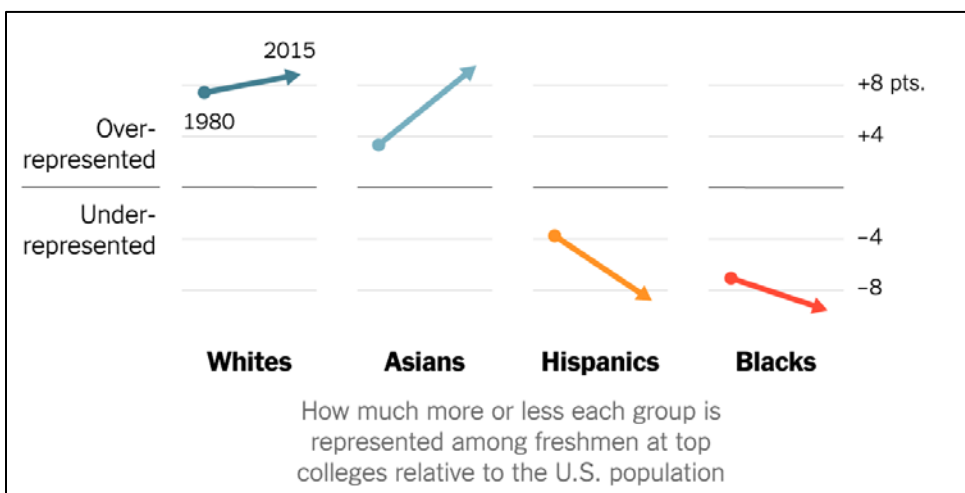


Figure 3 Representation of college freshmen at top colleges relative to U.S. population, excluding international students and students whose race is unknown. Courtesy of The New York Times (Ashkensas, Park, and Pearce).

looking at racial diities in the Ivy Leagues, Black students at Ivy League schools made up 9 percent of the freshman class in 2015 compared to the overall 15 percent of college-age Americans, marking Black students as underrepresented (Ashkensas, Park, and Pearce). Figure 2 depicts changes in freshmen representation by race at top colleges relative to U.S. population from 1980 to 2015, courtesy of *The New York Times*. Both whites and Asians have become increasingly overrepresented as opposed to Hispanics and Blacks, who have become increasingly underrepresented.

According to Farran Powell, a writer for the *U.S. News*, top colleges provide more resources and opportunities than lower-tier colleges with the potential to secure an above average salary post-graduation, regardless of discipline. Although Black and Hispanic students are underrepresented at top colleges, it does not mean they are any less academically capable than white and Asian students. However, as discussed above, structural inequality, low socioeconomic status, and higher risks of multidimensional poverty have caused this to be so.

3. Landmark Cases: Looking at Race in the College Admissions Process

In order to understand the beginning of the movement for increased racial diversity in colleges, we must examine how race has entered the national conversation, particularly in higher education, through landmark cases in the Supreme Court. Due to the historical underrepresentation of minorities in colleges across the nation, colleges have made efforts to prioritize a racially diverse student body. This consideration of race is known as affirmative action. The Legal Information Institute at Cornell identifies affirmative action as:

an active effort to improve employment or educational opportunities for members of minority groups and for women. [It] began as a government remedy to the effects of long-standing discrimination against such groups and has consisted of policies, programs, and procedures that give preferences to minorities and women in job hiring, admission to institutions of

higher education, the awarding of government contracts, and other social benefits.

For decades, affirmative action has sparked debate concerning the fairness of such processes despite the intention to work towards a just society for historically underserved groups. This has led several cases to make their way up to the Supreme Court.

Listed as the first of such high-profile cases on *Justia* was *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* in 1978, when the Supreme Court ruled that race could be used as a criterion for admission in institutions of higher education, but invalidated racial quotas. This was in response to Alan Bakke, a white man who had applied twice to the medical school at the University of California-Davis and was rejected both times. As part of its Affirmative Action Program, The University of California-Davis reserved 16% of its admission spaces for minority applicants (“Regents”). However, Bakke protested that because his grades and test scores were higher than that of minorities who had been admitted, he had been discriminated against on the basis of race. Since then, it has been affirmed that “a diverse classroom environment is a compelling state interest under the Fourteenth Amendment” (“Regents”).

Moreover, other cases challenging affirmative action are *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) and *Fisher v. University of Texas I and II* (2013 and 2016), all of which reaffirmed the constitutionality of affirmative action under strict judicial scrutiny but discouraged race being the primary factor in which an applicant is accepted or rejected (“Affirmative”). In the case of *Grutter v. Bollinger*, the Supreme Court struck down the

University of Michigan Law School's policy of awarding points to students based on race ("Affirmative").

Indeed, with race-conscious admissions policies receiving much public exposure, scrutiny, and debate, race has propelled itself into the national conversation. Affirmative action has been deemed constitutional due to the injustices and discrimination that minorities have faced and continue to face. The movement for diversity can be traced alongside this as people have begun to emphasize the importance of diversity and equity. The continued protection of racial diversity under the Fourteenth Amendment speaks to both the value of racial diversity in the U.S. and the beginning of the now-skewed race to recruit and sometimes overrepresent minorities on college campuses.

4. Racial Capitalism and Diversity as a Commodity

Although it was previously established that the nation is taking steps to increase and promote racial diversity in the workforce and in institutions of higher education due to race entering the national conversation, it is imperative to be aware of the existence of racial capitalism. An ironic consequence of the pressure for diversity has caused an undue shift in motive and practices for institutions as they begin to substitute the substantial benefits of diversity for appearances and numbers. In this way, the views of institutions and the general public on diversity have become problematic and concerning as they tiptoe the line between diversity and inclusion and racism.

A white man claims he can't be racist because he has a Black friend. Marketing tactics for a new movie revolve around a token minority character. A university's concerns about racial homogeneity

getting in the way of prospective students' admissions leads it to Photoshop a Black student onto an admissions pamphlet. These are all instances of racial capitalism.

Nancy Leong, a law professor at the University of Denver, defines racial capitalism as, "The process of deriving social or economic value from the racial identity of another person. A person of any race might engage in racial capitalism, as might an institution dominated by any racial group" (Leong "Racial" 2153). In essence, racial capitalism is the term used for commodifying diversity due to its inherent value in a society so preoccupied with increasing diversity. In popular terms, racial capitalism is referred to as "fake diversity." Leong further states that, "While in theory any group might derive value from the racial identity of another, in practice, since white people are historically and presently a majority in America, racial capitalism most often involves a white person or a predominantly white institution extracting value from non-white racial identity" (Leong "Fake"). Here, Leong touches upon an important question: who does racial capitalism involve? Essentially, Leong speaks to the systematic and structural divide of power between whites and nonwhites in the U.S.

Racial capitalism is problematic because it is normally all show and no substance on the institution's part. In the case of the Photoshopping incidents at both York College of Pennsylvania and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, minorities were used as a part of college marketing tactics to showcase a diverse social environment, when in fact the pamphlet did not accurately reflect the actual student demographic and thus overrepresented the minority populations shown.

Likewise, attempts of a similar vein are sometimes made with good intentions without regard to the consequences of such actions. Acts to increase and promote diversity should indeed be celebrated. However, the real problem lies within the motives and practices of institutions, particularly primarily white institutions, partaking in this. Diversity becomes viewed in the most short-sighted way: as a prized commodity and a display of numbers and appearances, rather than what it essentially is—a personal manifestation of identity. This definition of diversity is the reason why we seek to represent minorities numerically: their identities are historically underserved and we as a society must rectify the injustices and discrimination that structural and systematic inequality and racism has caused.

Furthermore, racial capitalism is much akin to darker times in U.S. history, where nonwhite people were assigned value based on their race and used as a commodity for white people, who were in power (Leong “Racial” 2154). Despite a different motive, the premise is the same: when institutions showcase minorities in a superficial manner, they are reaping the benefits of perceived diversity at the expense of both the minority or minorities shown and the experience of future minorities at the institution.

With “fake diversity” so prevalent, it is imperative to ask the administrators of universities if their perceived commitment to diversity is matched by success in enrolling and retaining underrepresented students. Because of the large socioeconomic inequalities that exist within the rhetoric for diversification, it is a given that universities hold the power to commit to diversity enough to work towards closing the racial gap in education.

5. A Change in Definition: Diversity versus Inclusion

The most obvious alternative to colleges falsely representing diversity is accurately portraying it. This is not just during the admissions processes; the enrollment of a diverse student body is but one part of the solution. As a society, outlawing segregation and discrimination and allowing for race-conscious and “holistic” admissions policies has not created equal educational opportunities. This is in light of problems beyond racial disparities in education to many persistent barriers to higher education such as an unequal K-12 educational or “feeder” system, highly inflating tuition costs, and weak college counseling. These barriers further stipulates the idea that our society still needs to address the plight of minorities, especially those who are low-income and/or may reside in areas with geographic poverty.

With this in mind, a better approach is considering what happens once the diverse student body is enrolled. How can colleges better support minority students and facilitate enriching learning experiences for the entire college community? The pressure for increased diversity has caused a misconception of what a diverse environment actually entails: inclusion. Marta Tienda, a Professor of Sociology at Princeton University, offers the definition of inclusion as, “organizational strategies and practices that promote meaningful social and academic interactions among persons and groups who differ in their experiences, their views, and their traits” (467). In essence, inclusive practices strives to embrace all members of a community while recognizing their differences as valuable to contributing to

interact within the community. It is an ideology aimed at providing equal access to opportunities and removing barriers.

Nonetheless, it is important to distinguish between diversity and inclusion/integration. In the book, *Defending Diversity: Affirmative Action at the University of Michigan*, authors Gurin, Lehman, Lewis, Day, and Hurtado assert that, “The word diversity [is] somewhat one-dimensional, connoting [mainly]... racial heterogeneity... At least today, the word integration does a better job of capturing the special importance to our country of undoing the damaging legacy of laws and norms that artificially separated citizens from one another on the basis of race” (62). Thus, the point of distinguishing these two terms lies in the fact that the definition of diversity has been distorted. Diversity on its own does not guarantee the achievement of the goal for equitable educational opportunities. Because of this, fostering an inclusive environment through integration is necessary.

The Association of American Colleges & Universities’, “Committing to Equity and Inclusive Excellence: A Campus Guide for Self-Study and Planning” provides a framework for higher education leaders and campus educators across departments to engage in meaningful and needed dialogue, self-assessment, and action to begin to commit to the success and learning of all students. The guide pays special attention to historically underserved students in higher education, with racial minorities being one of many. The Association of American Colleges & Universities maintains that the commitment to inclusivity encompasses being aware of and evaluating current and future student demographics, committing to difficult but necessary dialogues about campus climates on both the institution’s end and

students' end with the goal of change and action, and investing in culturally competent practices. The guide emphasizes the importance of expansion—expanding opportunities, resources, and curriculums that commit to the success and representation of underserved students.

Indeed, commitment to diversity and inclusion makes a difference. According to the U.S. Department of Education's, "Advancing Diversity And Inclusion In Higher Education: Key Data Highlights Focusing on Race and Ethnicity and Promising Practices," "Students report less discrimination and bias at institutions where they perceive a stronger institutional commitment to diversity" (49). In a *Science* article titled, "Scientific Diversity Interventions," researchers Moss-Racusin, Van Der Toorn, Dovidio, Brescoll, Graham, and Handelsman suggest that leaders and faculties' participation in diversity training and workshops can positively influence their behaviors and attitudes, most notably inclusive acting and teaching (615). In addition, resources such as alumni of color affinity groups and cultural organizations and clubs can contribute to the emotional wellbeing of students of color on campus (U.S. Department of Education 51). This is the difference between inclusion and racial capitalism: the substance and effort on the institution's part is there and also transparent.

One example of a university implementing inclusive strategies is the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's I-Connect Diversity and Inclusion Workshop, which offers collaborative exercises and discussion for first-year and transfer students to build and enhance communication skills and students' ability to collaborate in diverse

environments (U.S. Department of Education 50). Georgia State University also has a Multicultural Programming Council, which is comprised of student leaders who “provide input on events and initiatives developed and supported by the Multicultural Center, as well as workshops, advisement, and funding to student groups” (U.S. Department of Education 51). Both universities referenced have demonstrated increased Black and Hispanic enrollment and graduation rates as well as the increased hiring of nonwhite faculty (U.S. Department of Education 52). A demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion on the institution’s part has significant benefits for college communities and combats the problematic perception that diversity on its own is beneficial. Indeed, inclusion and integration for minority students serves the greater purpose of bridging the racial gap in higher education.

Circling back to underrepresented college students overrepresented on viewbooks, we must recognize that race has become important in the national conversation. People are recognizing the importance of sustaining diverse environments of all kinds and has thus propelled fundamental changes to the way institutions handle diversity. In the case of institutions overrepresenting underrepresented students, particularly primarily white institutions, it perpetuates racial capitalism and solidifies the assignment of value to people based on race in the form of oppression that can be traced back to darker times of slavery in U.S. history. Because diversity doesn’t fully account for the goals of equitable access to educational opportunities, a better concept to strive for is the inclusion and integration of minorities in college environments to ensure a just society.

Therefore, it is up to us as consumers of similar marketing tactics and other showcases of false diversity to reject them and hold these universities accountable and ask them the harder questions: what efforts are they putting into motion to retain their minority students and get them to graduation? What inclusive practices have they propelled to encourage students to reap the benefits of diverse learning environments while discouraging racism, prejudice, bias, and discrimination?

If we remain satisfied with false representations of diversity, it paves the way for an era of complacency where we allow identities in power to continue to extract and assign value from those who do not have power. By accepting racial capitalism, we allow the oppression and commodification of nonwhite identities to continue.

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The Evolution of Survivor Gameplay Norms: A Discussion of Old-School vs. New-School Strategies

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Abstract

Survivor is one of America's most popular reality television shows, featuring castaways stranded on tropical islands or in searing deserts to compete for one million dollars. Over the course of its 20-year run, *Survivor* has changed from a television social experiment to a dog-eat-dog game show as the castaways grow more competitive and deceptive. Using the social cognitive theory of mass communication and rudimentary aspects of evolutionary game theory, I set forth to analyze how *Survivor's* social norms have evolved from nobility to villainy. I analyze three critical seasons in *Survivor* history epitomizing the past norms, present norms, and the transition point between the two. Ultimately, I conclude that the returning, fan-favorite *Survivor* castaways who engaged in deceptive behavior are the reason that *Survivor* continues to grow more and more cut-throat. My analysis and conclusion not only expand the understanding of *Survivor* gameplay but work to validate and expand scholarship around the social cognitive theory of mass communication.

Keywords

Survivor, social norms, evolution, deception, social cognitive theory of mass communication, norm internalization

Introduction

Outwit, outplay, and outlast. These three tenets, inscribed on *Survivor*'s logo, characterize the gameplay that viewers have witnessed over the past 20 years. *Survivor* competitors must either have a better strategy than their competitors (outwit), win immunity challenges (outplay), and/or develop social connections and alliances to keep themselves in the game (outlast) to beat their opponents. The utilization of these tenets widely varies from season to season, resulting in a divide between Old-School *Survivor* players and New-School *Survivor* players. However, before elaborating on the stratification of players and its significance, it is important to contextualize their gameplay with the *Survivor* show structure.

Seasons begin by pitting 20 competitors (deemed “castaways”) against one another and the elements; castaways live on islands scavenging for food and battling the weather while simultaneously competing against one another for rewards and immunity. The team that loses the immunity challenge is faced with Tribal Council where the team (“tribe”) must vote off one of their fellow castaways. Once the total number of competitors is reduced from twenty to ~10, two teams are merged into one for the remainder of the game.¹ If a castaway is voted off between the merge and second-to-last Tribal Council, they

¹ Although the first season of *Survivor* premiered with 20 castaways, many following seasons only had 16 or 18 depending on the game dynamic. Furthermore, the original two-team format later changed from season to season (with a maximum of 4 teams in Season 13). The merge occurs relative to the amount of people voted off, usually varying between 8-13 remaining castaways. The remaining castaways compete until the end of 39 days, although in Season 2 the castaways competed an additional 3 days.

join the jury, who ultimately votes on the season winner. The Final Tribal Council occurs when the merged tribe is reduced to two castaways who then must defend their gameplay to the jury for title. There are no official criteria for how the jury should choose a *Survivor* winner, but typically those who have utilized a combination of the three tenets make it to the Final Tribal Council. The winner of a *Survivor* season is aptly declared the Sole Survivor and awarded 1,000,000 dollars.

The dynamic ways past castaways and Sole Survivors have played the game varies widely between the 40 total seasons of *Survivor*. Old-School *Survivor* clashes with New-School *Survivor* through their gameplay strategies and how they are rewarded.² OSS features more socially acceptable behavior, exemplified through the punishment of deception and manipulation, whereas NSS rewards these same actions. The gameplay divide is most evident in *Survivor*'s most recent season, *Survivor: Winners at War*, where past winners from 20 seasons once again compete for a cash prize. Despite having more experience and being the foundation of *Survivor*'s success, the OSP consistently loses to NSP. *Survivor* has evolved from a social experiment to a cutthroat game show, leaving the OSP behind because of and despite their being establishing members of the show's popularity.

² For the purposes of this paper, Old-School *Survivor* will be abbreviated as OSS and New-School *Survivor* as NSS. Their relative players and style of play will follow suit, where OSP = Old-School Players, NSP = New-School Players, OSGP = Old-School Gameplay, and NSGP = New-School Gameplay

In my paper, I analyze the evolution of *Survivor* gameplay social norms over the course of the show's run, drawing attention to the shift from OSGP to NSGP. Rooted in the social cognitive theory of communication and elements of evolutionary game theory, I aim to explain what norms evolved and, more importantly, how they did through analyzing three *Survivor* seasons (8, 20, and 28). After individual analyses, I put the three seasons in conversation with each other to clearly demonstrate the change in gameplay over time. Furthermore, I argue that the evolution of *Survivor* gameplay social norms is largely due to the return of beloved OSP who demonstrate controversial behavior that was punished in their seasons, such as lying to and manipulating fellow competitors. Viewers turned castaways internalize the social norms put forward by these returning OSP, creating NSGP: an exaggerated and dynamic game that is fundamentally deceitful. My work not only furthers the understanding of the *Survivor* series and the gameplay therein but demonstrates the practical application of the social cognitive theory of mass communication beyond what observed scholarship has done before.

Theoretical Foundations

Despite being one of the most popular reality television series in the 21st century, *Survivor* is not the most discussed topic within academic circles. To accurately address the scholarship regarding the evolution of social norms within *Survivor*, one must break down the topic into its essential parts: the evolution of social norms and reality television game shows. Scholarship analyzing and summarizing social cognitive theory regarding mass media and evolutionary game theory

synthesized with norm internalization give a proper basis for the eventual analysis of *Survivor* and its rapidly evolving social norms.

The principle scholar within, and the founder of, social cognitive theory, Stanford psychologist Albert Bandura, wrote “Social Cognitive Theory of Mass Communication,” a journal article specifically addressing the role that television plays in the propagation of social norms. Bandura emphasizes the effects of observational learning in his article, explicitly stating that if behavior perpetrated by an individual on television that the viewer is attracted to is rewarded, then that behavior becomes more acceptable in the mind of the viewer (276). In other words, behavior or beliefs seen on television have the capability, if not the tendency, to directly influence a viewer’s everyday societal behavior or beliefs. This element of social cognitive theory is tested in Richard MocarSKI and Kimberly Bissell’s analysis of NBC’s *The Biggest Loser* in reference to the propagation of social norms regarding obesity, weight, and health. The two scholars conclude that *The Biggest Loser* helps normalize/spread the idea that obesity and weight gain are an individual’s fault, and thus their own responsibility to remedy; this propagation prohibits society from looking at environmental or societal factors behind obesity which additionally obstructs a more holistic cure (MocarSKI and Bissell 113). The analysis on *The Biggest Loser* is social cognitive theory in action, as it highlights that norms portrayed on television influence the world narrative.

Evolutionary game theory, a more nuanced and sociological perspective of mathematical game theory, further contributes to the conversation through its involvement of norm internalization. As Richard Swedberg emphasizes in “Sociology and Game Theory:

Contemporary and Historical Perspectives,” the newest interpretation of (evolutionary) game theory in sociology has been focused on the social norms involved in competitive or preferential choice relationships, like analyzing the Prisoner’s Dilemma (314). However, instead of studying the strategies that individuals use, in evolutionary game theory, these strategies become player-archetypes. Brian Skyrms best explains this phenomenon through an extended metaphor with Stag and Hare Hunters (an interpretation of Stag Hunt, a popular game theory visualization). Skyrms asserts that if a hunter leaves a small group of Stag Hunters and a stranger joins the group, said stranger will observe and imitate an “existing strategy,” in this case stag hunting; the stranger at first is an individual who hunts stag and demonstrates a strategy, but as the population becomes uniform, the group is labeled as Stag Hunters. The strategy (hunting stag) becomes an archetype (Stag Hunters) through the stranger’s adoption of the social norm/strategy (Skyrms 1095). Skyrms’ described phenomenon is remarkably similar to social norm internalization as it is described by Sergey Gavrilets and Peter J. Richerson. Norm internalization is defined as the process “acting according to a norm becomes an end in itself rather than merely a tool in achieving certain goals or avoiding social sanctions” (Gavrilets and Richerson 6068). To speak in terms of the Stag Hunt and evolutionary game theory, using stag hunting as an effective strategy (acting according to a norm as a tool to achieve certain goals) creates the player-archetype of Stag Hunter (the end in itself).

The works of Skyrms, Gavrilets, Richerson, Mocarski, Bissell, and Bandura, although they differ in specific premise, all aim to analyze

and discuss how social norms evolve within a certain group. Social cognitive theory and evolutionary game theory can be synthesized together if one labels the viewer as the stranger in Stag Hunt and television programs as the Stag Hunters. The viewer/stranger will learn the social norms/strategies of the group via observation and internalize them; when it comes time to act, the viewer/stranger, now a player-archetype, further spreads the norm/strategy through their behavior and thus has the capacity to influence other new viewers/strangers. The understanding of this synthesis and cycle is integral to the later analysis of *Survivor* and the evolution of its social norms.

Methodology/Case Studies

To evaluate the evolution of social norms from OSS to NSS over the course of *Survivor*'s run, it's important to get a holistic view of the series. As such, I will analyze one season that aptly characterizes OSGP, the season that demonstrates the transition from OSS to NSS, and one season that characterizes NSGP. For the characterization of OSGP and NSGP, I have selected *Survivor: All-Stars* (Season 8) and *Survivor: Cagayan* (Season 28) respectively. The divide between OSS and NSS is largely contested, as different elements that are critical in NSGP were introduced at different points in time. For this paper, Season 20 *Survivor: Heroes vs. Villains* is going to be the transition from OSS to NSS. It is not only the current halfway point in *Survivor* history but demonstrates the final blow to OSGP. All seasons will be qualitatively analyzed by the following criteria: the analysis of the notable (returning) players, their historic style of gameplay (characterized by

the outwit vs. outplay vs. outlast template), and how far they progressed in the analyzed season; any notable moments from the season and what’s stated/revealed at the Final Tribal Council will be discussed to characterize gameplay norms.³

Seasons 8 and 20 are critically important to my research and argument because they either feature returning OSP or a combination of OSP and NSP. I hope to convey that these returning players play a vital role in the transformation of *Survivor* gameplay norms, an argument that embodies the previously described social cognitive theory of mass communication. Seasons 8 and 20 (along with any other seasons characterized by popular castaways returning) provide a platform for two things. First, the popular castaways are permitted to return and reenact their gameplay (sometimes controversial, sometimes not). Second, the viewers/fans of the show get to further connect and identify with the returning castaways on screen despite the way they behave. Eventually, some of these viewers become players and play by these internalized norms, thus creating NSGP.

Season 8: *Survivor: All-Stars*

Notable Players	Original Season	Characterization of Gameplay in Original Season	Placement in <i>All-Stars</i>
Amber Brkich	Season 2	Outlast. Brkich’s strategy in Season 2 was to build alliances and have a strong social game.	1

³ Season 28 will be analyzed slightly differently. In Season 28, there are no returning players, so instead of the aforementioned criteria, notable players will be analyzed by the characterization of their gameplay during Season 28, whether or not they are a long-time viewer of *Survivor*, and how far they progressed in Season 28.

"Boston Rob" Mariano	Season 4	Outwit/Outplay. Mariano is/was considered the "Godfather" of <i>Survivor</i> due to his controlling, dominant strategy of deception. He was also a strong physical competitor.	2
Rupert Boneham	Season 7	Outlast. Boneham, despite his temper, is regarded as a sweet man.	4
Tom Buchanan	Season 3	Outlast. Buchanan was deemed "Big Tom" and was portrayed as a funny, fatherly figure throughout his season.	5
Richard Hatch	Season 1	Outwit. In S1, Hatch led the voting alliance. At the Final Tribal Council, he was called a "snake" by former alliance member Sue Hawk (Episode 0113).	15
Rob Cesternino	Season 6	Outwit. In S3, Cesternino was considered the ultimate strategist and was voted off because of his manipulation of the game (Episode 0614).	16

Season 8: *Survivor: All-Stars* was "Boston Rob" Mariano's game to lose. The entire season is characterized by his manipulation, domination of challenges, and romance. Throughout Season 8, Mariano made cut-throat moves and betrayed many allies to further himself and his partner, Amber Brkich.⁴ Mariano and Brkich quickly established a romantic relationship, became a power couple, and systemically

⁴ An example of Mariano making moves for Amber's sake occurred in Episode 10 when Mariano makes a deal with castaway Lex van den Berghe to keep Amber safe. Later on in the game, after Amber's safety has been ensured, Mariano betrays van den Berge, saying: "What I made the deal to save Amber and I'll help you out later on? You guys didn't really believe that did you?" (Episode 0816).

dominated the game. Despite and because of Mariano's gameplay, *Survivor: All-Stars* is a great demonstration of OSGP.

Throughout the season, controversial behavior is consistently punished by the castaways (a key element to OSS). Past competitors who had used deviant strategies are voted off early with the exception of Mariano. Rob Cesternino and Richard Hatch, both castaways who are deserving of an All-Star title, were voted off the island by tribe members due to their deception in past seasons and threat to the current game. On top of controversial actions being punished, loyalty and kindness are rewarded. Of the top five castaways in Season 8, four (including Buchanan and Boneham) are viewed as friendly, genuine figures and people of their word.⁵

In episode 16 at the Final Tribal Council, Lex van den Berghe epitomizes OSS with his speech to Mariano:

"It's just a game, I'm sure both of you said that thousands of times to wash away the guilt of playing the game the way you played it ... well it's not just a game. For all of us out here, for all of you, it's life. And the line between game and life is not cut and dry."

Castaway Alicia Calloway backs up van den Berge's testimony, telling Mariano and Brkich: "You may have outwitted us, outplayed us, and outlasted us, but you have not outclassed us" (Episode 0816). In other words, the pair may have played a better game than the jury members, but they played a less ethical and ultimately a more controversial game.

⁵ In the Final Tribal Council, Boneham asks why he should vote for Mariano. Mariano responds: "Because you're a man of your word." Ultimately, Boneham votes for Mariano (Episode 0816).

Their actions had real-life consequences that impacted and damaged relationships outside of the game. It's evident from the Final Tribal Council jury testimonies that nobility and morality are the most valued strategy. Ultimately, Mariano loses *Survivor: All-Stars* after the jury makes it clear that he has played, in their eyes, a despicable game. Mariano's deception and betrayals have been punished. Brkich, despite being complicit in many of Mariano's plots, wins the million dollars. Her comparatively more ethical actions lead her to becoming the Sole Survivor. Brkich's win can and should be characterized as OSGP because her nobility triumphs over Mariano's deception.

Season 20: *Survivor: Heroes vs. Villains*

Notable Players	Original Season	Characterization of Gameplay in Original Season	Placement in <i>Heroes vs. Villains</i>
Sandra Diaz-Twine	Season 7	Outwit. Diaz-Twine used stealth to observe her opponents and ultimately win her original season.	1
Parvati Shallow	Season 11, Season 16	Outwit. Shallow is called " <i>Survivor's</i> flirty seductress," using her charm to lower her opponent's guard. She used this in combination with her alliance to win Season 16 (Episode 2015).	2
Russell Hantz	Season 19	Outwit. Hantz's manipulative strategy is best summarized by his infamous quote: "If I can control how they feel, I can control how they think" (Episode 1915).	3

Jerri Manthey	Season 2	Outwit. Manthey is “ <i>Survivor</i> ’s original black widow” whose strategy appears to be the precursor to Shallow’s (Episode 2015).	4
Colby Donaldson	Season 2	Outplay. Donaldson dominated the physical component of his original season and is considered “a gentleman cowboy” (Episode 2015).	5

As its name implies, Season 20: *Survivor: Heroes vs. Villains* featured one team composed of heroes and one team composed of villains from past *Survivor* seasons. Season 20 best exemplifies the transition from OSS to NSS due to its conclusion. In short, the villains dominate. First led by “Boston Rob” Mariano in challenges and later by Hantz in strategy, the villains systematically eliminated every hero of the game. At the Final Tribal Council, the three castaways eligible for the million dollars were from the original villains tribe: Diaz-Twine, Hantz, and Shallow. Furthermore, the Season 20 jury was composed of 5 heroes and 4 villains. This split is significant because, in combination with the final three, the villains represented over half of the castaways at Tribal Council. The heroes’ numbers were greatly reduced in the early game and therefore they are disproportionately represented.

In episode 15 at the Final Tribal Council, the apex of the split between OSS, NSS, and their relative gameplays was evident. Jeff Probst, the show’s host, began the Tribal Council meeting by alluding to the inherent deception involved in *Survivor* by saying any castaway who sits at the Final Tribal Council has “something to be held accountable for.” Probst’s allusion is backed up by multiple heroes,

including Candice Woodcock, who bases her vote on “how you treat people” throughout the game; Woodcock abides the traditional OSS narrative that deceptive players get punished and noble players get rewarded. The main focus of the Final Tribal Council was Hantz, the comparatively most deceptive castaway. Instead of apologizing for his actions, Hantz quipped that he’d “played the game” and expected the jury members to “respect” his gameplay (Episode 2015). In Hantz’s NSS-trending mind, deceptive strategies should be rewarded. In the end, Diaz-Twine won Season 20 and Hantz received no votes from the jury; every hero voted for Diaz-Twine.

Although Diaz-Twine was the least villainous villain at the Final Tribal Council, it would be unfair to solely characterize her win as OSGP or label Season 20 as OSS. It’s best to evaluate the effect that Season 20 had on the transition between OSS and NSS on a micro and a macro level. On the micro level, meaning localized to only Season 20, Season 20 does exemplify OSS, but only because the jury was majorly composed of former hero tribe castaways who abide by the traditional OSGP narrative. Diaz-Twine was rewarded because her gameplay was less controversial, whereas Hantz receiving no votes exemplified a punishment for deception. However, on a macro level, Season 20 saw the collapse of OSS and the birth of NSS. The domination of the villain tribe all the way to the end of the game clearly demonstrates the victory of deception over nobility. Despite Diaz-Twine winning as the least controversial villain, the simple presence of all three final castaways being from the Villain Tribe is a reward for deceptive behavior. The reward is symbolic of the transition between OSGP and NSGP, a type of gameplay seen in the following analysis of Season 28.

Season 28: *Survivor: Cagayan*

Notable Players	Longtime fan?	Characterization of Gameplay in Season	Placement in <i>Survivor: Cagayan</i>
Tony Vlachos	Yes	Outwit. Vlachos betrayed many of his alliance members and lied blatantly, including breaking promises he made on the lives of his wife, child, and dead father.	1
Yung “Woo” Hwang	No	Outlast/Outplay. Hwang was very loyal and was one of Vlachos’ key alliance members. He also won many immunity challenges.	2
Spencer Bledsoe	Yes	Outwit/Outplay. Bledsoe was an extremely strategic player and self-described “student of the game” (Episode 2815).	4

Season 28 of *Survivor* divided the 18 castaways into tribes of six based on the characteristics they utilize in their lives/professions: brains, brawn, and beauty. As one could expect, the brawn tribe, led by Vlachos, won the physically demanding early game immunity challenges. After a tribe swap in the middle of the game (a merge from three tribes to two), Vlachos solidified his alliance composed of the remaining brawn tribe members and their newly merged compatriots. Throughout the game, Vlachos made many false promises and betrayed his allies, but was still able to maintain a fiercely loyal alliance which included Hwang. At the second to last Tribal Council, where Hwang had the opportunity to vote off Vlachos and possibly secure the title of Sole Survivor for himself, Hwang saved Vlachos and voted off castaway Cassandra McQuillen.

In episode 15 at the Final Tribal Council, both castaways were forced to take responsibility for their gameplay decisions. In a heated speech, Bledsoe compared Hwang to a “dog” following the commands of his owner, i.e. Vlachos. In response, Hwang explained that he’s just “a man who’s trying to be honorable no matter what” and respect his alliance with Vlachos. In contrast to Hwang answering for his honor, Vlachos had to answer for his rampant lying and vicious deception. Jefra Bland, a former alliance member of Vlachos’, demanded that Vlachos owned his game.

“I want you to own your game. I want you to look me in the eyes for the first time and own the fact that you backstabbed almost everybody here on this jury ... [Tony] admit that you were the villain.”

Bland’s statement was reiterated throughout the night, as castaway after castaway asked Vlachos to take responsibility for his lies. Vlachos stood his ground, took ownership of his deceit, and made it clear that he was just playing a game. Vlachos defended his genuine nature and morality outside of *Survivor* but conceded that “his gameplay was a different story.” Despite facing a harsh jury, Vlachos’ gameplay was still highly respected. After commenting on Hwang’s loyal gameplay, Bledsoe turned to the jury and professed “love him or hate him, Tony played his ass off out here” (Episode 2815). Vlachos was declared the Sole Survivor in an 8-1 vote.

Season 28: *Survivor: Cagayan* epitomizes NSGP. There is constant lying and backstabbing and, instead of being punished, the perpetrator of such actions wins the game. Hwang, the honorable castaway, loses by a landslide to Vlachos, the accused villain.

Furthermore, the castaways see a clearer divide between the game and life as is evidenced by both Bledsoe's and Vlachos' aforementioned comments. It is also critical to address that multiple castaways featured in Season 28 are longtime viewers/superfans of the show. In his profile featured on CBS's website, Vlachos admits he is a "huge fan of the show" and compares himself to Russel Hantz and "Boston Rob" Mariano (*Tony Vlachos - Survivor Cast*). Bledsoe also mentions his superfan status throughout his one-on-one interviews during Season 28. The viewer-turned-castaway phenomenon, rewards for controversial behavior, and the more rigid divide between the game and life firmly cement Season 28 as NSS.

Discussion

When put into conversation with one another, these three seasons clearly delineate the evolution of *Survivor* gameplay social norms over the course of the show's run. Season 8 shows the classic OSGP where deceptive actions are repeatedly punished, i.e. Mariano losing the season, and comparably more noble gameplay is rewarded. In Season 28, the phenomenon is completely reversed; Hwang, the honorable castaway, loses to Vlachos, the habitual liar. Previously mentioned quotes from each season best demonstrate their differences. In Season 8, "the line between game and life is not cut and dry" whereas in Season 28 Vlachos is able to separate his personal life from his gameplay completely (Episode 0816). I argue that the reasons for this change in gameplay are seasons like Season 20, where past, fan-favorite castaways return to the game.

Season 20 was exceedingly unique because it embodies both the

social cognitive theory of mass communication and aspects of evolutionary game theory. First and foremost, the returning OSP are immediately separated into two tribes: the heroes and villains. Their past strategies, however varied, are turned into player archetypes. The heroes are fan-favorite castaways who engage in OSGP, meaning they are known to be genuine and reward noble behavior. The villains, in contrast, are the castaways who were thwarted because of their lies and betrayals but the viewers loved to hate. Because the final three competitors in and eventual winner of Season 20 are from the villain tribe, the deceptive behavior they have historically engaged in is rewarded. The player-archetype of the hero falls, leaving the viewers to learn the only way to win *Survivor* is by being “villainous.” The positive reinforcement that deceptive actions receive in Season 20 is imperative to the establishment of NSS. To restate Bandura's social cognitive theory of mass communication, viewers are likely to view rewarded behavior committed by an attractive or well-liked television personality as acceptable to reproduce. The fan-favorite villains win the season, leaving the *Survivor* superfans to observe, learn from, and internalize the norms the castaways engaged in to win.

These *Survivor* superfans become the newest castaways and act by these internalized norms. Lying and deception are inherent in gameplay and this negative behavior is consistently rewarded. Despite Vlachos, Hantz, and Mariano having very similar gameplays, only Vlachos was able to win; the social norms that allowed Vlachos to win had not been established in Hantz's and Mariano's original seasons. However, it's important to note that both Hantz and Mariano returned in Season 22 of *Survivor* to once again compete for the title of Sole

Survivor. Hantz is voted off early in the game, but Mariano secures the win. Mariano employed the same strategies that he used in Season 8 and, because the social norms in the game had shifted, was rewarded for it. Tyson Apostol, another villain from Season 20, returned for Season 27 and won. Because their character-archetype had ultimately won the battle in Season 20, Mariano and Apostol's individual gameplays became socially acceptable within the realm of *Survivor* as the social cognitive theory of mass communication predicted, allowing both former villains to win.

The villainous, fan-favorite OSP helped establish NSGP, but the new style of play quickly evolved beyond their influence. The process of observational learning, norm internalization, and the reproduction of those norms is a self-accelerating cycle. *Survivor: Heroes vs. Villains* began the cycle, but as more and more *Survivor* seasons are produced, its effect gets smaller. The newest *Survivor* superfans view winners like Vlachos with the same respect that the former viewed Mariano. As such, NSP become increasingly more devious. Winners like Adam Klein (Season 33) and Sarah Lacina (Season 34) are long-time viewers turned castaways characterized by betraying alliance members and making big moves. Lacina, who had previously lost to Vlachos and served as a jury member for Season 28, returned and won Season 34, *Survivor: Game-Changers*, a season built for rewarding deceptive gameplay. Before participating in Season 34, Lacina admitted that she “regret[ted] sticking to [her] morals and values” in Season 28 and said that next time she needs to “play the game” (*Sarah Lacina - Survivor Cast*). At this point, real life and gameplay are completely exclusionary.

Conclusion

The increasingly deceptive cycle evolving *Survivor* gameplay is ultimately the reason that OSP are consistently losing to NSP in Season 40: *Survivor: Winners at War*, the currently on-going season of *Survivor*. Although many of the previous winners helped create NSGP, they no longer know the game well enough to keep up with the new *Survivor* trailblazers. Some may argue that the OSP's losses in Season 40 are not due to unfamiliar social norms, but rather that the OSP are a bigger perceived threat in the game and thus voted off quicker. Although that is seemingly a convincing argument, the OSP do not have the social prowess to predict or counter those moves because they are less familiar with the newer gameplay norms. The OSP began the cycle that the social cognitive theory of mass communication suggests, but they no longer actively participate in it. I hypothesize that, if *Survivor* continues airing for another decade, the returning NSP will find themselves playing with outdated norms in a similar way that OSP are now. The current *Survivor* superfans, to once again invoke Bandura, will learn about, internalize, and recreate the norms rewarded on Season 40 and beyond. That said, my conclusions were reached through a qualitative analysis of *Survivor*, and I am interested to know if other scholars would reach the same conclusions if they quantitatively examined multiple *Survivor* seasons. I wonder if the number of lies told or frequency of deceptive behavior increases on average from OSS to NSS; I believe that this question, and those similar to it, issues further investigation.

The qualitative examination of the evolution of OSGP to NSGP not only sheds light on how a castaway wins in *Survivor* and how the

game could shift in the future but highlights the utility of the social cognitive theory of mass communication. Although applicable to all forms of mass communication, it is clear that Bandura's theory shines through in the reality television genre. Reality TV shows, especially those that have been on air for decades, are excellent texts to be used in the analysis of social norm evolution and participant-viewer influence because researchers can see to what extent the norms set by previous contestants have been normalized. With these ideas in mind, my paper becomes an archetype for how the social cognitive theory of mass communication can be best practiced and demonstrated. *Survivor* gameplay shifts embody Bandura's claims that television show viewers learn by observation and reproduce rewarded behavior. If the alternative was true, Vlachos, Klein, and Lacina would never have become Sole Survivors.

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Tocqueville's Fears of Radical Individualism Proven Valid by Proponents of Arming Teachers

Benjamin McNutt

Alexis de Tocqueville, a French aristocrat on his visit to nineteenth-century America, wrote his famous book *Democracy in America*, detailing and reflecting on what he observed during his visit. Writing in *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville reflects on the individualism exhibited in the Americans he encountered, and he posits the potentially negative effects such individualism could have on America if taken too far. Nearly two centuries later, in response to America's unparalleled rate of school shootings, many conservatives have come up with a simple solution to the issue: put more guns in schools by arming teachers. The idea that the best response to gun violence in our schools is more guns, specifically the policy of arming teachers, is a perfect manifestation of the radical individualism Tocqueville was concerned about, as it moves to advance individualistic goals at the possible expense of our children's safety and the greater public interest.

Alexis de Tocqueville recognized and reflected on the prevalence of individualism in America. Writing in *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville noted, "[Americans] owe nothing to any man, they expect nothing from any man" (Tocqueville 690). William E. Hudson, a professor of political science at Providence College, titles the third chapter of his book, *American Democracy in Peril: Eight Challenges to America's Future*, "The Third Challenge: Radical Individualism." In his book, Hudson chronicles what he sees as the main threats to modern

American democracy. One of his concerns, radical individualism, was shared by Tocqueville some two centuries ago. Tocqueville “was concerned that when taken too far, individualism could undermine democracy” (Hudson 107). According to Hudson, when taken to the extreme, Tocqueville believed individualism could easily develop into egoism, defined as “an ethical theory that treats self-interest as the foundation of morality” (“Egoism”). People who exhibit individualism in excess are labeled by Tocqueville as “egoists.” However, Hudson prefers to call them by a different name: “radical individualists.” Hudson writes, “A society of egoists [(or radical individualists)], Tocqueville feared, would be vulnerable to despotism” (107-108). Rather than acquiring the habits of heart necessary for a prosperous democratic society, Tocqueville said of individualistic Americans that “they acquire the habit[s] of always considering themselves as standing alone, and they are apt to imagine that their whole destiny is in their own hands” (609). Tocqueville, as he reflected in *Democracy in America*, believed that egoism (or radical individualism) presented a danger to American democracy. However, in our modern-day world, radical individualism presents a danger to American lives as well.

Selfish and radical acts, such as school shootings carried out by unreasonably and heavily armed individuals, are the type of development that Tocqueville was concerned about when he wrote about radical individualism in *Democracy in America*. A CNN article by Chip Grabow and Lisa Rose analyzes the number of school shootings in the United States compared to the other G7 Nations such as France and Germany. America’s two-hundred and eighty-eight school shootings versus five for the rest of the G7, a ratio of 57:1, is shocking (Grabow

and Rose). It is, however, unsurprising, given the prevalence of radical individualism present in today's America and specifically its gun culture.

The Second Amendment more than ever before is seen as an individualistic doctrine on gun rights in our country. Chad Kautzer, an Associate Professor of Philosophy at Lehigh University, writes about this interpretation in a 2015 article published in *Law and Critique*. As Kautzer describes, the Supreme Court, in a landmark 2008 decision in *District of Columbia v. Heller*, ruled that the Second Amendment specifically included the individual right to bear arms for the purpose of self-defense (178). This decision in regard to the Second Amendment, Kautzer laments, is “a radically individualist interpretation” (178). This “radically individualist interpretation” of the Second Amendment in recent years is less directly responsible for America's disproportionate number of school shootings than it is for the ways in which we seek to deal with such school shootings, which are arguably even more radically individualistic in nature.

As Kautzer notes, the ruling in *DC v. Heller* launched a flurry of new legislation seeking to expand the public places in which guns could be carried, including in schools (179). Following high-profile school shootings such as Sandy Hook and Parkland, many conservatives, especially those in the gun lobby, have suggested arming teachers with firearms as a potential solution to protect students against the increasing rate of school shootings in America. In a post-Sandy Hook press conference, NRA Executive Vice-President Wayne LaPierre made the following statement: “The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun” (Kautzer 176). As Kautzer notes, in the press

conference, LaPierre called for the arming of teachers, principals, and parents, and for hiring armed guards in schools (176). Wayne LaPierre and the gun lobby have not been alone in their support of arming teachers as a solution to school shootings, however. President Trump and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos have also expressed support for the policy following the Parkland shooting in 2018 (Blad, et al.).

Regardless of its support, arming teachers is simply unproven as a concept. Douglas Yacek, a postdoctoral research fellow and lecturer at the Leibniz University in Hanover, Germany, authored an article on the subject of arming teachers in 2018. In his article, Yacek argues that data that shows that schools who arm teachers exhibit demonstrable changes in school safety would be useful in assessing the efficacy of arming teachers (9). However, as Yacek goes on to state, “the problem here is that this data is lacking and there is important ethical constraints on collecting such data” (9). Even if such supporting data did exist, Yacek argues it would be difficult to discern if such changes to school safety were as a result of arming teachers or if they were as a result of additional safety measures that were implemented (9).

Interestingly, many scholars argue the limited data that does exist suggests arming teachers may actually make schools less safe. Todd DeMitchell and Christine Rath, professors at UNH and Plymouth State, respectively, discuss such data in their article in the *BYU Education and Law Journal*. In their article, DeMitchell and Rath discuss a *Politifact* study, which found that in 2016, NYPD officers had a hit rate of only 35% when firing at suspects (88). DeMitchell and Rath argue therefore, that if law enforcement officers cannot achieve a shooting accuracy of greater than 50%, untrained or undertrained teachers

would be even less likely to be able to do so, and ricocheting bullets could harm students or other innocent bystanders (88). Generally speaking, scholars like DeMitchell and Rath are of the opinion that “More guns may lead to more mistakes, and these mistakes can be deadly” (91).

Further providing evidence of the potential dangers of arming teachers, Everytown for Gun Safety, a gun-control advocacy group, found that “Access to a firearm, irrespective of age [...] doubles the risk of death by homicide” (“Arming Teachers”). In support of this claim, there have been many documented firearm mishaps and misfortunes resulting from arming teachers and school staff; they range from accidental gun discharges by armed teachers, to suicides and homicides committed by armed school staff members (“Arming Teachers”). Gun-control advocacy groups, alongside scholars, provide evidence that arming teachers actually increases the potential for violence and harm to students in schools, the opposite of what proponents of the policy intend.

Simply put, arming teachers isn’t proven to protect kids in our schools, and it potentially puts them in even more danger. Even in light of these facts, according to Everytown For Gun Safety, fifteen states in 2018 allowed for various levels of concealed carrying of firearms within schools, with over two dozen states considering similar policies the same year (Blad, et al.). It begs the question: if arming teachers is a potentially dangerous and unproven policy, why do so many people support the policy in response to school shootings?

Many Americans view their individual liberties as second to none, and routinely put self-interest above the public interest. This

sentiment is expressed best by a Texan's Facebook comment discussing arming teachers after Sandy Hook: "We need to arm our teachers and let them defend our kids, there should be no gun ban or legislation, we have our rights from our founding fathers for a reason" (Pérez 141). Many Americans would tend to agree with this sentiment, including members of the gun lobby like Wayne LaPierre. On the heels of Sandy Hook, LaPierre said in support of arming teachers that "politicians have no business—and no authority—denying us the right, the ability, or the moral imperative to protect ourselves and our loved ones from harm" (Kautzer 176). It is self-interest, or as LaPierre says, a "moral imperative to protect ourselves and our loved ones," that has driven many conservatives to support the policy of arming teachers. Individuals such as LaPierre connected to the NRA and other gun lobbying organizations also have a vested self-interest in the sale of guns. According to the Violence Policy Center, the gun industry donated between nineteen and sixty million dollars to the NRA between 2005 and 2013 ("Manufacturer of Assault Rifle"). Firearms sales among teachers would likely increase if they were to be armed, which would be a positive outcome for gun lobbyists and the gun industry they receive funding from. Regardless of their ulterior motives or reasoning, proponents of arming teachers claim that it is a sound public policy that would protect students in schools and ultimately save lives. Protecting students and saving lives is a goal that is undeniably in the public interest to achieve.

Arming teachers, as aforementioned, is unproven in its efficacy and may actually increase the likelihood of children being harmed in schools. Even when all the facts are considered, conservatives and

members of the gun lobby continue to support arming teachers in pursuit of their own individual self-interests, rather than for the reasons of public interest they may claim. While Hudson used the words “radical individualism,” Tocqueville in *Democracy in America* used the word “egoism” when describing his concerns about unchecked individualism in America. Egoism, again defended as an ethical theory that treats self-interest as the foundation of morality, is exemplified in statements made by proponents of arming teachers. By claiming a “moral imperative” to arm teachers, a dangerous and unproven public policy in which Wayne LaPierre has vested self-interest, he concedes to the egoism, or linkage of morality and self-interest, that is present in many of the arguments proponents of arming teachers present.

Writing in *American Democracy in Peril*, William E. Hudson says the following: “The American radical-individualist culture encourages most Americans to think primarily in terms of their individual-self interest rather than the public interest when thinking about public policy” (127). Arming teachers might as well be the poster-child policy for Hudson’s statement: an unproven and potentially dangerous policy that puts individual self-interests above the public interest at large. Proponents of arming teachers regularly have legitimate and pronounced self-interests in promoting the policy, a policy that is simply at odds with the safety of students and thus the general public interest. As such, proponents of arming teachers nearly two centuries later have proven valid the concerns about egoism (or radical individualism) that Alexis De Tocqueville expressed in *Democracy in America*.

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Resolving Berlin's Housing Crisis

Ian Riggs

Note: The Annotated Bibliography that led to this essay can be found earlier in the collection.

Berlin is a city in crisis. Germany's capital is rapidly losing its reputation as one of Europe's coolest and most affordable cities as rents have skyrocketed in recent years. Since 2008, rents have more than doubled, and in a city where 85% of people rent, that is a huge problem (Nasr and Hansen). It is such a crisis that Berlin's legislature has taken the unprecedented step to freeze rents for the next five years, over protests from housing analysts and construction firms, according to a *Reuters* report from Joseph Nasr and Holger Hansen. Yet the city legislature has also promised to build a mind-boggling 200,000 new housing units by 2030, a nearly unimaginable goal but one that is needed to keep up with demand and make up for previously lagging housing construction (O'Sullivan). The city wants to build so much that it has no idea of where to put it. With this massive pressure to build, Berlin has experimented with everything from the tasteless to the absurd, including building apartments on the site of Germany's first concentration camp (Borden). As Dan Borden writes for *EXBERLINER*, "expect to see more Berlin history trampled to put roofs over our heads."

But Berlin must have other options. The city is large and has wide reaching authority over its territory as a state in Germany's federal system. For one, as Feargus O'Sullivan, a reporter for *CityLab* explains, the city has numerous out of use brownfield sites throughout the city, a telling relic of its checkered past from World War II and the

time of the Berlin Wall and GDR. But those spaces are simply not enough for the volume that the city needs. Some suggest that Berlin must build on its vaunted green space, but the question still falls of on which green space. The city has a massive amount, more than 6 square meters (about 65 square feet), for each citizen of the city (Kabisch and Haase). The city's most desirable areas have relatively large amounts of open space, even in the urban core, but whether it will or should be built on is a separate question. Berliners have resisted moves to develop more of the city, from voting down a referendum involving the former airfield and current park Tempelhof to backlash against gentrification in Kreuzberg (O'Sullivan). There is still a push for more construction in these open spaces in the inner-city, however, and Mayor Michael Müller still wants to build on Tempelhof. Another option lies in the plentiful greenspaces surrounding the city, but to build there faces another set of challenges, namely NIMBY impulses in these largely wealthy areas and a wish to limit city sprawl (O'Sullivan). What should Berlin do given these conflicting impulses about construction? Should the city sacrifice its core green space for needed housing or focus instead on building on sites further from the city center?

Ultimately, even while Berlin city leaders push for new construction throughout the city, it is more important to balance the city's housing needs with preserving greenspace. This paper will look to examine these conflicting impulses about construction and greenspace that find themselves at the heart of Berlin's housing debate. To start, the severity of Berlin's need for housing construction will be examined. Then, the availability of spaces for said construction will be

evaluated. Next, there will be a discussion of the harms that would be done to the people of the city, including to their health, should more housing be constructed on inner-city green space, including on the site of Tempelhofer Feld. Accordingly, there will then be analysis of where Berlin can build in place of sacrificing the greenspaces in its core, which is something that the city ought to avoid. Ultimately, Berlin must weigh its options and choose the lesser of two evils and develop areas towards its perimeter, sacrificing prime building location in exchange for protecting its urban greenspaces and the well-being of its residents.

The Severity of Berlin's Crisis

Before delving into how Berlin should best address its housing crisis, it is necessary to look at its severity. Berlin certainly does face a similar plight as other cities around the world, as increasing demand in part due to inward migration has put a serious upward pressure on housing prices. In 2017 alone, Berlin saw 41,000 new people move into the city and is on pace to grow from 3.7 million inhabitants today to 4 million by 2030 (O'Sullivan). To meet this demand and a backlog of need from previously slow construction, the Berlin Senate's Department for Urban Development calculates the city needs to construct at least 194,000 units to keep up; the city, to respond, has promised to build at least 200,000, with half set to be affordable (Bünger; O'Sullivan). However, many claim that this is not enough, including Mayor Michael Müller's Social Democratic Party (SPD). The SPD argues that the city needs 300,000 new units by 2030 as they point to the Senate's calculations underestimating where the population will lie by the end of the decade (Bünger). Either way, this is still a massive

number of new units, which may be challenging given controversies between governing parties about where to build, resistance from the population for destroying greenspace, and the downward pressure that the rent freeze (*Mietendeckel*) places on new construction (in the first part of 2019 the city saw a 10.7% decline in the approval of new apartment construction) (O’Sullivan; Schönball “Schon wieder”). This latter development, along with the failure of city housing purchases to push down housing prices, indicate that the only solution that Berlin has remaining to counter rapidly rising rents is to build (Kirschbaum).

Before moving forward, I am going to perform calculations of my own to determine the need for housing which will be referenced through the rest of this paper in order to resolve the discrepancies in existing projections from the Senate and SPD. Different calculations are shown in Table 1 as follows. The row labeled Senate are the numbers provided by the Berlin Senate as previously discussed. Senate adjusted is the same base calculations but adjusted for the population being 4 million by 2030. The final row are my own calculations, based on the most recent data from the Berlin-Brandenburg Statistics Office (from 2018). According to the Statistics Office, the number of households per dwelling is not what one would expect at 1.0, but instead is 1.06, making the difference between the number of households in Berlin and the number of dwellings 100,935 (“Kleine Berlin-Statistik” 29). Therefore, the table shows two different numbers for needed housing stock, one of which uses number of needed dwellings to fill the backlog per the Berlin Senate (77,000) and one of which uses this value from the Statistics Office, labeled as adjusted (Bürger). As seen in Table 1, I have calculated the actual number of needed new dwelling units (new

housing units) to be 243,300. This number will be used for the remainder of the paper.

Table 1

Source	Population by 2030 ¹	People per dwelling ¹	New households by 2030 ¹	Number of dwellings needed ¹	Number of dwellings needed, adj. ¹
Senate	3828.0 ²	1.547	117.0	194.0	217.9
Senate adj.	4000.0 ³	1.547	162.9	239.9	263.8
Author	4000.0 ³	1.771 ⁴	142.4	219.4	243.3

Finally, before discussing the implications of this for Berlin’s greenspace, it is important to look at the key indicator of how severe this problem is, which is the change in prices of housing in Berlin over the last few years. Housing sales prices, a relatively small proportion of the market, have risen 208.2% in the last 10 years to 4,760 Euros/square meter (“Berlin Property Market”). More critical is rental prices, which have more than doubled since 2008 (Nasr and Hansen); the price of new rentals has increased by 31% in the last 5 years, while for new construction rents have increased 50.7% (“Berlin Property Market”). However, this includes the limit on price increases due to the rent freeze (Nasr and Hansen). Therefore, Berlin most certainly faces a grave housing crisis, with prices rising much more rapidly than

¹ In Thousands

² According to Bünger

³ Prediction according to O’Sullivan

⁴ Calculated based on data from the Berlin-Brandenburg Statistics Office (“Kleine Berlin-Statistik” pp. 29)

inflation or wages and a drastic need of over 200,000 new housing units.

Where could it all go? Options for Construction in Berlin

The task of building over 200,000 new housing units by 2030 is quite a difficult one, especially in a city which has historically missed building targets and now has the deadweight contributed by the rent freeze. But the city does indeed have the space for such a massive expansion, as it has more than 6 square meters of space per inhabitant, exceeding the city's own target (Kabisch and Haase). While this per capita figure is dubious for planning due to uneven distribution of greenspaces in the city, which will be examined later, it does indicate that at some level Berlin has large amounts of greenspace and thus areas on which housing could be built.

The easiest place to look in Berlin for new construction projects is the city's numerous brownfield locations, which are places in a city previously occupied but have now fallen into disuse (Kälberer). A report for the German Federal Environmental Agency extolls the virtue of such developments, including for "reducing further land occupation" (Kälberer 4), like through the construction of 6,000 apartments on the side of a former railyard in the city center (O'Sullivan). This aspect of brownfields indicates that redeveloping them into usable spaces like housing are ultimately most beneficial, as it keeps the overall land use of the population the same while allowing more people to actively use it. Furthermore, somewhat surprisingly, the number of brownfield sites across Germany, including in Berlin, rose after reunification, leaving a lot of space for potential redevelopment (Kälberer). However,

O’Sullivan points out that in Berlin’s case, while there may be substantial opportunities to develop the city’s many brownfield locations, that simply does not meet the vast quantity of housing units that the city needs to construct, meaning it must supplement brownfields with other options.

Similar to the redevelopment of brownfields is an approach that more-or-less involves optimizing the usage of existing structures,



Figure 1: Rendering of an Aldi Store with apartments. Image from Borden.

included through adding floors to existing residential buildings or the construction of apartment blocks on top of grocery stores (O’Sullivan; Borden). The latter has the potential to be a major injection of new housing

supply in Berlin, should the city be willing to fully exercise it; grocery store chain Aldi has already begun to proceed with building units on top of two of its stores (see Figure 1), which if expanded city wide would lead to 2,000 new units (Borden). While nowhere near the 243,300 units needed, this is a sizable number that is worth the city’s interest.

However, these two options still leave Berlin short, if it chooses to pursue them at all. That leaves a clear other option that is the most contentious: using the city’s greenspace. First are a myriad of options that would develop greenspace lying in some of the city’s central districts, including city-owned parks and courtyards around buildings. Movements have already occurred in this regard, including an attempt

to build on a courtyard in Lichtenberg and construction on the site of a cemetery (not true greenspace, but an approximation of it) in the district of Neukölln (Klages and Stollowsky; O’Sullivan). Another major project, the potential redevelopment of the former Tempelhof Airport, is such a consequential one that it will be discussed in a following section. This option of developing on greenspace in the city center seems to be what most attracts Berlin’s leadership, especially as these are the most in-demand areas and would not lead to any spreading of the city, allowing it to rely on existing infrastructure, much like brownfield redevelopment (“Berlin Property Market”; Kälberer).

Finally, there remains the option of the city’s lush external ring of greenspace. This is the option, which is supported by many, including journalist Ralf Schönball of *Der Tagesspiegel*. Rejecting calls to build in

the city center, Schönball argues that “the city is large enough. There is space in Spandau and Pankow [two districts that include parts of the city’s exterior, see Figure 2].... A team of experts



Figure 2: “Berlin District Map.” Map from Berlin: Manifestation of a Distance.

must... develop ideas for city expansion” (“Bauen”). There are plentiful options in these areas, including in and out of use farmland and

expansive forests (O'Sullivan). But these ideas run into problems mentioned earlier relating to city expansion, including the need to develop more city infrastructure and places like shops and schools (Schönball "Bauen"; Kälberer). Furthermore, these areas of the city are often wealthier and willing to put their weight behind resisting attempts at new, affordable construction in a NIMBY-esque fashion, opposing development on a "specific ill-chosen site" as new construction remains broadly popular in general (O'Sullivan). Clearly Berlin has many options but has still yet to fully move forward in any way to solve its crisis. How should the city weigh what lies in front of it?

The Necessity of Preserving Urban Greenspace

Even given the complex needs of a city like Berlin, clear empirical evidence suggests the serious harms done to a city's residents by destroying greenspace, including studies done on Berlin itself. These studies have looked at factors like life satisfaction of people living in Berlin, self-reported health, and whether these spaces are justly distributed throughout the city.

First is the issue of Berliner's life satisfaction in relation to greenspace. Bertram and Rehdanz in *Ecological Economics* conducted a study on individuals' life satisfaction in relation to the available amount of greenspace in their immediate area (within a radius of 1km from their home address). To limit their study to the most urban areas of Berlin, it only included the districts of Mitte, Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, Pankow, Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf, Tempelhof-Schönberg, Neukölln, and Lichtenberg (Bertram and Rehdanz; see Figure 2 for

reference), which include some of the most in-demand areas of Berlin that have a serious lack of housing stock (“Berlin Property Market”). According to their survey, after adjusted for other factors like wealth, district, and level of access to public services, Bertram and Rehdanz found that the ideal amount of greenspace within their 1km radius is 35ha, 11% of that total area (149). Furthermore, their results indicated that “three-quarters of the respondents have less than this amount of urban greenspace available in their living environments, green space is, overall, in insufficient supply in the case study area in Berlin” (Bertram and Rehdanz 149). As seen in this study, greenspace not only has an impact on an individual’s life satisfaction, which serves as a good indicator of general well-being, but Berlin itself lacks sufficient greenspace in its urban core, in effect harming the wellbeing of its citizens. Therefore, as Berlin has an insufficient amount of greenspace in these denser areas, it would not be prudent for the city to continue to build more housing in these jurisdictions as it would harm the wellbeing of those already living there and produce an overall lower quality of life.

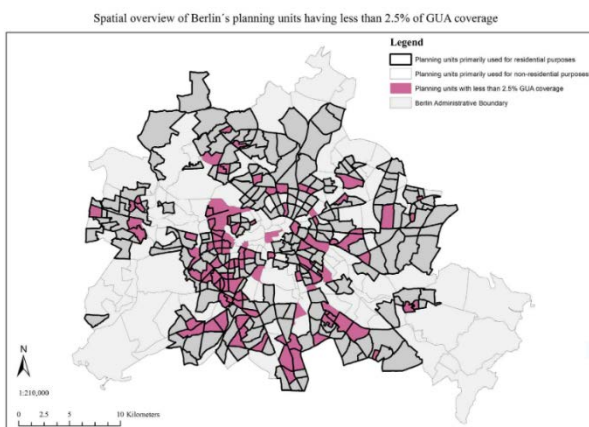


Figure 3: “Spatial overview of Berlin’s planning units having less than 2.5% of GUA [green urban area] coverage.” Map from Coppel and Wüstemann.

Additional studies have also shown the insufficient levels of greenspace within Berlin, including how it negatively impacts

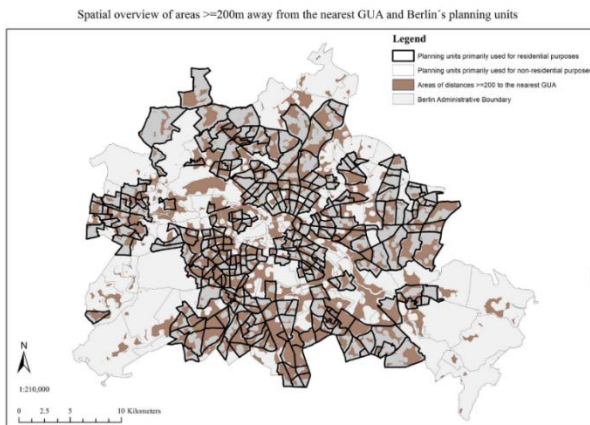


Figure 4: "Spatial overview of areas $\geq 200\text{m}$ away from the nearest GUA and Berlin's planning units." Map from Coppel and Wüstemann.

individual health. Taking a survey of participants throughout the city, a study from Coppel and Wüstemann looked at whether certain levels of greenspace or distance from it had positive or negative effects on the self-

reported health (SRH) of those surveyed. After being adjusted for other contributing factors, which were found to be consistent with other studies on SRH, the authors found that having greenspace within 200m distance or living in an area where greater than 2.5% of the area is taken up by greenspace has a positive effect on SRH (Coppel and Wüstemann). Accordingly, living further away or in areas with less coverage were found to have negative impacts on SRH. The others conclude that based on their findings, "437 of Berlin's 447 planning units that provide access to UGS negatively affecting SRH of which 297 were used for residential purposes primarily" (Coppel and Wüstemann 417). Therefore, further reducing the amount of greenspace that Berliners have access to would undermine citizen's health and that of new residents as well. This would especially be the case in the core of the city, as those areas are most likely to already have lower levels of greenspace (seen in Figure 3 as pink areas, in Figure 4 as brown), meaning that building in the city's core would be especially harmful.

Furthermore, looking at it from a social justice perspective, Kabisch and Haase found significant problems with Berlin's distribution of greenspace, particularly as immigrants lived in areas where greenspace is low, which are those areas in Berlin's center city area. Therefore, immigrants are disproportionately likely to not benefit from greenspaces in the ways previously discussed, meaning that the lack of greenspace relatively speaking in Berlin's urban core is specifically harming them in relation to other groups. On the other hand, areas on the outskirts of the city, particularly the southeast, have a large and excessive amount of greenspace, including large farms and forests (Kabisch and Haase). These results indicate, as the last two studies did, that reducing the provision of greenspace in Berlin's urban core will harm the individuals living there, including by disproportionately harming immigrants, an already vulnerable group. Altogether, this demonstrates that Berlin has insufficient levels of greenspace in its urban core and that the reliance on a city-wide measure of per capita greenspace is not relevant for planning, as those spaces are unevenly distributed throughout the city, meaning that Berlin cannot afford to build on greenspace in the city center.

An Application: Tempelhofer Feld

Now having examined the need for Berlin to preserve the greenspace in its urban core, I will apply these principles and others to a brief case study of Tempelhofer Feld, a park on the location of the former Tempelhof airport. The park is situated in the northeast corner inner-city district of Tempelhof-Schönberg and borders the districts of Neukölln and Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg (see figure 2), two of the areas

of Berlin with the greatest housing shortage (“Berlin Property Market”). These areas, as found by Bertram and Rehdanz, are already lacking greenspace, visualized in figures 3 and 4, which indicate that Tempelhof-Schönberg and adjacent districts in the south-central portion of the city have among the worst distributions of greenspace, along with the neighboring district of Mitte. As such, Tempelhof



Figure 5: One proposed development of Tempelhof. Rendering from Schönball "Ein Ring..."

provides a key access point for individuals in these areas to access greenspace when it would otherwise be lacking, meaning developing this particular site, even with its immense

size may be ill-advised.

Supporting this fact is a survey conducted on visitors to Tempelhof, which found that an even proportions of visitors (greater than 35% of the total, each) came from the immediate area surrounding Tempelhof and from neighboring districts, supporting the idea that Tempelhof's accessibility is allowing it to serve as a substitute for greenspace in areas that are otherwise lacking it (Kabisch and Haase 135). This indicates that developing Tempelhof (an example of which is seen in Figure 5) and thereby making it a less attractive site by taking away greenspace would not only impact those in the immediate surroundings, but those in nearby districts as well, causing potential widespread harm on a level larger than the immediate areas near the site.

One shortcoming is identified at Tempelhof in that “Only 9% of survey participants were immigrant residents, whereas 27% of individuals within the 1500m catchment were immigrants” (Kabisch and Haase 135). However, solutions to this problem exist, including through the creation of park amenities that are preferable to immigrants, which would make immigrants more likely to use Tempelhof and attain the benefits of greenspace, overall helping to rectify some of the discrepancies in greenspace prevalence in areas immigrants live (Kabisch and Haase). Especially unique to Tempelhof and an indication of how much the public values greenspace in the urban core, Berliners rejected a referendum that would have led to developing the site (O’Sullivan). While that factor alone should dissuade Mayor Müller from continuing to pursue construction on this site, these other factors make it clear that Tempelhof’s function as a park needs to be preserved. Ultimately, these different factors involving Tempelhof, while some only applicable to it as Berlin’s largest urban greenspace (Kabisch and Haase), indicate how preserving greenspace in Berlin’s urban core is key and enables large numbers of individuals to access greenspace in spite of living in areas that otherwise have lower than optimal levels of it.

What should Berlin do, then?

Some of the possible solutions to Berlin’s housing crisis were discussed previously in the section entitled “Where can it all go?” Seeing that the evidence points to the most favored option of developing greenspace in the core as unsustainable and harmful to the citizens of Berlin, this section will evaluate the other possible solutions

and offer suggestions on what Berlin should indeed do to alleviate its housing crisis.

First comes the question of brownfields, the clear leader and most popular option at many levels, from journalists like O’Sullivan to the German Federal Environmental Agency. However, these brownfields raise another question when they are located in the city center, which is whether they could be turned into greenspace in order to alleviate the problems caused by the low levels of greenspace in these areas. Certainly for some sites that would be wasteful to do, like former industrial sites due to the level of work involved, however, other brownfield sites that are largely empty could readily be turned into greenspace rather than housing in order to provide Berliners with more places to go. As found in a study of people’s preferences regarding greenspace, “The residents did not seem to disapprove of using urban wastelands as recreational areas per se, but a minimum level of maintenance and accessibility appeared to be necessary” (van der Meer et al. 314). Therefore, some of these brownfield sites that sit open, including areas along where the Berlin Wall once stood, could be productively turned into greenspace and be just as successful as traditional greenspaces in appealing to and providing the benefits for the residents of the city.

Next are the strategies I labeled previously as optimizing the use of structures, which involves building additional housing on top of existing buildings. In certain regards this makes a lot of sense, as in general Berlin has many areas that could expand upwards, especially given the city’s height limits (O’Sullivan; van der Meer et al.). However, planners need to be cautious about embracing this as a primary strategy,

given that not only does likely it not meet the necessary need of over 200,000 units (O’Sullivan), but it also has negative implications on citizens’ well-being. Adding stories to buildings has been found to increase the perception of density and crowding for individuals, leading to stress and negative implications for their health (van der Meer et al.), leading to the recommendation that “From the perspective of environmental psychology... keeping... inner city’s restriction of the building height... can lead to increased quality of life” (van der Meer et al. 327). One caveat, though, exists with structures like grocery stores and other single-story buildings. These buildings by their nature are inefficient users of space as they provide no housing or other diverse public needs, meaning that should they have apartments built on top of them as Aldi is beginning to do; it could more efficiently use this space and provide much-needed housing (Borden). Aldi alone can provide 2,000 new housing units to the city, so if the city gave incentives for other grocery stores and similar establishments, it could make a serious dent in the 243,300 needed units, along with effectively having similar benefits to developing brownfields, as the city infrastructure is already there if a grocery store is there (Borden; Kälberer).

Finally comes the other contentious proposition: building on greenspace in the outer ring areas of the city. While many would argue that this idea is harmful as these areas may lack infrastructure or that developing there would encourage urban sprawl (O’Sullivan), there is a lack of research into this issue in relation to Berlin’s circumstances, meaning that it is impossible to draw these conclusions at this time. However, it is clear from the existing body of research that serious harms would be done by destroying greenspace in the city center in

order to build housing, meaning that that option would be wrong for Berlin to pursue. Indeed, this same research found that external areas in Berlin have substantially more greenspace than the internal parts of the city, reaching levels way above the city's target and more than satisfying the ideal levels found for SRH by Coppel and Wüstemann, reflected in figures 3 and 4 (Kabisch and Haase). Therefore, Berlin can safely develop portions of the outer ring of the city without sacrificing its citizens' life satisfaction and SRH, along with not contributing to existing inequities that exist based on greenspace development; all these factors would be worsened should the city develop in the city center.

Building in these areas may indeed require more effort for the city than building in the center city area as infrastructure and stores may not be frequent enough (Kälberer), however, Berlin should be capable of taking these efforts to solve their massive housing crisis. City leaders need what Ralf Schönball calls "civil courage" and to acknowledge that "the city is large enough!" ("Bauen"). Schönball is right; these areas of the city have enough greenspace as is that can be developed into housing. All the city needs to do is address their other deficiencies, as Schönball suggests through "a team of experts in traffic, environment, economics, and housing development must, in consultation with the districts, find locations and develop ideas of city expansion" ("Bauen"); doing so would resolve problems relating to infrastructure in these locations. Berlin is in the middle of a housing crisis, and while this solution may not be the easiest one, the city can accommodate building in its outer ring should it put in the effort to do so, which would save citizens of the city from the harms that would be

caused by destroying greenspace in its core, while allowing new residents to have plentiful greenspaces for themselves.

Conclusion

It is clear that Berlin needs to reevaluate how it seeks to approach its housing crisis and properly consider the negative implications that high levels of construction along with the destruction of greenspace would mean for its urban core. Instead, the city can move towards finding better and more responsible ways to deal with its massive, but solvable, housing crisis. These options need to be further studied and research should be conducted on the implications of projects like mixed-use developments on grocery store footprints and the development and expansion of the city into traditionally green areas on the city's perimeter, including forests, grasslands, and farms. However, that does not mean that Berlin should not pursue these options given the known harm of developing on the already limited greenspaces in the city's center. This paper also indicates how other cities facing conflicts between construction and greenspace preservation can evaluate the importance of greenspace in relation to other factors. Urban planners must consider the value of greenspace in other cities going forward and attempt to find quantitative understandings of a city's circumstances on the detailed level that Berlin has access to in order to inform where construction should go. Ultimately, Berlin shows that simple solutions to housing problems that sacrifice greenspace are not the appropriate course of action and should serve as both a warning and a guide as to how other cities can approach planning for the future.

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