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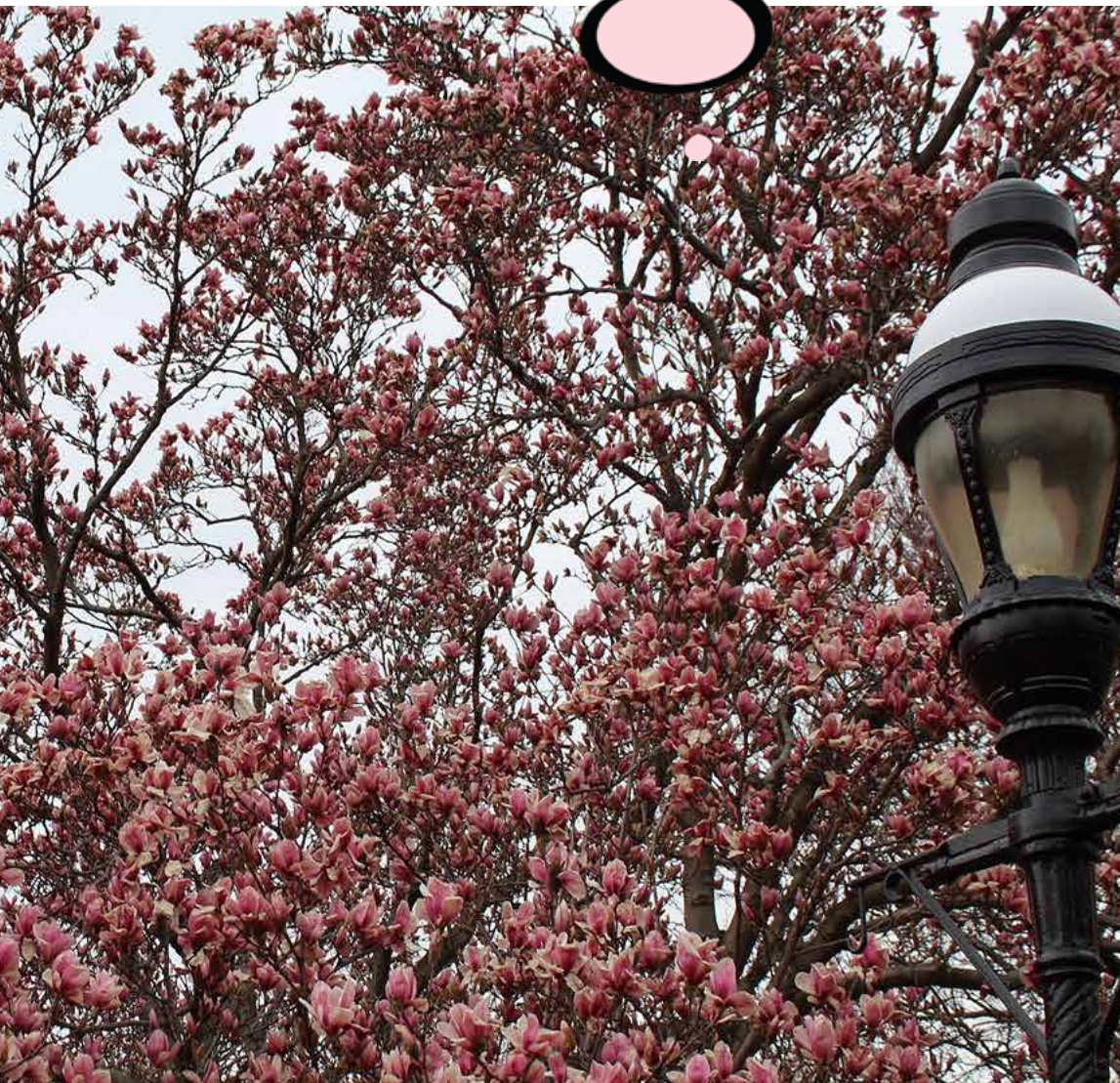
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Spring 2020



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Cover photo entitled "Magnolias in Spring"

Aegis: The Otterbein Humanities Journal

Perhaps the first question readers will ask about Aegis is “What does it mean?”

The word “aegis” is Latin for “shield” but may be more specifically associated with Greek mythology as it refers to the shield carried by Zeus, god of thunder. Made from the hide of the goat Amaltheia, the shield came to represent not only a practical tool of protection but also a godly power. “As the Greeks prided themselves greatly on the rich and splendid ornaments of their shields, they supposed the aegis to be adorned in a style corresponding to the might and majesty of the father of the gods.”¹ Myths have even suggested that the shield was worn by both the god Apollo and the goddess Athena, adding to the prestige of the shield throughout tales of mythology.²

Much like the myths and literary representations of Zeus’ shield, Otterbein’s journal, Aegis, seeks to transport readers into a deeper study of literature and humanities through the fields of history, philosophy, language, linguistics, literature, archaeology, jurisprudence, ethics, comparative religion, and the history, theory, and criticism of the arts (in accordance with the National Endowment for the Humanities’ (NEH) definition). Every year, Aegis includes a collection of undergraduate scholarly book reviews, essays, and interviews prepared and edited by Otterbein students.

Since its first edition in 2004, the journal has come a long way and has showcased the exemplary work that Otterbein students continue to produce. Aegis is a journal designed to catalyze a deeper critical appreciation of the humanities at Otterbein University and is published once every spring semester. It strives to advance the presence and values of the humanities on campus and beyond. An editorial board comprised of Otterbein students is responsible for selecting books, writing, and publishing book reviews as well as revising any essay submissions to the journal and determining their suitability for Aegis.

The 2020 Editorial Board and its editors hope that readers will approach each piece in the journal with curiosity and wonder, just as they may have approached the Latin term “aegis” with such curiosity. Aegis is committed to nonsexist language and to wording free of hostile overtones. The Editorial Board, essay authors, and Otterbein faculty have worked hard to create a journal that showcases the humanities in a unique way. Please enjoy.

Submissions: Essay submissions should be 8-25 double-spaced pages. Use 12-point Times New Roman font with standard one-inch margins, and please number all pages. Use either the MLA Manual Style or The Chicago Manual of Style for citations. Specific submission deadlines will be sent out to all Otterbein students in the early spring semester. Submissions are also accepted on a rolling basis. Submissions must be accompanied by an email or cover sheet noting the author’s name and title of the essay. Electronic submissions are preferred. Please send any submissions to aegis@otterbein.edu.

Aegis is always looking for student volunteers to serve on the Editorial Board. To volunteer, submit an essay for review, or to ask questions, please send an email to aegis@otterbein.edu.

Endnotes

- 1 James Yates, “Aegis,” University of Chicago, last modified April 13, 2018, http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRA*/Aegis.html.
- 2 Ibid.

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Editors' Introduction

As this year's editors, we are pleased to present the campus community with the fourteenth edition of *Aegis: The Otterbein University Humanities Journal*.

The essays that have been selected for this year's edition of *Aegis* exemplify the talent and commitment to academics that are continuously exhibited by students at Otterbein University. The topics covered examine issues in U.S. history, art history, gender studies, virtue ethics, film analysis, and more. All of the essays in the journal meet the standards of rigorous research in the humanities, but more importantly, they are engaging pieces that work to address a variety of complex issues.

In "Parasitic Poverty" by Casey Rife, Bong Joon Ho's representations of poverty in his award winning film *Parasite* are examined and compared to those of other South Korean filmmakers. In "War Requiem: An Outcry for Peace and Unity" by Anna Ehret, the composition by Benjamin Britten, commissioned to honor the reconstruction of Saint Michael's Cathedral in England, is analyzed for its musical representations of the despair caused by World War II and as Britten's call for peace as he urges future generations to avoid the destruction of war. Selena LaBair discusses the virtues of scrutiny and tenacity and the role that they play in ethical consumption in her essay "The Virtues of Scrutiny and Tenacity: The Tools Needed for Effective Ethical Consumers." These essays, along with the others included in this year's edition of *Aegis*, represent the great work that is being done across the humanities at Otterbein University.

Along with the essays, *Aegis* includes book reviews written by the members of the editorial board who make the journal possible. These reviews allow the members of the editorial board to exhibit their intellectual interests and display their own skills in their respective disciplines. The books reviewed in this edition include *Educated*, a memoir of a young Mormon girl who is determined to receive a formal education despite her family's disapproval, which details the struggles she faced and overcame due to her sheltered upbringing in Utah. *Go Ahead in the Rain: Notes on A Tribe Called Quest* tells the history and impact of the seminal hip-hop group A Tribe Called Quest, both in a broad cultural sense and a more personal sense from the perspective of the author. *Sing Unburied, Sing* is a historical fiction novel which revolves around the story of a young black girl in the American South attempting to overcome the injustices placed upon her and her family. These titles, among other fiction and non-fiction works are reviewed and discussed within the pages of *Aegis*.

This year's edition of *Aegis* was faced with unprecedented circumstances. The pandemic of COVID-19 cut the Spring 2020 semester short, as classes were cancelled and Otterbein's campus closed in mid-March. These circumstances complicated the publishing of the journal because its editors and editorial board were not able to meet to discuss its progress as normal. All communication became remote, which placed higher pressure on all involved. It also meant that the journal could not be released at the annual launch party, in which the authors of essays, editorial board members, and editors are recognized for their hard work and dedication. The editors would like to extend our endless gratitude to all involved, as we are not able to do so in person. Thank you to the authors for their understanding in delays of communication, to the editorial board for their continued dedication during uncertain times, to Julia Grimm whose help in getting the journal published cannot be overstated, and especially to staff advisor Stephanie Patridge, whose determination to get this year's journal completed was the driving force behind the hard work by all who were involved. We deeply regret that we cannot recognize the hard work of you all in person, but are incredibly grateful for your dedication through unprecedented times.

Aegis is proud to belong to a strong scholarly community of students and faculty within the humanities at Otterbein University. The reviews and essays included within *Aegis* speak to Otterbein's commitment to that community. We hope that our readers find engaging, stimulating, and thought-provoking work throughout this year's edition.

Sean Horn & Selena LaBair

Aegis Editorial Board 2020

Sean Horn (head editor) is a senior History and AYA Integrated Social Studies major. This is his second year as a member of Aegis and his first as co-head-editor. His favorite areas of study are American social and political history, especially post-Civil War, and modern European history. Upon graduation, Sean plans to teach high school social studies. He enjoys music, movies, and hiking, and would love to spend his summers off as a teacher touring all of the National Parks. He would like to send gratitude to his family for their support, as well as all of his professors and friends at Otterbein for an incredible four years.

Selena LaBair (head editor) is a fourth year Sociology and Criminology double major with minors in Philosophy and Psychology. She is Vice President of the Otterbein University Student Government and President of the Otterbein Collegiate Chapter of Women for Economic and Leadership Development (WELD). This is her second year as part of the Aegis team and her first year as co-head-editor. Selena greatly enjoys being a part of Aegis as she is inspired by student's passion for the humanities despite the increasingly disruptive noise made to discredit its worth. She will be attending law school in the fall.

Lucy Clark is a sophomore Creative Writing student with a minor in Film Studies. She is also the Fiction Editor and a staff member of Quiz & Quill. After graduation, she plans to pursue a career in the film industry, primarily relying on her writing background to help her pursue screenwriting.

Andrea De La Rosa is a senior undergraduate English Literary Studies major with minors in Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies and creative writing. As well as being a seasoned member on the Aegis Editorial Board, Andrea currently serves as a Resident Assistant in Mayne Hall for first year students. In her free time Andrea enjoys talking about astrology, playing animal crossing, and silent reading with Susan.

Kat Gibson is a sophomore English Literary Studies and History double major with a minor in French and Francophone Studies. She most enjoys classic novels and is interested in the ways that history and literature inform each other. After graduating, she plans to attend graduate school.

Miranda Hilt is a second year English Literary Studies and Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies double major with a Biology minor. She is also a member of Tri Iota and Sigma Tau Delta honorary societies. This is her first year as a member of the Aegis Editorial Board.

Riley Hysell is a sophomore Literary Studies and AYA Integrated Language Arts major. This is his first year on the Aegis editorial board, and he looks forward to continuing to help in the creation of the journal. He hopes readers enjoy the journal and take the chance to immerse themselves in the thoughts of their fellow students.

Juli Lindenmayer is a junior at Otterbein University with majors in English Literary Studies and Womens Gender and Sexuality Studies, and a minor in Film Studies. She is thankful that she has been able to participate in Aegis for another year. She loves reading these works because the journal gives her a place to learn a little bit about subjects that she has not had the chance to explore. She hopes you find something interesting in these essays.

Safiya Mohamed is a sophomore English Literary Studies major and Race & Ethnic Studies minor. She has enjoyed her time in Aegis this year and is proud to be part of a journal that honors the work of students so much. Though this has been an unprecedented school year, she's thankful for the Aegis team's dedication to finishing strong.

Kimberly Satterfield is a sophomore English major with a double minor in journalism and creative writing. This is her first year serving on the Aegis editorial board. She enjoys reading, writing, and spending time with her family. When she graduates from Otterbein in 2022, she plans to pursue a career in law.

Josh Wolf is a senior History major with a focus in American History, and with a minor in Political Science. He thinks that it is important for college students to understand historical morals and values so that the past does not repeat itself again.

Erin Van Gilder is a junior History and Global Studies major. This is her first year on the Aegis editorial board. She enjoys colonial history and its translation into modern post-colonial international relations. After graduating in the spring of 2021, she hopes to continue her studies in graduate school.

How the Harlem Hellfighters Would be Remembered as America's Most Celebrated African American Military Unit

By Josh Wolf

On April 2nd, 1917, Democratic President Woodrow Wilson signed a pact in a joint session with Congress by which the United States of America would enter World War I on the side of the Allied Forces in their onerous struggle against the aggressive Central Powers. More than two million young men across the nation valiantly answered the call to take up arms and serve their nation overseas.¹ Among those young men were hundreds of African Americans who were eager to prove themselves in the then predominantly white military. A significant number of these perennially unsung heroes would come from Harlem, New York- the largest black community in all of America.² Although black servicemen had participated in earlier American conflicts, such as the Civil War, the United States Army viewed them as ignominious. One unit, known as the 369th Colored Infantry, was no exception. Organized on June 2nd, 1913 by the New York National Guard at the U.S. Army Reserve Center on Long Island under Colonel William Haywood, they would soon gain fame for being the first

all African American unit to serve with the American Expeditionary Forces towards the end of World War I.³ To the French Army for which they were assigned to, they were called “Men of Bronze” out of high courtesy. But to their German foes, they would become known as the “Hellfighters” for their daring competency on the front line.⁴ The Harlem Hellfighters would become the most celebrated African American military in United States history for their devoted service to the French Army, aggressive fighting skills, and the introduction of jazz music to Europe.

Although the United States Army permitted hundreds of young black men to sign up for military service, they were prohibited from serving alongside their fellow white soldiers. They were also required to be commanded by white officers only. To add insult to injury, most divisions of the United States Army, such as the Marines and Coast Guard, closed their doors to African American soldiers, while others, mainly the Navy, were only willing to take a small number.⁵ Moreover, the white soldiers who made up the

Rainbow Division of the New York National Guard were invited to a grand parade in the streets of New York City shortly before their deployment to France in late 1917. Sadly, the 369th Infantry was not allowed to attend the march because, as their commanding officer was told, "...black was not a color of the rainbow." Unsurprisingly, the United States Army had never considered this regiment worthy of being deployed for battle duties. Upon their arrival in France, the African American military unit was given the non-combat tasks of digging trenches, unloading ships, cleaning out latrines, guarding defense equipment, and laying out railway tracks along the Western European frontier.⁶

"They had no place to put the regiment," said infantry Captain Hamilton Fish,... "They weren't going to put us in a white division, not in 1917, anyway; so our troops were sent in to the supply and services as laborers to lay railroad tracks. This naturally upset our men tremendously."⁷

While they carried out these often harsh labor duties, the African American regiment would reluctantly watch as the white soldiers marched right beside them off to serve a nation that they all called home.

Sometime later, U.S. General John J. Pershing decided to assimilate the 369th Infantry with the white soldiers of the New York National Guard Rainbow Division to serve in the front line. Unfortunately, his plan backfired when many white soldiers and even white officers in his own cabinet boldly voiced their disdain at the then outrageous idea of black troops serving next to fellow soldiers in a predominantly white army.⁸ Thus, as was the case with other African American units, he assigned them to two

divisions of the French Army on April 8th, 1918.⁹ Rather interestingly, the French Army did not segregate the 369th Infantry or treat them as harshly as they had been in the U.S. Army. They actually welcomed the African American unit with open arms especially as they had become short of troops.¹⁰ They also exchanged their weapons, equipment and clothing articles, including now notable military items such as the Berthier Rifle and Adrian Helmet, with the Harlem Hellfighters for any American equivalents.¹¹ By virtue of the French soldiers' hospitality, the African American soldiers formed permanent bonds of friendship with the French Army, something many of them would cherish for the rest of their lives.

By the time the 369th made its way into the trenches, each member of the regiment was paired off with a French counterpart – a stab at forced harmony that would have been unthinkable in the American military at the time. The pairs then trained intensely for three weeks, near the front and amid sporadic attacks by German aircraft and artillery.¹²

The Harlem Hellfighters received their knowledge of war conduct and fighting tactics from their intimate French allies, something they never received under the American Army.

Despite no longer being under the U.S. Army's jurisdiction, the Harlem Hellfighters continued to face racial discrimination from their estranged American comrades, who attempted to convince the French soldiers that they were useless. To make matters worse, most members of the American Expeditionary Force even delivered a pamphlet known as "Secret Information Concerning Black American Troops," (SICBAT) to the

French officers in which they warned the latter of the black soldiers' immortality.¹³ SICBAT stated that, if the French generals were to command black troops and live beside them, then they needed to understand the status of these people in the United States. It demanded that the French Army should cease their nonpartisan treatment of African American soldiers since they were "a depraved race of people who were prone to acts of rape and theft by most Americans."¹⁴

The American attitude upon the Negro question may seem a matter for discussion to many French minds. The pamphlet stated that the increasing number of Negroes in the United States (about 15,000,000) would create for the white race in the Republic a menace of degeneracy were it not that an impassable gulf has been made between them. The pamphlet continues to state that although a citizen of the United States, the black man is regarded by the white American as an inferior being with whom relations of business or service only are possible. The black is constantly being censured for his want of intelligence and discretion, his lack of civic and professional conscience and for his tendency toward undue familiarity.¹⁵

After SICBAT was passed, the second dean of the Tuskegee Institute, a man named Robert Russa Moton, travelled to France to investigate the behavior of black soldiers. He was surprised when he discovered that not one of the black soldiers was causing any strife like the American Expeditionary Forces had claimed.¹⁶ It was then clear the organization had attempted to dismantle the close bond between the 369th Infantry and their French allies. In spite of SICBAT, the French Army continued to treat the all black unit in the same fair manner as they treated

“

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”

them initially.

The Harlem Hellfighters were now finally able to perform their combative duties in the trenches against the truculent German forces. They would soon participate in major battles that preceded the end of World War I, such as Belleau Wood and Chateau-Thierry.¹⁷ But the most significant conflict their members would engage in occurred on May 15th, 1918 in Northeastern France. Two young privates, Henry Johnson and Needham Roberts, were both assigned to carrying out guard duty in a trench near the Argonne Forest at night. At around 2 a.m., a sniper shot was fired at them, which was followed by the sound of barbed wire being clipped from the other side. Without warning, out of the thick smog, charged an armed patrol of around twenty four German soldiers. Substantially outnumbered, the two men fired their rifles and launched hand

grenades. Johnson then ordered Roberts to climb out of the trench on the back end and alert their sleeping French comrades. Roberts bravely consented while Johnson threw another hand grenade. In retaliation, the Germans threw several grenades and a volley of gunfire. Roberts turned back to help Johnson but was injured by a retaliatory hand grenade thrown by a German soldier. "Roberts, badly hurt and unable to rise, propped himself against the door of the dugout and threw grenades out into the darkness."¹⁸ Overcome with a fiery anger that burned for his injured friend, Johnson continued to fire his rifle into the darkness, killing at least three Germans and wounding two more as they approached him. He soon ran out of grenades and took several bullets to the chest plate.

It was not long before Johnson found that the enemy forces had managed to infiltrate the two men's trench and pile themselves on top of his body in their desperate plight to kill him. By some means, he managed to swiftly push them all off at once. After some time, Johnson's French Berthier rifle unexpectedly jammed because he had tried loading it with American bullets. Suddenly, he received a massive blow to the head from one of the German soldiers' rifles, nearly knocking him unconscious. Just as it seemed that all hope was now lost, he then noticed that three of the German soldiers were mercilessly dragging Roberts as their prisoner of war. The last thing they expected was when Johnson almost instantaneously leaped onto them and bashed their waists with the back of his gun like it was a club until the butt cracked in half. He then pulled out a long bolo knife and slashed the Germans with it before they could even get a

chance to fire their Gewehr 98 rifles at him. "Each slash meant something, believe me," [he] later said. "I wasn't doing any exercises, let me tell you..." "There wasn't anything so fine about it..." "Just fought for my life. A rabbit would have done that."¹⁹ Now unconditionally defeated, badly lacerated and scared for their lives, the remaining German soldiers immediately retreated to their positions higher up in the mountains. When the French Army and other 369th Infantry members showed up, dawn was already breaking upon them, and Johnson slowly passed out after having received twenty one critical wounds. He had managed to kill four German soldiers and wound more than twenty two others.²⁰ The grisly ordeal he had just endured would later become known as "The Battle of Henry Johnson" for his courageous efforts to prevent the Germans from not only storming past the French lines and to thwart their efforts to take his friend, Roberts, as prisoner.²¹ From then on, Johnson would also be known as "Black Death" for his combat duties.²²

For their single-handed performance and display of proficient fighting techniques, Johnson and Roberts were both given a grand ceremony that was attended not only by their fellow black army comrades but all other French troops stationed within the Argonne Forest region in which they were each awarded the Croix de Guerre, France's highest medal for valor. It should be noted that they were also the first American soldiers altogether to receive such a prominent decoration.²³ The French Army commended the ceremony in a letter to the U.S. War Department that "This little combat does honor to all Americans!"²⁴ Nonetheless, most U.S. officers openly expressed

their disgust at the French Army for giving a third- class citizenry such a high honor that was regarded as traditional for white people only. They even went as far as telling their French allies that the African American unit was still an unavailing lot despite their recent actions, and that they should not be treated with the same esteem as white soldiers. But Pershing, on the other hand, expressed his pleasure in a communique that he promulgated four days later after the “Battle of Henry Johnson” had taken place.

“Section B- Reports in hand show a notable instance of bravery and devotion shown by two soldiers of an American colored regiment operating in a French sector... “Both men fought bravely in hand- to- hand encounters, one resorting to the use of a bolo knife after his rifle jammed and further fighting with bayonet and butt became impossible... “Attention is drawn to the fact that the two colored sentries were first attacked after receiving wounds and despite the use of grenades by a superior force.”²⁵

While Pershing adhered to the racial indoctrination imposed onto the American Army by President Wilson, at the same time, he held an admiration for them. Before his military career, Pershing educated African Americans at the Prairie Mound School in Missouri. During his fourth year at West Point in 1885, he was promoted to the rank of first lieutenant and became a leading white officer who commanded Buffalo Soldiers in the Tenth Cavalry during the Indian Wars. It was here that his most famous nickname, “Black Jack,” originated from his fellow peers as an insult for commanding only African American troops. Pershing would also gain fame for leading the 10th Cavalry Buffalo Soldiers in the charge up San Juan

Hill on July 1st, 1898 during the Spanish- American War. Overall, he was one of the few American soldiers who acknowledged the success of African American troops on the Western Front.²⁶

The Harlem Hellfighters continued their devoted service to the French Army for the remainder of the war. Since they had already gained a reputation for their fierce determination and aggressive fighting tactics to their now anguished German enemies, the latter often shrieked “Es sind die Männer aus der Hölle!” (It is the Men from Hell!), as they met through hand- to- hand combat on the Western Frontline.²⁷ While the phrase was originally concocted as a vehement taunt, it actually struck a vibrant chord with the black troops as they knew they were fighting to preserve democracy, something that many internationalists at the time saw as suitable for only white people. This was where the title, “Harlem Hellfighters,” would materialize as the company’s main designation. By September 26th, 1918, the Harlem Hellfighters would find themselves assisting not only the French Army, but also their estranged white American comrades in securing a full- blown victory during the Meuse- Argonne Offensive. They managed to capture a local town that had been held by the Imperial German Army since the beginning of the war that same day. Although the fighting was intense, they succeeded in reducing seven hundred German soldiers to one hundred and fifty. Eventually, on September 30th, they seized a key railroad junction. After having suffered eight hundred and fifty casualties themselves, the French decided to relieve them from the Front Lines later that night.²⁸ Throughout October, the Harlem Hellfighters would take up arms

once again as the German Army was slowly retreating away from the French lines. In the process, they became the first Allied unit to reach the Rhine River on November 17th, 1918.²⁹ Lieutenant James Reese Europe expressed this joyous moment for his regiment in a letter that he had written to his sister, Mary, on Thanksgiving Day.

I think I have told you that we are now guarding the Rhine. I have so much to give thanks for this time for I have been through the valley and shadows of death so often and still I am unscathed... I am so tired of army life now that I do not know what to do... Now I must close. I've so many things to do.³⁰

When they dipped their fingers into the Rhine River for the first time, the Harlem Hellfighters realized that they were not only the first Allied unit to reach this large waterway, but also the first unit to spend the longest amount of time on the frontlines. They spent a total of about one- hundred- and- ninety- one days on the Western Front without ever losing a foot of ground or taking a German soldier prisoner.³¹ They also suffered the largest number of casualties out of all the American regiments to serve in World War I (more than 1,400 soldiers) as a result.³² While the Harlem Hellfighters eventually returned to a life of persistent racial partisanship in the United States, they left behind an everlasting legacy of military valor in the European continent.

Over the past century, jazz has become an integral component in many European

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cultures, especially in French society, as a way of expressing their artistic feelings while conveying a message to their audiences. What many people today do not seem to understand is that jazz was first introduced to Europe towards the end of World War I with the arrival of African American troops. Since the early 1890s, jazz music had emerged out of the old ragtime culture that African American residents in major cities like Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York City pursued after a long day of work in America's burgeoning proletarian sectors, and would eventually play an exceptional role in the struggle for racial equality. Jazz caused a euphonious sensation wherever it was played, not only in America, but also in France.³³ In matter of fact, before their deployment to France, Colonel Haywood asked Lieutenant Europe to organize a band for the 369th Infantry so that its members would be mitigated from the ambience of

homesickness. Europe was a renowned jazz composer, and he garnered bandmates from all over the United States of America, even as far out as Puerto Rico.³⁴ Originally from Mobile, Alabama, he moved to New York City in 1905 where he played piano in local bars to make an honest living. It was also here where he first met the Bob Cole/ Johnson Brothers Team along with the Williams and Walker Company, both of which were prominent African American comedy and musical organizations based in New York.³⁵ By 1906, he began writing his own songs, and some of these compositions, most notably "Gay Lunetta," made their way into the theater of Cole and Johnson's Shoe- Fly Regiment. Four years later, in 1910, with support from both the Bob Cole/ Johnson Brothers Team and Williams and Walker Company, Europe managed to organize the Clef Club and became its first president. Under Europe, the Clef Club arranged its own chorus and orchestra, and served as a contracting agency for African American musicians.³⁶ The Clef Club would soon rise to commercial success when, on May 2nd, 1912, it became the first African American jazz orchestra to perform at Carnegie Hall.

The concert was a tremendous success. The 125- man orchestra included a large contingent of banjos and mandolins and presented music by exclusively black composers. By this time, Europe believed that although black musicians respected white music of quality, they did not need to play or imitate it. Instead they had their own music to play which people of all races would want to hear.³⁷

Europe became a leading figure in the jazz movement that defined African American culture during the early 20th century,

even after he had left the Clef Club in 1913. When the United States declared war on the Central Powers in 1917, he would carry not only his fighting spirit, but also his musical talent aboard the naval ship bound for France.

Lieutenant Europe would become the 369th Infantry's main composer, and led this company throughout most of the orchestras they conducted while serving in France during the closing days of World War I. Jazz was not a very well- known form of music in the world at this time, not even among the white American citizenry.³⁸ However, when the Harlem Hellfighters played this musical genre in Europe for the first time, it immediately caught the attention of French citizens who hailed this undervalued American military unit for their valor and bravery. Jazz quickly became popular among the French Army during the remaining days of World War I as a way to boost morale among the Triple Entente. Even the French officers became fond of the melody that jazz music produced, and further cited this appraisal in their evaluation of the Harlem Hellfighters. General Philippe Pétain himself was later said by the officials who served in his cabinet that he enjoyed listening to Europe as the latter conducted jazz orchestras on the Western Front, and would often sit down to watch several black soldiers perform dance stunts in order to keep up with the spiritual strains.³⁹ It is significant to note that the term "jazz" was originally conceived by journalists who worked for various American news agencies, such as The New York Age, who sought to commemorate this mellifluous revolution on the European continent during such a dark and bloody time in world history. Lieuten-

ant Europe later noted in his journal that the 369th Infantry had established an identity for African American culture based not only on military valor but also musical talent.

“I have come from France more firmly convinced than ever that Negroes should write Negro music. We have our own racial feeling and if we try to copy whites we will make bad copies,” writes Lieutenant Europe. “We won France by playing music which was ours and not a pale imitation of others, and if we are to develop in America we must develop along our own lines.”⁴⁰

Lieutenant Europe felt that musical talent was important for all African American regiments like the Harlem Hellfighters to be recognized for their services on the Western Frontline.

To this very day, jazz still remains a popular form of entertainment, not only in America but also in certain areas of Europe, most notably France, due to the services of African American troops like the 369th Infantry in pushing back the truculent Central Powers in 1918.

In conclusion, the Harlem Hellfighters would become the most celebrated African American military unit in United States history for their devoted service and close bonds with the French Army, their aggressive fighting skills during battles, and the introduction of jazz music to Europe. Not

only did they succeed in helping the Triple Entente to impede the Central Powers from reaching the rest of Europe, but also to leave an infinite endowment of military expertise, patriotism, musical talent, and devotion to the sustainment of democratic rule throughout the global community. When the 369th Infantry Regiment finally returned home to America in early 1919, they were given a hero’s welcome by the inhabitants of New

York City, both black and white. On February 17th, 1919, its members would be astonished with the request for them to participate in a parade through Fifth Avenue that celebrated America’s victory in the First World War. Once the parade ended, they were even invited to attend a banquet dinner hosted by the New York National

“

**the 369th Infantry
had established an
identity for African
American culture
based not only on
military valor but also
musical talent**

”

Guard in the Grand Hall of New York City where they sat and dined with other black soldiers.⁴¹ Despite the joyous occasion, their accomplishments in Europe did not help to bring an end to racial discrimination in American society. As a matter of fact, the 369th Infantry found themselves faced with the same partisanship that had persisted prior to their departure for France. To make matters worse, they were not even given the same attention by the local news press that the white soldiers received, which meant that they went unrecognized for many decades.

It was not until towards the end of the 20th century when most of the 369th Infantry's members were finally awarded medals for their service and bravery during World War I. Henry Johnson received the Purple Heart medal in 1996 and eventually the Distinguished Service Cross in 2015, long after he previously had passed away in 1929.⁴² Although their devoted services in the U.S. Army throughout the final days of World War I did not put an immediate end to racial partisanship, at the same time, the Harlem Hellfighters' actions would inspire future generations of young African Americans to enlist and fight in other major wars such as World War II and the Vietnam War.

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War Requiem

An Outcry for Peace and Unity

By Anna Ehret

Chimes echoing like church bells are followed by solemn, hushed voices singing the words “requiem aeterna,” meaning eternal rest. The immediate emotions provoked by the *War Requiem*, composed by Benjamin Britten, are despair, anguish, and grief. Benjamin Britten experienced the tragedy and horrific nature of the World Wars and composed this requiem in 1961. Through this composition he wanted to remember those who died, depict the terrors and inhumanity of war, warn future generations of the consequences of war, and plead for reconciliation and peace in the world. These themes are represented through intentional grouping of ensembles, combining the standard requiem liturgy with Wilfred Owen’s symbolic anti-war poetry to create irony, and through Britten’s choice of pitch collection, especially the use of the tritone interval.

Benjamin Britten was born on in Lowestoft, England on November 22, 1913, the feast day of St. Cecelia, the patron saint of music. Britten expressed interest in music at an early age and started composing at age six. At just eleven years old, he was noticed by Frank Bridge, a composer who was interested in experimental styles. Bridge was impressed by Britten and took him in as

a private student, which is where Britten’s compositional and musical foundations stem from. In 1930 he attended the Royal Conservatory of Music to study composition and piano but was disappointed by his education, stating that he did not learn a lot. Britten traveled to America in 1939 and settled in Long Island, New York. During his time in America, Britten grew as a composer and composed many of his most famous works, including his first opera *Peter Grimes*. Britten’s compositions spanned many genres, such as opera, ballet, orchestral, solo instrument and orchestra, voice and orchestra, chorus and orchestra, piano, instrumental, vocal, and choral. One of his most noteworthy compositions is the *Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra*, which was written to be used in a short, educational video about the different orchestral instruments. Britten composed steadily throughout his lifetime until his death on December 4, 1976. He was highly regarded and received many awards for his works.¹

Britten was asked to compose the *War Requiem* for the celebration of the reconstructed St. Michael’s Cathedral in Coventry, England which was bombed during the Battle of Britain in World War II. The

ceremony for the completion of the cathedral was held on May 30, 1962 where the requiem was first performed. Britten's hope was to convey the themes of anti-violence, peace, and unity through the composition. Referring to the performance of the requiem at the ceremony, Peter Evans commented, "It represented not only an effort to mark worthily a triumphant recovery from the ashes of war, but also a conscious resolve on the composer's part to put the experience of his entire creative activity to that date at the service of a passionate denunciation of the bestial wickedness by which man is made to take up arms against his fellow."²

As the soloists for his requiem, Britten chose personal friends, all of whom came from countries which were majorly impacted by the physical, emotional, and societal destruction of war. The tenor was his partner and musical associate, Peter Pears of England, the baritone was Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau of Germany, and the soprano solo was written for Galina Vishnevskaya of Russia, the wife of Britten's cellist colleague Mstislav Rostropovich. Hoping to express his anti-war beliefs through this piece, Britten dedicated it to four of his friends who were fallen soldiers of war.³ While he was composing the *War Requiem*, the Cold War was still in full force. In a letter to Fischer-Dieskau, Britten wrote, "I am writing what I think will be one of my most important works," knowing that he was being asked to help the world heal. The need for peace in the world was urgently necessary and humanity needed to open its eyes to the harsh reality of the state of the world.

The *War Requiem* was commissioned specifically for the reconstruction of the Coventry Cathedral which was bombed

in the Battle of Britain during World War II. The Battle of Britain was an air battle between Britain and Germany during the second World War in the summer and fall of 1940. Hitler wanted to invade Great Britain because they were the last enemy of Germany, but knew that he must first destroy Britain's air force in order to successfully invade. Despite the devastations brought forth by the bombings, Britain's Royal Armed Forces defeated Germany and kept them from invading their country. All of Coventry was destroyed, including the cathedral which had been built between the 14th and 15th century. Architects immediately began plans for reconstruction; the ruins of the west tower that remained were built into the new cathedral. Mary Houlgate noted, "Hate had destroyed their old cathedral. Out of the new cathedral would come forgiveness and love."⁴

The theme of Britten's *War Requiem* perfectly fits with the purpose and message of the reconstruction. Britten wrote,

Coventry Cathedral, like so many wonderful buildings in Europe, was destroyed in the last war. It has now been rebuilt in a remarkable fashion, and for the consecration of the new building they are holding a big Festival at the end of May and beginning of June next year. I have been asked to write a new work for what is to us all a most significant occasion.⁵

The unique composition of the requiem effectively communicates these themes with the audience.

Britten's *War Requiem* is a massive work which is written for chamber orchestra, full orchestra, full choir, boys choir,

three soloists, and organ. The score calls for eleven woodwinds, fourteen brass instruments, piano, organ, timpani, a plethora of percussion instruments, and strings. The incredible amount of musicians that this piece calls for creates a power and intensity that helps drive the emotion. Britten carefully pairs Wilfred Owen's anti-war poetry with Latin Mass text traditionally used in requiems in order to strengthen the message he portrays. The order of the Latin Mass parts are "Requiem Aeternem," "Dies Irae," "Offertorium," "Sanctus," "Angus Dei," and "Liber Me." These six Mass parts are interspersed with nine poems by Wilfred Owen that are performed by soloists or the chorus to emphasize or comment on the Latin text.

Wilfred Owen died as a soldier in World War I on November 4, 1918. He is best known for his anti-war poetry which became more recognized due to *War Requiem*. During the war, Owen connected with Siegfried Sassoon, a fellow pacifist soldier. Sassoon was also a poet and he encouraged Owen to pursue his poetry; he even helped him publish some of his earliest poems. Wilfred Owen found his voice through poetry, writing, "I am not concerned with Poetry. My subject is War, and the pity of War. The Poetry is in the pity. Yet these elegies are to this generation in no sense conciliatory. They may be to the next. All a poet can do today is warn. That is why the true Poets must be truthful."⁶ As a soldier himself, the poems he wrote were full of truth and experience. They are filled with sorrowful, sickening details, inhumane realities of war, and even biblical stories and metaphors. The inclusion of Owen's poetry in *War Requiem* created symbolism, irony, and new perspectives on the politics and reality of war.

To heighten the drama and symbolism of the piece, Britten divided the musicians into three groups which were located in different areas of the church. Each ensemble represented a different perspective and helped develop the overall message of the piece. The three spatially distinct ensembles move most often on separate planes. The first group is the full adult choir, main orchestra, and soprano soloist who represent the mingled mourning, supplication, and remorseful apprehension of humanity. They sing the traditional Latin requiem text to express their grief. The second group are the two male soloists and chamber orchestra who represent the passionate outcry of the doomed soldiers of war. They express their point of view in a personal way through Owen's poetry that allows them to tell the story. The last group is the boys choir and organ which present the emotionless calm of liturgy that points beyond death; they are placed farther away from the other groups to represent a heavenly or angelic perspective.⁷ The timbre of the boys choir is lighter and has a purer quality which contrasts the full, powerful sound of the adult chorus. Although the boys choir sings the Latin requiem text like the chorus, they often begin the prayers. As seen in example one, the boys sing "*Domine Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae, libera animas omnium fidelium defunctorum de poenis inferni, et de profundo lacu: libera eas de ore leonis, ne absorbeat eas tartarus, ne cadant in obscurum.*" The repeating unison text of "*Domine Jesu Christe*" in the distance is Britten's way of creating an angelic sound of sending prayers up to heaven. The homophonic texture of the boys choir and the organ feels soothing, creating a sharp contrast to the other parts of the piece.



Example 1: The boys choir representing angels from heaven with their distant, unison repetition of "Domine Jesu Christe" on D sharp and C sharp.⁸

Immediately after the boys sing their prayer, the texture changes and the full chorus continues the prayer. Because the chorus represents humanity, their prayer is sincere but tainted with tension and guilt which is represented by dissonance and forceful, polyphonic orchestration. Example two depicts the dissonance of sopranos and tenors on D sharp and altos and basses on C sharp as well as the aggressive orchestration.



Example 2: Showing dissonant and aggressive orchestration and dissonant phrase of the chorus represents the underlying tension and turmoil of humanity. i.e. bass and alto C sharp against tenor and soprano D sharp and clashing chords in orchestration.⁹

Wilfred Owen's poetry is brought to life though the male soloists representing the fallen soldiers of war. Their prominent voices tell the harsh reality of war from first-hand experience. Example three shows the duet between the tenor and bass soloists, one of nine poems included in the piece. They sing,

Out there, we've walked quite friendly up to Death: Sat down and eaten with him, cool and bland, - Pardoned his spilling mess-tins in our hand. We've sniffed the green thick odor of his breath, - Our eyes wept, but our courage didn't writhe. He's spat at us with bullets and he's coughed Shrapnel. We chorused when he sang aloft; We whistled while he shaved us with his scythe. Oh, Death was never enemy of ours!¹⁰



Example 3: Wilfred Owen's poem, "The Next War," sung as a duet between the tenor and baritone soloist who represent the soldiers of the wars.¹¹

The men tell of their close encounters with death and evil throughout their journey and how they maintained their courage despite the horror of war. These soldiers were fearless because they knew they were fighting to protect their country. Their first person perspective is very different from the other groups which are responsible for the

liturgical aspect. The intentional grouping of ensembles was a very creative method that Britten used to communicate his message.

Combining liturgical text with Owen's poetry was a way for Britten to create a bold statement. Britten was not known for writing religious music, however, he knew that combining liturgical text with poetry would be the best method to honor the war victims and convey his message. One way he chose to represent this unity was by composing this work for specific soloists. Britten wrote,

I am interspersing the Latin text with many poems of a great English poet, Wilfred Owen, who was killed in the First World War. These magnificent poems, full of hate and destruction, are a kind of commentary on the Mass; they are, of course, English. These poems will be set for tenor and baritone, with an accompaniment of chamber orchestra, placed in the middle of the other forces. They will need singing with the utmost beauty, intensity, and sincerity.¹²

The poems that Britten sets against this liturgy are intensely individual, personal, and firmly rooted in the cruel experience of early 20th-century warfare. The content of the text is comforting at some times, but at others inappropriate or out of touch.¹³ Britten strategically places the nine poems where they will provide the most effective, ironic commentary. Instantly following the first prayer for the dead, "Requiem Aeternam," the blunt tenor solo proclaims the cruel first line of Owen's *Anthem for Doomed Youth*. The chorus had previously asked that the Lord grant the dead eternal rest when the tenor declares, "What passing

bells for these who die as cattle? Only the monstrous anger of the guns. Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle Can patter out their hasty orisons- No mockeries for them from prayers or bells." Placing this poem directly after the prayer for eternal rest is ironic because the poem's message is that the soldiers are being killed inhumanely and their fellow soldiers cannot afford to stop for them. The sound of firing bullets are their funeral bells and formal prayers and church bells are not heard. Even the tempo markings align with the juxtaposition of the text. Pictured in example four is the beginning of the "Requiem Aeternam" which is marked slow and solemn and then the beginning of the tenor solo which is marked very quick and agitated.



Example 4: The beginning of the "Requiem Aeternam" is marked slow and solemn while the tenor solo in the same movement is marked quick and agitated. The contrasting tempo markings emphasize the irony of the two separate texts.¹⁴

One of the most shocking contradictions between the liturgical text and poetry is in the "Offertorium." After the chorus sings "But let the holy standard bearer Michael lead them into the holy light as Thou didst promise Abraham and his seed," Britten inputs Owen's *Parable of the Old*

Men and the Young sung as a duet by the tenor and baritone. The poem is based on the biblical parable of Abraham and his son but Owen chose to reverse the ending. In the parable, God is testing Abraham; he asks Abraham to go to a specific region and sacrifice his first born son, Isaac. Abraham obeys God's orders and prepares to give up his son as an offering. The ending of the original parable says,

But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied. "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son." Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. Genesis 22:1-18.

Owen's version of the parable ends with Abraham receiving the ram that God has sent him but choosing to sacrifice his son anyway. Owen writes, "Offer the Ram of Pride instead of him. But the old man would not so, but slew his son, - And half the seed of Europe, one by one." Isaac's death symbolizes those who lost their lives due to war. "Half the seed of Europe, one by one," signifies the incredible loss of life in Europe due to the consequence of humanity's participation in the sinful act of war. Example five depicts the overlay of the tenor and baritone singing "one by one" while the boys choir immediately starts singing "Quam olim Abraham promissisti et semini ejus."

The overlap of text denotes the igno-

This musical score snippet shows the vocal parts for the tenor and baritone, along with a boys' choir. The tenor and baritone parts are written in a way that they overlap, with the tenor part starting slightly earlier than the baritone part. The boys' choir part is written below the vocal parts and starts at the same time as the baritone part. The lyrics "one by one" are written under the vocal parts, and "Quam olim Abraham promissisti et semini ejus" is written under the boys' choir part.

Example 5: The overlapping of the boys choir on top of the tenor and baritone who are still singing "one by one" to symbolize the multitude of people who were killed by war.¹⁵

rance of the world and the broken promise; It is as if the boys choir is ignoring the duet that is happening and singing over it. The tenor and baritone alternate singing the last words of the poem as if fragmented like the broken promise. Likewise, the phrase "*Quam olim Abrahæ promissisti*" is composed in a fugal style throughout the movement. The motivic phrase is being passed between voice parts to embody the brokenness of the promise as seen in example six.¹⁶

This musical score snippet shows a fugal style for the chorus singing the text "Quam olim Abrahæ". The score is written for a choir, with multiple parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) shown. The fugal style is evident as the same melodic phrase is passed between the different voice parts in a staggered fashion. The lyrics "Quam olim Abrahæ" are written under the vocal parts.

Example 6: The chorus sings the text "*Quam olim Abrahæ*" in a fugal style to represent the broken promise.¹⁷

Creatively weaving the poetry in with the liturgical text was one way that Britten chose to convey his message, evoke certain emotions, and create irony. The other significant way he did this was through his use of dissonance, chromaticism, and the tritone interval. He pairs text and music in a way that is contradictory of what one would expect. Britten uses nontraditional word painting to represent the underlying connotation.

Introducing the *War Requiem* are the chimes followed by the distant sounding soprano and tenor voices of the chorus. The first movement is the “Requiem Aeternam,” which is the prayer, “Lord, grant them eternal rest; and let the perpetual light shine upon them.” This rather comforting message is accompanied by a very unpleasant sound that contradicts the hopeful text. Though the text is a prayer for peace and rest for the dead, Britten composes the music to sound completely unrestful by using a tritone interval throughout. The sopranos and tenors pass the text back and forth on the single pitch of F sharp and the altos and basses sing the same thing as the sopranos and tenors immediately after them on C sharp. Britten does this to establish the tritone interval right away. The unsettling feeling increases with the building intensity, increasing dynamics, and more prominent dissonance. All of these elements lead up to the high point where the chorus sings “et lux perpetua.” At this point, the percussion makes a booming entrance and the text descends through the chorus on the pitches F sharp and C. The chimes powerfully resonate, emphasizing the tritone creating the overall emotion of distress. This climactic moment is shown in example seven which

shows the chorus singing “et lux perpetua” on pitches F sharp and C, the forte timpani entrance, and the increasing dynamics and intensity of the orchestration.

The “Requiem Aeternam” progresses



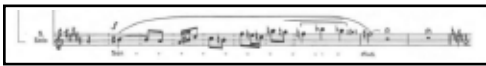
Example 7: The use of the descending tritone interval throughout the chorus along with the powerful entrances of the timpani, gong, and bells create the climax of the first movement.¹⁸

with the baritone solo followed by the chorus singing “Kyrie eleison” and a reprise of the beginning of the movement. In this reprise, the chimes reintroduce the unrestful tritone while the chorus, ever so quietly, provides a subtle resolution to the dissonance. Example eight shows the chorus’ *pianissississimo* dynamic marking as they resolve to an F major chord.



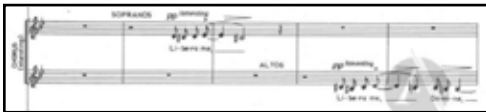
Example 8: The chorus resolves to an F major chord at the final measure of the War Requiem, creating a subtle resolution to the tension that persisted throughout the entire piece.⁹

Britten uses the tritone as a reoccurring theme throughout the *War Requiem*. He also uses intense dissonance and chromaticism to achieve the same feeling. The soprano solo at the beginning of “Sanctus” is an example of both harmonic dissonance and chromaticism. She sings a series of pitches that are chromatic and have large leaps as seen in example nine. The oscillating pitches almost seem to represent a warning siren.



Example 9: The chromatic, oscillating notes of soprano solo in “Sanctus” represent tension and sounds like a siren.²⁰

“Liber Me,” the final movement, is full of chromaticism to amplify the gut wrenching feeling of death and destruction. As seen in example ten, the chorus opens the final movement with narrow, chromatic, lamenting melodic phrases on the words “*Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna*” (“Liberate me, Lord, from death eternal.”)²¹ The emotion builds in harmonic dissonance and dynamics which demand powerful emotion.



Example 10: The narrow range and chromatic phrase of the chorus at the beginning of the final movement to build emotion.²²

Later in the movement, Britten uses chromaticism for specific word painting. The chaotic sound of the chorus fades and the two male soloists are free to sing their passages. The chromatic descending line while the tenor sings “down some profound

dull tunnel,” represents the actual descent down the tunnel but it also gives a feeling of contemplation and distaste. The soloists sing of being former enemies but they have now come together in agreement that war needs to end. They reflect on their encounters and how the world has been destroyed by the pity of war and people need to realize the awful things they let happen. The boys choir and soprano soloist enter at the end of the baritone’s passage with pleasant, sweeping harmonies that contrast the chromaticism. The pleasing sound is briefly interrupted by the tritone sounding in the chimes and boys choir as they begin another reprise of “Requiem Aeternam,” reminding humanity that there is a need for peace amidst the current unrest caused by war.

Benjamin Britten’s anti-war message is effectively conveyed through his compositional techniques throughout the *War Requiem*. The wickedness and inhumanity of war, the urgent need for peace and unity, and the efforts to warn future generations of the consequences of evil are the central themes of the piece and they are masterfully represented through the grouping of ensembles, blending of poetry and liturgical text, and pitch collection choices. This piece serves as a representation of the world’s state at the time. Britten recognized the dire need for change and hoped to make an impact through his music by playing with irony, contradicting ideas, and powerful musical expression. Art has the ability to make powerful statements and provoke change, which is exactly what Britten was able to do through his composition; the *War Requiem* cautioned people against the cruelties of war and ultimately allowed people to hear an outcry for world peace.

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The Virtues of Scrutiny and Tenacity

The Tools Needed for Effective Ethical Consumers

By Selena LaBair

Introduction

Consider the common practice of donating clothing to mass donation centers like Goodwill or The Salvation Army. Typically, one views this practice as noble, that you have saved your precious sweaters and 2006 rec-league basketball t-shirt from ending up in a landfill so they can instead be used by someone in need of clothing. There is little thought put into why you are donating your clothes in this way and there is little thought after your box of clothes has been dropped off at the donation center. If one were to pause and quickly research the effects of this type of donation, they could find that this practice is far less noble than it is often perceived.

As a result of this donation process, developing countries have experienced a flood of used clothing which has had drastic effects on their local economies. Countries such as Uganda, Kenya, and other small African countries have witnessed an almost complete decimation of their local textile industries as bend-over markets have replaced local merchant operations. Given the cheap price of used clothing—often purchased by

the pound from foreign governments and distributed to local secondary markets at cheap prices—locals more often opt to purchase this clothing rather than the textiles made from the local cotton or silk mills and designed by local tailors.

If a consumer were to be scrutinous of their donation practices by understanding the philanthropic efforts of what are often considered morally good organizations, one could have a better understanding of the effects of their actions as well as the organization's actions to make a more informed decision regarding what groups they seek to support. They could then decide to take up more sustainable practices such as repurposing their donations into kitchen rags, dog beds for local shelters, or mats for the homeless; all alternative consumption practices that yield more ethically conscious outcomes. This behavior takes tenacity through one's commitment to ethical consumerism as it is not easily done and takes retraining of one's assumptions about what is an ethical process.

The issues of clothing donation services can also be seen with other services or products such as those that claim to be

one-to-one or those that have a socially conscious mission without an environmentally informed agenda.¹ I will make the case that scrutiny and tenacity are virtues given that they encourage the necessary attitude for one to effectively manage the requirements of an ethical consumer. To be succinct, the scope of my argument is narrowed to understanding the effects of these virtues on ethical consumption. While there are other instances where implementations would be beneficial, I will spend my time focusing on these as consumption practices have historically had such a drastic effect on all the world's systems in almost an exclusively negative way.² Thus, my goal is to make the case that to be scrutinous and tenacious will allow one to effectively pursue ethical consumerism.

Defining a Virtue

In defining a virtue for my argument, I turn to Gambrel and Cafaro's eclectic and compounded description of a virtue as the base for my use of the term. There are eight necessary interrelated components to a virtue that work to support multiple conceptions of types of flourishing. This definition is a conglomerate of multiple amended philosophers' descriptions of a virtue as described in their work. A virtue favors (1) individual survival, (2) the continuance of the species, (3) pleasure and freedom from pain, (4) the good functioning of human communities and societies, and contributes to (5) human autonomy, (6) the acquisition of knowledge, (7) a meaningful life, and (8) to the preservation and/or promotion of other valuable ends beyond human flourishing (Gambrel and Cafaro 2009). These com-

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ponents ensure that for a quality to become a virtue, it is oriented around promoting an inclusive type of wellbeing. Gambrel and Cafaro adopted a reduced version of these eight requirements for the sake of brevity throughout their paper, for something to be virtuous it promotes both human (1-7) and nonhuman (8 which inherently ensures 1-7) flourishing given the facets mentioned (Gambrel and Cafaro 2009). I too will discuss this version throughout my essay.

Scrutiny and tenacity accomplish these requirements of a virtue as they favor the described outcomes above given the level of agency encouraged and the critical mindset needed to accomplish these goals. If these traits are adopted as virtues, they allow an individual to practice ethical consumption to their best ability given that they uphold these stipulations.

It should be noted here that the ethical consumerism I am referring to seeks to address two types of effects caused by unethical consumption as they are both caused and remedied by humans as illustrated by David Schwartz. These are direct abuses of people, resources, and non-human animals for the sake of profit via a direct action as well as those that result in indirect long-term, environmental harms (Schwartz 2017). I will not make the case that one is more important than the other or to explain how these types of harms should be considered important to humans but will instead refer to the eight tenants of a virtue to demonstrate that their effects violate these types of flourishing and thus must be addressed when one aims to become virtuous.

I will now articulate the traits of scrutiny and tenacity to then illustrate how they both demonstrate the means to achieve the favors of a virtue as discussed above.

Describing Scrutiny and Tenacity

Scrutiny is the ability of an individual to conduct research regarding the products they use by discovering the origins and effects of their products. This can be done through apps and websites that scan product barcodes to search the ethicality of said product in terms of animal testing, carbon emissions, fair trade, and others. This may seem like an exceptional amount of work for one individual to do for each product, which is exactly why one must also adopt a second virtue, tenacity.

Tenacity is the ability to maintain the path of ethical consumerism through continuous research of products one uses and purchases as well as maintaining these

practices in the face of inconvenience. While it may be relatively easy to be scrutinous of products to weed out which ones are unethical, continuously doing so and allocating the funds and time to pursue said products can prove exceptionally trying. Most consumer products are made with only convenience in mind, resulting in harmful production and or harmful effects by stunting at least some if not all of the aforementioned favors of a virtue. Examples of these are sweat shop factories, detritus carbon emissions, fast-fashion companies, and others.³ I will not take the time to demonstrate how these are harmful but will point to how they violate the necessary preferences of what is considered virtuous as described above as they do not promote both human and non-human flourishing. Continuing, to be tenacious ensures that one can resist the perceived inconveniences of these virtues and endure on their path towards encouraging common good.

Taken together, these traits advocate for the promotion of both human and non-human flourishing as they both encourage the type of agency needed to do so. Other virtues may guide an individual on how to make changes that result in recognizable change for only themselves. However, scrutiny and tenacity can create the elevated collective level of change necessary to reverse the drastic negative affects humans have produced which diminish current and future non-human flourishing which in turn deplete their own. I am not suggesting that every product one purchases must be intensely evaluated, but that one understands the effects of their most frequent purchases that are not made out of absolute necessity—such as sustaining one's life through sustenance or shelter. To adopt these traits, one is equipped with the

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Upholding the virtues of scrutiny and tenacity allows an individual to accomplish the existential and physical needs of humans to live a meaningful and sustained life.

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will power and the critical lens needed to make thoughtful consumption practices—which also include political, economic, and cultural choices as I will demonstrate later that will have a lasting impact on society.

The Effects of These Virtues on the Individual

Upholding the virtues of scrutiny and tenacity allows an individual to accomplish the existential and physical needs of humans to live a meaningful and sustained life. Through contributions to companies and businesses that seek to uphold ethical consumption practices that have been carefully researched and diligently pursued, one will gain satisfaction in knowing that they have made a positive impact. Given their efforts to aid in the continuance of the species, which includes themselves, as they seek to alleviate suffering in communities that

produce goods, they will also feel they have made a positive impact in doing so. Further, one will feel a sense of personal pride and pleasure for their efforts through their use of agency in acquiring knowledge which aids in establishing a meaningful life for themselves. These effects cover requirements 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7. The use of their agency through their tenacity and scrutiny will have positive effects on the individual. As these are virtues, others will feel the pull to this movement not because of the pressure given the actions of others, but that they will be guided by intrinsic principles that seek to promote flourishing of all types.

For example, when one chooses to purchase fairly traded, sustainably grown and harvested coffee that they have thoroughly researched to understand the positive effects of their purchase and have worked tenaciously to obtain, a level of gratitude and appreciation for the product and their efforts

is achieved. At first it may seem difficult and trivial to investigate so many coffee suppliers and pay the often steeper price for the product. However, given their value of tenacity, they will come to find their efforts easier as they continue this practice. Just like other ethical consumption practices, it will be difficult to adopt the necessary critical lens as they will need to do the work to find pathways to evaluate products. Like other virtues, at first these efforts will take practice, but will eventually become routine and will feel rewarding.

The Effects of These Virtues on Society

There are then two requirements left to establish a trait as a virtue that are still to be addressed, the good functioning of human communities and societies as well as the preservation and/or promotion of other valuable ends beyond human flourishing. By adopting scrutiny, one can carefully research their consumption practices that promote these values. For example, backing politicians with agendas that keep these ideas in mind. By adopting tenacity, one can further promote said candidates by withstanding social objections and overcome individual hardships for the sake of the promotion of human and non-human flourishing.

I am looking at the issue of consumer patterns not from a consequentialist perspective, but that of virtue, what one morally ought to do. Given that we live in a world directed by consumer activity, I suggest that it is by the hand of the consumer that adequate change will be made to remedy said affects. As Maniates suggests as mentioned at the conclusion of Schwartz' book, there

is a scientifically proven need for large scale sacrifices that seismic waves in the current consumption ethic in all manifestations, political, economic, and cultural in order to preserve life as we know it (Schwartz 2017: 160).⁶ Therefore, I also prescribe that ethical consumerism takes in account the political and cultural hold that consumption has on people. This then means that there are further practices aside from the act of buying that an ethical consumer must take in account, specifically, they must endorse political and social actions that promote both human and non-human flourishing. I will not describe specific political or social ideologies one must undertake as an ethical consumer but will instead state that they must be scrutinous of the ones they choose to involve themselves in and be tenacious in maintaining involvement with those that promote the types of flourishing mentioned.

Thus, an ethical consumer guided by the virtues of scrutiny and tenacity has the ability to be conscious of the entities they endorse along with the will to sustain their efforts. If more people were to adopt scrutiny and tenacity as a virtue, we would see the emergence of a society willing to make the momentous change necessary as described by Maniate. Pleased consumers would be concerned with both human and nonhuman flourishing which will ensure the necessary components a virtue, one through eight.

Addressing Objections

One might be inclined to raise a consequentialist objection to this line of reasoning, arguing that individual actions make no significant impact in the overall types of flourishing discussed. However, by

using a virtue-oriented perspective given the adoption of scrutiny and tenacity, one does not measure themselves through their level of impact but their ability to follow what is prescribed as virtuous behavior. Further, I have described the societal impact that can be achieved through this work above.

Some may critique that a consumer is not truly culpable for the effects of their involvement with an unethical company. This is a critique outside my realm of discussion as I have asserted that consumer engagement guides companies as they are reliant on consumer engagement. I will not defend this claim any further as this is a separate conversation to be had in other philosophical papers. It is for the sake of being succinct in my argument that we assume this stance.

Others may feel that there is a need for only one of these virtues. I argue that each virtue sustains the other. To be tenacious without being scrutinous, one is not guided by thoughtful principles in their efforts. To be only scrutinous does not give one the endurance to maintain their efforts. Therefore, they must be adopted together.

Finally, some might say that this is too

much work for one consumer. However, I argue that given the ease one can find sources to understand a product's ethicality it should not take much more time to make an informed decision about the products they purchase most. Further, the products one uses most frequently should be subjected to scrutinous observation to ensure one is consistently purchasing ethically made goods as it is their most frequently sought product.

Conclusion

Scrutiny and tenacity should be considered a virtue as they provide the level of agency required to make the seismic consumption changes needed to promote both human and nonhuman flourishing. They must be taken together as to be one without the other does not lead to effect or long-lasting outcomes. Together, scrutiny and tenacity promote the most effective change as a virtue as more people will adopt them if they are guided by practices they believe to be morally good.

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Endnotes

- 1 Such as brands like Toms.
- 2 Aside from those who own said companies or are direct beneficiaries of said company's existence. This excludes many workers within said company's who are gravely underpaid.
- 3 David Schwartz provides several examples of harmful consumer practices in his book, "Consuming Choices: Ethics in a Global Consumer Age."

Should We Shorten Grieving?

By Grace McCutchen

Death hurts. Sometimes it hurts too much. For those of us who have been to funerals, it is easy to recognize the feeling that there is a social requirement to be sad while others are watching, to prove our love for the deceased or to follow the example of others. Seneca, a Roman Stoic philosopher, wrote letters to a friend detailing his advice on reducing grief, pointing to this act put on for others as one of the main causes of excessive grief. Seneca disapproves of excessive grief because of its disruption of tranquility—the ultimate good for a Stoic—and productivity—or usefulness in the world—and because it is irrational. The reasons for the irrationality of excessive grief, which we will go through one by one, include that we don't have to grieve to have loved the deceased, grief is ungrateful, the perspective taken on loss is wrong, and grief isn't on behalf of the deceased, but the living. A concern over reducing grief is, as per Michael Cholbi's argument, that grieving can be valuable and shouldn't be shortened, but Seneca's advice doesn't exclude the ability to get value from grief, it just doesn't address it.

Seneca's advice on grieving is sound advice we should take. It can help us remove excessive grieving so we only do what we need to, get value from it, and move on. He doesn't suggest ignoring or "squashing" grief but gives us the reasons that will keep us from becoming lost in our grief to the

point of no longer functioning or irrationally hurting ourselves when we don't have to.

So why should we reduce grief? Seneca points to two kinds of reasons. First, the practical reasons, or those with an end goal in mind; particularly, as Seneca puts it, that you should "act as befits your own serenity of mind" (Letter 63). Excessive grief disturbs one's tranquility and ability to continue functioning in the world—two reasons one should not grieve excessively. This, of course, is predicated on a Stoic notion of control over our emotions as are many of the other reasons for reducing grief, but we will see Seneca's precise feelings on how much control we have and should be expected to exercise later. Another slightly different point of practicality that Seneca gives is that, eventually, we all tire of excessive grief and just cannot keep it up. We eventually start to laugh and to live again. Seneca tells his friend, "I should prefer you abandon your grief than have grief abandon you," and this is perhaps the strongest answer to the question "Why not stop grieving?" (Letter 63). You will eventually, so why not continue a happy life sooner?

The second set of reasons have to do with the badness of grief itself, and these, interestingly, don't have to do simply with the fact that grief is painful. Seneca criticizes the reasons many give for their grieving, proving them irrational. Some of these things we've

heard before in such phrases as “don’t be sad you’ve lost them, but glad you’ve had them,” some are simple (but still debatable) assertions like grief being only for the living since the dead can no longer feel pain, but others are more unusual. For instance, Seneca says grief is ungrateful because we act, in excessive grief, as if we have gained nothing of worth from our relationship, but as if all is lost. Additionally, you are ungrateful for and think poorly of the remaining people you love if their existence doesn’t console you over the loss of the deceased. Seneca also claims that grieving over anyone’s death, yours or someone else’s, is grieving their having been born in the first place, since to be born is to, eventually, die. This helps us remember that death is a part of life and you can’t have one without the other. Finally, he confronts the argument that failing to continue grieving your friend is forgetting him. If so, “it is surely a short-lived memory that you vouchsafe to him,” for that excessive grieving, as we saw earlier, will eventually end (Letter 63).

These two sets of reasons, which I have merely listed, function not only as the reasons Seneca gives us not to grieve, but as the tools he gives us to meditate on should we want to reduce our grief. Not all of these reasons may work for you, but the validity of these tools will be left for another paper. Here, we will use them as an understanding of Seneca from which to delve more deeply into the question of whether we should shorten grief and how much.

The first reaction of many is to object to Seneca’s seemingly analytical approach to grief. We are, after all, emotional creatures and can get value from grief. At least, it seems one must cry, for “by being shed

[tears] ease the soul” as Seneca acknowledges of those initial, genuine tears (we’ll get there in a moment) (Letter 99). First, I’d like to mention something Seneca has cleared up. He is not telling us to be hard-hearted and unmoved, “not allowing your soul even to feel the pinch of pain.... That would mean lack of feeling rather than virtue” (Letter 99). He encourages love of your friends (friends, in a Roman manner, perhaps expanding today to anyone important to you), and, as a Stoic, finds sociality, or a love of other people, to be one of the great goods. This doesn’t mean, though, one must grieve excessively if they have truly loved the deceased, for the reasons mentioned above.

Now let us see what exactly Seneca means by excessive grief, for he encourages some tears and not others. Seneca says to “let [a mourner] satisfy his grief or at any rate work off the first shock; but those who have assumed an indulgence in grief should be rebuked forthwith” (Letter 99). This is the grief, but not excessive grief, that he allows. Indulgence in tears occurs when we don’t merely allow tears to fall but “command them to do so; let us according as emotion floods our eyes, but not as mere imitation shall demand” (Letter 99). The worst thing Seneca says you can do in grief is to grieve because others are around and it feels like the socially acceptable thing to do, especially because “they are afraid lest men doubt whether they really have loved” (Letter 63). This we know happens, but perhaps not to a great extent. We feel it perhaps at funerals, where we feel compelled to work up our grief, but there is something further that Seneca says which I think more of us will relate to. “We seek the proofs of our bereavement in our tears, and do not give way

to sorrow, but merely parade it” (Letter 63). It feels like the right way to prove, if not to other people, to yourself, that you loved the deceased. But this is merely excess, ingenuine, and ungrateful in Seneca’s eyes. Why mourn when you needn’t? He’d much rather you be happy at your friend’s memories, the better to recall those memories often, free of “the display of grief [which] makes more demands than grief itself” (Letter 99).

The tears that Seneca allows are different. They are those that come “of their own force” as a result of being shocked by that first blow (Letter 99). “Tears like these fall by a forcing-out process, against our will; but different are the tears which we allow to escape when we muse in memory upon those whom we have lost” (Letter 99). This leads us to the conclusion that Seneca prefers we shorten our grief as much as is possible for us, and he condemns those who consent to the tears which are not authentic—the grief we can forgo.

Now, briefly, we must address the difference between actively prolonging grief and not actively shortening it, because it seems as if Seneca describes both. Do we condemn just those who actively prolong their grief or also those who do not actively shorten it? I argue that due to the nature of grief, these two things are the same. Active prolonging may come in the form of putting on an act for others or looking at a picture and trying to work up tears, but besides that, grief has the capacity to hold on and may seem inescapable just because the fact of the loved one’s death is still there. Without doing something, like meditating on the tools Seneca gave us earlier, grief will often hang on long enough to start causing problems even if it won’t last forever. So, if you aren’t choosing

to shorten your grief, it will become irrational, unproductive, and ungrateful. It will go to excess.

Michael Cholbi, a professor of philosophy at the University of Edinburgh, in his paper “Finding the Good in Grief,” gives an argument for the value of grief for self-knowledge. Perhaps it is a good objection to Seneca—a reason not to shorten grief. It goes something like this: The pain of grief can be judged to be good because the pain is essential to the activity. It wouldn’t be grief without it (just as Romeo and Juliet wouldn’t be the great work of art it is without being a tragedy), and the pain is also a good tool and motivator for self-knowledge. The motivation is a bit self-explanatory—when in pain one looks for a way out—but as a tool it tells you something about yourself.

Cholbi talks about our “practical identities,” chiefly, in the context of grief, as they are formed by our identity-constituting relationships. These relationships are with people we admire (we needn’t know them personally) or love, whom we have defined ourselves in relation to; as in answering the question “Who are you?” we might answer, “the sister of [insert name here].” When we lose those people, Cholbi argues that it seems as if we aren’t just losing something separate, but something that is part of ourselves, as we have lost our identity-constituting relationship with them. Grief prompts us to examine these relationships and re-examine our own identities and role in the world, finding that “our practical identities... are not inevitable or preordained.... [and we] figure out who we are and how our lives should continue” (101).

This is the value of grief, then, but is that at odds with Seneca’s shortening of

grief? I think not. Firstly, Seneca does allow grief, but more importantly promotes love and encourages us to return as quickly as possible to tranquility and productivity. In this shortened grief, we can still implement our self-reflection as Cholbi would have us do—we can still use the grief we have as an opportunity and get value from it. Additionally, Seneca even promotes the reflection on the memories and lessons learned from a friend that would help us to gain more self-knowledge. Meanwhile, Seneca still allows that “it is possible for tears to flow from the eyes of those who are quiet and at peace” (Letter 99). This is, perhaps, akin to the dull sadness we continue to feel when people say the grief will never end and the loss of your loved one will always hurt—perhaps allowing room for Cholbi-like improvement at any time—but Seneca’s method prevents that grief from “impairing the influence of the wise man,” meaning you can still be wise and go on living well and tranquilly despite the grief (Letter 99).

On Cholbi’s side of things, if one does truly attain his self-improvement, grief wouldn’t last forever or be prolonged. If it did, we would not be said to have learned anything or found our new place in the

world, but would merely be stuck in our old knowledge of ourselves. Self-knowledge will help us to be productive in the world, move on from our grief, and love more people in the way Seneca says we should. Additionally, none of Cholbi’s lessons are valuable (or even possible to learn or implement) if you are unproductively over-grieving. So, though Seneca urges you to reduce what you can of your pain and Cholbi doesn’t, Seneca allows the pain that Cholbi shows is valuable to us and then gives us the tools to move on and become a well-functioning person again.

Seneca says a man “should continue to remember, but should cease to mourn” (Letter 99). He understands well the impact people can have on us and encourages us to remember that impact and be a better person for having had them in our life. He grants the important process of grief needed to learn lessons about ourselves and our lives but warns us not to get stuck. If we shorten our grieving by preventing ourselves from getting carried away by our presentations of grief or our incorrect perceptions of our loss, we can remember all we’ve gained and make the person who has passed ever more important to shaping who we are.

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The Effects of Baseball During the Fifty-Year Japanese Occupation of Taiwan

By Kaitlyn Bader

Baseball, known famously as “America’s pastime,” is played around the United States by many; starting from the time they can just barely swing a bat, but with the dream of making it to the big leagues. Even though it is so strongly associated with American culture, baseball has been embraced by other countries around the world since the 1890s; specifically, by what was at the time the colony of Taiwan, in 1895. The fifty-year Japanese occupation of Taiwan was far from perfection, but some positive effects cannot be ignored. Umin Boya’s 2014 film, *Kano*, uses the lens of baseball to depict the complex nature and experience of the Japanese occupation through the lives of the high school baseball team, Kano, during the time of occupation. Through the team, Boya shows how Taiwan was receptive to Japanese cultural impacts, but also strived to uphold their identity throughout the occupation. Agricultural enhancements in the film show the benefits of Japanese influence and help. And finally, the depiction of the team’s dedication to winning their baseball tournament, even through hardships, shows that Japan instilled both pride and fear within the colony.

Kano centers around the tri-ethnic

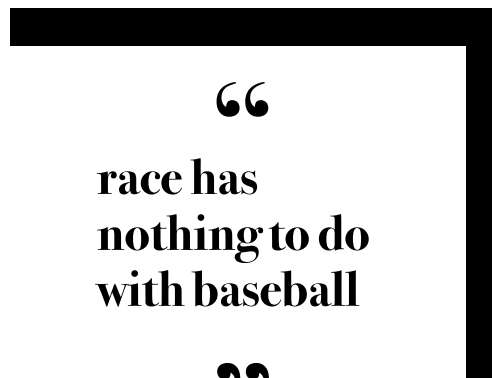
(Japanese, Han, and aborigine) Taiwanese high school baseball team, Kano, between 1929 and 1931. The film opens in 1944, showing Joshiya Hiromi and fellow soldiers preparing to travel to the Philippines. The setting is dark and dirty, with sick soldiers lying in tents and being carted off. This opening scene sets the tone for the bleak fate that lay ahead for the men during the Pacific War. Joshiya asks to stop in Kagi to visit the baseball field of the well-known Kano team. The film then cuts to a flashback of the Kano team beginning in 1929. The team was unsuccessful early on, hardly winning any games. Their fortunes changed when coach Hyotaro Kondo took over the team as the new manager. His ultimate goal as a coach is to get back to Koshien, the large high school baseball tournament held in Japan, after his previous team lost early on in the tournament.

The film then changes focus to the team’s training, with the goal of making it to Koshien in mind. Viewers see the heartbreak of losing to other teams, seniors graduating, funding hardships, and players moving away. Simultaneous to the focus on the Kano baseball team, the film also focuses on the story of Mr. Hatta and the Kanan

Canal. Mr. Hatta is a civil engineer fixing the irrigation system for the rice fields of Kagi. This subplot serves as a reference to the imperial presence of Japan within the colony. The Kano team eventually makes it to Koshien and wins the hearts and support of the crowd as they sweep through the other teams. Commentators struggle to grapple with the idea of a tri-ethnic group playing together and being cohesive, but as the coach and team state, race has nothing to do with baseball. After an intense and brutal final game, Kano unfortunately does not win the tournament, but they have brought pride to Taiwan and further established Taiwan's identity through the game of baseball.

Taiwan's involvement in baseball would not have been possible without Japan's interest in American baseball. Baseball became popular in America during the Civil War, and the first professional team was created in 1868, according to Sumei Wang in "Taiwanese Baseball: A Story of Entangled Colonialism, Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism."¹ During Japan's Meiji Restoration period in the 1860s, the Japanese were very intent on adopting Western ideals and values. In "Baseball and the Quest for National Dignity in Meiji Japan," Donald Roden states that, "In fact, early Meiji educators were not at all convinced of the need for physical education."² Even though some of these Japanese educators were not immediately supporting baseball, by the 1890s, American baseball was purposefully introduced to Japanese students that were interested. By the end of the 19th century, baseball in Japan had become very popular among the students.³

Japan officially colonized Taiwan in 1895 and remained in control there for fifty years. As one can assume, forceful coloniza-



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tion is never a desired outcome for natives. There were cultural and value differences between these two groups as Japan established its rule. Baseball was “imported to the colony of Taiwan around 1897, just two years after its incorporation into the Japanese Empire” according to Andrew Morris in “Taiwan: Baseball, Colonialism, and Nationalism.”⁴ The Taiwanese were very skeptical about baseball at first, especially because the influence was coming from the Japanese. The rising interest in baseball within Taiwan was due, in large part, to the intrigue of the Taiwanese youth. In his article “Youth Baseball and Colonial Identity in Taiwan, 1920-1968,” John Harney explains that in 1908, the first organized and recorded game between students occurred when the Colonial Government High School held a game between fifth-grade students and third and fourth-grade students.⁵

The Taiwanese Baseball Association was formed in 1915 and more youth students were becoming interested in baseball within the colony.⁶ Harney claims that “it wasn’t until 1921 that youth baseball gained a significant public profile. The inaugural Taipei

Secondary School Baseball Tournament was the first major tournament in the colony to feature young athletes exclusively.”⁷ Heading into the 1930s, significantly more Taiwanese youth were involved in baseball across the colony. By this point in time, the Kano team was rising to fame throughout Taiwan and Japan, bringing pride and joy to everyone that they met.

The main takeaway from the historical context of baseball in Taiwan is how intertwined it is with their colonization and national identity. According to Wang, “Baseball in colonial Taiwan indicated the distinction between the ruler and the ruled: the Japanese colonizer and the colonized islanders.”⁸ While this establishes a negative connotation for Japan, it also sets Taiwan apart with its own identity. The Taiwanese couldn’t resist the Japanese, but they could place their own meaning on what their colonization meant. Baseball became the mode through which Taiwan was able to show that they were still their own beings and could still hold their own values. Wang also claims that, “The development of baseball in Taiwan can be read as an indicator of the progress of Taiwan’s identity in the past century.”⁹ From the beginning, in 1895, to the mid-1920s, Taiwan’s interest and involvement in baseball quickly grew into their own statement. Taiwan’s complicated history that is interwoven with baseball depicts how symbolic baseball is to the Taiwanese and their national identity.

Throughout his film, Boya uses scenes of both extreme positivity and negativity toward the imperial presence of Japan, which speaks to the complex nature of Japan’s rule. This also shows the way in which baseball was used as a bridge between the two

cultures. Beginning at 58:00 minutes in the film, Kano is playing for a spot in a smaller high school championship tournament. A victory will qualify the team for a place in the Koshien tournament in Japan. The field is in awful, muddy condition, making it difficult for the team to play to the best of their abilities, despite their best efforts. With mud everywhere, the catcher becomes frustrated

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and yells “Even if we’ll end up with broken bones, we have to win this game!”¹⁰

The subsequent scenes are filled with inspirational music, impressive displays of skills, and an overwhelming sense of hope. Unfortunately for the Kano team, about of torrential rain moves through. The coaches agree to end the game due to weather, and because the other team was ahead, Kano ultimately loses the game. The boys are devastated, claiming they can play on even in the rain, and that they will not lose.

This intense scene from the game reveals the strong determination of the Tai-

wanese through the Kano team, along with the relationship between the Taiwanese and Japanese. Wang focuses on how baseball developed in Taiwan, and how baseball is connected to Taiwan's identity and the history of their colonization. Wang argues that "The islanders under the Japanese rule could not fight back with military force, nor could they run away, but they played baseball with their own interpretations of what it meant to do so."¹¹ The boys knew what winning this specific game would mean to them and knew that they had to pull together as a cohesive group to make that happen.

Under the pressure of moving on to the championship tournament, the team knows they cannot stop playing nor accept the loss of the unfair game. The team can be best represented by the quote from Wang: "...but they played baseball with their own interpretation of what it meant to do so." This specific scene is not about just winning or losing to the Kano team; it's about proving everyone around them wrong. Kano knew that this game was about proving that their hard work could pay off, that they weren't just a lousy team, and playing this game to the very end through any situation would prove their dedication and pride as a team. Baseball is used in this scene to show the strong-willed players struggling through difficulties and pressures to prove to themselves and others that they can be strong and do not fit the "lousy" and "farmer" stereotypes. The team's effort and determination pays off, as they return victorious from the high school tournament after facing many difficult teams. Kano embodies the fact that the Taiwanese want to be more than just islanders and barbarians that the Japanese think they are within their complicated

relationship.¹² The complex nature of the relationship between Taiwan and Japan is present here as Kano represents the Taiwanese people's determination to go through pain against the Japanese, which paints the Japanese as the villains. But contrasting that, the Taiwanese would not be able to prove themselves or their worth in the game of baseball if it wasn't for the Japanese occupation that brought the sport to them. Hence, the difficulty in stating that the Japanese occupation can be inherently bad or inherently good.

Beginning at 1:34:51 in the film, viewers experience a couple of extremely positive scenes as Mr. Hatta's Kanan Canal is finally finished and working during the grand opening. The Kano team has just returned from the high school championship game as victors, and everyone in the town is celebrating the accomplishment of the Japanese engineering and Kano's win. As Mr. Hatta asks for the valves of the dam to be released, he stands at the top with extreme pride as his hard work is celebrated by those around him. During this scene, viewers can see that the people around Mr. Hatta are waving both Japanese and Taiwanese flags; showcasing that the two can celebrate as one. Next, the Kano team is seen arriving back in Kagi by train with crowds from the town awaiting their arrival. Once again, flags of both Japanese and Taiwanese can be seen waving, showing that the Kano team can unite Japan and Taiwan with their victories and pride.

These exciting scenes show a very positive and optimistic view of Taiwan's accomplishments, both through their own players as well as the Japanese improvements within the colony. Regarding baseball in Taiwan John Harney states, "It provided an

opportunity to celebrate colonial Taiwanese achievement with the imperial cultural Japanese identity.”¹³ Baseball paved the way for the Taiwanese to show off their accomplishments that they had brought back from winning games. Once again, these baseball accomplishments would not have been possible without the attention of the Japanese and their decision to include Taiwan in these sporting events early on. This scene also functions to show that there were positives that came out of the Japanese occupation. Mr. Hatta brought much-needed improvements to the colony. Mr. Hatta’s pride for the colony is seen throughout the film as he encourages the boys to win and bring the championship home for Taiwan. Yet again, we see that there were positives co-existing with the negative aspects of the Japanese occupation in Taiwan.

In the last scenes of the film from 2:33:25-2:38:24, viewers see some of the most heartbreaking and bittersweet moments of the film so far. The star pitcher of the team, Akira, has sustained an injury to a finger on his pitching hand. There is a deep gash close to the nail with blood dripping from it. Blood is smearing all over the baseball as Akira can’t stop the blood. He resorts to wiping the bloody finger on the side of his pants, hoping to clear the blood long enough to get a good pitch in. This proves ineffective, as he continues to throw pitches completely outside of the strike zone as the ball slips from his grasp. After letting three batters walk onto the bases, Akira decides to submerge his hand in the coarse sand. The commentators and other teammates gasp as they realize how painful that will be for Akira. His facial expressions reveal just how excruciating the pain is, but

he is determined to improve his situation. Unfortunately for Akira, this still does not work, and he ends up hitting the next batter with his pitch.

After Akira hits the batter, the entire stadium, including all of the players, are in silent shock. One of the outfielders of Kano steps up and yells to Akira “Just serve them straight balls. Let them take the swing. We will catch any ball that they hit.”¹⁴ The rest of the team members join in with cheering on Akira and telling him to trust them; that they will not let any ball get past. Another one of the outfielders proudly exclaims “We are Kano from Taiwan!”¹⁵ The team is unified in supporting Akira to the very end, as well as each other. Uplifting music plays as the Kano team puts their entire hearts into the next few plays, knowing that this is their last chance. It is also during this sequence that viewers see Joshiya standing at the abandoned Kano practice field yelling “Welcome home!” Kano, unfortunately, does not win the Koshien tournament, as they fall short due to the inevitable repercussions from Akira’s injury. However, the Kano team becomes inspired and determined, playing out their last game to show their pride as the team from Taiwan.

This intense sequence embodies everything that Kano, and the Taiwanese, are ready to sacrifice to make it through any situation. Akira was pitching through excruciating pain, with blood dripping from his hand. And he continued to find new ways to fight as he shoved his hand in the sand. Akira represents the absolute dedication the Taiwanese have as well as the lengths they will go to prove their dedication to the Japanese when asked to serve. Despite not winning the Koshien tournament, “Kano’s

achievement in reaching the final at Koshien in 1931 was a massive success for the Taiwanese baseball community, the team itself the subject of transposed hopes and dreams of colonial Japanese organizers of youth baseball in Taipei.”¹⁶ Just the fact that the team made it to the tournament, as they were previously thought of as a rag-tag group that couldn’t, proves how incredible their story truly is.

This scene of epic sacrifice from Akira and the unification from the team through the game of baseball is the ultimate representation of the complicated relationship between Taiwan and Japan. Through the intense last game, the Kano team became more unified and resilient than ever before. After the inning of Akira’s difficult pitching, coach Kondo asks the boys to gather around. He thanks them for helping him find his passion for baseball again, and then tells the boys to trust each other, telling them “You’ve already got the most precious thing in the world.”¹⁷ The boy’s teamwork and trust in each other exemplify the way Taiwan was able to band together as the islanders and natives to still claim their own cultural identity during the difficult time of Japanese occupation. Taiwan was able to unify and establish their own pride and identity through the game of baseball, which was brought to them by their imperial rulers.

Akira’s injury also highlights some negatives of the relationship between Taiwan and Japan. The way he decides to play through the pain also shows the extreme lengths that the Taiwanese and even the Japanese would go for Japan during war-time efforts. There is so much dedication

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instilled in the Taiwanese through their own efforts, that when they are asked to serve for Japan, they use their learned dedication to do so. These results are evident as viewers recall Joshiya in the beginning scenes, about to embark towards the hopeless war. He wanted to stop by Kagi to see the Kano baseball field to understand the dedication that the Taiwanese team was able to establish and carry with them anywhere in hopes that he could carry that same dedication to the war. Knowing that Joshiya is being sent off to a senseless war at the beginning of the film is a nod to the mundaneness of fighting for Japan.

The film *Kano* is an excellent movie that is filled with excitement and adventure, as well as heartbreak and sadness. The film contains rosy overtones about Taiwan and baseball during the period of Japanese occupation from 1929 through 1931. The stars of the film are the tri-ethnic baseball team,

Kano, that works towards the goal of making it to the Koshien baseball tournament held in Japan. Through all of the hardships that the team faced, they end their tournament run as a unified group that brought pride to both Japan and Taiwan through their winning and determination. The scene of the muddy baseball game that Kano is trying desperately to win but can't shows how dedicated the boys are to the game of baseball. It also reveals how their dedication to the game of baseball would not be possible without Japan's influence, highlighting how Japan is not 100% bad or good in this context. The scene of the canal opening for the first time and Kano winning the high school championship game shows the incredibly positive side of the Japanese occupation and how both the Taiwanese and Japanese can be celebrated together in a positive light. Finally, the third scene further complicates the story about how the team becomes completely unified from the hardship of the game and Akira's injury, but also how the Taiwanese are willing to go through so much pain for the Japanese, when that same loyalty will not always be returned. The complexity of the Japanese occupation in colonial Taiwan can never prove to be completely positive or negative because the Japanese helped to elevate and improve the colony, despite being a forced colonizer which enforced their own rules and instilled their own cultural values.

The fact that Japan's colonization of Taiwan cannot be proven to be inherently good or bad speaks to the fact of how complicated history can be when looking at it from a newer perspective. We may never know the complete stories and opinions of the Taiwanese regarding the Japanese occupation of their homeland. Wei De-

Shen, a producer of *Kano*, understood that complexity of history and stated that while creating *Kano*, "It was the historical reality that I wanted people to become aware of."¹⁸ Films like *Kano* help to show that Japan was a mix of both; there were positive and negative aspects in baseball and outside of baseball. John Harney points out another example of this as he states "The emergence of this sports team featuring young adults from a Japanese colony coming together in racial harmony to excel in a sport taught to them by the Japanese was extremely valuable for imperial propaganda."¹⁹ *Kano*'s ability to bring together the two countries and their people is a positive effect, but is used for Japanese imperial propaganda, which would be considered negative by most. *Kano* helps to emphasize that there are two sides to every story, and that Japan's occupation of Taiwan brought about great changes for the colony at one point in time, even during their forceful rule.

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Parasitic Poverty

By Casey Rife

Introduction

By looking at global issues of poverty and income inequality through a specifically South Korean lens, Bong Joon Ho perfectly depicts Merriam-Webster's definition of parasite in his film, *Parasite*. A parasite is defined by Merriam-Webster as "a person who exploits the hospitality of the rich and earns welcome by flattery." In Bong Joon Ho's film, a poor family—the Kims—infiltrate a rich family—the Parks—in a twisted story of deception and greed. This is not the first South Korean film to thematically focus on poverty. Economic conditions have always affected how South Korean filmmakers choose to portray poverty. By examining how these issues are currently and historically represented in South Korean films, poverty goes from being perceived as the result of structural inequity to the result of personal responsibility. The changing economic and social conditions in South Korea have impacted poverty's representation in film. *Parasite* breaks ground thematically and narratively by blending these past and current perceptions of poverty in a realistic yet dystopian story of income inequality in South Korea.

Visual Representation

There are many ways in which poverty is represented in *Parasite*, one of which is through visual representations. The most

evident representations are seen in the two family's housing situations. While the Parks live in a large mansion, the Kims live in a sub-basement home at the bottom of a densely populated hill in a slum of Seoul. The Park's house is unable to be seen from the road, as it is heavily secured by fences and a video doorbell gate at the top of a hill. The Kim's situation is quite the opposite. Their neighborhood is packed with neighbors. Their windows look right out onto the street. There is often an intoxicated person who pees right outside those windows. There is no privacy. In an article from Patrick Brzeski, director Bong Joon Ho discusses how these homes and scenes were carefully constructed from scratch by the crew. They were meticulously planned to best represent the contradictions of the lives the two families lead. The contrast of the lighting in the homes was very important when making the film. As can be seen in Figure 1, the Kim's house had conventional fluorescent lighting. The streetlights outside had a red hue and were dimly lit. The film's cinematographer says this lighting created a "very dull, deadening feeling." On the other hand, natural light from the large windows and warm-tones were used when filming at the Park's home, giving it a more pleasant scene.

The physical layout of the houses is also a mode of representing poverty. Everything



Figure 1: The windows of the Kim home (left) and the windows of the Park home (right).



Figure 2: Ki-woo and Ki-jang searching for a WiFi signal in the bathroom.

in the Kim home is cluttered and stacked in big piles, while the Parks have big open spaces and a whole basement to store their clutter. The infrastructure seen in and around the Kim's house is clearly outdated and flawed. Their toilet in the bathroom is elevated to be closer to street level for plumbing purposes. Not only would it be inconvenient to climb up to the toilet, but there is a window just level with the toilet, another way their home lacks privacy. This

can be seen in Figure 2. When the heavy rain and floods come, they overwhelm the sewer system and the Kim's home is filled with backflow from the toilet. Their neighborhood's infrastructure is clearly unable to handle these conditions and all of the residents are forced out of their homes to sleep in a gym and pick through clothes that aren't covered in filth before attempting to return to their normal lives and work. Meanwhile, the Parks get to look out their giant windows



Figure 3: The Park family in pajama sets (left) and the Kim family in leisure clothing (right).

and enjoy the view of the rain hitting the glass and watering their highly manicured garden.

Those living in poverty are significantly more vulnerable to harm. Whether that vulnerability has to do with their housing situation, like floodwaters or fumigation, they are also more vulnerable to some situations of violence. The old housekeeper and her husband find themselves constantly hiding from loan sharks. When the wife, Moon-gwang, is no longer protected by the tall walls and privacy of the Parks' home, she is beaten by loan sharks looking for her deranged husband, Geun-se.

Access to simple things can be very difficult for many living in poverty. Accessibility to services, education, and employment are all extremely difficult for the Kims. They are unable to access services like WiFi without crouching by their toilet and holding their phones to the ceiling to steal a nearby signal (Figure 2). Without WiFi, they don't have access to basic services on their phones, making it extremely difficult to communicate and exist in a world that is constantly advancing technologically. There is a lack of access to education when families don't have an expendable income. The Kim son, Ki-woo, has taken a university entrance exam four times,

but is unable to actually attend because his family cannot afford it. The daughter, Ki-jung, is highly skilled, but because of the Kim's situation, will never be able to hold a non-forged degree with her name on it. It is evident from the opening scenes that it is difficult for the family to find work. They fold pizza boxes but cannot actually work for the pizza company. The only way Ki-woo is able to begin working for the Parks is because his wealthier friend, Min, recommends him for the job. The general premise of *Parasite* is based on a true story of director Bong Joon Ho's personal experience. When he was younger, he worked as a math tutor for a wealthy family at the recommendation of his girlfriend. The hiring processes seen in *Parasite* shows how hard it can be to get a reliable and good paying job without the proper connections.

Looking at representation of poverty on a smaller scale, there are stark contrasts in everyday life items like clothing and food. The Parks wear matching silk pajama sets to bed and wear expensive looking clothing around the house. The Kims wear cotton tank tops and tee shirts the majority of the time they are home or sleeping, as can be seen in Figure 3. The only time they dress up is when they are working at the Parks

and disguising their true selves. The Parks always have snacks and large spreads of food available at their beck and call. They have fresh produce. Their kitchen is huge and includes top of the line equipment. Meanwhile, the Kims eat lots of pizza drizzled in packs of hot sauce. Even when they have enough money from Ki-woo's first payment, they go to a questionable looking buffet style restaurant. The daily basic necessities of life available to the two families are polar opposites.

Cultural Representation

There are also a variety of representations of poverty beyond the physical and visual cues in the film. Mental health is an evident issue among the families living in poverty in *Parasite*. The most prominent example is Geun-se, the housekeeper's husband. This man lives in an underground bunker, unbeknownst to the Parks, and spends his time sending messages in Morse code and manually turning on lights as the Parks patriarch, Dong-ik, goes up and down the stairs. This gesture is to thank him for his hospitality, which would certainly not exist if Dong-ik was aware of the man living in the secret bunker. It is not surprising that living in those conditions for four years would lead you to insanity. It is not only Geun-se that appears to have issues remaining sane, but the Kim's familial patriarch, Ki-taek, does as well. The decisions and crimes that these men and their families commit throughout the film are driven by desperation. Their views of sane and moral behavior have been warped by living in the extreme circumstances of poverty.

The sheer nature of the jobs the Kims

are performing for the Parks are quite intimate. Housekeeping, driving, tutoring, and art therapy all give the Kims a unique insight to what life is like at the top. When the Parks go camping, the Kims find themselves indulging in food, alcohol, and the Park daughter's private diaries. By simply being in the house, they feel so close to the life they desire. The proximity makes it feel almost feasible for them. They feel that if they can just continue their ruse a little bit longer, this is what their life could be like. The Kims are constantly looking at the next opportunity to get a leg up, even when it is at the expense of another person's well-being. This proximity only fuels their desperation, inevitably worsening their situation.

Past Representations

Poverty has been represented in South Korean film for decades. The manner of these representations has dramatically changed over the years, according to Yongmie Nicola Jo in the journal, "Disclosing the Poverty-Shame Nexus within Popular Films in South Korea (1975-2010)." Jo details how South Korean filmmakers rely on visual cues to represent stereotypical depictions of poverty. Jo specifically references homogeneously deprived neighborhoods as one signifier of poverty in older South Korean films (mid-1970s and early 80s). Multiple films represented moon villages, a particular type of housing that is unique to South Korea. "Moon villages were unauthorized settlements on top of the steep hillsides (thus 'nearer the moon') surrounding the city of Seoul in which new migrants to the area congregated on the only land that remained undeveloped and vacant." This particular style

of neighborhood and housing is not exactly what is presented in *Parasite*, but shows how important housing is in representing poverty via film. Especially important is the contrast between the impoverished and the wealthy that can be seen in older and more recent films.

In earlier films from the 70s and 80s, Jo discusses how the affluent were often depicted as unjustly or illegitimately earning their money. They were depicted as cruel. However, those in poverty were depicted as good people, virtuous members of society being exploited by the rich. Beginning in the 2000s, there is a great flip in how people in poverty are represented. They were no longer viewed so positively, but as failures, economically and socially. This view of the poor being failures is more in-line with how poverty is represented in *Parasite*. The Kims live in the sub-basement home, while Geun-se is exiled to a secret underground bunker. Their lives are shameful.

Perhaps the most important differentiation of how poverty has been represented in South Korean film is how they view poverty in terms of responsibility. Jo explains that older films represent poverty as a societal responsibility while newer films represent it as a personal responsibility. In the past, living in poverty was seen as bad luck; an unfortunate situation which one was born into at no fault of their own. Society had failed to properly allow its citizens a chance to lead comfortable lives. Now, poverty is seen as a reflection of the impoverished individuals; if they're in poverty, they're lazy and don't work hard enough. Jo states that in more recent films, "poverty, once thought to be a product of fate and misfortune, is now interpreted as evidence of personal failure

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and inadequacy.” Living in poverty has always been represented as a horrible and difficult experience, but has shifted toward attaching personal responsibility and shame to that experience.

In *Parasite*, the viewer can see a combination of these two types of responsibility. On one hand, the Kims are trapped in poverty. They struggle to find even the humblest of jobs and to make money. Their basement home is all they can afford in such a densely populated and inequitable city as Seoul. There is a sense of societal responsibility while the family does what they can just to scrape by. The city's poor infrastructure and the gentrification that has occurred has greatly decreased their quality of life. On the other hand, many of the family's shortcomings are attributed to their poor decisions. The family is seen as unambitious in some ways. In her journal, Jo explains how

those living in poverty “end up frightened, angry, and bitter, placing all their hopes of rebuilding their lives, which seems possible only through winning prosperity and success, on one-off opportunities that carry a high risk of ultimate failure.” This is clearly represented in the actions and risks taken by the Kim family in *Parasite*. By lying about their education and experience, Ki-woo and Ki-jung are able to get their jobs as tutor and art therapist. They could have easily stopped the deception here and made enough money to support their parents and lead a much better life. However, they push it further with those high-risk decisions. Planting suspicious items, lying about their relationships, poisoning the housekeeper with peach fuzz, and fabricating a company that employs housekeepers are all actions that carried a high risk of failure. It did not take much for the family to slip up and get caught by Geun-se and Moon-gwang in the middle of their lies. However, Moon-gwang hiding her husband in a secret bunker for the family that she works for, unbeknownst to the family, is a similarly high-risk situation.

While *Parasite* is a fictional story, the poverty is a harsh reality for many people living in South Korea. Brian X. Chen, a writer for the New York Times writes about the inequity and lack of social mobility that is presented in *Parasite*. A widening income gap is creating an increasingly lopsided income distribution. As of 2015, the top 10% of Koreans held 66% of the wealth and the bottom half of the population held a mere 2%. Chen writes about how effective Bong Joon Ho's work is when it comes to sending messages about and referencing the reality of South Korean income inequality and political corruption. “That inequity,

combined with scandals involving corruption among the privileged, have bred so much bitterness and frustration among Koreans that new slang phrases have emerged in recent years, like ‘gold spoons’ and ‘dirt spoons’.” Gold spoons are born into their wealth and have few issues making it through life in terms of wealth. Dirt spoons are those born into poverty and, regardless of their talent or skill, are unable to escape or succeed, just like the Kim family. Chen details that recent scandals and exploitation of power associated with the South Korean presidential impeachment in 2016 have also contributed to the frustration felt by so many South Koreans. Viewers have drawn parallels between *Parasite* and recent real situations like forgery of school documents. There was one incident in particular when the impeached president refused to shake a supporter's hand which correlates to the Parks recoiling at the stench that they think poor people have.

For many South Koreans, the Kim family's lives are quite relatable. “The Kim's reality has turned into an unsettling allegory of modern life.” Authors Jo and Walker interviewed thirty-one people living in poverty to better understand their personal experiences and how some of those can be seen in South Korean film. The people they interviewed were receiving social assistance and a majority of them lived in half-underground or sub-basement homes. The authors describe these as very typical in urban areas of South Korea. They are characterized by “limited lighting, frequent problems with damp when it rains, and inadequate heating for the winter,” just like the Kim family home. This and other types of material hardship that affect South Koreans in poverty

are big parts of the issue. However, there is also social-relational hardship experienced by those living in poverty. There is often a sense of rejection felt when they are struggling financially that couples with feelings of loneliness, depression, and even suicide. There is certainly a sense of rejection felt by Ki-tack when he overhears Dong-ik referencing his smell. This sense of rejection affects him so dramatically that it drives him to eventual murder, displaying the clear impact on his mental health and clouding of his judgement.

Kim et al. write about the relation between material hardship and depression among low-income households and how it correlates to household type. Using data from the Korean Welfare Panel Study (KOWEPS), they found that low-income households, specifically elderly and single-head households, are at a high risk of experiencing depression and material hardship. The trend of growing poverty can be traced back to the 1997 Asian Economic Crisis. The official poverty rate in South Korea rose from 6.5% in 2001 to reaching its peak at 11.5% in 2009. This is a clear indication of the problems present in modern Korea and

gives insight on why Bong Joon Ho may have created a film like *Parasite*.

Conclusion

Bong Joon Ho's *Parasite* tells a startlingly relatable tale about income inequality in South Korea. Film has played a critical part in shaping and representing society's view of people living in poverty. There are clear indicators of poverty that Bong Joon Ho chose to represent in this film that combine how poverty has been seen and represented differently in the past and present. Many of the issues facing South Korea, like growing poverty, don't have a clear end in sight. Chen's article even quotes a professor of East Asian studies saying, "they're losing hope," when referencing South Korean citizens who want to see reform and positive change. This film has had a much bigger impact than the filmmakers initially expected, likely because of the relatability of inequality to not just South Koreans, but the global community. It may even provide a new way of representing poverty in film.

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A View of American Society in 1967 and 1968, Through *Ladies Home Journal*

By Sean Horn

The best way to understand a past era is by viewing it from the same lens in which its contemporaries did; reading what they wrote, admiring the photographs they took, taking in the portraits they painted. These things, however, are not only a reflection of society at that time—they can also shape it. For decades, women's magazines were, as described by Nancy A. Walker, the "adviser to and definer of domesticity and women as domestic beings."¹ In her book, *Shaping Our Mothers' World: American Women's Magazines*, Walker asserts that the role of these magazines can be traced as far back as the early 19th century. The articles and advertisements in these magazines can be used as a window into the time they were published both by showing us what society was like, and by showing us why certain aspects of society were the way they were, or how they got that way. My research is focused on *Ladies Home Journal* in the years 1967 and 1968. In these two years, the United States saw the beginnings of both the sexual revolution and a break from traditional gender roles for women. However, it is still clear through both the ads and the articles that this was a time where these things hung in the balance, and the nation

was polarized between tradition and change. Where the move away from traditional sexuality in American society was evident, we see a hesitance to fully accept this, and when traditional gender roles were challenged, those who challenged them were often being nudged back into tradition. I argue that by examining *Ladies Home Journal* in the years 1967 and 1968, one can see a perfect reflection of the conflicting views in society at this time—a constant struggle between tradition and change.

The July 1967 issue of *Ladies Home Journal* featured a section of commonly themed articles titled "The California Woman." In the introduction to this selection of articles, the editors wrote that "the California woman is different. She is different from other American women, indeed from women anywhere in the world, in varieties of ways.... She has greater total freedom, more mobility, yet greater personal security as a wife and mother... the "back home" social structure has evaporated."² In 1967, the idea of a woman with this kind of freedom was new to America, but according to George R. Bach, in his installment to the section, titled "Her Amazing Sexual Freedom," "she will be found tomorrow, I predict, all over the

world.”³ Bach argues that this “California woman” is the first woman in history who was truly free in every sense of the word, and in every way was equal to her male counterparts. He argued that these women were real people, which assumes that others were not, and says that they were “deeply and unashamedly sexual...” adding that, because of these things, “She is the best possible wife.”⁴ Based on this description, which sounds almost like that of some newly discovered subspecies of human, this type of woman had seemingly not existed before 1967. However, many historians, including John D’Emillio and Estelle B. Freedman, refute the idea that this sexual freedom and outward contempt for traditional social order was a new phenomenon in the mid to late 1960s. In their book, *Intimate Matters*, D’Emillio and Freedman claim that at the turn of the century, young members of the working class had created their own commercially based sexual subculture, but the difference was that these single youths faced widespread disapproval, whereas this new group of middle-class singles who enjoy similar pastimes are “glamorized;” because “they embodied the unspoken fantasies of a consumer society extended to the sphere of sex.”⁵

Bach’s article reflects the glamorization of an idea that was once scrutinized and in some cases harshly punished. The 1960s are seen as a turning point in American society, the beginning of the sexual revolution; the idea of the “California Woman” is a perfect picture of American society at the time... on the verge of breaking barriers, but still viewing those who have already

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broken them as different from the rest of society. Bach didn’t just discuss the sexual aspects of the California woman, though. He also argued that this is the first time women can “grow, develop, struggle, and mature as their own natures dictate, not as rules of a male-dominated society demand...” which he says is a “process... taking place in California” and adds that “it will soon spread elsewhere.”⁶ Even in his awe and praise of the California woman, Bach still echoed the other side of American society, the side still rooted in conservative values. He spoke of the sexual experimentation that was being done by these women and claimed that it was happening “more... than is good for any human being.”⁷ Bach himself seemed confused over whether sexual freedom was a good thing or a bad thing. On one hand, he said that it made her the perfect wife, but on the other, that having as many partners

as a woman can is not a happy experience, but is rather something that must be done to reach freedom—one of the “confusions and mistakes,” that are “part of the price that must be paid for progress.”⁸ This sentiment is similar to the feelings of mothers surveyed in a 1962 Gallup poll, in which 90 percent of mothers wanted their daughters not to follow the patterns of their own lives, but also thought that marriage and family would provide them a necessary security.⁹ This was a time in America where the previous generation wanted their children to have a better and different life than they did, but they also wanted them to have the same securities and traditional mores that they did.

The articles in *Ladies Home Journal* aren’t the only representation of the diverging society in this period of the United States. In fact, it is even more apparent in the advertisements in the magazine. In these ads, we can see the shift that is occurring all in one place. Not only in terms of sexuality, but the role of women in society as well. One example of this is found in the same issue as “The California Woman,” July of 1967. The ad is for a cleaning product called One Step Floor Care, and is one large photo of a woman in a bathing suit, laying on a surfboard on her kitchen floor, sunglasses in hand. Underneath the image, in large black print it reads “For women with more exciting things to do than scrub floors” and then in pink letters “One Step Floor Care” followed by “It cleans and waxes at the same time” in parentheses, and much smaller, underneath.¹⁰

The image of a woman in a bathing suit laying on a surfboard couldn’t relate more to the idea of a California woman. A California woman would certainly have more exciting

things to do than clean a floor, as well. This advertisement is perfectly representative of the struggle in society between the past and the changes occurring at the time, for many reasons. First, the fact that the woman is wearing a bathing suit represents the words of D’Emmilio and Freedman in *Intimate Matters*, when they write “as the Supreme Court in the 1950s and 1960s shook the legal edifice that kept sexual imagery within certain limits, the capitalist impulse seized upon sexual desire as an unmet need that the marketplace could fill.”¹¹ In other words, this is when sex began to sell. And sell is what *Ladies Home Journal*’s new editor and publisher, as of 1967, John Mack Carter did best, according to Mary Ellen Zuckerman. “Carter’s sales experience and sound editorial instincts” Zuckerman writes in her *History of Popular Women’s Magazines in the United States*, “enabled him to successfully determine what would sell, both to readers and to advertisers.”¹² Carter knew what the readers wanted to see, and what the advertisers wanted their ads to appear beside. According to Ruth Rosen in *The World Split Open*, as recently as 1962 “Much of American society still accepted the idea that “separate but equal”... suited men’s and women’s separate social roles rather well.”¹³ This means that only five years prior to the publishing of this ad, many Americans believed that women held the role of housekeeper, making the home presentable for their husband to come home to after work, and that is just how it was supposed to be. However, things had begun changing; women were beginning to get jobs, in fact, this number was steadily rising. In 1950, 29% of women worked outside their homes, which saw consistent increases to 35% in

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1965, and 42% in 1970.¹⁴ On top of working, according to Bach, they were also doing things such as “barhopping, scuba-diving, and weekendng in Palm Springs.”¹⁵ However, society wasn’t quite fully on board yet, meaning she could do those things, as long as she still cleaned the floors too, so says the advertisement for One Step Floor Care. Acknowledging that women now played roles outside of housekeeper, but maintaining that they are still in fact the housekeeper as well, is very representative of the collective voice of American society in 1967.

Readers of *Ladies Home Journal* in the years 1967 and 1968, whether they realized it or not, were often being subtly nudged toward following the traditional gender roles within a marriage in their reading of the magazine’s articles and advice columns. While D’Emillio and Freedman argue that “One important ideological source for the revamping of sexual beliefs was feminism,” as they note that “Most [younger hetero-

sexuals] looked forward to marriages in which roles blurred,” Walker argues that “The fact that articles advising on the marital relationship appeared in magazines intended for female readers suggests... [women] were responsible for making most of the adjustments necessary for improving marital happiness.”¹⁶¹⁷ Based on these contrasting arguments, it seems that in general women’s magazines at this time were attempting to reinforce a traditional view on marriage, which was no longer held by the younger generations.

One instance where we can see traditional views being reinforced in *Ladies Home Journal* is in the advice column article “In The Mail: Questions From You, Answers From Us,” which appeared in the January 1968 issue of the magazine. This was a regularly featured article in *Ladies Home Journal* in which questions that had been submitted by readers via mail were answered by the magazine’s panel of experts. In this

specific feature of the article, a woman confessed to Dr. Gideon and Barbara Seaman, two of the members of the panel of experts, that she often feels lonely despite having “a nice husband and nice kids.”¹⁸ Dr. and Mrs. Seaman, in their response to this confession and plea for help, placed the responsibility of fixing the situation—as Walker argues was often the case—on the wife. Specifically, the experts wrote “usually, it is up to the woman.”¹⁹ Not only is the responsibility placed on the woman, but they also point to a mother’s responsibilities, or their “three C’s... cooking, cleaning, and chauffeuring,” as a common cause of this problem.²⁰ Women’s magazines, including *Ladies Home Journal*, which were—as Walker argues throughout her book—shaping and defining the views and lives of the women who read them, were giving advice that relied on the fact that women had these specific roles in a marriage. Society, however, was on the verge of breaking this mold and parting from the traditions which the magazines remained rooted in, including the role of a wife as caretaker and housekeeper, among others.

The subject of sex outside of marriage had been one of much debate in the United States long before the 1960s, but it was during this decade that the dominant culture—the white middle class—had begun to accept it, at least the younger generations within it. According to David Allyn, this had really begun in the 1920s, but not on nearly as large a scale, or within the dominant culture, until the release of Helen Gurley Brown’s *Sex and the Single Girl*, which he marks as the beginning of the sexual revolution.²¹ Allyn argues that while the view of sex outside of marriage had become much

more relaxed, the double standard of single women having sexual relations never disappeared, as he writes “Each new generation of young girls was indoctrinated with the same message: A woman’s virginity is her most precious commodity.”²² Young girls were told by not only their parents, but by the media, and society in general, that to be a fit wife they must keep their virginity for their future husbands.

This double standard can be seen in *Ladies Home Journal* in the years 1967 and 1968, especially in its advertisements. It may have seemed subtle, but the way in which the reader’s attention was drawn to advertisements for feminine care products such as douches seems to have been specifically aimed at married women. This is especially evident in an ad that appeared in the July 1968 issue of the magazine, for Demure Liquid Douche. As you turn to pages 22 and 23 in the magazine, the first thing you see is very large, bold, black, print reading “HUSBAND?” This one word, husband, is the largest thing on the page, and it clearly was meant to draw your attention, which is exactly what it does. However, it is meant to draw the attention of married women in particular; women who have a husband. Once the ad has your full attention, you can read the much smaller print above “husband?,” which creates the full sentence of “What does douching with Demure have to do with your husband?” The ad continues on with text saying that using Demure is important because every man wants his wife to be “feminine... in every sense of the word.”²³ This is a feminine care product that was being sold to the reader as essential only to keep her sexual partner happy, but they didn’t just say sexual partner, they

specifically said “husband,” wherein lies the whole point of the ad. This was clearly meant for married women, despite the fact that the product being advertised could be used by single women who had sex as well. The creators of this ad, and the editors of *Ladies Home Journal* who placed it in their magazine, however, did not want to promote the idea of women who were not married having sex or using hygienic products which made her having sex ideal for her partner, even though it was essential for a married woman to do. D’Emillio and Freedman note that despite the negative view of sex outside of marriage by much of the dominant culture “from the mid-1960s onward... premarital intercourse among white females zoomed upward.” This double standard against single women engaging in sex was one that persisted in society at the time, and one that the editors of *Ladies Home Journal* seemed to agree with.²⁴

Through analyzing the articles and advertisements of the twenty-four issues of *Ladies Home Journal* in the years 1967 and 1968, it is evident that there was a struggle in American society at this time. The sexual revolution and feminism were gaining con-

siderable traction, but not everybody was on board. We can see this in the way women were represented in advertisements as the traditional housekeeper alongside articles celebrating the “California woman” who was breaking the barriers which had created this tradition. It is shown in the advertisements which suggest products which improve your sex life are only intended for married women, despite the booming rise in premarital sex among women in the dominant culture. The late 1960s in America were a time of polarization within dominant culture, between the generations of young adults and their parents especially. We can see this polarization in *Ladies Home Journal*, which is both a reflection of that society, and a large contributor to it. On one hand, there were articles which celebrated the breaking of tradition, while on the other, there was explicit reinforcement of the traditions which had been present for decades prior. This polarization seen in 1967 and 1968 represents both the hesitation at the time to change, as well as the mass destruction of barriers which came in the years which followed.

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Sex and the Early Novel: Unhappy Beginnings to Uncertain Ends

By Kat Gibson

The development of the English novel introduced a new stylistic writing form that hoped to gain the attention of young readers moving into Britain's urban areas in the eighteenth century. The cultivation of this new form quickly generated an increased interest in sex-centric pieces as writers and publishers alike soon discovered the profit that could be made from people's natural interest in the taboo. Though fictitious accounts, these works acted not only to delight and shock readers with the racy situations the protagonists found themselves in, but they would also generally promote morality by concluding these stories with the taming or repentance of the sex-deranged libertine. The rise of interest in science and medicine that was accompanied by a weakening religious grip on society also aided in creating the ideal circumstances for these works to be written and circulated. Science created a keen interest in the human body while pervading moral codes created the desire to instruct and influence social behavior. These interests materialized in these newly written novels, creating three prevalent categories of sex-centric literature: the more instructional conduct-based novel; the racy and

captivating "sermon and striptease" format; and the well-wishing pornographic anomaly. The variety of these categories acted to cast a wide net to attract and influence as many young readers as possible.

The precursor to the novel's interest in sex was Britain's changing outlook on social issues as the eighteenth century opened and progressed. Many scientists, philosophers, and researchers were developing new ideas on the nature of man in both body and soul. Roy Porter states the reason for these changes is that "all such new beliefs about man and his fate were also adjustments to socio-cultural change. England was fast urbanizing. Its expanding middle classes were possessed of some learning in their heads and money in their pockets... a population was emerging that was no longer submissively inured to the pains and privations of this vale of tears but eager to participate in pleasures of polite prosperity" (Porter 22). As society rapidly entered a new era of development, a changing mindset began to take hold: one that allowed the novel to develop and led to the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the middle of the century.

Nonetheless, women were still viewed

as second-class citizens and were seen closer to property than to people in relation to men. Mary Wollstonecraft theorized that “the ‘person’ of a woman was ‘idolized’, that is, respected only for its ‘sexual character’”. It was an admiration which paradoxically cheapened and weakened those upon whom it was bestowed” (Porter 258). Women’s sexuality was viewed as an object designed and ready for male acquisition. This ideology is highly prevalent in the early novel as many of them either have a primary focus or some type of subplot that concerns a woman’s virginity. Conduct books, which instructed women on how to best execute almost every aspect of life, stressed the importance of a woman’s duty to privatize her sexuality and sexual integrity for one man’s (her future husband’s) use. This led to extensive male interest in the conquest which thus became a central plot element in books about women’s chastity and subsequent ruin. Men are depicted as holding much less of a regard for the concept of marriage and strongly interested in and expectant of a woman’s sexual availability, especially if she is of a lower class.

The most famous novel that can be cited as a guide for proper sexual conduct is Samuel Richardson’s novel, *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740). The protagonist of the novel is depicted as an idealized pillar of chastity and morality as she fights against the typical promiscuity forced upon her as both a member of the lower class and as a housemaid. Pamela embodies the ideal behaviors of a virgin which were outlined in conduct books that were being written at that time, such as William Kendrick’s *The Whole Duty of Woman* (1794). When one compares the events of *Pamela* and her reactions, they fol-

low closely to what expectations are outlined in Kendrick’s conduct book, especially in how she handles the importance of her virginity. Richardson pins his protagonist in every situation that a contemporary conduct book told the same audience of readers to stay away from. This captivated the audience while also showing them that they too could find the strength to remain virtuous under any circumstances, and they would be rewarded by God for doing so. *Pamela*’s struggle ends with the ultimate reward: since she successfully protected her and her family’s Christian values and relationship to God, she marries high above her rank, becoming a gentlewoman.

Kendrick’s conduct book includes two separate chapters on chastity and virginity. These chapters warn against the sneakiness of men as they try to deceive young women into having sex and thereby stealing their virtue. He informs women to be wary of talking or indulging men too much in any way as it encourages them to pursue further. In the matter of kissing, Kendrick states: “doth he only ask a kiss of thy cheek, indulge not his frequent request; lest the sweetness thereof inflame him to desire, and the poison of his lips descend into thine own bosom” (Kendrick 51). This parallels *Pamela*’s Mr. B’s frequent advances on Pamela, though Kendrick describes this kind of situation in a much more benign and consensual way. Mr. B often catches Pamela, typically to kiss her, and though she fights him off and cries, he is indeed always more “inflamed” as he continues to pursue her more and more viciously as the novel progresses. Pamela initially trusts her master but after his first attack “all his Wickedness appear’d plainly. I struggled, and trembled, and was so

benumb'd with Terror... he kissed me two or three times, as if he would have eaten me" (Richardson 23). Another interesting tie between Kendrick's conduct book and *Pamela* is that they both use metaphors for eating in regards to sex; the chapter on chastity concludes, "by avoiding temptation thou mayst preserve thy chastity; but man is the serpent of deceit, and woman is the daughter of Eve" (Kendrick 51-52). Both Richardson and Kendrick believe that it is entirely a woman's duty to protect her virginity, and men are to be broadly depicted as vile serpents that will do anything to have sex.

In his chapter on virginity, Kendrick also warns girls to stay away from other women, as they spread curiosity with vulgar stories of intimacy. He states, "let not thine ear listen to the tale of a wanton, nor be privy to the amour of thy sister, even with her sworn spouse. Delight not in the romantic tales of love; the triumphant beauty and captive knight are deluding images to the passions. A fictitious tale may awaken a real curiosity, and that may prove fatal to thy peace" (83). *Pamela* plays upon this gimmick of soiled womanhood with the character of Mrs. Jewkes. Though Pamela did have a female friend in Mrs. Jervis, she was more of a mother figure, which is stated explicitly at the beginning of the novel when Pamela says she "uses me as if I were her own Daughter" (Richardson 17). Oddly enough, Kendrick does outline that the only women girls should be looking to for wisdom and as role models are their mothers, and since Mrs. Jervis is like a second mother for Pamela in the novel, their relationship is acceptable. The other female companion of Pamela, Mrs. Jewkes, acts as a foil—contrasting harshly against Pamela's beauty and

grace with her harshness and ugliness. She acts as the anti-Pamela, being consistently vulgar and horrifying, "she talk'd more like a *London* Prostitute, than a Gentleman's Housekeeper... she is a Disgrace to her Sex. And then she ridicules me, and laughs at my Notions of Honesty; and tells me, impudent Creature that she is! What a fine Bedfellow I shall make for my Master" (180). Though Pamela is left in the hands of Mrs. Jewkes for a prolonged period, she is, of course, not swayed by her promiscuity or immorality. Pamela is and must remain an undaunted model of exemplary high virtue for Richardson's readers. To him and many others of the era, she embodied a modern tale of strength and perseverance as she overcomes these trials in the name of God.

There are many excellent examples of eighteenth-century narratives that are either pornographic or, to a lesser degree, sexually explicit. However, there seem to be three ways to categorize and chart the development of salacious texts. First, there were novels about promiscuous women that garnered great attention due to the detailed nature of the accounts, the most famous of these being Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722). After this came the popularity of what were deemed "whore biographies" as they were real accounts (unlike *Moll Flanders*) of the sex lives of prostitutes. Beyond that developed the pornographic novel, which greatly increased the sex and promiscuity in a more cohesive narrative form. The greatest of these sex novels being John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1748) or simply *Fanny Hill*. Pornographic texts existed in France and Italy prior to the eighteenth century, but this is when they rose in prominence and popularity in Eng-

land due to the country's greater and more prolonged sense of conservatism (Peakman 62-63).

Of these the two novels mentioned, what is most fascinating is the way they handle what would have been deemed culturally as sexual misconduct. *Moll Flanders* can be aptly described as a "sermon and a striptease" as it allows its protagonist to sin but then forces her to repent for her deeds. It in a way acts as the midpoint between a conduct novel like *Pamela* and the pornographic *Fanny Hill*. Both Fanny and Moll break the aforementioned rules of womanhood and virginity, but Moll is still acting as a conduct guide. She is the example of why one should not break their chastity: it leads to a life of misery. Ultimately, however, the reader is supposed to have sympathy for Moll due to her poor circumstances. Unlike Pamela she was not in the position to refuse a life of sinful living, as Moll states, "the Vice came in always at the Door of Necessity, not at the Door of Inclination" (Defoe 103). She repeats numerous times throughout the novel that she feels terrible about her sins and crimes, for which she repents in various ways. Defoe's novel was intended to excite audiences with its explicit details of crime and prostitution but also to guide people away from leading a similar life to any degree.

Fanny Hill is incredibly subversive in the way that it breaks all of the conceptions of punishment and conduct set up by *Pamela* or *Moll Flanders*. When compared to Kendrick's conduct book, Fanny breaks both of the outlined rules previously mentioned in connection to *Pamela* but to a monumental degree. Early in the novel, Fanny witnesses sex for the first time after

she is unknowingly taken into a brothel. Her response is to masturbate and to immediately want to find a man, any man, to have sex with her. Fanny's sexual frustration is all-consuming and she thinks to herself, "I now pin'd for more solid food, and promis'd tacitly to myself that I would not be put off much longer with this foolery from woman to woman, if Mrs. Brown did not soon provide me with the essential specific" (Cleland 42). Again, we also have a food metaphor in connection to sex, however here it is used as a positive one. Here sex is being seen as a natural process of life and a manner to satiate one's internal desires. Additionally in this novel, Fanny has close relations with other women as is alluded to in the quote. She is, as Kendrick warns, introduced to sex by her bedmate, Phoebe, who Fanny allows to fondle her and receives and reciprocates sexual acts. Phoebe is also the one who led her to the scene where she viewed a fellow prostitute having sex with a customer, which is what sends her into the depths of her lust and sinful behavior.

Beyond this, *Fanny Hill* breaks the established order of many other British sex-centric novels—it does not punish our heroine for her salacious acts. Instead, she immediately finds a man that she falls in love with named Charles, who is also the man she allows to take her virginity. He is forced to leave her for a portion of the novel, but this is simply so Cleland could give her some additional moments of sexual intrigue, as she then becomes a prostitute. Closer to the end of the novel, however, she retires from prostitution and becomes a lover to a much older gentleman. This affords her the opportunity to gain some education, and when her lover dies, she becomes a wealthy

widow. At the novel's end, she reunites with Charles, who happily marries her. She befalls no tragedy like Moll and has no obstacles to overcome like Pamela. Fanny herself acknowledges this at the beginning of the novel, as it is structured as a letter that recounts these events to a friend, "I shall call to review those scandalous stages of my life, out of which I emerg'd, at length, to the enjoyment of every blessing in the power of love, health, and fortune to bestow" (5). Generally, as a pornographic novel, Cleland would not have had to worry about in any way instructing his audience; however, he does concern himself with wrapping the story up with a nice, happy ending. We can only assume that Cleland himself did not see this as purely a piece of pornography. It was crafted clearly as a narrative that he cared deeply about and believed held literary merit. Like both *Moll Flanders* and *Pamela*, it is written with powerful and provocative language which has allowed it to remain beside them as esteemed literature.

The development of the English novel opened endless possibilities for artistic

expression for eighteenth-century writers. They were no longer confined to write solely nonfiction or opinion pieces: they could now tackle what they believed were important moral issues and perhaps shape their audience through invigorating creative works. Likewise, these works allowed readers to enter new realms of experience that may be otherwise unattainable and could satiate their developing interests in modern science and morality. In particular, sex-centric novels redefined English depictions of female intimacy and questioned how they intersected with cultural standards of morality. Though sexual promiscuity was still largely looked down upon and punished, literature opened the possibility for even a prostitute to have a happy ending. These novels perfectly capture the unique disjuncture that existed in eighteenth-century British society as some desired to hold on to the traditional and others pushed boundaries into liberal new territory. Increasing literacy, urbanization, and development created the perfect storm to produce an era that ultimately redefined what meaningful writing could be.

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The Closet of a Drag Queen:

A Historical Analysis on the Fashion of Drag

By Olivia Baker

Introduction

Drag first became established in the United States in 1869, but was not popularized until the 1920s, specifically in New York as a part of gay subculture.¹ Since then, drag has taken hold of every major American city. While various definitions of drag exist within and outside of the drag community, for the purpose of this analysis drag will be defined as the over-exaggeration, or distortion, of gender. This is to act inclusively towards all members of the drag community, such as biological girls who over-exaggerate their femininity, individuals who wish to present androgynous, and transgender individuals who participate in drag despite their gender. As a result, drag will not be categorized as simply “cross-dressing,” but acknowledged rather as a broad act of gender distortion. Three separate skills create the artform of drag: performance, makeup, and fashion. This analysis will focus exclusively on the relationship between fashion and drag historically within the United States. This leads to my research question: What historical factors influenced the steady change of fashion within the drag community in the United States from the 1920s through the early 2000s? This question is

of interest to explore largely because it has remained ignored by historians. The history of the drag performer’s existence, hidden for centuries and difficult to rediscover, is widely left untouched due to its difficult nature to investigate or a lack of willing investigators. As a result, minimal research on drag exists, let alone research regarding the relationship between fashion and drag. Furthermore, this research is essential in order to clarify existing wider misconceptions surrounding the portrayal of fashion through drag. For example, many Americans assume that all drag is a man in a campy gaudy big-breasted outfit, which is simply not the case. This investigation is worthwhile as it will enable greater understanding of a largely-misunderstood and stereotyped community.

I will use a wide range of primary and secondary sources within the context of the twentieth century that relate to the fashion of the drag community. My primary sources include photographs, direct accounts, and interviews originating directly from the time period being described. Many of my secondary sources include journal articles that analyze aspects of historical context in relation to drag, predominantly written by various American professors. These sources helped form my conclusion that while fash-

ion choices by drag performers were primarily a response to oppression, mainstream fashion and celebrity culture also influenced common fashion trends within the drag community.

Investigation

Throughout history, drag fashion became a response to queer oppression and alienation of the queer community. In the 1920s, drag ball culture emerged as a means for queer Americans to cope against discrimination while simultaneously ridiculing the society that rejected them. The Roaring Twenties in Harlem, New York became the foundation for the future of America's drag scene. Impoverished and rejected queer people of color, specifically Black and Latino, made up the early drag community.² Resultantly, discrimination was heavily tied to both sexuality and race. They formed a system of "houses", or makeshift families with an older "mother" as the leader.³ Jennie Livingston, award-winning director of *Paris is Burning*, a 1990 documentary of house culture, describes these houses: "[They are] gay street-gang-like-groups...The gay 'mothers' create a substitute family, standing in for the nuclear family that's dissolved, or for the family that's failed to respect the son's gayness. Many members of houses have been harassed or even thrown into the street by their families, and the house members provide a support system, which can include places to stay, advice, and money."⁴ The makeshift families described by Livingston interwebbed to form a larger overall community. This community partook



Photograph of a drag ball from the 1920s.⁷

in "balls," or competitions where house members compete in various appearance-based "categories" based on gender and social class. Categories often mimicked the lives that were unavailable to queer people of color, such as the benefits of a middle-class life.⁵ This may have included dressing up in designer dresses or suits with suitcases and expensive magazines in hand.⁶

As a result, ballroom culture provided the opportunity for queer poor people of color to impersonate the economic and psychological benefits they were excluded from while also using fashion as a political commentary. By manipulating gender and social class, these individuals proved that these social roles are "malleable things" that do not define a person's worth and success. The drag community thus used fashion as a way to experience, in their own way, the life they were not allowed to live.⁸

While drag continued to spread and take root in other cities, such as San Francisco, Buffalo, Chicago, Memphis, New Orleans, and Pittsburgh, queer Americans still experienced intensive discrimination.⁹¹⁰ To

provide context, Historian J. Todd Ormsbee of San Jose State University explains that discrimination during this time took form both blatantly and discreetly:

“The material side of this [discrimination] took the obvious, in-your-face forms of police raids and entrapment, exclusion from meaningful social interactions such as family and church, and at its worst, incarceration and institutionalization. But there was also an internal, affective experience of [discrimination], which arose from the continual stream of information about homosexuality circulating in the American culture at the time.”¹¹

The “internal” discrimination Ormsbee references expressed itself in the psychological and legal beliefs of the time period. During this time period, psychologists labeled homosexuality as a “psychopathological condition.” For example, the American Psychiatric Association’s list of mental illnesses, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, listed homosexuality as a “sociopathic personality disturbance.” When the second edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* was released in 1968, homosexuality was classified as a “sexual deviation” along with fetishism, pedophilia, transvestitism, exhibitionism, voyeurism, sadism, and masochism.¹² As a result, homosexuality was widely viewed by the American public as a disturbing illness.

This belief translated to the American legal system. In 1960, every state had a sodomy law that inherently made sex between two men or two women illegal.¹³ This applied even if the couple was in the privacy of their own home. Similarly, queer Americans often

experienced discrimination in the court. The societal belief that homosexuality was connected to pedophilia, that homosexuals were more likely to be “emotionally irresponsible,” and act as a danger to children, led to “legal decisions and campaigns against gay and lesbian teachers, the rounding up of gay men in the sex crime panics of the 1950s and 1960s, and the backlash against the lesbian and gay freedom struggle represented by the 1977 “Save Our Children” campaign in Dade County, Florida.”¹⁴ Queer Americans struggled against the consequences of the American society’s preconceived definition of their homosexuality. As a result, this affected how a queer individual would be treated by their family, coworkers, and the larger society. Likewise, the discriminatory societal belief towards homosexuality led to inequality in regards to how a queer American was treated medically and legally.

Dramatic change of drag fashion did not appear until the Stonewall Riots, which had a profound impact on the perspective of drag and its fashion. The Stonewall Riots occurred in 1969 when policemen attempted to raid a popular gay bar, a practice common for the time, and “grieving drag queens mourning the death of Judy Garland struck back.”¹⁵ As a result, drag performers became idolized and glamorized by the queer community—to cross-dress in public was an empowering action. To look of the opposite gender, particularly for a man to appear as a woman, was marked as an act of civil disobedience against an unforgiving society.¹⁶ The Stonewall Riots made drag more widely accepted within the LGBTQIA+ community. The fashion of drag became less reliant on white rich culture and shifted towards individual taste, however, typically

still within the boundaries of strictly either masculine or feminine:



These photographs depict various drag performers from Kansas City during the 1960s. It is a part of the Private Birthday Party collection, a rediscovered collection of photographic slides surrounding Kansas' drag culture from the 1950s and 1960s.¹⁷

The value of these photographs as a historical source is increased by their origin; they act as a unique time capsule into the drag scene of the 1950s and 1960s. This is made even more significant to the historian when noted that many aspects of drag existed in solely an “underground scene” and failed to be recorded or photographed.

After the Stonewall Riots, the response to queer oppression in fashion was bold and abrasive—fashion became focused on a clear shift in gender, to look as a woman or man if you were not, rather than to mimic straight white rich society. The Stonewall Riots prompted the identity politics movement, which worked hand in hand with the subcultures of the 1960s and 1970s to create more controversial, edgy, and explicit drag. Mary Bernstein, the Professor of Sociology at the University of Cincinnati, defines identity politics as a term “widely used throughout the social sciences and the humanities to describe phenomena as diverse as multiculturalism, the women’s movement, civil rights, lesbian and gay movements.”¹⁸ To contextualize, the identity politics movement found within the United States during the 1960s and 1970s can be described broadly as a movement fighting for increased civil rights, class equality, LGBT recognition, and feminism. An argument stands that the decline of the civil rights movement provided the perfect breeding ground for the identity politics movement, while others credit the end of World War Two.¹⁹ The growth of the LGBT rights movement can be described to have grown out of the identity politics movement

and spurred on by the StoneWall Riots, as described aptly in the *Journal of the History of Sexuality*:

News of the Stonewall Rebellion in late June in New York City also inspired within a few months the formation of a number of independent gay liberation groups, including the Berkeley Gay Liberation Front (Berkeley GLF), Berkeley Gay Liberation Theatre, San Francisco Gay Liberation, and Gay Women's Liberation. As many scholars have noted, the rise of gay liberation was as much inspired by the milieu of New Left politics as it was by the Stonewall Rebellion. Appropriating the rhetoric of the student rights and anti-Vietnam War movements, Black Power, the Chicano movement, and women's liberation, gay liberation organizations framed gay oppression as part of a complex matrix of power relations within the capitalist state that also created racism, sexism, and class discrimination.²⁰

As a result, the political climate of the 1960s produced an environment where many queer people began to rebel against the normalcy of discrimination. This produced a drag style known as "gender-fuck," a brazen combination of traditionally masculine qualities (such as a penis or beard) and traditionally female qualities (such as long hair or breasts) that blurred the lines between gender, sex, and sexual practice.²¹ Gay protestors attending meetings, public demonstrations, and protests often dressed in gender-fuck drag, perhaps as a bearded man in a dress or a woman with a prosthetic

penis.²² However, the specific fashion of gender-fuck, maybe a flowy dress or black leather jacket, was defined by the subcultures and movements of the time, such as the hippy phase, glam rock, disco, and later punk rock.²³



Reputable American drag queen RuPaul in "gender-fuck" drag.²⁴

Overall, gender-fuck fashion within the drag community emerged as a response and tool to queer rebellion, a means to advocate freedom from gender by making gender unrecognizable.

However, even though societal views on homosexuality had largely progressed and modernized by the 1990s, homophobia was still embedded in the American society. For example, "in 1991, a restaurant chain, Cracker Barrel, fired all of its lesbian and gay male employees, announcing that it was a "family" restaurant where such employ-

ees were not welcome.”²⁵ Even violence towards queer Americans still existed at shocking rates. A report of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force recorded more than 1,800 instances of anti-gay violence in Boston, Chicago, Minneapolis, New York City, and San Francisco alone.²⁶ Just a few years earlier, a Gallup Poll revealed that 54% of respondents still believed that private and consenting homosexual relations should be illegal, despite the fact that sodomy laws had been removed by this time.²⁷

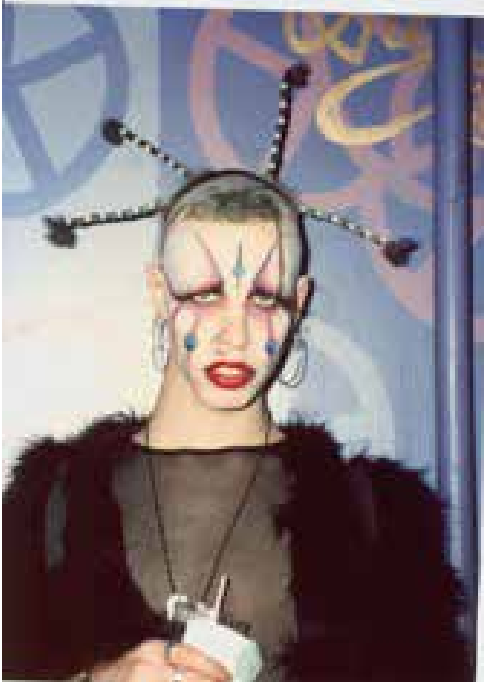
In spite of the removal of sodomy laws, queer Americans still faced legal barriers. In terms of education, by 1996 a total of 16 states had adopted anti-gay curriculum laws. For example, in 1991, Arizona Republicans “added several anti-gay provisions to an HIV- education bill... As the sponsor of these amendments explained: ‘Many people today still believe that homosexuality is not a positive, or even an alternative, lifestyle Medical science has shown that there are no safe methods of homosexual sex.’”²⁸ This Arizona Republican summarizes the common attitude of fear and disgust surrounding gay sexual-relations during this time period. Furthermore, homosexual relationships were not recognized by any state and faced discrimination in the government workforce. The federal government “openly denied lesbians and gay men the opportunity to serve their country in the military [and] effectively denied employment to gay people in the FBI [or] CIA.”²⁹ In summary, queer Americans still experienced immense amounts of discrimination and oppression.

By the early 1990s, some drag performers outright rejected mainstream fashion and gender ideals, giving birth to the vibrant and unorthodox club kid drag. Club kid drag

remains unique to the fashion movements before it: its fashion is defined by “bright colors and harsh lines”.³⁰ Club kid drag was defined by the drug-rampant club scenes of major cities such as New York City and Los Angeles. Drug use is suspected to be more common in a “subculture,” as a subculture community may be isolated from mainstream norms, and by 1990, a “queer subculture” was fully developed. The collection of queer-specific neighborhoods, dance clubs, and bars fostered an environment for “club drugs” such as cocaine, methamphetamine, and ecstasy.³¹ Consequently, it was common for club kid goers to be frequent users of hard drugs. The fashion itself may have included “japanese anime, fractured fairy tale Mother Goose chic gone amok, [or] apocalyptic chic.”³² However, club kid fashion also blurred gender lines. Frequently, club kid drag performers appeared androgynous; they ignored the gender construct that society had placed them in.

James St. James, a famous New York club kid performer from the 90s, commented “I think we definitely broke barriers and subverted gender stereotypes. We created our own trends, tackled taboos and lampooned social protocol...As for what it meant to us at the time: I think we really thought that we found a way to create our own utopia outside of society. We felt like we were living in a bubble where the rules of normal people didn’t apply to us.”³⁴ As a result, club kid fashion represented a movement against traditional gender and fashion norms. It ultimately became a tool for rebellion and self-protection against a discriminatory and judgemental society.

However, in addition to the role of oppression, mainstream fashion clearly



An unbothered club kid of the 1990s photographed by Alexis Dibiasio.³³

held historical influence on fashion within the drag community. Ballroom drag of the 1920s, while reflective of action against oppression, relied on mainstream fashion for inspiration. The houseball categories often mimicked and played to the popular fashion of the time. For example, drag performers would abide to mainstream fashion by donning Chanel in houseball competitions.³⁵ Similarly, mainstream fashion influenced changes in drag during the 1960s. Changes in what was considered socially acceptable within dress and gender presentation opened the doors of fashion within the drag community. For example, to provide context, the 1960s were marked by “the Beatles [inspiring] teenage boys to grow their hair long, and the hippies [growing] their hair

even longer; Black men and women [sporting] Afros to signify Black Power; feminists [removing] their bras and scorned makeup and high heels; and youths [wearing] blue jeans, floral print.”³⁶ Many drag performers imitated these fashion styles that emerged as a result of social movements. Without the wider historic movement towards these trends, these styles, such as heavier makeup and floral prints, may not have been explored by the drag community. This can similarly be seen by the fashion trends of the 1970s. Without the subculture fashion movements of the hippies, disco, and punk rock, it is unlikely that gender fuck drag would have emerged on its own.³⁷ As a result, the fashion trends of larger society often played a role in the fashion movements within the drag community.

However, it is worth noting that the modern relationship between mainstream fashion and fashion with the drag community is more strained. On one hand, it is evident that popular American fashion influences the fashion choices of drag performers. This is exemplified with the recent revival to the popularity of street style, a form of fashion characterized by affordability and commonality; its inspiration draws upon what the ‘average’ person may wear. Street style fashion draws upon mainstream stores, thrifting, and homemade creations.³⁸ In New York’s 2018 fashion week alone, designers such as Phillip Lim, Prabal Gurung, and Ralph Lauren all featured street style looks on their runways. Mirroring this are drag performers such as Aja, Biblegirl, and Aquaria who have all featured street style looks in their recent outfits. On the other hand, it can be argued that it has become increasingly difficult for drag performers to pull inspiration from

mainstream fashion due to the growing overlap of androgynous styles. As a result, modern drag performers are forced to turn back to the gendered styles of the past.³⁹ This may include the 50s hollywood glamour of Blair St. Claire, the glitzy burlesque gowns of Violet Chachki, or the over-the-top poofy lace dresses of Creme Fatale. Thus, in modern day, it is easily a combination of both present and past mainstream fashion trends that influence fashion styles within the drag community.

However, mass celebrity culture has also historically held a strong influence over fashion within the drag community. New technological advances in the 1930s gave birth to the phenomenon of celebrity culture that is still prominent in American society today. The invention of the television allowed for cinema to take hold of Hollywood, creating celebrity stars for the American public to adore. Prior to this, a widespread foundation for supporting a celebrity figure did not exist. Cinema allowed for the American public to watch, idolize, and fall in love with the actors of Hollywood.⁴⁰

In order to assess how celebrity and Hollywood culture has affected the fashion of the drag community, one must first explore why drag performers attached themselves to Hollywood figures. The gay community's cult fascination with film and movie-stars can be explained with various conclusions. One explanation offers that, to drag performers, movie stars such as Mae West embodied the "essence of camp," or, in other words, the "playful enactment of the theatricality and artificiality that sustain all sex roles."⁴¹ This perspective argues that the faux over-done femininity of movie stars appealed to queer audiences that understood

the facade of gender roles. Similarly, another explanation states that the characteristics of the individual movie star herself appealed to queer audiences. For example, a journal article exploring Judy Garland's relationship with the gay community argues that "three characteristics make [Judy Garland] particularly available for queer identification and pleasure: androgyny, camp, and ordinariness."⁴² This, in effect, argues that the celebrity's own characteristics attract queer followers. However, a more complex assessment of the relationship between the drag community and hollywood culture offers that queer individuals clung to movie stars as a means of coping with oppression. For some, it may have been the appeal of independent outward feminine expression paired with self-protection from an ostracizing society. In other words, this may be described as "the gay man's exploitation of cinematic visions of Hollywood grandeur to elevate himself above his antagonistic surroundings and simultaneously express membership in a hedonistic demimonde."⁴³ In a way, drag performers may have idolized Hollywood celebrities as a form of coping with their compromised masculinity. As a result, it can be concluded that a likely explanation for the drag performer's obsession with cinema stars is reflective of self-protection against a homophobic society.

Thus, since the genesis of Hollywood culture, drag performers have masqueraded themselves as the powerful and independent women that appeared on screen. Cinematic culture revolutionized the act of drag: the simple act of emphasizing gender died. Cinema gave birth to a drag that became "much more specific and complex, not the imitation of a woman, any woman, but an imitation of

the woman, the star, the Mae Wests, Judy Garlands, and Marilyn Monroes.”⁴⁴ Consequently, it is not difficult to see the impact of celebrity culture on the modern day drag community. Some drag performers adorn the names of celebrities as a part of their dragsona: Naomi Smalls is born from Naomi Campbell and Biggie Smalls, Nina West draws from Mae West, Katorie Karbdashian-Williams steals from Kim Kardashian, and Marc Minaj embodies Nicki Minaj. Even yet, other drag performers base entire performances and outfits off of celebrities. For example, Landon Cider is known for his spot-on Pitbull impersonation. In some cases, impersonation and embodiment of a celebrity becomes a drag performer’s entire career, as is the case with Derrick Barry, who impersonates Britney Spears, and Chad Michaels, who impersonates Cher. Thus, for some drag performers, celebrities became a character to portray.



A drag queen from 1956 imitating Marilyn Monroe.⁴⁵

However, in other cases, the impact of Hollywood culture is less apparent. While celebrity culture has led to the increase in direct impersonation and mimicking, Hollywood movies have also slyly held an influence in the discrete fashion choices of drag. For example, Hollywood culture has immortalized vintage styles such as sleek gowns, long gloves, and feather boas. Not only that, but modern day cinema stands as a beacon for up-and-coming fashion trends. The modern drag performer watches the Hollywood glamour stars for fashion inspiration to utilize.

In summary, fashion within the drag community is constantly evolving and re-working itself to mold to the political and popular strains of the society it is confined to. The ever-changing status of fashion within the drag community is a multi-faceted history that can be credited to many overlapping factors. The sharp pressure of oppression has evidently been the most impactful in shaping how fashion is portrayed in the drag community. In particular, societal isolation and rejection of LGBTQ+ individuals coaxed strong reactions in the form of drag fashion: sometimes mimication as a defense mechanism, sometimes bold and vulgar as a means of rebellion. However, it must be acknowledged that mainstream fashion and celebrity culture has historically also influenced fashion within the drag community. Mainstream fashion has always held influence over fashion within the drag community; drag performers looked to what was up-and-coming and popular as inspiration for creatively designing their own outfits. This aspect only became amplified with the genesis of cinema and celebrity culture. Celebrities—and their respective fashions—

became idolized and pursued after. Thus, the influence of celebrities throughout history has also shaped the popular fashion of drag.

All of these aspects have led to the ultimate creation of modern drag: a complex artform motivated by politics but shaped by old historic fashion trends. Modern drag exists outside of one definition. Modern drag is the campy man in a wig, the bearded comedic man in a dress, a woman dressed hyper-feminine, individuals that defy any recognizable gender. Modern American

drag is shaped by politics, to combat a hostile government, society, and gender norms. However, its fashion is inspired by everything from celebrities, worldwide trends, and niche styles such as underground rock'n roll fashion or Harajuku fashion from Japan. Modern fashion within the drag community is the culmination of the generations of drag performer's that came previously. Thus, the hand of oppression, mainstream fashion, and celebrity culture can be seen even in the modern drag performer's outfit.

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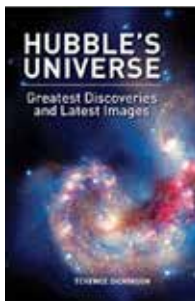
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Book Review by Josh Wolf

Hubble's Universe:

Greatest Discoveries and Latest Images

Author: Terence Dickinson

Publisher: Firefly Books Ltd., 2012

One of the most significant advancements that mankind was able to achieve in the 20th century was the development of space telescopes that could capture all celestial activities beyond the Milky Way galaxy. One optical instrument, the Hubble Space Telescope, is no exception. Named after American astronomer Edwin Hubble who discovered that redshifts in the spectra of extrasolar galaxies are equal to their distances in 1929, this scientific tool has provided humanity with a colorful display of our solar system. Such illustrative images can be explained in *Hubble's Universe: Greatest Discoveries and Latest Images*, written by Canadian award-winning astronomy writer Terence Dickinson. His goal in writing this portfolio was to provide his readers with an explanation of how astronomy allows us to analyze the different activities that occur within the universe. He recorded this information in a book called *Hubble's Universe: Greatest Discoveries and Latest Images*. This cosmic portfolio commemorates the numerous achievements that the Hubble Space Telescope was able to produce during its quarter-century-long voyage in space. Its achievements include our universe's expansion rate, the galactic production of stars,

and the stellar activities of the eight planets.

After it was launched into low Earth orbit by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration on April 24th, 1990, the Hubble Space Telescope captured exotic images of the universe. Coupled with a 2.4-meter main mirror, its priorities included measuring the universe's expansion rate, locating any distant galaxies, and ascertaining the chemical components of space between the constellations. The Hubble Space Telescope soon provided astronomers with vivid snapshots of materials that demonstrated how the universe was originally formed, and how galaxies evolved from smaller celestial structures in accordance with their distances. A deep view of the universe provides astronomers with direct visual corroboration that our universe is indeed changing.

As the universe continuously ages, both the birth and death rates of stars increase in coordination. An example of a cloud bubble that produces stars through the fusion of small dust particles and cold hydrogen gas as presented in *Hubble's Universe: Greatest Discoveries and Latest Images* would be IRAS 05437+ 2502, which is located within the Taurus constellation. One of the most mysterious celestial objects ever captured by

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Upon close observation, a science student might ask what we have learned from capturing stellar activity. The answer, according to Dickinson, is that our universe is a convoluted celestial rift of different modules and elements.

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the Hubble Space Telescope, IRAS 05437+2502 reflects light from nearby star clusters, giving it a solid appearance, even though it is close to a vacuum. This constellation is unique to the reader as it characterizes where the Earth and the Sun can be located within our solar system.

Aside from the process by which stars form in the nebula of our Milky Way galaxy, the Hubble Space Telescope also captured the stellar activities of the eight planets. Since both the terrains and temperatures of the eight planets vary depending on their position in the solar system as well as proximity to the Sun's orbit, the Hubble Space Telescope provided astronomers with stark images of certain planets such as Mercury that exhibit environments that would be inhospitable for living organisms, or even basic elements like water. Hubble also caught snapshots of different celestial conditions that change over time depending

on the circumstances that surround a planet. For instance, the Great Red Spot in Jupiter's atmosphere is known by astronomers to be a massive storm, which produces winds that reach speeds of about 400 kilometers per hour. Another instance of an intricate stellar activity would be the tilting of Saturn's rings. Over a seven- year period, Hubble photographed Saturn experiencing a gradual tilt caused by its 27- degree angle in the Jovian planet's axis. This movement allowed astronomers to understand how Saturn can traverse about one- quarter of its orbit and display the full range of its axis tilt to their vantage point on Earth.

Upon close observation, a science student might ask what we have learned from capturing stellar activity. The answer, according to Dickinson, is that our universe is a convoluted celestial rift of different modules and elements. “Every... planet that has been visited by spacecraft has held its share

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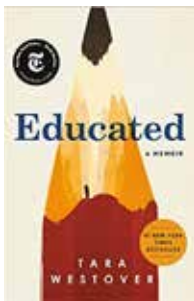
Throughout its services for NASA, Hubble has acted as a security camera for analyzing any unusual events that take place in the universe.

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of surprises and offered unpredicted details. The strategy of exploration was first to fly by planets, then to send planetary orbits that would loop around these worlds to carry out global photographic surveys” (Dickinson 279). Throughout its services for NASA, Hubble has acted as a security camera for analyzing any unusual events that take place in the universe. It has witnessed a massive series of unexpected transitory events, like the collisions between planets and celestial objects. Even the Earth has been victim to interplanetary smashups, such as falling asteroids, that yield unpredictable results for astronomers who study these flurries from safe distances.

In conclusion, Terence Dickinson’s book, *Hubble’s Universe: Greatest Discoveries and Latest Images*, commemorates the numerous achievements that the Hubble Space Telescope was able to produce during its quarter-century-long voyage in space. This tool’s achievements include our universe’s expansion rate, the galactic production of stars, and the stellar activities of the eight planets. Aimed at an audience

of college students who study astronomy, Dickinson chronicled the discoveries of our universe that were made possible by Hubble. After reading this book, young astronomers could enhance their knowledge of how machines in space can capture images of celestial activity and their formation in conjunction with the solar system’s elements. I believe that even college students, like myself, who are not majoring in science can learn about the astronomical forces around our planet through this portfolio due to its colorful photographs. Dickinson finished his book with the notion that, in 2018, the Hubble Space Telescope would be succeeded by a more improved device called the James Webb Space Telescope. This new instrument is now located one million kilometers in a gravitationally stable area of the Moon’s atmosphere. It has a giant segmented mirror that produces seven times the light-collecting power of Hubble. Only time will tell if the James Webb Space Telescope will capture more discoveries and observations than what Hubble was able to achieve.



Book Review by Kimberly Satterfield

Educated

Author: Tara Westover

Publisher: Random House, 2018

In her 2018 memoir *Educated*, Tara Westover tells a compelling story about her unquenchable desire to receive a formal education, despite a lack of support from her strict Mormon family. Westover grew up by a mountain called Buck's Peak in Idaho, which was a rough and uncivilized place. Westover's father, although extremely charismatic, was a deeply paranoid man who used his Mormon faith to justify his and his family's backwards lifestyle. He forced his children to work in his scrap yard, and he rejected education and medicine, claiming that the government was using these tools as a way of brainwashing society. Westover's mother was not very involved in the lives of her children, as she was sickly and prone to migraines as a result of a terrible car accident. Because of her father's beliefs and her mother's apathy, Westover never set foot in a classroom and was hardly educated at home either, besides learning to read so that she could read the Bible. As Westover grew older, she rejected the life her parents wanted for her, and instead set her mind towards studying for the ACT. Because of her hard work and dedication, she scored high enough to gain entrance into Brigham Young University, a Mormon college in Utah, and the next chapter of her life began.

University was not an easy time for Westover. Going away to college can be difficult even for well-adjusted individuals, and Westover's upbringing provided her with even more challenges. Before her classes even started, Westover was shocked by her roommates, who wore tank tops and went shopping on the Sabbath. What shocked Westover most of all was that these girls, as well as most of her other classmates, were Mormons too. Westover began to understand that the way she had been raised was very atypical, even within the Mormon faith. Once classes began, things only got worse for Westover. Having never been in an academic setting before, she was forced to play catch-up, learning routines that the other students had been practicing since elementary school. A shocking moment for Westover was when she came across the Holocaust in a textbook. Having never heard the word before, Westover researched it. Her horror at having never heard about the Holocaust was second only to the horror of the event itself. Wondering what other important events she had never heard of, Westover vowed in that moment to educate herself. Although her college experience was difficult, Westover persevered and forced herself to grow as a person. Because of her willingness to learn, Westover now has a

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The biggest takeaway from *Educated* is that we are only limited by how hard we are willing to work, which, in a way, means that we are not limited at all.

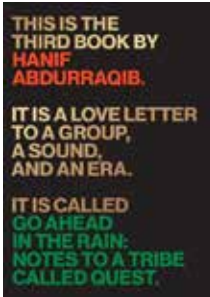
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BA from Brigham Young University, an MPhil from Trinity College, and a PhD from Harvard. Westover has become educated in every sense of the word.

Although the title of the memoir is *Educated*, Westover spends just as much time writing about her family as her education. Westover describes in detail her complicated relationships with the members of her family, particularly with her father and her older brother Shawn. Westover writes, “It’s strange how you give the people you love so much power over you” (199). The biggest struggle she faced was breaking free from the toxicity of people she cared about. Westover loved her father and wanted to be his little girl forever, but she knew that staying with him and the rest of her family would only stifle her. Westover’s relationship with her brother Shawn was even more strained. He was bipolar, fluctuating between being her best friend and her abuser. Shawn claimed that his abuse was all fun and games, and Westover wanted desperately to believe him. When discussing her family, Westover honestly and openly lays out the perspective of the abused. It would be easy for her to gloss over the difficult moments and emotions of her

past, but Westover’s honest retelling of her life shows other abused people that they are not alone, and that they too can overcome their past and accomplish great things.

Westover’s vulnerability is what truly sets this memoir apart. She turns her readers into confidants, allowing them to fully understand the intricacies of her life. Westover would be justified in bragging about her accomplishments, but she never does: The tone of her book is always humble and gracious. Westover is not bitter at her family for the way that she was raised. She recognizes the mistakes they made, but she has also realized that the difficulties of her past make her who she is today. Westover grew from an uneducated eighteen-year-old into one of the most highly educated people in the country. Her growth did not just take place in a classroom, nor is it measured by the amount of degrees she has. Although her upbringing did not make it easy for her, Westover became a kind, caring, and sensitive adult who now uses her voice to make a change in the world. The biggest takeaway from *Educated* is that we are only limited by how hard we are willing to work, which, in a way, means that we are not limited at all.



Book Review by Lucy Clark

Go Ahead in the Rain

Notes to A Tribe Called Quest

Author: Hanif Abdurraqib

Publisher: University of Texas Press, 2019

Hanif Abdurraqib's *Go Ahead in the Rain: Notes on a Tribe Called Quest* takes its readers through the history of the seminal rap group. Abdurraqib highlights not only the history of black music in America which gave influence to the group, but the history of their surrounding environment, and the beginnings of the rap genre. He does this in many ways: through detailed retellings of important moments in the social history of rap through the 1990s, personal anecdotes, and letters which directly address the group members. The book familiarizes its audience with A Tribe Called Quest, as well as the era to which they belong. It captures the beginnings of the group—and the genre itself—the peak of their career, and their downfall. Abdurraqib also takes the readers through the ups and downs of the members personal lives, and how their differences affected the group. *Go Ahead in the Rain* feels as though it is Abdurraqib's love letter to the group. The intimacy of his writing on the group and era of rap music will allow the readers of his book to feel a similar bond to A Tribe Called Quest, whether there was any prior connection or not.

Abdurraqib begins by explaining the genre's history—detailing the importance of chanting and percussion as a way for slaves to communicate, to the blossoming of jazz

as “a music born out of necessity,” and the rise of hip-hop as a genre born out of all of the above (3). He goes on to recount his own early interest in music—specifically jazz, beginning with the trumpet. He explains that his passion for music played a major role in his growth during adolescence. The reader quickly gets a sense of Abdurraqib's attempt to honor not only the roots of jazz, but how the rap genre, especially A Tribe Called Quest, was able to blossom from its rich history.

Early in the book, Abdurraqib approaches the story by presenting a moment in history, giving the reader a context of the time and climate, to which he then relates—sometimes lovingly contrasting—it to his own childhood. An especially relatable note here is Abdurraqib's contrast of the East versus West coast debate that sparked in the early days of 90's rap, in the uniquely relatable context of growing up in Columbus, Ohio. This works to set up a triangle of familiarity and experience between the reader, Abdurraqib, and A Tribe Called Quest. That is, he pulls in the reader to empathize with his feelings surrounding the music, which was unique to both certain moments of adolescence, and history, and in doing so starts to bond the three together.

However, Abdurraqib switches gears in

the middle of the book. Instead of situating the group's story in relation to himself and his youth, he gives a more detailed narration of the history of rap in the 90's, and how A Tribe Called Quest was situated in between it all. The middle of the book seems to be somewhat of a lull in the grander scheme; the reader wants to return to this connective triangle, but instead can feel as if they're being taught a history lesson. However, Abdurraqib delivers the information in a more pleasant manner than the reader may be used to. Instead, he delivers it in a very conversational, laid-back manner, as if a friend or family member were giving you a quick catch-up on the conflict between Tupac and Biggie, or the downfall of sampling in rap music. Abdurraqib also returns to this original style of personal relation towards the last third, making the informational section relevant, and the personal anecdotes more worthwhile.

Abdurraqib details the group's break-up, but he also details the rather bumpy ride of their reunions; through tours, Michael Rapaport's documentary, their performance at the Grammy Awards, and the tragedy and impact of Phife Dawg's death. Abdurraqib applies his personal touch in a letter to Phife Dawg's mom, gracefully situating himself in relation to her loss and his own, and continues in a letter to Q-Tip, and finally, Phife Dawg, addressed as Malik. This shifts the tone of the book, and, as Abdurraqib has built such a close relationship not only between himself and A Tribe Called Quest, but the reader and the group, the impact is something tragically beautiful, and needless to say, deeply impactful.

Go Ahead in the Rain: Notes to a Tribe Called Quest is not only a story about an

influential rap group. It is a story of connection, of brotherhood, of love and pain, a coming-of-age and a purposeful regression. Abdurraqib details A Tribe Called Quest's SNL performance in 2016, painting the indescribable political and social climate in a way that is felt deeper than it is understood. In their performance, Q-Tip opens by saying "We are all one, we are the people," a sentiment needed at a time of deep tension in the country. Abdurraqib ends his book in saying "If I close my eyes now, I think I see the world as A Tribe Called Quest would have me see it. I think I can see my people dancing in the streets, like nothing they loved has ever been set on fire" (206). This is a story of people as they are at their most intimate, behind the persona and the media's eye. This is a story of—as Abdurraqib calls it—letting "a room be carried away" (206). It is a story for lovers and strangers to rap alike, for 90's kids and children born to a new era of hip-hop, for people who both need and want to be reminded of the history behind the group and the era, to be reminded of the importance and richness of *A Tribe Called Quest*.

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It is a story of connection, of brotherhood, of love and pain, a coming-of-age and a purposeful regression.

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Book Review by Miranda Hilt

The Nickel Boys

Author: Colson Whitehead

Publisher: Doubleday, 2019

Colson Whitehead's novel *The Nickel Boys* tells the harrowing story of the abuses faced by the boys sentenced to the fictional Nickel Academy. The story is based on the Dozier School for Boys, a real-life Florida reform school which operated from 1900 to 2011. Set in 1960's America, the novel opens by introducing Elmwood Curtis, a studious, dedicated high school senior falsely accused of grand theft auto and sentenced to the reform school. Underneath its façade, Nickel Academy is a living hell in which the boys are subjected to physical, sexual, and psychological abuse. While at Nickel, Elmwood befriends a boy named Turner, who has become deeply cynical about life and is just attempting to survive his imprisonment. Elmwood, however, is more hopeful and determined to overcome the abuse, keeping a record of the injustices occurring and those involved. The contrast of their personalities becomes a major plot element and ultimately determines the fate of the two boys. *The Nickel Boys* is a story that consistently confronts the historic and persistent racism, segregation, and violence towards Black Americans—a result of American chattel slavery and Jim Crow. Whitehead weaves the lives of Elmwood and Turner together in ways that only become fully understood at the end of his novel.

Abandoned by his parents, the protagon-

ist—Elmwood—is raised by his grandmother, Harriet. She has high aspirations for her grandson, encouraging his pursuit of education and employment. The narrator notes that “White men were always extending offers of work to Elmwood, recognizing his industrious nature and steady character, or at least recognizing that he carried himself differently than other colored boys his age and taking this for industry” (19). The assumption that Elmwood must be industrious because of his intelligence and work-ethic represents the exploitation of Black bodies for profit. First, he works for Mr. Marconi at the local tobacco shop and is then “rented out” to the townspeople surrounding Nickel Academy to complete menial labor. It should also be mentioned that the building in which vicious beatings are inflicted on the students of Nickel is called the “White House” by the Black inmates. The whiteness of the building can be seen as commentary on the complexion of the abusers and the way in which the traumas inflicted within its walls were white-washed by the institution for over a hundred years. The confrontation of the historical transgressions against Black Americans is a prominent theme in the novel.

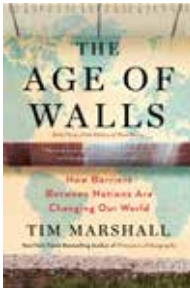
Using the teachings of Martin Luther King Jr. as his guide, Elmwood becomes deeply passionate about participating in the civil rights movement. After receiving the

album *Martin Luther King at Zion Hill* as a Christmas gift, Elmwood pores over every word and turns it into his own moral code. Through these teachings, he realizes “There are forces that want to keep the Negro down, like Jim Crow, and there are small forces that want to keep you down, like other people, and in the face of all those things you have to stand up straight and maintain your sense of who you are” (27). Elmwood realizes a certain determination and selfhood that helps him to remain hopeful during his imprisonment at Nickel. However, his strong moral code poses a risk, putting him in harm’s way in a society in which violence is so deeply ingrained. After trying to break up a fight, Elmwood is taken to the “White House” where he’s beaten with “Black Beauty,” a torture device used as punishment by the institution. King’s teachings inform Elmwood’s selfhood and moral code, which cause Elmwood to be resolute on overcoming the horrifying position in which he finds himself. However, Elmwood’s strong sense of right and wrong also cause his abusers to view him as an agitator in the institution.

During his sentence, Elmwood meets a boy named Turner. This is Turner’s second stint at Nickel Academy, and he is resolved to keep his head down and avoid confrontation. Elmwood and Turner bond during Elmwood’s lengthy stay in the Nickel hospital following his intense beating at the hands of Superintendent Maynard Spencer. Turner frequently eats soap, making himself physically ill to get out of labor. While chatting in the hospital, Turner advises Elmwood that “The key to in here is the same as surviving out there—you got to see how people act, and then you got to figure out how to get around them like an obstacle course. If

you want to walk out of here,” (82). Turner has been emasculated by his time at Nickel and is focused on surviving his sentence, rather than on resistance or action. During a “surprise” inspection, they have the opportunity to pass along Elmwood’s records of the abuses going on within the reformatory, a decision in which both boys are pushed to uncharacteristic behaviors. The consequences of their actions ultimately determine their fate at Nickel Academy.

This novel gives a stark look inside the traumas endured by Black Americans well into the 20th century. It confronts the reader with the persistence of racism, segregation, and physical abuse of Black bodies, even to this day. This novel is particularly relevant in today’s society where, according to Collier Meyerson in the article “When Protesting Police Violence Puts You in the Crosshairs,” “Black men are six times more likely to be incarcerated than white men, and Black women more than twice as likely as white women. Black men are [also] three times more likely than white men to die at the hands of law enforcement.” Because of its societal relevance, this book would be enjoyed by anyone interested in the civil rights movement or the operation of Jim Crow during the 1960s, as well as those who enjoy historical fiction. However, due to its graphic descriptions of both physical and sexual abuse, it is recommended for those of ages fourteen or older. In writing *The Nickel Boys*, Colson Whitehead has created a powerful piece of fiction that recognizes the real-life victims of the Dozier School for Boys, while invoking a powerful conversation about the continued mistreatment of Black Americans.



Book Review by Erin Van Gilder

The Age of Walls:

How Barriers Between Nations Are Changing Our World

Author: Tim Marshall

Publisher: Scribner, 2018

As the third in his three-part “Politics of Place” series, *Age of Walls* continues Tim Marshall’s exploration into the theme of nationalism in a globalized world. Through eight case studies, capturing instances of both inter and intra-state conflict and division, the author strives to display the challenges of maintaining identity in a globalized world. When ideas and issues arise that provoke fear and instability, people seek comfort in sameness and relatability to protect themselves from these threats. When this narrative of “us vs them” is drawn, with one side inevitably rising as the perceived superior, walls are constructed (7). *Age of Walls* is written for a general audience to achieve greater insight into world issues of nationalism and the survival of the nation-state. Through the use of case studies, Marshall helps to illustrate these global issues in action with enough clarity and conciseness for an interested global citizen to understand. The value in this reading is its ability to reach a general audience at a time in history when the problem of “fortress mentality” has become more pervasive than ever (1). It allows its readers to appreciate why these walls and divisions are in place and to question their validity—to question the state of international relations.

Age of Walls refutes the misconception that, in an age of increased globalization, we are breaking down borders faster than we are constructing them. Separating himself from others in the field, Marshall does not discredit nationalism. Although nations are regarded as imagined and false constructs, Marshall warns that, “there is nothing false about people’s feelings concerning national identity,” and although imagined, it is not nonexistent (199). Marshall’s focus on the concept of “nation” is essential to understanding the depths of people’s allegiance to it. Identities are polarizing into specialized factions, and over time, people are coming to conclude that they are the one source of truth and that those who disagree are lesser individuals. Making this concept even more relevant in the modern-day is the use of social media as an amplifier of extremist sentiments. With the influx of immigration in recent decades, culture and identity have been regarded as values “under attack,” furthering the division of “us vs. them” (206). However, as Marshall correctly recognizes, immediate condemnation of nationalistic sentiments serves to worsen the problem at hand. It is normal that with the break-down of homogeny, people feel unsure of their place in the world. To dismiss and chastise

these legitimate fears drives people towards bigotry and into the hands of extremists (240). Instead of criticism, Marshall suggests working towards the root of their fears.

Fear is what drives the creation of walls. In the post-9/11 world, we have been fed the rhetoric of safety from terror, told of how the world “can be downright scary,” and taught to fear those outside of our man-made borders (109). This does not mean that walls are useless constructions. Casualties in the Middle East and between Israel and Palestine have been mitigated by the use of walls. Though in cases like the United States, since 9/11, despite safety measures put in place to fight foreign terrorism, 80% of terrorist activity has come from within (53). Conflict from within and the barriers we see in our own countries divide as well. In almost every case that Marshall explores, there is a definite divide between rich and poor. The Great Wall was built with the idea that on one side was civilization and the other was chaos (15). This demarcation still exists in China. Walls constructed between India and Bangladesh serve to keep poor migrants from entering a country of which they were once a part. Terrorism is used as an excuse, but it is the movement of the poor that prompt walls (135).

As the world becomes more globalized, nations are confronting, with much greater regularity, value systems and cultures different from theirs. Exposure to such a broad spectrum of cultural values that are so different from theirs is overwhelming and creates the impression that to overcome these disparities is impossible. When divisions seem insurmountable, walls go up (248). The problem does not disappear once the wall is built, it merely hides behind it—ever-present

and looming. As foretold by graffiti on the Israeli-Palestine border wall: “This wall may take care of the present, but it has no future” (75). It offers a false sense of resolution. So, what then does Marshall propose as a lasting and long-term solution? This is where he, like most, fails to deliver a promising resolution. Though one must agree that to solve one of the greatest issues in international relations within 250 pages is an unrealistic expectation. Marshall claims that if nations were to accept universal brotherhood and there was no longer a competition for resources, there would be no walls (255). His solution would suggest a complete reorganization of the international order and a universal appeal towards peace and harmony among all humans—an indisputably idealistic aspiration. Marshall recognizes that this is a tall order and that it may not be seen for decades to come but, as if to inspire hope in the closing pages of his work, he takes time to acknowledge the progress that the global community has made. Through the European Union, NATO, World Bank, Mercosur, and others like them, strides have been made in establishing international unity and cohesiveness.

There is always work to be done. Even if the physical barriers were to be taken down, others would still exist. As stated by former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, referring to the Arab-Israeli conflict: “... [t]here remains another wall...a barrier of suspicion; a barrier of rejection; a barrier of fear, of deception; a barrier of hallucination” (119). It must not be forgotten that barriers themselves stand for something greater. As the world becomes more interconnected, we need to confront, or at least be cognizant of, the serious divisions that separate us.



Book Review by Selena LaBair

Sing, Unburied, Sing

Author: Jesmyn Ward

Publisher: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2017

Jesmyn Ward's historically based fictional novel set in 21st century Mississippi follows the experiences of an African American family entangled by complicated race relations and the hardships of rural life. The narrative style is roulette like, the characters gradually progressing the timeline as they alternate the narrative spotlight at the beginning of each chapter. Each experience seen through the eyes of one character is then witnessed through the eyes of another in the following chapter. With each added reflection, the family's history becomes more developed and the complexities of the present bloom. The timeline of the book takes place predominantly over a period of a few days, though the bulk of the text is spent reflecting on past experiences that have led them to the present. Thus, the plot acts as a creeping tide, flowing forward, reverting back, and then inching forward ever so slightly.

The bulk of the story oversees the journey of Leonie, Jojo, Kayla and Leonie's friend, Misty, as they travel into the heart of Mississippi to pick up Michael. Michael is Leonie's boyfriend and the father of Jojo and Kayla. He is soon to be released from Parchman Farm, the same penitentiary that Pop, Jojo's grandfather, once was incarcerated in. Michael is not trusted by the

elders in Leonie's family as he comes from the same racist white family that the man who murdered their son and Leonie's brother, Given, came from. Not only is Michael the cousin to Given's murderer, he is the son of parents who refuse to acknowledge the existence of their son's black girlfriend and Michael's mixed-race children. These details added with the already exponential stress of reuniting with a distanced family member, cause heightened levels of stress during the trip and the interactions that followed.

Not only is there a cloud of nervousness about Michael's reunion with the family, the drive to the penitentiary is absolutely grueling. The coastal breeze has been lost as they travel deeper into the state, the heat is thick and inescapable. This intensifies everyone's irritability as they are hungry, uneasy, and on edge. Misty, who is white, does not understand the unsettling feeling experienced by Leonie and Jojo as they travel through the state. The risks posed for people of color in an unexpected police stop are immense. To make matters worse, the risks Leonie and Misty are taking along the way to ensure payment of Michael's lawyer could endanger the entire group, particularly Leonie and Jojo. On top of this, young Kayla, becomes intensely ill. Leonie is too distracted with the risks of her and

Misty which leaves fifteen-year-old Jojo to take care of Kayla, a chore he has become used to over the years.

Jojo is thirteen years old, the son of Leonie and Michael, brother to five-year-old Kayla. He is growing strong and is large for his age, though still fogged by his childhood innocence. Through this story, his maturation becomes imminent, a common experience of young black boys given the demands of white society and their rural setting. Since Kayla's birth, Jojo has watched over her out of his immense love for his little sister. Though as he grows older, he's become increasingly aware of the necessity of his care, given their mother's continuous short comings and neglect. This becomes clear to him during their journey, leading Jojo towards adulthood as he uncovers the faults in each of the adults around him. On the drive to Michael, Jojo is followed by Richie, the ghost of a young boy who was incarcerated with Pop during his time at Parchman. Richie explains to Jojo that he must uncover how he was killed in order to transcend his ghostly purgatory into the resting stage of the afterlife. In the process of uncovering the truth of Richie's story, the reader is exposed to Ward's message and the realization of how steeped the family, and America, is in racial injustice and the path towards reparations.

In this outstandingly lucid novel, Ward personifies America's unwillingness to address our history of brutal killings and enslavement of African Americans at the hands of white oppression and racism. Ward personifies the stories of racially motivated killings with ghosts like Richie and Given who seek release from their wandering state by having their stories heard, believed, and

learned from. In order to find release, there are varying levels of action required by the living to liberate the ghosts as some still exist from centuries ago and others from the present day. There is a clear first step of recognition of the wrongdoings done upon the ghosts while they were living in order to move forward towards their soul's final resting state. Thus, Ward seeks to describe that when our country decides to recognize our own history of violence, we will then take a necessary step towards righting the wrongs of injustice.

The prose of Ward's novel makes her book easily accessible to an older teen audience and up. There are parts with descriptive violence, though they should not be a deterrent for classrooms to take up this book. Ward's attention to emotive detail completely engulfs the reader making the novel both hard to put down and difficult to continue at times. The expertly narrated audio book version makes for an exceptionally illustrative experience as well. The task of using this book in a classroom should be taken on by more teachers, as students should be exposed to this real, unapologetic, and masterful depiction of life. This text requires guidance by an individual with undaunted patience if it were to be used in a classroom. The instructor must be someone who can provoke respectful, intellectual conversation about Ward's work if it is to be shared with an audience who have not themselves experienced a confrontation with race or believe deeply that legal and social reforms have remedied the existence of racial inequality. This story should be heard, discussed, contemplated, and mulled over without a conservative time frame for completion.



Book Review by Safiya Mohamed

Children of Blood and Bone

Author: Tom Adeyemi

Publisher: Henry Holt Books for Young Readers, 2018

Nigerian-American author Toni Adeyemi debuted her first novel, *Children of Blood and Bone* in 2018. The novel, set in a fictional African country called Orïsha, is said to be an “allegory for the modern black experience” according to Adeyemi. The novel takes on three different perspectives: Zélie, Amari, and Inan. All three of the main characters go through their ever-changing young adult lives, dealing with hidden identities, struggles with societal responsibilities, and the effects the Orïshan’s society has put on their lives.

The novel starts with Zélie, a young Diviner girl, while she is learning skills for self-defense. A Diviner has the ability to do magic once they reach a certain age. When and if a Diviner’s magic is given to them, they become a Maji. A decade prior, King Saran, the ruler of Orïsha, sent a raid to Zélie’s village, killing all those Maji with magical abilities, including her own mother. Now, those who are able to do magic must hide it before they face the same demise of their ancestors. Those who remained after the raid became subject to oppression. Those of Diviner lineage are held to pay high taxes, with the consequence of being arrested and put into enslavement if they’re unable to pay. They are called “maggots,”

being insulted over their darker-skinned complexion. These rulings ensure that the Diviners will never again reach above any higher status in Orïsha and will remain impoverished and institutionally oppressed. Zélie and others live in constant fear of the punishments that are capable of being done to them for actions they take. Despite this, Zélie’s goal is to restore the magic in Orïsha.

Next, the reader meets Amari, King Saran’s daughter. Amari is the princess of Orïsha, and she is trapped. Being confined to living in the palace every single day, the only friend she makes is the palace’s maid, Binta, who is a Diviner. The prejudices made against Diviners in Orïsha affects even Amari’s sense of beauty. As a child, Amari was subject to skin bleaching to lighten her darker skin, which makes her ugly because of its association with the Diviners. When Amari witnesses Binta being murdered by King Saran after her magic comes to life, Amari runs away from home and brings the scroll that can reactivate Maji power.

Inan is pushed into being the universal masculine man. He is raised to be the future king, and it’s understood that he fears his father, saying, “If Father doesn’t ask me to remove my armor, he’ll go for my face... More bruises for the world to see” (73).

Although he fears King Saran, readers can see that Inan still admires the man who is causing pain for so many. King Saran defends his actions to his son, repeating constantly throughout the novel, “Duty before self” (286), erasing any sympathy Inan might have towards his father’s victims. The fear of his father’s power truly comes alive once Inan realizes he is also a Diviner and will soon carry the power his father has tried his entire life to eliminate.

As the novel continues, all three characters stories connect, and their lives are all changed because of one another. The characters’ developments throughout the novel are most intriguing. Zélie and Amari come from completely different walks of life, yet they somehow become great friends throughout the novel. Their interactions open up and Zélie begins to trust Amari more as time continues despite their background. Zélie and Inan even develop a growing romantic relationship. With five hundred and twenty-five pages, Adeyemi does not rush the progression of these relationships as well as the novel’s storyline.

Following the recent Black Lives Matter movement that advocates for the fight against systematic oppression and violence against African Americans, Adeyemi accurately mirrors the struggles of growing up Black in America in the novel. Reading the novel, the readers will notice many parallels to the real world. The Maji and Diviners are at the bottom of Orisha’s society and are treated inhumanely. The Maji women, who are identified by their white hair, are forced to cover it, similar to some Black women being forced to not down their natural hair in the work setting in fear of it being “not professional” or being

ridiculed enough to cover it. The Diviners are forced to work low caste job with limited or non-existent pay. Like Zélie, the other Diviners are subject to harassment at the hands of higher-ups in society without the ability to gain justice. Through all this, Zélie remains strong but even at her bravest moments she breaks down because no matter how hard she will try, the system will always be against her.

“I am always afraid. It’s a truth I locked away years ago, a fact I fought hard to overcome...It doesn’t matter how strong I get, how much power my magic wields. They will always hate me in this world. I will always be afraid” (312).

This new young adult novel is now being made to fit the big screen soon, and the series continues with *Children of Virtue and Vengeance* which was released in December 2019. Adeyemi’s creation of the land of Orisha connects the magic of fantasy literature and fuels in elements of realism to create a captivating and relatable reading. Adeyemi recalled that she never saw Black people in books growing up and believed that they couldn’t be featured in novels because of it. Seeing characters like hers in future novels can impact the lives of many young children of color who can now see themselves in mainstream media being represented as strong and brave. Any reader that enjoys the fantasy genre will surely enjoy this novel. It leaves you with a feeling of adventure while simultaneously educating you with an understanding of the world around us.



Book Review by Andrea De La Rosa

Living a Feminist Life

Author: Sara Ahmed

Publisher: Duke University Press, 2017

Lack of tolerance is the crest which bearers of activism must wear, especially if they wish to see change on the horizon. From an early age, women are taught values that not only encompass but sustain a patriarchal society. Sara Ahmed's 2017 manifesto titled *Living a Feminist Life* begins by acquainting the reader with what may be everyday sensations that one may face and questioning the "wrongdoings [or the] tinges of pain" which have become caloused over time (22). Ahmed expresses the fragility of history, but overall the complete and utter necessity of it, and how "feminist work is often memory work," and she welcomes all feminists to partake in getting acquainted with the history to commemorate the memory of past activists while making way for new forms of activism through her writing (22).

Interspersed with a nuanced perspective, the sources which Sara Ahmed uses in *Living a Feminist Life* are that which historically defy the normative approach that writers may take. Ahmed constitutes a new means for citation as she mentions that "white men are an institution" and refused to use them as sources (15). In making this choice, she realizes that she will have to extend great efforts into finding academic resources that not only support her feminist writing but also the importance of diverse

writer's work. Her extensive research pursuits demonstrate her commitment to go against the grain of institutional conventions and challenges of power structures that most do not acknowledge in the field of academia in terms of whose research is utilized. It wasn't necessary to point out this citation choice, yet Ahmed decided to emphasize this move as most may not notice the exclusion of white male sources as they are considered normative. Through this choice, Ahmed engages with the reader in a manner that encourages them to question their relationship with institutions and how we can choose to withdraw our support.

The most compelling facet of this read is how easy it is to engage with. Sara Ahmed's *Living a Feminist Life* is classified as a manifesto, which may deter some initially. Additionally in her conclusion, Ahmed mentions Valerie Solana's *SCUM* manifesto as a source of inspiration for her. *SCUM* has been historically deemed by some as provocative and even completely vulgar, making her choice of writing a manifesto notably bold. Compared to Solana's *SCUM* manifesto, Ahmed steers clear of satirical insults and offers a more subtle word choice. Ahmed's choice of words can be noted in the minimalist division of the manifesto into five parts: "introduction," "part I becoming feminist," "part II diversity work," "part III living the

“ **Ahmed puts forth the challenge of allowing one's self to become vulnerable** ”

consequences,” and lastly the “conclusion” which itself is split into “a killjoy survival kit,” and “a killjoy manifesto.” Each section offers her first account tale of her personal experiences with our patriarchal society and guides the reader in how one is to properly respond in a manner that executes feminist values.

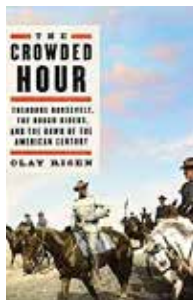
The idea of being a feminist and what that entails may be perceived differently depending on who is asked and how it's asked. However, Ahmed begins by educating the reader with proper verbs and concepts regarding feminism and why it exists in the first place. Ahmed makes her work accessible to all readers by introducing her greatest realization of patriarchal structure and how that coincides with equality for women;

“Finding feminism can be empowering as it is a way of reinhabiting the past. It is personal. There is no question: it is personal. The personal is structural. I learned that you can be hit by a structure; you can be bruised by a structure. An individual man who violates you is given permission: that is structure. His violence is justified as natural and inevitable: that is structure. A girl is made responsible for his

violence: that is structure. A policeman who turns away because it is a domestic call: that is structure. A judge who talks about what she was wearing: that is structure. A structure is an arrangement, an order, a building; an assembly” (30).

What made the read the most compelling was Ahmed's “Part III Living the Consequences,” because she doesn't glorify what constitutes being an active feminist. Often when a writer is attempting to persuade or change the thought pattern of the reader, the writer glosses over the negative aspects that come with accepting said thought pattern. Ahmed is very frank and personable as she acknowledges within the full chapter that her firsthand experience has left her being worn down, tired, exhausted, so much so that the overall fragility that occurs when partaking in this work breaks her. However, I believe that Ahmed's candid writing style amplifies visions of unity that encourage people to become feminist, as “feminist fragments” become then “an assembly. In pieces. [and of course] Becoming an army” (186).

Although this read is considered a feminist read, I would greatly recommend people of all genders, sexual orientations, and identities to read it. Ahmed puts forth the challenge of allowing one's self to become vulnerable with the inequality and vulnerabilities that come with being a person of marginalized identity. At only 268 pages, this is a captivating read that encourages individuals to challenge structures within our society from the way we interact with others, set boundaries, but most importantly give one another strength and vitality through the army that is activism.



Book Review by Sean Horn

The Crowded Hour:

Theodore Roosevelt, The Rough Riders, and the Dawn of the American Century

Author: Clay Risen

Publisher: Scribner, 2019

Clay Risen's 2019 biography, *The Crowded Hour: Theodore Roosevelt, The Rough Riders, and the Dawn of the American Century*, is the story of how one man helped bring together a country in desperate need of a unifying force. An unconventional biography in its focus on an entire army regiment, *The Crowded Hour* is both thoroughly researched, and brilliantly narrated. While the main subject of the book is Theodore Roosevelt, the lens through which he is detailed is that of his involvement with the famed volunteer cavalry brigade, the Rough Riders. As such, Risen must detail the men of the regiment as well as Roosevelt himself, which he does eloquently. Additionally, the book retells the events of the Spanish-American war, in which the Rough Riders fought, with detail so methodical that it sometimes toes the line of monotony. However, Risen still takes on the task of a book with three major subjects in a way that keeps the reader engaged, and certainly allows them to come away well informed.

The Crowded Hour begins in New York City on September 12th, 1899, at a parade celebrating the American victory in the Spanish-American war. "It was the grandest parade New York City had ever seen," reads the first line of the book, after which Risen describes just how grand the parade

indeed was (1). He continues though, in the following paragraph, to write "The celebration was less about the nation's recent past achievements than what those achievements foretold: a new, confident, global American empire" (2). Leading the parade was none other than Theodore Roosevelt, at this point governor of New York. Fittingly so, as this new, confident America—Risen argues throughout *The Crowded Hour*—was the work of Roosevelt himself; he was the face of this new, united America. Risen explains the Rough Riders as "... a quintessentially American story: ragtag, provisional, drawn from the country's vast distances and disparate communities, forged by patriotic fervor and sent out into the world to fight for what was right" (4). Roosevelt himself represented a mix of American masculinity; he was at once an avid outdoorsman—explorer of the frontier, and a Harvard and Columbia man residing in Manhattan. His ragtag group of volunteers which comprised the Rough Riders equally represented a cross-section of Americans in 1898. This fact alone could assist a nation in reaching unity, but the largest factor in such was what they were fighting for—many of them volunteering to do such.

The United States went to war with Spain in defense of Cuba, not in defense of itself. Cuba had been occupied by Spain and

placed under tyrannical rule and subjected to obscene violence. Many Americans felt America should intervene, for years before war was declared. Among these Americans was Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt was always an advocate of war, writing about the Civil War that “It was a good thing, a very good thing, to have a great mass of our people learn what it was to face death and endure trial together” (24). He believed war brought nations together, even in the case of war within the nation. More than this, though, he believed what was happening in Cuba went against one of the most important ideals of the United States—Independence. He believed America was the ideal display of such, and that they should take out any nation that stood in the way of independence for others. As Secretary of the Navy, he urged President McKinley to go to war against Spain, but for a long time, to no prevail. When war was declared, Roosevelt promptly volunteered to form a volunteer regiment to assist in the fighting, as the United States, fearful of a large standing military, was vastly unprepared and undermanned. What came from this was the Rough Riders. Made up of men from across America, the Rough Riders represented America’s willingness to fight for what is right.

Risen spends the middle third of his book detailing the issues of the American military, the training of the Rough Riders and other volunteer brigades like it, and giving detailed accounts of the battles faced in Cuba, once they were deployed. Though narrated excitingly, this section of the book seems to drag. While much of this information is important to the book, it is hard to say that it is all completely necessary.

Finally, Risen wraps the book in the final two chapters, by detailing the lives of the Rough Riders after the war. He tells of the complications of death, injury, and illness, but also of the fame these volunteer soldiers enjoyed, none quite as much as Roosevelt. He details Roosevelt’s gubernatorial campaign, which was ultimately a success, leading, of course, to the presidency.

In writing *The Crowded Hour*, Clay Risen paints a portrait of Theodore Roosevelt as a man relentlessly dedicated to the cause of human rights, as well as the unity of his beloved nation. Risen tells of Roosevelt as a man who changed the face of America, as through volunteering to fight for the rights of a foreign nation, cemented the United States as a global power. However, Risen does not ignore the less than desirable ideals held by Roosevelt, pointing out the lack of any black soldiers in the Rough Riders, along with the racist sentiments in his “The Strenuous Life” address. Risen, therefore, sheds an honest light on an imperfect man who helped to create a more perfect America, with the help of other imperfect men like him.

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Risen paints a portrait of Theodore Roosevelt as a man relentlessly dedicated to the cause of human rights

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Book Review by Riley Hysell

Someone Who Will Love You In All Your Damaged Glory

Author: Raphael Bob-Waksberg

Publisher: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2019

Love exists in a constant state of oxymoron. It is so universal yet so individual. It is so complex, but easily runs the risk of being cliché. Needless to say, love is a tricky thing to write about. Raphael Bob-Waksberg attempts to understand and capture the elusive feeling in his first book, *Someone Who Will Love You In All Your Damaged Glory*, through a series of eighteen short stories. Many of the stories make heavy use of second person. One is a list, another is a poem, and one masquerades as the rules for the game Taboo. The funniest of the stories (they range from side-splittingly hilarious to heartbreakingly sad, with a surprising amount pulling off both), titled “Rufus,” is told from the point of view of a dog.

Through this willingness to experiment with form and style, Waksberg largely avoids falling into the trap of cliché.

Waksberg similarly manages to dodge the issue of conveying a simultaneously universal and individual love through sheer absurdity. When a story’s style is not especially exciting, the setting and characters often make up for it. “A Most Blessed and Auspicious Occasion” follows a soon to be married couple as they plan their wedding, although this is made difficult by their family

and friend’s concerns about “the ceremony to sacrifice the goats to the Stone God”, and other such invented customs (8). “Up-and-Comers” offers a dysfunctional team of superheroes whose drunkenness increases their powers. “We Men of Science” involves a scientist’s experimentation with an Anti-Door, which leads to a world where “everything... would fit neatly into the crevices of everything we are not” (49). Bizarre scenarios like these separate the stories from generalness; it never feels like Waksberg is trying to teach us something about ourselves because the stories are specific to their own characters and worlds. Nonetheless, each story does present a different look at love which is applicable to the real world.

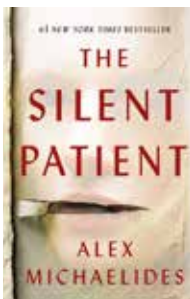
Despite Waksberg’s exemplary approach to exploring the topic of love, parts of the book fall flat in their lack of recognizable story, neglected in favor of exploratory literary flourishes. Upon opening the book to the first story, “Salted Circus Cashews, Swear to God”, one will immediately notice the enormous font size. This is not because you accidentally bought a large-print edition of the book, but because this story’s text starts at this massive size and shrinks. As the story continues, however, one realizes that

this is all there really is to “Salted Circus Cashews.” As far as actual narrative goes, this story offers close to nothing. A man and a woman are on a date. He hands her a can labelled “Salted Circus Cashews.” She reads the label in its entirety, which assures her “This time there is no snake waiting,” as she worries there might be a fake spring snake inside the can (4). This is all that happens. This specific piece functions well enough because its placement in the book gives it the meta purpose of a dare to the reader to continue with the book (or perhaps a warning depending on one’s ultimate opinion of what follows). But Waksberg continuously gives plotless stories like this, in which the reader is meant to get something from the style alone, and it eventually gets boring. By the time the reader gets to the final story, “We will be close on Friday 18 July,” second person narration may seem so over-used that they are tempted to skip the story entirely. It’s certainly not the case that these stories offer nothing, just nothing of narrative value. While skipping any story would be a loss, the fact that the temptation is there is *Someone Who Will Love You*’s greatest downfall.

The book also suffers because it alienates many people who may enjoy the book thematically, but have trouble adjusting to Waksberg’s special brand of cynicism and absurdity, or who have a shortage of the literary knowledge necessary to see what makes the experimentation special. Waksberg never strays from the same cynical tone present in his Netflix show, *Bojack Horseman*, which is great for fans of such cynicism (or of *Bojack Horseman*), but can be understandably difficult for some to take in. “More of the You That You Already Are” ends with

the protagonist leaving all elements of the story behind and unresolved in order to be with his ill sister. “But what happened to the girl you liked? And the monster? And the new monster they were going to bring in?” the protagonist’s sister asks on the final page of the story. “I don’t know,” the protagonist responds (240). The ending of “More of the You That You Already Are” exemplifies how jarring Waksberg’s style can be to readers expecting more traditional romance stories. Romance fans might get a lot out of this book’s unique take on love, but Waksberg limits his audience to the one he has already formed. If one cannot reconcile with strangeness, or fails to understand why an abundance of well written second person is unique and interesting from a literary perspective, Waksberg has practically ensured *Someone Who Will Love You* will not appeal to that person, limiting who gets to experience the book’s refreshing take on its universal topic.

Ultimately, this limit is so aggravating because Waksberg offers something so different in an occasionally disappointingly straightforward genre. Waksberg presents readers with what is essentially a guide to love, covering what love looks, feels, and sounds like between spouses, siblings, two people who never speak to each other, even people and their pets. Missing out on such an intense and weird experience would be a mistake. Waksberg best instructs how to deal with this book in “Salted Circus Cashews”: “Open this can and everything will be okay. The salted circus cashews are waiting. They are so savory and delicious” (4). Open this book and dig into these “savory and delicious” stories.



Book Review by Juli Lindenmayer

The Silent Patient

Author: Alex Michaelides

Publisher: Celadon Books, 2019

Ever since Alicia Berenson murdered her husband, she has not uttered a single word. She leaves no explanation as to why she would commit such a crime, and there does not seem to be any reason or rationale to motivate her actions: no evidence of domestic violence, no financial hardships concerning the involved parties, and no previous records of delinquency or criminal activity.

Unable to verbally defend herself, Alicia is named clinically insane in court and moved to a psychiatric unit in North London called the Grove. The secrets of that night seem to be concealed forever, until criminal psychotherapist, Theo Faber, accepts a position to work at the Grove, and gets the chance of a lifetime to work with the notorious killer.

From the start, Theo knew he wanted to work on Alicia's case. As a person dealing with his history of trauma and hardship, he immediately felt a deeper connection with Alicia than previous partnerships he had taken on. Theo explains how he felt "uniquely qualified to help Alicia Berenson," and there was something about her story that "resonated with [him] personally —[he] felt a profound empathy with her right from the start" (12).

Miraculously, Theo is able to make profound discoveries into the investigation

of not only the murder but Alicia Berenson's personal life—one that he is more caught up in and connected to more than one could expect. Why is it that Alicia watches Theo so closely, and has a glint of recognition in her eyes when she does? The fast-paced plot leaves you not only silent but breathless, concluding with a twisted ending that you won't see coming.

Even though the novel is centered on Alicia Berenson and her actions, the reader takes on the perspective of Theo Faber, the male protagonist in the novel. Although the point of view is inconsistent throughout the narrative—changing from first person to second person, as Theo addresses the reader by saying "you"—ultimately, the deep involvement the reader takes on in learning about Theo's personal life—from his crumbling marriage to his wife or the abandonment and neglect he faced from his father—classifies Theo as the focus of the story. Subsequently, Alicia becomes more of a source of conflict or a plot point.

Theo Faber is the character who narrates a majority of the events that occur within the story's progression. However, like an Edgar Allan Poe short story, the narrator is extremely unreliable and does not try to hide this fact, when in the novel he directly confronts and communicates with the reader by stating, "I wrote down everything,

word for word, capturing it as precisely and accurately as possible. As you will see, it's an incredible story—of that there is no doubt. Whether you believe it or not is up to you” (262). In this passage of the novel, Theo has just finished the first interview where Alicia Berenson verbally converses with him.

There are several references to ancient Greek mythology and tragedies, which clearly is inspired by the author's heritage and childhood upbringing. Alicia Berenson paints a picture titled *Alcestis*, which tells the story of a heroine who willingly sacrifices her life to save her husband, Admetus. The hero Heracles is able to rescue Alcestis from Hades and return her to her husband, who is overcome with joy. However, similarly to Alicia Berenson, she does not speak of her experience. Instead, she is silent. Alex Michaelides grew up in Cyprus, an Eastern Mediterranean island country, and was raised by a Greek-Cypriot father and an English mother—again, the reader can see how Michaelides' personal life has deeply influenced his writing, as the novel's setting takes place in London.

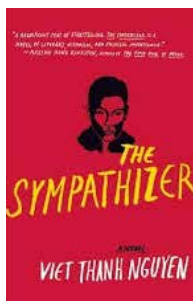
This quick-paced thriller and mystery is perfect for any fun-loving reader. There are some inappropriate parts of the novel for younger audiences that revolve around sex, drug use, violence, and profanity, but mature readers who enjoy tragedies and complex character developments in novels will greatly appreciate reading this one. Some important themes in this novel include mental health and mental disorders, the view of people with traumatic histories or pasts and how those circumstances more powerfully affect their futures, and the way in which women specifically are portrayed when assumed to have mental disorders.

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Themes such as these contribute greatly to studies involved in humans, women, criminal, and psychological behavior, as this novel represents how some people view those who have disorders; although society has made great improvements on how we understand the human mind and human behavior, there remains the tendency to mark those with disorders or problems as “other.” The way in which the novel was written also presents great advancements in the humanities—it has been quite some time since Greek mythology has been referenced or reworked to be made this entertaining, and the unique switching of point of view is unconventional and keeps readers on their toes. To reiterate a previously mentioned idea, *The Silent Patient* initially makes one believe that the novel's action will describe Alicia Berenson (*the silent patient*) and her story—however, Theo Faber draws in most of the audiences' attention—in fact, he is the one telling the story, and we only hear Alicia through sporadic journal entries from her diary that are copied within the novel. In this way, the reader could interpret a theme or take on the novel that effectively silences women's voices and keeps them from sharing their own stories—quite literally.



Book Review by Kat Gibson

The Sympathizer

Author: Viet Thanh Nguyen

Publisher: Grove Press, 2015

Though the Vietnam War ended well over forty years ago, its brutality and misunderstanding have left an eternal imprint on global consciousness. The landscape and people of Vietnam, both those who fled and those who remain, carry within them a culture that has been invaded by a multitude of damaging foreign “aid” and are often left voiceless in our recollections of the war. Viet Thanh Nguyen’s *The Sympathizer* depicts the intricate web of issues and politics that surrounded the war in Vietnam from the perspective of a Northern communist mole who is hiding in the ranks of the Southern military. It is the job of the nameless narrator to return coded intel to his supervisor while deflecting suspicion from himself. What this brings is a multi-faceted reflection on politics, history, and culture of both the United States and Vietnam and what the role that belief and depiction plays in our reality. Nguyen’s novel gives a Vietnamese voice to these issues and directly commentates on the United States’ attempts to culturally rectify itself—leaving unacknowledged those who still live in Vietnam, which remains scarred by the brutality and neglectful practice left behind after the United States withdrew.

The narrator describes his experience as a mole in the form of a written confession, beginning at the Fall of Saigon and his

escape to the United States. This journey is one riddled with terror and uncertainty: many are left unable to escape, and others die trying. When the narrator arrives, he discovers a new type of racism that it simultaneously hostile and indifferent towards the Vietnamese. He later becomes the consultant on a film about the Vietnam War, only to find that the screenwriter has no interest in getting any facts about the Vietnamese correct: he instead wants to paint a picture of the restlessness of American heroism, even in the face of defeat. Throughout the narrative, the narrator must grapple with the implications of his actions and who or what he is really fighting for. *The Sympathizer* is interested in examining the many dualities that exist between cultures, parties, and within one’s own identity. The narrator has to struggle with the corruption he sees on both sides—leaving him disenchanted with all aspects of his life and the war.

This novel is captivating with its cast of characters, many of whom are simply referred to by their title, demonstrating how one loses their sense of individual identity when they are part of the war machine and submerged in its politics. Though dark in nature, it captures a unique sense of humor in its situation and offers a wandering, retrospective series of events that have led up to

the present and beyond, along with its critical assessment of war makes it reminiscent to Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five*. The only difficult aspect of the novel is its lack of direct quotes and indication of dialogue, which is entirely embedded within the paragraphs without any breaks. This is an interesting stylistic technique which, when coupled with its confessional style, links itself to the early days of novel writing where a directed, retrospective letter writing style was popular. Though this form may be more difficult for the modern reader, it greatly increases the novel's intimacy. It is winding and personal; it is written intentionally to not feel like a novel, but to instead lead the reader through the narrator's authentic unpacking and discovery of self. The narrator refers to his captor, the piece's intended reader, directly in his writing, asking to be understood as someone who is much deeper than his position in the war: someone who is fraught with uncertainties and personal trauma.

The Sympathizer serves as a hauntingly necessary depiction of the homeland perspective of a war which finds itself washed in white saviorism. The American perspective of Vietnam is that it was lost; however, Vietnam is still as present as ever and is living in the shadow of democratic interference. It is critical to our historical and cultural understanding to examine the weight of which intersections of identity complicate our lives. What is most important is not the semantics of our definition of who we are, but instead enjoying what we have, and the joy life has to offer. This is what resides at the core of the novel, demonstrating how easily sympathy

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comes when we are able to see all sides of a conflict and actively humanize all parties. Overall, *The Sympathizer* is a powerhouse of a debut novel that is well deserving of the bevy of awards it has received, including the Pulitzer Prize. Nguyen's novel has immense lasting power in its ability to capture the complexities behind social and political rifts still felt today, as well as offer perspectives to overcome them. This novel is an essential work for any modern reader as global affairs continue to grow progressively unstable, especially as the United States continues to try to retain its sense of being a global police power. This desire for deep involvement, control, and autonomy is what drove its involvement in the war in Vietnam and is what continues to cause the United States to hold a precarious place on the world stage. Works like Nguyen's help us re-center our perspectives and drive us to find understanding and growth in conflict and difference.

