

# ARCHIVE

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OF HISTORY

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*AN UNDERGRADUATE JOURNAL OF HISTORY*

# ARCHIVE

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An interdisciplinary journal featuring undergraduate work in history and related fields, founded in 1998.

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## *COVER IMAGE*

A male student waves a newspaper in the air while speaking to  
passers-by on Bascom Hill about a political cause.  
Ca. 1960 - 1969.

Image (#S05127) courtesy of  
University of Wisconsin-Madison archives.

# CONTENTS

---

WHEN MY BROTHER FELL  
*Gay Men, Manhood and HIV/AIDS*

7

Cody Dunn

---

THE STARVATION OF A NATION  
*The Ukrainian Famine of 1932-1933 as a Soviet Engineered Genocide*

19

Jacob Lokshin

---

ENLIGHTENMENT THROUGH SOLITUDE  
*The Age of Reason, Rousseau, and the Importance of Being Alone*

41

Sam Gee

---

CORPORATE CONSERVATISM AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT  
BY GENERAL ELECTRIC IN THE MID-20th CENTURY  
*A Spark of Modern Social Responsibility?*

55

Kelsey Beuning

---

WOMEN, GOOD PEOPLE, AND BAD PEOPLE  
*Women in Early Shanghai Cinema*

73

Emma Wathen

---

MASCULINITY AND VIOLENCE  
IN THE WEATHER UNDERGROUND

87

Liliana Silverman

---

CONTESTED DISCOURSE OF  
LIBERAL TRADE IN CHIAPAS

97

Riley Sexton

---

THE FEMALE WHO FORGOT TO BE COY

117

Brita Larson

---

PHOENIX'S ASHES  
*The CIA, the Phoenix Program, and the Development of  
U.S. Coercive Interrogation Doctrine*

145

Dylan Rindo

---

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# *A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS*

As the days get longer and our semester draws to a close, we can't help but reflect upon our decision to participate in the 2016 publication of the 19<sup>th</sup> volume of ARCHIVE. Our relationship to ARCHIVE is singular in its transitory nature. Every year an entirely new editorial staff crystallizes to publish ARCHIVE. Our experience working on ARCHIVE was a moment in time driven by context and contingency, just like the topics explored in this volume. As history undergraduates, a mutual appreciation for historical research and the opportunity to develop non-academic skills, such as collaboration and leadership, drew us to ARCHIVE. Similarly, our contributors saw the potential in ARCHIVE to have their undergraduate research recognized for its importance and commendable execution. We would like to thank the Department of History at the University of Wisconsin - Madison, our faculty advisor, Professor Nan Enstad, and our contributors for the opportunity to leave our own specific mark on ARCHIVE.

While the experience of editing an academic journal is unique, and dare we say wonderful, ARCHIVE's primary goal is to showcase excellence in undergraduate historical research. If you're interested in US foreign policy consider reading Dylan Rindo's essay on the CIA's interrogation programs first implemented in the Vietnam War and extended through the present. Emma Wathen's piece takes our focus to the cultural conflicts of Shanghai cinema between the world wars and critiques the ways that actresses faced intense media scrutiny and sexist industry standards. The intersecting themes of gender and race — issues currently under intense debate here on University of Wisconsin's campus — feature prominently in Liliana Silverman's piece on the Weather Underground, a radical group which relied on masculinity to further its militant agenda. The discussion of gender continues in Brita Larson's research on the elimination of the term 'coy female' from zoological vernacular in the late 20th century. Cody Dunn chronicles Ameri-

can society's failure to support gay men during the HIV/AIDS epidemic of the 1980s and 1990s and offers a commentary on gender and politics during a time of collective tragedy. Jacob Lokshin's essay tracks the Soviet Union's denial of responsibility for the 1931-1932 Ukrainian famine and demonstrates the nature of governmental involvement in the death of millions. Two of our authors discuss governments' sometimes contentious relationships with business. Kelsey Beuning features General Electric's evolving corporate social responsibility in response to post-World War II governmental pressure. Riley Sexton's essay examines the Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) by comparing the neoliberal discourse of US and Mexican government officials to the individual voices of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation in Chiapas. Finally, Sam Gee's essay, which reads like a reverie, mobilizes an analysis of Rousseau and his contemporaries to discuss timeless questions about the value of solitude versus social participation.

In recent years, historians have expanded the viable topics for historical research and discussion to include all pockets of society. The 2016 editorial board of ARCHIVE fully respects and genuinely believes in the value of all of human history. History has inspired us to be critical citizens of the world who ask not just "how" but also "why," and we invite you, our readers, to do the same.






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## WHEN MY BROTHER FELL

### *Gay Men, Manhood and AIDS*

**Cody Dunn** is a fifth-year student with a double major in Creative Writing and Computer Science. After graduating this year, he plans to work as a software developer while improving his writing for a Masters of Fine Arts in poetry. This paper was written for Susan Johnson's History 600: Men and Masculinities in U.S. History.

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Photo: UW- Madison Students with a gay pride banner saying "Queer Pride- Flaunt it". Photo taken by Andrew Rawson in the 1990's.

Photo courtesy of UW- Madison Archives, #S00726



In July of 1985, a physician speaking on behalf of actor Rock Hudson announced that the movie star was being evaluated for HIV/AIDS. Historians would go on to regard Hudson's diagnosis as a watershed moment in the trajectory of the epidemic. His diagnosis would finally draw mass attention to the disease for a number of reasons: Hudson was straight-seeming, square-jawed and a friend of President Reagan. The president's administration had remained silent on the issue for years, despite massive criticism, and many believed Hudson's diagnosis would finally provoke a tangible response. They would be sorely disappointed, but the Hudson controversy did prove emblematic of the epidemic and its problems in ways not confined to the federal government. A white, masculine (and, notably, closeted) man was needed to garner the public's concern, making it very clear which victims did not count: the out and proud, the sexually free, and people of color. Misnamed "gay cancer" for years, the disease quickly became inextricably linked with gay male sexuality. Though many factors went into any gay man's experience of the epidemic, several trends seemed to emerge. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, HIV/AIDS complicated sexual desire between gay men and made gay sexual practice a promising target for homophobes. At the same time, the disease exacerbated or exposed racial and gendered fault lines between gay men. Unsurprisingly, this array of issues made the redefinition of gay male sexuality an important priority for gay artists and activists of the time. Through published works and activism in the 1980s and 1990s, gay men sought to reconcile a fraught sexuality with HIV/AIDS by adopting a gay male identity predicated on affection and inclusion.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the era, gay men were confronted with a sexuality interrupted or otherwise complicated by HIV/AIDS, whether they had the disease or not. Most gay men considered the exercise of their sexuality to be fundamental to their identity, so the appearance of a disease propagated by that exercise was destabilizing. In Marlon Riggs's *No Regrets*, a 1992 film recounting the experience of five HIV-positive gay men, activist Reggie

Williams worried over whether he would still be seen “as a desirable person, someone [men] would want to be intimate with.”<sup>2</sup> Likewise, poet Donald Woods noted that his sexual self had been “enormously diminished by HIV” and that sexuality had become something he was no longer entitled to, but something he had to fight for.<sup>3</sup> Riggs juxtaposed this moment with overlain text written in the style of a classified: “B.G.M. [black gay man], tall, muscled, educated, HIV-, seeks same.”<sup>4</sup> HIV/AIDS was a one-two punch for the infected, complicating their own desire while making them feel less desirable as partners. Even those who continued to practice sex freely found themselves adversely affected. Activist Michael Callen recalled an episode in 1984 in the bathhouses where men appeared as “little boys lost—each wandering around aimlessly...holding on to his penis for what small comfort might be left in this hostile, frightening world.”<sup>5</sup> Gay bathhouses remained a contentious topic of debate and emblem of gay promiscuity throughout the decade, especially after the closure of San Francisco establishments in 1984.<sup>6</sup> However, it was never a question that gay men went there for sex, and Callen’s observations of the men therein suggest that even those who continued to patronize such establishments couldn’t shake the specter of the disease. Infected or not, sexually active or not, gay men across the country found their desire complicated by this new virus.

Such complications of gay sexuality were not localized to gay sexual practice, but sometimes extended into the misinformed or otherwise homophobic heterosexual world. As historian Martin Duberman argues, figures like columnist Pat Buchanan maintained that gay men deserved HIV/AIDS as punishment for committing the most unnatural act of all: sodomy.<sup>7</sup> While Buchanan may have represented a small but vocal minority, many gay men did feel that American culture as a whole had the wrong perception of HIV/AIDS. American culture tended to equate HIV/AIDS with death and write off those who contracted it, despite the fact that many remained intent to live.<sup>8</sup> The public also remained woefully undereducated about transmission patterns of the disease. A

widely publicized 1987 protest of the Supreme Court showed gay activists pitted against police officers in visors and medical gloves, suggesting a belief in airborne or skin-to-skin transmission.<sup>9</sup> This is just one example of the well-documented refusal of some public servants even to touch those with HIV/AIDS. Whether it was stigma or outright hatred, many people outside the gay community held dangerous conceptions of HIV/AIDS. If it was true that the dominant culture equated AIDS with death, then the sexual transmission of AIDS linked gay male sexuality to death. Amidst these external criticisms and internal complications, gay men turned to safe sex pamphlets as a vehicle to reform, but not deny, their sexuality.

Through the presentation of responsible sexual practices in sex pamphlets, gay men redefined male sexuality in a way that was both erotic and medically conscious. By “gay male sexuality,” I refer to gay men’s sense of self with respect to sexual practice and partners, everything regarding whom they slept with and in what manner. Pamphlets on the subject tread a thin line between advocating for public health and avoiding the sexual prescriptivism that early gay activists sought to escape. To many, discussions of safe sex smelled suspiciously of homophobia. In a 1983 safe-sex pamphlet titled *How to Have Sex During an Epidemic*, authors Michael Callen and Richard Berkowitz sought to mitigate such criticisms with a simple premise: safe sex was not only ethical, it could be sexy. The primary recommendation was obvious: reduce one’s number of different sexual partners as much as possible. However, whether men followed this advice or not, the pamphlet also recommended incorporating safe sex practices into sexual encounters in an erotic way. Inspecting one’s lover for rashes in showers at the baths and establishing closed circles of trusted “fuck buddies” were among the suggestions presented in plain, non-condescending language.<sup>10</sup> Most startling was the assertion, “Demonstrating a concern for safe sex may even make you more appealing!”<sup>11</sup> In a bold move, the pamphlet targeted gay men right where they were most sensitive, positing a new model of male

sexuality made sexier because it was healthier. If men wanted to keep their sexual freedom, the pamphlet aimed to convince them to do so in a way that didn't endanger themselves or other men.

Critically, *How to Have Sex During an Epidemic* sought to reform sexuality in a way that challenged gendered stigmas among gay men. In his study of New York, George Chauncey has shown that men have feminized one another for being the receptive partner in anal sex since at least the turn of the century.<sup>12</sup> John Howard has argued the same for 19<sup>th</sup>-century Mississippi, noting that sodomy law targeted all same-sex practices, but that the receptive role was considered particularly non-masculine.<sup>13</sup> These pervasive ideas lived on in the gay community of the early HIV/AIDS crisis. One interviewee in Marlon Riggs's 1989 film *Tongues Untied* recounts an argument between two gay men in which one man, shamed for being receptive, shouts, "I'm not your bitch! Your bitch is at home with your kids!"<sup>14</sup> This feminine stigma was amplified by the fact that receptive partners were far more likely to be infected than penetrators.<sup>15</sup> Michael Callen, a "stone-cold bottom [receptive partner]" who was quite proud of his more than 2,000 sexual partners, had a vested interest in challenging stigmas against promiscuity and receptive sexual preference.<sup>16</sup> In the pamphlet, he maintained that although gay men like himself might bristle over the "stereotype that being 'passive' and getting fucked are somehow 'unmanly'...the issue is disease—not sex."<sup>17</sup> In doing so, he sought to dispel the apprehensions of the men he most needed to reach: susceptible bottoms. Callen's approach worked. The pamphlet, written in the specific (and explicit) language used by men it meant to address, was widely regarded as groundbreaking and levelheaded, selling out its first printing.<sup>18</sup> Ten years later, the interviewees of *No Regrets*, sounding like mouthpieces for Callen's work, urged gay men to have as much sex as possible, but to do it safely, saying all the while that disease was the problem, not sex.<sup>19</sup> In no small part, Callen's widely circulated pamphlet challenged gendered assumptions in gay sexual practice and posited a new male sexuality made attractive by its responsibility and made

inclusive by reattributing the stigma to the infection, not the infected.

While the pamphlet primarily challenged gendered assumptions in sexual practices, it also challenged the gendered socialization of gay men and identified affection as the primary attribute needed to redefine gay male identity. In the section "Love," Callen argued that it was gay men's socialization as men that allowed the apathy around HIV/AIDS to persist. He argued, "From the day we are born we are trained as men to compete with other men. The challenge facing gay men in America is to figure out how to love someone you've been trained to 'destroy.'"<sup>20</sup> This was not pure philosophy. Callen argued that men who were trained in this way would not care about transmitting diseases.<sup>21</sup> Thus, in the landscape of AIDS, the social conditioning of gay men as men may have had the real consequence of proliferating the disease. To counter this, Callen argued that gay men had to learn how to love one another again, saying, "Maybe affection is our best protection."<sup>22</sup> The problem was deeper than sexual practice. It stemmed from gay men's competitive masculine conditioning, which had to be undone in order to construct a sexuality that was not destructive. The result was two-fold. By specifically targeting desire, Callen's work defined a responsible model of gay male sexuality for the era predicated on affection. Further, it attached this model to a sense of inclusion through its sensitivity to sexual preference. While it is unlikely that Callen was the only man advocating such changes, his model embodied attributes that would continue to appear in other works throughout the epidemic.

For black gay men, however, this inclusion would remain elusive throughout the AIDS era, as it had been since the origins of the gay rights movement. This is not because gay people of color were unimportant to the movement, but rather because white gay men tended to look out for themselves at the expense of gay men of color. People of color, drag queens, and lesbians led the 1969 Stonewall riot, a formative moment for the gay rights movement, and stood in stark contrast to forms of resistance typical of the

homophile movement of the 1960s.<sup>23</sup> The homophile movement had been predicated on gay people seeming as “normal” as possible and its demonstrations were largely “demonstrations of respectability” in which predominantly white members dressed in suits or conservative skirts.<sup>24</sup> Even though people of color catalyzed the formation of the contemporary gay movement, racial tensions persisted throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Poet and editor Essex Hemphill criticized the so-called unity of the gay community in his introduction to *Brother to Brother*, a 1991 anthology of writing by and for black gay men, saying, “The post-Stonewall white gay community of the 1980s was not seriously concerned with the existence of black gay men except as sexual objects.”<sup>25</sup> For Hemphill, this racial blind spot was a massive oversight in a gay community where, by 1985, 50 percent of reported AIDS cases were among African Americans.<sup>26</sup> Hemphill and Riggs sought to address this blind spot by speaking directly to the experience of black gay men and other people of color with HIV/AIDS.

The work of Essex Hemphill and filmmaker Marlon Riggs shows that, for black gay men, breaking silence was the first step in agitating for inclusion. Historian Lillian Faderman has argued that the HIV/AIDS epidemic forced the gay community out of the closet.<sup>27</sup> However, Riggs and Hemphill advocated that gay men break their silence voluntarily, coming out around both their sexuality and their HIV status. Doing so was not easy. Duberman argues that the black community often accepted gay men and lesbians in the home, but discouraged public homosexuality.<sup>28</sup> In relation to the syndrome itself, Hemphill worried that the black community had convinced itself that AIDS was a white sickness because of the concentration of initial deaths in the white community.<sup>29</sup> To remedy this, Riggs and Hemphill worked together in 1989 on *Tongues Untied*, a documentary that unapologetically showcased all manner of black queer identities. From the outset of the film, the narrator takes silence head on: “Silence is the deadliest weapon...Let’s break the silence, baby.”<sup>30</sup> *Brother to Brother*, which Hemphill edited and published two years later, contained an entire

section dedicated to the experiences of black men with HIV/AIDS. The year after, Riggs released *No Regrets*, in which the faces of his HIV-positive interviewees are almost entirely blacked out, only an eye or mouth visible at any given moment. Each man's face is slowly revealed only as he talks of coming out around his HIV status. This filmic practice put visibility and liberation at stake in being transparent about the disease.<sup>31</sup> While breaking silence was doubly difficult for black gay men, beset by both racial and sexual exclusion, doing so was only the first step, after which came the matter of using one's reclaimed voice.

Riggs's work challenged silence by making visible those whose obituaries obscured that they died because of HIV/AIDS. This phenomenon was endemic in the early years of the crisis. According to Randy Shilts, obituaries often noted how men wasted away with illness, sometimes obscure cancers or pneumonias, not survived by wives or children.<sup>32</sup> AIDS obituaries were themselves a kind of code one learned to read. Riggs broke this silence in *Tongues Untied*, showing portrait after portrait of men as a narrator speaks of the "time bomb ticking in [his] blood."<sup>33</sup> In an era where the circumstances of men's deaths were regularly erased, Riggs's work tied the faces of men to the manner of their death—a kind of public, visual obituary. For some, even this was not enough. In *No Regrets*, fashion designer Assotto Saint speaks of the countless prominent men whose obituaries outted them as both gay men and HIV-positive. He condemns these men for choosing silence over action, "And wait a minute, you say, this person could have done a lot of good. Shame, I say. Shame."<sup>34</sup> Thus, there was a complex relationship between the gay community and their obituaries. On the one hand, obituaries were a place where they were regularly silenced, the disease swept under the rug as "illness" or "natural causes"; on the other hand, choosing the obituary as one's only form of coming out, whether with respect to one's sexuality or one's status, was problematic. It ran counter to the push for visibility and the end of silence. Thus, gay men fought a double battle to end the obituary as a space of silence while also rejecting it as the first and

last closet.

It is important to note nonetheless that activists did not see silence as wholly without its defensive benefits, especially with respect to employment. By 1989, only two states had laws protecting gay people from discrimination and it was not uncommon for people with AIDS to lose their jobs. The protagonist of Walter Rico Burrell's "The Scarlet Letter Revisited: A Very Different AIDS Diary" in *Brother to Brother*, was encouraged by his doctor not to disclose his status at work, and he ultimately opted to tell only his closest confidante.<sup>35</sup> In cases where one's livelihood was at stake, silence held much more utility. However, the dominant discourse of the time maintained that silence, whether about one's sexuality or one's status, was no longer politically or socially expedient.

Finally, gay black men with HIV/AIDS extended their fight for visibility into the greater gay community, which had developed support structures often excluding women and people of color.<sup>36</sup> It was not uncommon for these groups to criticize AIDS activist organizations for being white boys' clubs. One notable example was the hugely influential ACT UP, which split up in 1992 over tensions between the highly educated and mostly white Treatment and Data Group, and the more socially minded foot soldiers.<sup>37</sup> Excluded as they often were from such groups, gay black men criticized them from the outside. Two excellent examples of this are the poems "Aunt Ida Pieces a Quilt" by Melvin Dixon and "When My Brother Fell" by Essex Hemphill, both appearing in *Brother to Brother*. Both poems are critical of the Names Project, a prominent movement started to construct a quilt out of panels memorializing those lost to the disease. Hemphill believed that the quilt primarily served the white community.<sup>38</sup> By contrast, "When My Brother Fell" memorializes former *Brother to Brother* editor Joe Beam in a way that encouraged other gay men to reject ceremonial remembrance in favor of fighting. Hemphill interrogates the usefulness of the AIDS quilt: "I realize sewing quilts / will not bring you back / nor save us."<sup>39</sup> His tone is masculine and his language militaristic as he rejects the project entirely: "When my brother fell / I picked up his



weapons / ... / A needle and thread / were not among / his things / I found.” Likewise, the titular Aunt Ida of Dixon’s poem fails to see the use in stitching a quilt to send off to Washington D.C.: “A quilt ain’t no showpiece / it’s to keep you warm.”<sup>40</sup> Ultimately, she stitches one to swaddle a new baby due in the family: “...having a baby and here comes winter already / The cold cutting like knives. Now where did I put that needle?” In both poems, the Names Project—a performative memorial without action or utility—is an inadequate method of commemoration. Aunt Ida takes up the needle not to stitch a showpiece, but a quilt with a purpose. Hemphill’s poem even casts the debate in masculine terms, rejecting the traditionally feminine needle and thread for the weapons and marching of battle. In both cases, not only is the value of a show quilt at stake, but also the value of project that doesn’t memorialize the entire community. In that sense, both poets were critical of a movement that excluded black gay men and misunderstood the inseparable way in which they experienced their race and sexuality. Because they perceived themselves as external to the Names Project, Hemphill and Dixon were able to criticize the organization for excluding black gay men like themselves.

In many ways, the emergence of HIV/AIDS amplified the existing problems of the gay community rather than exposing new ones. The gendered stigma leveled at receptive men and the apathy encouraged by male competition were obviously present before HIV/AIDS was widely recognized, but the deadly nature of the disease raised the stakes of such issues to new levels. Likewise, the gay community was in no way immune to racial tensions, and the development of social structures to combat HIV/AIDS presented new arenas in which whiteness and privilege could be replicated. Therefore, it was the project of gay men of the time to attempt to reconstruct their identities in a way that combatted a new threat while continuing the fight against familiar enemies. They did so by encouraging safe sex and affection while criticizing racial and sexual stigma, ultimately striving for, though perhaps not achieving, an identity based on manly affection. While the 1980s and 1990s

were filled with death and social confusion, it cannot be denied that gay men confronted the disease and attempted to rectify injustices within their community, making positive strides in the process.

## ENDNOTES

1. Randy Shilts, *And the Band Played On: Politics, People and the AIDS Epidemic* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 572-601.
2. Marlon Riggs. *Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien (No Regrets)*. MP4. Directed by Marlon Riggs. New York: Fear of Disclosure Project, 1992.
3. Riggs, *No Regrets*.
4. Ibid.
5. Martin Duberman, *Hold Tight Gently: Michael Callen, Essex Hemphill and the Battlefield of AIDS* (New York: The New Press, 2014), 94.
6. Duberman, *Hold Tight Gently*, 93.
7. Ibid, 73.
8. Riggs, *No Regrets*.
9. Lillian Faderman. *The Gay Revolution: The Story of the Struggle* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2015), 435.
10. Michael Callen and Richard Berkowitz, *How to Have Sex During an Epidemic: One Approach* (New York: Tower Press, 1983), 30.
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12. George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994), 81.
13. John Howard, *Men Like That: A Southern Queer History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 284-285.
14. Marlon Riggs, *Tongues Untied*. MP4, directed by Marlon Riggs. Berkeley: Signifyin' Works, 1980. Film.
15. Berkowitz and Callen, *How to Have Sex*, 21.
16. Duberman, *Hold Tight Gently*, 12-13.
17. Berkowitz and Callen, *How to Have Sex*, 21.
18. Duberman, *Hold Tight Gently*, 70.
19. Riggs, *No Regrets*
20. Berkowitz and Callen, *How to Have Sex*, 38.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid., 39.
23. Robert Self, *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy Since the 1960s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012), 97-99.
24. Self, *All in the Family*, 75-100.
25. Essex Hemphill, "Introduction," in *Brother to Brother*, ed. Essex Hemphill (Boston: Alyson Publications, Inc., 1991), xviii.
26. Martin Duberman, *Hold Tight Gently*, 120.
27. Faderman, *The Gay Revolution*, 415-441.
28. Duberman, *Hold Tight Gently*, 79.
29. Ibid, 216.
30. Riggs, *Tongues Untied*.
31. Riggs, *No Regrets*.

32. Shilts, *Band Played On*, 178.

33. Riggs, *Tongues Untied*.

34. Riggs, *No Regrets*.

35. Walter Rico Burrell, "The Scarlet Letter, revisited: a very different AIDS diary" in *Brother to Brother*, ed. Hemphill, 121.

36. This is not to say Michael Callen did not practice what he preached. In fact, Duberman records him as a frequent agitator for including women and people of color in the very activist groups Hemphill criticized (see : Duberman, *Hold Tight Gently*, 158-159).

37. Duberman, *Hold Tight Gently*, 159.

38. Ibid., 166.

39. Essex Hemphill, "When My Brother Fell" in *Brother to Brother*, ed. Hemphill, 110-112.

40. Melvin Dixon, "Aunt Ida Pieces a Quilt," in *Brother to Brother*, ed. Hemphill, 145-147.



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# *THE STARVATION OF A NATION*

*The Ukrainian Famine of 1932-1933  
as a Soviet Engineered Genocide*

**Jacob Lokshin** is a second-year student at the University of Southern California studying History and International Relations. This summer he will be working at the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance.

“I remember Holodomor very well, but have no wish to recall it. There were so many people dying then. They were lying out in the streets, in the fields, floating in the flux. My uncle...died of hunger and my aunt went crazy – she ate her own child. At the time one couldn’t hear the dogs barking – they were all eaten up.”<sup>1</sup>

-Galina Smyrna, Holodomor survivor

## **Introduction**

The academic community’s understanding of the Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933 has changed drastically over the past 80 years. It has transitioned from nearly complete denial to at least partial global acknowledgment in both political and academic communities – outside of Russia – of Soviet culpability for the famine, perhaps even constituting crimes against humanity or genocide. The evolution of this discussion of the famine is vital to understanding its place in history as its remembrance has been so intrinsically linked to the Cold War and post-Cold War international politics at play between Russia and the West.

Despite extensive research in the past 20 years, the question remains: was the Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933 merely one unfortunate facet of a broader famine caused by ruinous policy or perhaps poor crop yield across the USSR, without any specific victimization of Ukrainians? Or was it in fact a strategic mass killing – even a genocide – perpetrated by Stalin’s regime against the Ukrainian people to eradicate them as a perceived oppositional element? This paper serves to discern the true culpability of Stalin’s regime in the Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933, as well as to determine the exact conditions of the famine in order to hold accountable those responsible for the wanton death and misery that enveloped Ukraine.

## **State of Research: An Evolving Geopolitical Struggle**

As the famine lay waste to farms and villages across Ukraine, the world was deafeningly silent. Stalin ordered strict

control over the release of information on the subject of Ukraine. Journalists were forbidden from entering; to even discuss the famine as such was a crime punishable by extensive prison terms.<sup>2</sup> This imposed silence was combined with carefully disseminated misinformation. Among the few foreigners allowed access to Ukraine was the New York Times correspondent Walter Duranty. He wrote a series of Pulitzer Prize winning articles denying the famine.<sup>3</sup> It was not until decades later that Duranty's private correspondence with British diplomats showed that in truth Duranty estimated the death toll of the famine at about 10 million. These revelations brought to light his extensive career of blatantly lying in his reports on the USSR.<sup>4</sup> For those who may not have as willingly lied – such as writer George Bernard Shaw – fake villages were established, sending Shaw and others back with “glowing accounts of soviet achievement.”<sup>5</sup> This was combined with continued exports of grain, giving the global impression of excess in this Soviet utopia, “they...shipped [the grain] abroad in order to prove to the world that life in this communist country was wonderful.”<sup>6</sup> It seemed implausible at the time that there could be a silent genocide sweeping Ukraine.

Although there were scattered reports of the famine, and condemnations against Stalin, they were largely ignored for decades.<sup>7</sup> It was not until the 1960s that Montreal-based scholar Roman Serbyn asserted that the famine was “a weapon against...the peasants and the non-Russians” when the issue began to emerge.<sup>8</sup> Indeed the Ukrainian famine – known by its Ukrainian name Holodomor – still did not reach international consciousness until 1986 with historian Robert Conquest's book, *The Harvest of Sorrow*.<sup>9</sup> These were important pieces, but largely lacked sufficient documentary evidence, particularly of the Soviet role.<sup>10</sup> However, as the USSR began to crumble in the years of Perestroika and Glasnost, troves of archives relating to the famine and Soviet administration were released – many of which scholars still use as the core documentary evidence of the famine.<sup>11</sup> Ukrainian scholars, like Ruslan Pyrih, collected hundreds of documents on

the famine.<sup>12</sup> All of this influx of information was gladly collected by the United States Commission on the Ukraine Famine which presented its findings to a receptive Congress in 1988.<sup>13</sup> From the fall of the USSR through the mid 2000s there was a significant international push to prove Soviet culpability. The international academic community today stands with near consensus that there was indeed an artificial famine that was at least partially caused by Stalin's regime.<sup>14</sup>

Contrary to prevalent international views on the famine, scholars and politicians within Russia have continued to deny the extent of the famine, and any Soviet culpability. Russian news giant, Russia Today, continues to print reports by Russian sympathizers such as impeached Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovych who told press in 2010 "the attempt to present...the famine of 1932-33 – as having been an act directed by Russians against Ukrainians is historical nonsense, and it's dangerous nonsense."<sup>15</sup> Previously, in 2002, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma dismissed Ruslan Pyrih from his academic chairmanship in Kiev.<sup>16</sup> Presently, most deniers in the scholarly community have had to admit that there was in fact a famine, but they continue to contest its uniqueness, scope and certainly its qualifications as genocide.<sup>17</sup> In 2006, Vice-Speaker of the State Duma Lyubov Sliska voiced the stance of the Russian government – minimizing acknowledgment of the famine and framing Russia as a nation besieged:

*Why always insist that Russia apologize for everything? The people whose policies brought suffering not only to Ukraine, but to Russia, Belarus, peoples of the Caucasus, and Crimean Tatars, remain only in history textbooks, secret documents and minutes of meetings.<sup>18</sup>*

However, in a starkly anti-Russian move in 2005 – 72 years after the famine – Ukrainian President and Opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko opened up the Ukrainian archives to the public, erected a monument in honor of the famine and called on the international community to recognize the Ukrainian famine as a Soviet driven genocide.<sup>19</sup> Recognition of Holodomor within

Ukraine has been closely tied to Ukraine's tumultuous struggle for autonomy under the weight of Russia's geopolitical struggles with the West.

### **Framework for Death: Stalin's 5-Year Plan and Dekulakization**

After rising to power as one of the initial seven members of the first Bolshevik Politburo in 1917, Stalin swiftly consolidated his power as General Secretary in the wake of Lenin's death in 1924.<sup>20</sup> In the months before his death, Lenin warned of the dangers he saw brewing in an increasingly authoritarian Stalin, "Comrade Stalin, having become Secretary-General, has unlimited authority concentrated in his hands, and I am not sure whether he will always be capable of using that authority with sufficient caution."<sup>21</sup> Upon obtaining this power, Stalin began to roll out his plans for the advancement of Russia. He announced his first Five-Year Plan in 1929, calling for extensive and rapid industrialization – around 250% overall – and as high as 330% in heavy industries.<sup>22</sup>

Stalin's ambitions, especially in agriculture, were centered on the principles of collectivism. Farmers were forced to form collectives known as kolkhozy, or their farms were confiscated and consolidated as sovkhozy: state-run collectives.<sup>23</sup> The transition to these collectives was especially important in the outer regions of the USSR – in particular Ukraine – as it was mostly agrarian.<sup>24</sup> The basic principle was that collectivism would increase productivity of farms, projected to rise by more than 50% over the 5 years.<sup>25</sup> The Central Committee and Politburo established quotas of grain procurement based on these lofty projections and then passed these down to local party officials in Ukraine.<sup>26</sup>

However, these goals were accompanied by constant paranoia among the Soviet elite. At the launch of his first Five-Year Plan, Stalin gave a speech addressing what he saw as the key opposition to his plans: rich peasants and landowners called kulaks.<sup>28</sup> He spoke of the necessity of "eliminating [the kulaks] as a class...[replacing] their production with the production of kolkhozy and sovkhozy" as liquidation of the kulaks was the key



*Projections for Stalin's Five-Year Plan:*<sup>27</sup>

	1927/28 (mil- lion rubles)	1932/33 (mil- lion rubles)	Absol- ute incre- ment	1932/33 as per- cent- age of 1927/28	1927/28 percent share	1932/33 percent share
<i>Annual Deliveries to Final Demand</i>						
Consumption	21,218	30,250	9,032	143	76	57
Government	1,590	3,634	2,044	229	6	7
Inventories	533	2,906	2,373	545	2	6
Fixed capital	3,888	13,726	9,838	353	14	26
Exports	748	2,129	1,381	285	2	4
Total	27,977	52,645	24,668	188	100	100
<i>Annual Gross Output of Each Sector</i>						
Agriculture	13,607	21,715	8,108	160	33	24
Industry	13,423	38,260	24,837	285	32	42
Transport	2,106	4,151	2,045	197	5	4
Construction	3,888	13,726	9,838	353	9	15
Housing	1,694	2,561	867	151	4	3
Other and margin	7,198	11,329	4,131	157	17	12
Whole economy	41,916	91,742	49,826	219	100	100

*Source:* Derived by the author from Gosplan SSSR, *Piatiletanii plan* (see table 1).

to the success of collectivism.<sup>29</sup> One month later, Stalin's Politburo released a resolution "On Measures for the Elimination of Kulak Households in Districts of Comprehensive Collectivization" which dictated the means by which to prosecute these supposed enemies of the state. Kulaks were divided into 3 categories: those who must be summarily executed or imprisoned by local secret police (GPU), those who would be deported to gulags and their property confiscated towards sovkhozy, and those who would be put to work as local forced labor and their property confiscated.<sup>30</sup>

With the framework and official legitimacy given to the persecution of the kulaks in place, the issue with the dekulakization of the USSR rose in determining who exactly these kulaks were. Their definition quickly expanded from those who ran independent farms to any peasant who resisted fulfilling their quotas of grain procurement to the Central Committee.<sup>31</sup> Even further, once the first Five-Year Plan was underway, the authority to identify a kulak was given to local GPU as well as anyone who submitted a letter to their local party officials, vastly increasing the numbers of accused kulaks. Under this system, peasants with a few more cows or an acre more land than their neighbors could be shot and their property confiscated with practically no recourse or due process.<sup>32</sup>

The rapid push towards collectivism combined with rabid paranoia and persecution of perceived "alien and enemy elements" in attempts to exterminate the kulaks, sharply disrupted agricultural production. Instead of a 50% rise, agricultural

production dropped by 20% – exactly counter to projections used to calculate grain quotas – while livestock production dropped by nearly 60% as farmers desperately killed off livestock largely to prevent being perceived as kulaks or having their livestock confiscated.<sup>33</sup>

Even as production dropped dramatically and food supplies plummeted across Ukraine, the quotas remained static. In the face of numerous disappointing failures to meet quotas in Ukraine by 1932, the Politburo released a resolution ordering “all Party organizations and all Party members, immediately use all measure necessary to ensure that Ukraine fully and completely executes the decisions concerning grain adopted by the October Plenum of the Central Committee.”<sup>34</sup> The responsibility for this grain procurement fell on brigades of “prodzahony” who were “overzealous socialiser” recruits from Russia sent to enforce party rules.<sup>35</sup> These prodzahony acted with impunity and there are hundreds of reports of the brutality they employed while carrying out their orders.<sup>36</sup> Throughout agricultural Ukraine they performed door-to-door searches and confiscated or reported everything edible they found as evidence of sabotaging the Five-Year Plan.<sup>37</sup> The failures to fulfill grain procurement quotas were ascribed to a willful decision on the part of the peasants of Ukraine.<sup>38</sup> As such, they were offered no sympathy from a scornful Stalin, “in my opinion Ukraine has been given more than enough.”<sup>39</sup> Efforts to root out those who were “maliciously undermining grain procurements” were intensified as the party deemed failing farms to be run by counter-revolutionary elements – kulaks – who had to be eliminated.<sup>40</sup>

In 1932, advisor to Stalin and elite Party member, Vyacheslav Molotov acknowledged environmentally driven failures to meet grain procurements in grain-growing regions in the USSR’s Kazakhstan, but ignored Ukraine. Further, he ordered massive shipments of aid to these Kazakh regions, largely taken from Ukraine.<sup>41</sup> As Ukraine’s grain shortage relative to relentlessly expanding grain procurement targets deepened, policy became only harsher, even as it loosened on other regions.

## The Famine

With the mandate established for “unconditional completion of the grain procurement plan” and the punishment for those who may object established, the famine descended on Ukraine.<sup>42</sup> By the winter of 1932, food was becoming dangerously scarce throughout Ukraine. Soviet secret police and volunteers from Russia confiscated all food produced, “[the brigades] took away everything, even food standing in pots...the famine began.”<sup>43</sup> The situation quickly worsened as hunger spread. Within months the people of Ukraine began dying by the hundreds of thousands. Villagers regularly experienced horrors: “Kharyton and his wife died in our corner of the village. They left behind two children, a girl and a boy. The boy died. By the time people arrived, [the girl] had eaten him.”<sup>44</sup> There are innumerable such stories of death and disease across Ukraine in 1932 and 1933. Even the GPU’s official report from March 1933 on the state of the famine curtly noted, “this phenomenon has grown to be massive in scale.”<sup>45</sup>

To make matters worse, areas that failed to meet grain procurement quotas were “blacklisted.”<sup>46</sup> This meant the immediate suspension of delivery of all goods, extraction of all goods currently in stores, prohibition on trading, suspension of all banking and collection of any outstanding debts, and the “cleansing of various enemy and alien elements” by *prodzahony*.<sup>47</sup> Further, collectives that did not fulfill the quotas were ordered to “immediately hand over all available reserves, including so-called sowing seed” which of course prevented them from being able to grow more grain – worsening the deficit.<sup>48</sup> This essentially laid siege to the areas most affected by the famine, where they already could not fulfill grain procurements. The Ukrainian people, particularly peasants, were sentenced to death with no recourse. These communities were deprived the resources needed to survive and grow grain, and because they were not growing grain, they were further deprived those necessary resources. It was a vicious cycle that could only end in famine, starvation and death, as a farmer in Kremenchuk Oblast recalled, “we are condemned to starving to death.”<sup>49</sup>

Besides starvation, many were killed outright by both the GPU and local prodzahony as punishment for “sabotage” of grain procurements or for being kulaks.<sup>50</sup> In many cases leaders or intellectuals in a community were forced through torture by the GPU to admit to counter-revolutionary activities within invented separatist organizations working against the USSR, which would justify their incarceration or summary execution.<sup>51</sup> Under the pretense of dekulakization, thousands were hastily prosecuted and sentenced to extreme punishments.<sup>52</sup>

Logically, hundreds of thousands tried to flee Ukraine, searching for anywhere that could provide hope of survival. By 1933 party officials and the GPU noted there was a “mass flight of peasants ‘for bread.’”<sup>53</sup> Stalin’s Politburo quickly sent down orders to stop the exodus “organized by enemies of Soviet Government.”<sup>54</sup> The directive was distributed to party committees across Ukraine and in surrounding Soviet areas to arrest anyone attempting to leave, suspend all transit out of Ukraine, and “remove” all counter-revolutionary elements that might be inciting these departures.<sup>55</sup> Following Stalin’s directive, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian refugees – many of whom went to the ethnically Ukrainian Kuban region of the Northern Caucasus – were “hunted,” arrested and punished or sent back to Ukraine to die in their starving villages.<sup>56</sup> This completed the siege on Ukraine. Its citizens were now cut off from receiving any supplies, or leaving. Any supplies they had were confiscated and all leaders or anyone implicated was summarily executed or imprisoned. The Holodomor had completely enveloped Ukraine.

By the end of 1933, estimates from Soviet censuses themselves place deaths from the famine at 3.1 million, although a first group of census collectors did not “find enough people” and were shot before the second – evidently more satisfactory – census was taken and archived.<sup>57</sup> A local secret police chief Zinoviy Katsnelson wrote to his superior, “the mortality rate has gotten so high that numerous village councils have stopped recording deaths.”<sup>58</sup> The Soviet propagandist and rare witness to the famine

Walter Duranty gave a private estimate to British diplomats of a death toll closer to 10 million.<sup>59</sup> A UN report in 1990 estimated around 7.5 million dead as a result of the famine.<sup>60</sup>

In the face of these facts and increasing pressure from both the academic and political community in recent years, it is nearly impossible for Holodomor detractors to simply deny the existence of the famine as their pre-Perestroika peers may have. The evidence of the famine in Ukraine is overwhelming and has been relatively well documented over the past 20 years. By the late 1980s, Soviet spokesmen admitted to “severe food supply difficulties...[and] famine in some localities,” though they continued to dispute “its scope and cause.”<sup>61</sup> Most now acknowledge the famine but dispute its uniqueness to Ukraine, and Stalin’s culpability.<sup>62</sup>

In regards to its uniqueness, Holodomor deniers often point to the fact that the famine and the dangers of collectivization affected not only Ukrainians but also Russians and Kazakhs. It is true that Kazakhstan as the other major grain producing region, as well as the much smaller Northern Caucasus region of Kuban, suffered from the tragic policies of collectivization. However, the famine deaths in these areas are estimated at roughly 2 million in total from 1932-1933, of which roughly 40% were ethnically Ukrainian.<sup>63</sup> Certainly there was not comparable mass death from famine in Russia itself, although still deeply tragic. However, considering that approximately 1 million non-Ukrainians died across the USSR as a result of the famine, compared to a total of 8-11 million Ukrainians, the scope of Holodomor is unique.

### **Stalin's Regime's Role and Responsibility**

Independent of any discussion of intent, Stalin’s policies of collectivism were indisputably disastrous. Even Stalin himself recognized the tremendous failure of his endeavor to collectivize the agricultural industry of the USSR before the famine began in Ukraine. In the speech “Dizzy with Success” Stalin blamed the blatant failures of collectivism on “overzealous ‘socialisers’” who “carried out the party line [with] violation [and] distortion...

disrupting [the collectives]”<sup>64</sup> As such he proceeded to outline in this address the need to radically slow down the collectivization process. Clearly he knew of the inefficacy and dangers of the implementation of collectivism going forward and made moves to correct this – at least in most of the USSR.

Despite recognition of the dangers of collectivism and its implementation and adjustments elsewhere, Stalin not only refused to slow collectivization requirements in Ukraine but escalated them. A year after “Dizzy with Success,” complaints from Ukraine where the situation was deteriorating were growing. In response to the desperate requests for policy change Stalin proclaimed, “No comrades... the pace must not be slackened! On the contrary, we must quicken it as much as is within our powers and possibilities... either we do it or they crush us.”<sup>65</sup> Ukraine was being treated uniquely, raising the question: what, if not to kill, was the impetus behind the distinction Stalin made between policy towards Ukraine and the rest of the USSR.

The disproportionate suffering of Ukraine can be seen when compared to the scope of the famine in Kazakhstan. In 1931 and 1932 Kazakhstan had a massive reported drought, and the ensuing famine combined with ineffective aid systems cost almost 1 million lives despite food and aid shipments ordered by Soviet leader Vyacheslav Molotov.<sup>66</sup> Stalin himself noted the tragedy of drought-induced famine in Kazakhstan, noting no such environmental disaster in the Ukraine and Kuban regions.<sup>67</sup> Dozens of first-person accounts corroborate this: during the worst year of the famine – 1932 – “the harvest [in Ukraine] was very good.”<sup>68</sup> There was no environmental explanation for the famine, proving it was in fact man-made, caused by Soviet policies disproportionately affecting Ukraine.

Soviet policies determined and implemented by Stalin’s regime caused the Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933. Further, the creators of those policies that uniquely affected Ukraine knew the dangers of those policies. Party officials carefully remarked on the impossibly large grain quotas, “we knew that fulfilling grain

procurements in Ukraine would be difficult.”<sup>69</sup> The famine was caused by Stalin’s regime’s policies – which were unique towards Ukraine – and Stalin’s regime made these policies knowing they were dangerous, had failed, and would fail in Ukraine.

It could be tenuously argued that perhaps Stalin thought that the policies – that he admitted had failed so far in 1930 – would somehow work better in Ukraine with escalation of policies. However, Stalin only worsened the policies when he saw the death toll rapidly mount. This cannot be credited to ignorance of the devastation his policies were causing in Ukraine. Stalin – and certainly his subordinates in Ukraine – were fully aware of the severity of the situation. There was a well-documented constant flow of correspondence between officials in Ukraine and Stalin’s central administration in Moscow.<sup>70</sup> Some of Stalin’s top administrators and advisors, such as Vyacheslav Molotov and Lazar Kaganovich, even visited the sites of famine regularly throughout 1931–1933.<sup>71</sup> In response to complaints, Stalin ordered Kaganovich and Molotov to “isolate whining” and eliminate these “rotten” elements that would corrupt the Ukrainians and drive them to rebel against the Soviets.<sup>72</sup> Stalin and his top party officials knew not only that the policies being enacted to a singular extent against Ukraine had been disastrous by 1930, but that these escalating policies were in fact actively killing thousands of Ukrainians every day by 1932. Knowing this they chose to continue them through 1933. It cannot reasonably be said that Stalin and his colleagues can escape culpability through ignorance. The question is then: what exactly was their intent in pursuing their deadly policies in Ukraine?

Luckily, Stalin and his Politburo stated what their goals were in implementing these deadly policies. In a series of letters Stalin fearfully remarks that “without these and similar measures... we will lose Ukraine.”<sup>73</sup> Stalin – a reputed Ukrainophobe – feared a Ukrainian nationalization movement and used the famine as a means of castrating the Ukrainian party and obtaining total control over the region.<sup>74</sup> With the help of his personal viceroy of

Ukraine, Pavel Postyshev, Stalin set about getting Ukraine firmly under his control.<sup>75</sup> By 1933, he declared Ukrainian intellectuals, political leaders and religious leaders “alien and enemy elements,” proceeding to imprison them in gulags or execute them.<sup>76</sup> This effectively decapitated any potential “Ukrainization” movement. He concurrently ordered local Party committees to “immediately discontinue ukrainization in [their] regions, print all ukrainized newspapers, printed materials and publications in the Russian language and, by autumn 1933, prepare the introduction of Russian language school instruction.”<sup>77</sup> This was in an effort to not only subdue their political power, but to eradicate their culture – forcibly replacing it with Russian culture.

The core element of Stalin’s attack on the Ukrainian people, their political power and culture was the Holodomor itself and the death of over 7 million Ukrainians. His reasoning for this was implicit in his own remark: “the peasantry constitutes the main army of the national movement...there is no powerful national movement without the peasant army” and the Holodomor certainly helped deplete that army.<sup>78</sup> Indeed, Stalin and his regime hold ultimate culpability for the Holodomor as they worked to eviscerate the Ukrainian people, rendering them impotent “sowers of millet” under Stalin’s rule.<sup>79</sup>

### **Holodomor as Genocide**

The discussion of the Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933 as genocide has existed as long as the term genocide itself. Raphael Lemkin, a Polish-Jewish lawyer, trained in Germany working on cases relating to the Armenian genocide, immigrated to the US in 1941 and coined the term genocide in 1944. Lemkin defined genocide as:

*A coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups...disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the*



*lives of the individuals belonging to such groups.*<sup>80</sup>

Lemkin further remarked that:

*Genocide has two phases: one, destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group; the other, the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor. This imposition, in turn, may be made upon the oppressed population which is allowed to remain or upon the territory alone, after removal of the population and the colonization by the oppressor's own nationals.*<sup>81</sup>

The fledgling UN used Lemkin's definition to write the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 1948. This convention, which remains today as the only legal definition of genocide accepted in the UN or international criminal courts, determines genocide as "any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such."<sup>82</sup> There has been considerable critique of the UN definition as it is not adequate for many scholars, largely due to its creation as a compromise between Lemkin and all the member state of the UN who had to ratify it.<sup>83</sup>

Considering what we know about the famine and Stalin's regime's role in it, the question is if their actions constituted genocide. The first person to condemn Stalin for genocide was Lemkin himself – who was considering Holodomor when writing the very definition of the term. He wrote and spoke of the Ukrainian famine as "the classic example of Soviet genocide" noting the clear Soviet intent to destroy the nation of Ukraine in spirit and in body: "if the intelligentsia, the priest, and the peasant can be eliminated [then] Ukraine will be as dead as if every Ukrainian were killed, for it will have lost that part of it which has kept and developed its culture, its beliefs, its common ideas... which, in short, made it a nation."<sup>84</sup> Stalin's efforts were to gut the Ukrainian people as a nation, fulfilling Lemkin's definition. If we take the Ukrainian people as a "national" or "ethnical" group – which Stalin

certainly seemed to think as evidenced by his anti-Ukrainization programs – and take into consideration the evidence of his intent, the Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933 fits perfectly into the UN definition of genocide as well as Lemkin's. One of the most incriminating pieces of evidence against Stalin actually took place after the famine. In the winter of 1933/1934 – after the famine had eviscerated Ukraine – orders were given to resettle Ukraine with Russians.<sup>85</sup> This indubitably betrays Stalin's intent for genocide in the two phases described by Lemkin: destruction of a nation, and then its replacement by the oppressor.

Although larger political battles complicate the question for many states, the UN issued a special report on the Ukrainian Famine in 1990 in which they declared it genocide. However, opposition from Russia and its allies prevented the report from ever being adopted as an official resolution.<sup>86</sup> Further, a total of 26 states to date formally consider the Ukrainian famine genocide, including the US and most ex-Soviet states. In 2003, 65 UN-member states adopted a joint statement asserting that “(Holodomor) took 7 to 10 million innocent lives.”<sup>87</sup> There is also avid support from many in the scholarly community and in the field of human security.<sup>88</sup> Even among those who do not call it genocide, many – such as the European Parliament and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and Pope John Paul II – condemn it as a crime against humanity.<sup>89</sup>

## Conclusion

In international law, definitions are inevitably political. However, irrespective of any political implications, 7-10 million Ukrainians died in the famine of 1932-1933, and it was orchestrated by Stalin's regime specifically against the Ukrainians. Although there were famines across the USSR as policies of collectivization made droughts deadly, the Soviet response in Ukraine was unique and singularly devastating. Stalin and those in his immediate circle used their power to establish impossibly high demands for resources from the peasants of Ukraine. They

then punished the Ukrainians for their failure to reach those demands by confiscation of supplies to survive or grow food, mass incarceration in deadly gulags, and summary execution. Stalin's regime took everything from the peasants of Ukraine and kept them trapped, condemning them to die of hunger in the fields growing the food they so desperately needed as it was taken back to Russia. Once the Ukrainians had been sufficiently decimated and Russified, Russians were shipped in to complete the submission of Ukraine. Stalin's regime had full awareness that their policies would result in death, and was fully aware when death resulted. Evidence shows that Stalin feared Ukraine and decided that the best way to eliminate the threat was to slaughter the Ukrainian peasants – which he proceeded to do with ruthless efficiency.

Russian politicians, such as Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesman Mikhail Kamynin and Vice-Speaker Lyubov Sliska, have proclaimed in recent years that to raise the issue of recognition for Holodomor is to politicize an issue which is solely “a matter for historians...[that should] remain only in history textbooks, secret documents and minutes of meetings.”<sup>90</sup> This must be categorically rejected. It must be rejected because Holodomor should not be swept under the rug of history. Its recognition – thoroughly justified by the evidence – has continuing effects on victims, their loved ones, the Ukrainian people, the state of Ukraine, issues of genocide and discussions of Soviet history and current international politics.

This paper does not attempt to answer questions going forward in regards to issues such as reparations; it does however serve to prove the extent of Stalin and his regime's responsibility for the Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933, as well as discern the true scope of the famine and the reasoning behind its tragic occurrence. The Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933 was a genocide perpetrated by Stalin and his regime in which 7-10 million were exterminated by starvation, imprisonment, forced labor and summary execution. Stalin's regime wrought these horrors upon the Ukrainians in order to subjugate the Ukrainian people and

eradicate what he saw as a potential threat of dissent or opposition. Stalin and his regime committed a crime against humanity of massive proportions. The Ukrainian people suffered unimaginable terrors. The nature of Holodomor and its causes have been largely ignored, but we must not be indifferent towards this crime. The world must bring awareness to this issue, recognition to those who suffered, and condemnation to those who sowed death across the fields of Ukraine; not only in respect to Holodomor, but to better understand and prevent similar atrocities elsewhere.

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19. Marples, "The Great Famine Debate Goes On..."; BBC Staff, "Ukraine Demands 'Genocide' Marked," *BBC*, Nov. 25, 2005 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4471256.stm> (accessed Dec. 1 2015)
20. "Politburo" refers to the executive committee of the communist/Bolshevik party; Bolshevik party was Vladimir Lenin's revolutionary socialist political party which swept to power in the October Revolution of 1917.
21. Vladimir Lenin, *Lenin's 'Testament' at Last Revealed*, translated by Max Eastman. Found in *New York Times* 18 Oct. 1926
22. Library of Congress. *Collectivization and Industrialization*. (Washington DC: Library of Congress, July 22, 2010) <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/archives/coll.html> (accessed Dec. 3, 2015)
23. Holland Hunter, "The Overambitious First Soviet Five-Year Plan." *Slavic Review* 32.2 (1973): 237. [JSTOR]. 242
24. Library of Congress, *Collectivization and Industrialization*
25. Hunter, *The Overambitious First Soviet Five-Year Plan*, 242
26. The Central Committee under Stalin was essentially a subordinate organ of the Politburo.
27. Hunter, *The Overambitious First Soviet Five-Year Plan*, 241, Table 3: Projections for Stalin's first Five-Year Plan
28. Concept of kulaks – translating from the Russian кулак roughly as "tight-fisted" or "greedy" – came from the Leninist demonization of peasants who were relatively rich – a derogatory term for capitalists of sorts. It was perpetuated that these individuals' greed was a form of sabotage against the communist state, and that any failures in the communist system could be accounted for by their greed and sabotage. However, before the revolution and even after, these "kulaks" served vital roles as financial and administrative centers of peasant villages.
29. Joseph Stalin, "Concerning Questions of Agrarian Policy in the USSR," From speech at Conference of Marxist Students of Agrarian Questions, Moscow. Originally published: *Pravda* Dec. 29, 1929. <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1929/12/27.htm> (accessed Dec. 2, 2015)
30. Excerpt from Politburo, *Resolution On Measures for the Elimination of kulak Households in Districts of Comprehensive Collectivization*, Jan. 30, 1930. From Peter Julicher, *'Enemies of the People' Under the Soviets*, (McFarland, Mar. 13, 2015), 99

31. Richard Pipes, *Communism: A Brief History*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2001), p. 39
32. Robert Conquest, *Reflections On A Ravaged Century*, (New York: Norton, 2000), p. 94
33. Hunter, *The Overambitious First Soviet Five-Year Plan*, 242
34. Vasylii Stroganov, *Resolution of CC CP(b)U on Grain Procurement*, Jan. 3, 1932., #1 From Pyrih
35. Joseph Stalin, "Dizzy with Success: Concerning Questions of the Collective-Farm Movement." Editorial. *Pravda* [Moscow] Mar. 12, 1930, 60th ed; The prodzahony were "requisition" agents sent from the major cities by the communist party down to the border regions like the Ukraine to enforce party regulations.
36. Partychenko, *God Forbid That This Should Ever Happen Again*, 1
37. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine 1932-1933*
38. Stroganov, *Resolution of CC CP(b)U on Grain Procurement*, Jan. 3, 1932., #1 From Pyrih
39. Joseph Stalin, *Letter from Stalin to Kaganovich on Appeal from Ukrainian SSR leaders to CC AUCP(b)* (excerpt), June 15, 1932., #10 From Pyrih
40. Politburo, *Resolution of the CC CP(b)U Politburo on measures to strengthen grain procurement* (excerpt), Nov. 18, 1932., #28 From Pyrih
41. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine 1932-1933*, 11
42. Vlas Chubar and Stanislav Kosior, *Resolution of the Ukrainian SSR RNK and CC CP(b)U on blacklisting villages that maliciously sabotage grain procurements*, Dec. 6, 1932., #32 From Pyrih
43. Hanna L. Mykhalchuk, *Eyewitness Testimonies of Residents of the Village of Zalyvanshchyna*, 1991, 1., From Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies, "Ukraine Famine Memoirs" <https://www.concordia.ca/research/migs/resources/ukrainian-famine-memoirs.html> (accessed Dec. 3, 2015)
44. Mykhalchuk, *Eyewitness Testimonies of Residents of the Village of Zalyvanshchyna*, 2
45. Ukrainian SSR GPU Secret Political Department, *Report from Ukrainian SSR GPU on problems with food supplies and raions affected by famine in Ukraine* (excerpt), Mar. 12, 1933., #60 From Pyrih; See Appendix A
46. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine 1932-1933*, 6
47. Vlas Chubar and Stanislav Kosior, *Resolution of the Ukrainian SSR RNK and CC CP(b)U on blacklisting villages that maliciously sabotage grain procurements*, Dec. 6, 1932., #32 From Pyrih
48. Stanislav Kosior, *Letter from CC CP(b)U to oblast and raion Party committees on collecting all available reserves for grain procurement*, Dec. 29, 1932., From Pyrih
49. Collective Farmers of Horby, Hlobyn Raion, Kremenchuk Oblast, *Letter to Comrade Stalin*, April 28, 1932, Summarized by Agitations and Mass Campaigns Department for CC CP(b)U., #4 From Pyrih; See Appendix B
50. Vasyi Savchuk, *Eyewitness Testimony of Vasyi Ulianovych Savchuk*, 1991, 1., From "Ukraine Famine Memoirs"; Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine 1932-1933*, 7
51. Yaroslav Bilinsky, "Was the Ukrainian Famine of 1932-1933 Genocide?" *Journal of Genocide Research* 1.2 (1999): 147-56. (accessed 19 Oct. 2015), p. 149; Vasyi Savchuk, *Eyewitness Testimony of Vasyi Ulianovych Savchuk*, 1
52. Stanislav Kosior, *Letter from CC CP(b)U to oblast and raion Party committees on collecting all available reserves for grain procurement*, Dec. 29, 1932., #42 From Pyrih
53. Vsevolod A. Balitsky, *Report from Balitsky to the OGPU on the mass exodus of villagers from Ukraine*, Jan. 22, 1933., #49 From Pyrih; Joseph Stalin and Vyacheslav Molotov, *Order from the USSR SNK and CC AUCP(b) on preventing the mass flight of starving villagers in search of food*, Jan. 22, 1933., #50 From Pyrih
54. Joseph Stalin and Vyacheslav Molotov, *Order from the USSR SNK and CC AUCP(b) on preventing the mass flight of starving villagers in search of food*, Jan. 22, 1933., #50 From Pyrih
55. Vlas Chubar, *Resolution of the CC CP(b)U Politburo on executing the January 22 Order from the USSR SNK and CC AUCP(b)*, Jan. 23, 1933., #51 From Pyrih, 2007
56. Serbyn, "The Ukrainian Famine of 1932-1933 as Genocide in the Light of the UN Convention of 1948," p. 186; Although it is difficult to know exactly, some historians estimate as many as 100,000

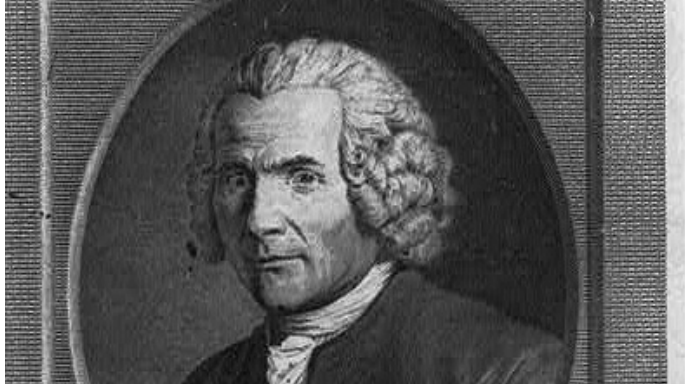
- Ukrainians managed to escape, often leaving to Poland or into unaffected parts of Russia.
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70. Pyrih, *The Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine*
71. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine 1932-1933*, 45
72. Joseph Stalin, *Letter from Stalin to Kaganovich and Molotov on the Ukrainian SSR leadership*, July 2, 1932., #12 From Pyrih
73. Joseph Stalin, *Letter from Stalin to Kaganovich on changing Ukrainian SSR leadership (excerpt)*, Aug. 11, 1932., #20 From Pyrih
74. Bilinsky, *Was the Ukrainian Famine of 1932-1933 Genocide?* 153
75. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine 1932-1933*, 7
76. Vlas Chubar and Stanislav Kosior, *Resolution of the Ukrainian SSR RNK and CC CP(b)U on blacklisting villages that maliciously sabotage grain procurements*, Dec. 6, 1932., #32 From Pyrih; Subtelny, *Ukraine: a History*, 418
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79. *Ibid.*, 154
80. Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress*. (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Division of International Law, 1944) 79
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82. UN, *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, 1951, Article II
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90. NEWSru Staff "Россия не должна извиняться за голодомор на Украине, считает первый вице-спикер Госдумы," NEWSru, Dec. 5, 2006, <http://www.newsru.com/russia/05dec2006/golodomor.html> (accessed Dec. 1, 2015) Quoting Lyubov Sliska







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# *ENLIGHTENMENT THROUGH SOLITUDE*

*The Age of Reason, Rousseau, and  
the Importance of Being Alone*

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“The sole cause of man’s unhappiness is that he does not know how to stay quietly in his room.”

-Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*

“Our philosopher does not believe in exiling himself from this world, he does not believe that he is in enemy country; he wishes to enjoy with wise economy the goods which nature offers him; he wishes to find pleasure with others...”

-Cesar Chesneau Dumarsais, *Philosopher*

## I. "Only the Wicked Man is Alone"

In 1757, at an idyllic retreat 12 miles from Paris, Jean-Jacques Rousseau wept. A man of incomparable sensitivity and unabashed passion, this was not altogether unusual for him; shows of heartfelt affection and glimpses of the beauty of nature would often send him into fits of free-flowing tears. But on this occasion, the cause of Rousseau’s passion was decidedly less pleasant; for how can one weep tears of joy at the public betrayal of a friend?<sup>1</sup>

Jean-Jacques’ betrayal came in the form of one sentence appended to his dear friend Denis Diderot’s 1757 play, *Le Fils Naturel* (“The Natural Son”). The offending line read simply, “*Only the wicked man is alone.*”<sup>2</sup> In that line, Rousseau saw a trusted companion condemning everything that he was proud to stand for; he saw the beginnings of a conspiracy meant to rob him of everything good in his life.<sup>3</sup> That was what Rousseau read; what we may read is entirely different. In that line, I contend, we may see one of the great and hidden conflicts of an era - a conflict which came to a head in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but which had been brewing for many generations before.

This conflict was, in a word, over solitude, and it took the form of a long debate over two of the most fundamental questions of human existence. First, how do human beings learn things, and second, what is the proper orientation of the individual towards society? The question about solitude thus takes on both an epistemological and an ethical dimension. This essay seeks to sketch two broad historical positions in this debate. The first

stance is the dominant one: humans learn through dialogue and social interaction – the duty of the individual is to play an active and useful role in society. The second position is an undercurrent; it says that we learn best when we are alone and through solitary inspiration – the highest duty of the individual is to live a virtuous life at least in part outside of the world. For the purposes of this essay, this second position will be called “enlightenment through solitude”; it is the stance taken by Rousseau, and it is the real focus of this paper.<sup>4</sup>

We will return to the compelling Jean-Jacques later; first we must sketch a brief outline of his “enlightenment through solitude” predecessors from Saint Augustine to Blaise Pascal, in order to fully understand the tradition in which Rousseau situated himself. Debates over the efficacy and ethics of solitude came to a head in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Enlightenment.<sup>5</sup> Before we can firmly place Rousseau into this story, we must also then look at his enemies in this period, from Voltaire to Diderot. Once this is done, the importance of Rousseau’s role as a defender of the solitary man becomes clear. It is my hope that this essay will demonstrate that those who preach “enlightenment through solitude” do so in order to subvert dominant intellectual trends, which may be able to reorient thinking in profound ways.<sup>6</sup>

## II. A Brief Genealogical Sketch of "Enlightenment Through Solitude"

Ever since classical antiquity, learning has been conceived of as an inherently social project. Socrates wandered the streets of Athens engaging in philosophical inquiry with anyone who professed wisdom. Plato wrote in a dialogue format, stressing the role of social discourse in creating knowledge. Aristotle taught in the Lyceum, Epicurus in The Garden, and Zeno of Citium under the *Stoa Poikile*. The Greeks, and later the Romans, viewed the path to wisdom as a road best traveled in good company. The duty of the philosopher was, in fact, to be explicitly social, teaching wisdom to as many people as possible in intensely social settings.

Yet, starting with Saint Augustine in the fourth and fifth centuries, there was an undercurrent of thought that viewed learning not as a process at all, but as a moment of divine inspiration occurring in solitude. Under this view, knowledge comes from inner experience (often with God) when one is alone, away from the corruption of the world. The clearest example of this in the thought of Augustine comes in his *Confessions*, when he is converted to Christianity in a Milanese garden.<sup>7</sup> Later thinkers in the “enlightenment through solitude” tradition would draw on this episode directly and indirectly to make their own claims about the world.

Augustine’s story in his *Confessions* traces his path from engagement in a world of sexual misadventure and glory-seeking to his ultimate turn inward and acceptance of the Christian revelation. The key episode comes in book eight, when Augustine leaves his dwelling in Milan to enter a garden in order to settle what he describes as the “burning struggle with myself.”<sup>8</sup> He brings his friend Alypius, but states that, “although he was present, I felt no intrusion on my solitude.”<sup>9</sup> Augustine fights as hard as he can to bring his will to full conversion, and finally, leaves Alypius’s side to be fully alone. In his complete solitude, he hears a voice tell him to “pick up and read,” following which occurs the famous moment of Augustine’s conversion, when he opens the Bible up to Romans 13: 13-14.<sup>10</sup>

This story is important to ours in that it contains every element that later thinkers in the “enlightenment through solitude” tradition would come to draw on. For one, Augustine goes from engagement with the outside world, which he sees as confusing and dangerous, to a more content inner life. His important knowledge comes to him in a moment of divine revelation, and is the result of intense solitary introspection. And the knowledge he gains, the Christian revelation, stands in stark contrast to what Augustine perceives as the dominant intellectual currents of his time, namely glory-seeking through rhetorical skill and Manichaeism.<sup>11</sup>

Because my contention is that Augustine and his thinking

are present in every other “enlightenment through solitude” thinker, it would be impossible to list every example of his influence; a few select cases will have to suffice, all of which directly or indirectly bear the Bishop of Hippo’s pedigree.

In 1336, the Italian poet Petrarch climbed up Mount Ventoux in Provence. In a letter to the monk Dionisio da Borgo San Sepolcro, Petrarch describes his ascent and the conversion moment he experienced at the mountain’s summit.<sup>12</sup> While gazing over at the Alps, Petrarch opened his copy of Augustine’s *Confessions*, and read a particularly striking passage therein which would forever alter his thinking (much like Augustine’s reading of Romans 13). Petrarch describes the incident thus:

*I was astounded, I admit. My brother was agog to hear more, but I asked him not to disturb me and closed the book, angry with myself for attending to earthly wonders when I should have learned even from pagan philosophers that it is only the spirit that is wonderful.*<sup>13</sup>

And so, like Augustine, Petrarch turns from the outer world to the inner in a moment of divine inspiration.

Many other thinkers – for example, the solitary Michel de Montaigne - come after Petrarch and before Rousseau, but two especially cannot be passed over.<sup>14</sup> The first is the 17<sup>th</sup> century French philosopher René Descartes. Unlike Augustine and Petrarch, Descartes was a strident rationalist. Yet just for this reason, in an age dominated by scholasticism and Pyrrhonian skepticism, Descartes was forced into solitude to recreate the whole system of knowledge.<sup>15</sup> In his *Discourse on the Method*, Descartes describes how he “remained for an entire day shut up by myself in a stove-heated room,” where he wrote that he was “completely free to converse with myself about my thoughts.”<sup>16</sup> Alone in Ülm, Descartes constructed his whole philosophy in a day, decisively overcoming the repellent scholasticism and Pyrrhonism of his time. Although Descartes probably did not draw directly on Augustine, he considered himself a devout Catholic and it is not surprising to find him, even if unconsciously, drawing on the same trope used by

the Saint.

The second important “enlightenment through solitude” thinker before Rousseau is the French mathematician, Blaise Pascal. In the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century Pascal too had a conversion moment that ultimately led him to find his austere Jansenist theology and to write his famous *Pensées*.<sup>17</sup> In this collection, Pascal decries man’s reliance on “diversions,” and ultimately decides that “the sole cause of man’s unhappiness is that he does not know how to stay quietly in his room.”<sup>18</sup> This is because man is intensely uncomfortable in the face of his inadequacy, which when alone, he cannot escape. “Men who are naturally conscious of what they are,” wrote Pascal, “shun nothing so much as rest; they would do anything to be disturbed.”<sup>19</sup> Pascal’s Jansenism was explicitly Augustinian, drawing on notions of original sin and reliance on God’s grace. For Pascal, solitude was the space where one learned everything one needed to know, just as he had done, and just as Augustine had done in Milan.

And so, by way of conclusion to this brief historical overview, we may note that every thinker drew on the Augustinian tradition of “enlightenment through solitude” in order to resist what they perceived to be the dominant intellectual trends of their time. Usually this turn inward was accompanied by a strong religious conviction, and a condemnation for the this-worldly, but not always. Every thinker was unique in his own way, but each articulated a strong ethos wherein knowledge was gained in a moment of solitary inspiration, and wherein the ideal state for man was that of the hermit: completely alone.

### **III. The Sociable Enemy: Opponents of "Enlightenment Through Solitude"**

As may be imagined, not everyone throughout the history of Western civilization has been willing to concede that man is a solitary creature who learns best by a lonesome fit of divine grace. The classical tradition of social learning perhaps reached its ideological apotheosis in the thinking of Francis Bacon and the establishment in 1660 of the Royal Society of London.<sup>20</sup> Under the

Baconian philosophy, knowledge is a broad corpus; it is a series of facts gathered by people from around the world, and theorized about by teams of scientists in societies like the previously mentioned Royal Society, or France's *Académie*. Taking Bacon largely as their inspiration, a generation of philosophers in what scholars call "The Age of Reason," or "The Enlightenment" put forth a view of knowledge as being inherently socially constructed, and man as being an irrevocably social (and thereby commercial) animal.

An early document of this position is Voltaire's 1734 *Letters Concerning the English Nation*. In the *Letters*, Voltaire praises Bacon as the "Father of experimental Philosophy [sic]," and also praises Newton and Locke for their contributions to human knowledge.<sup>21</sup> But more importantly, Voltaire articulates a fundamentally social, commercial view of man. Voltaire asks his readers to, "take a look at the Royal-Exchange in London... where the representatives of many nations meet for the benefit of mankind" (emphasis Voltaire's).<sup>22</sup> In the great Enlightener's view, commerce and the marketplace are the forces by which people are brought together; by participating in free trade, man becomes a social, and thus a tolerant and good creature.

Voltaire's view was followed by the progenitors of the great *Encyclopédie* in the middle decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. But before returning to the ethical issue of man's sociability, we must note the Encyclopedists' stance on the epistemological issues solitude raises. *The Encyclopédie*, a project conceived of by Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond D'Alembert, was in its very nature a social undertaking. The goal, according to Diderot, was to "collect all knowledge scattered over the face of the earth, to present its general outlines and structure to the men with whom we live, and to transmit this to those who will come after us."<sup>23</sup> Diderot laments those "narrow minds, deformed souls" who would rather see knowledge kept to a small group than shared with the multitudes.<sup>24</sup> In taking contributions from a wide variety of writers, and seeking to take the knowledge of the philosophes out of the salons into the houses of



ordinary citizens, the Encyclopedists amplified and broadened the ethos of the Royal Society. Man's knowledge was now to rely on a vast network of transcontinental connections, and enlightenment would occur by pooling the minds of all of the scientists and artists in the world.

In light of the new 18<sup>th</sup> century dependency of knowledge and enlightenment on man's sociability, the long-admired solitary philosopher became a figure of evil. In the *Encyclopédie's* entry on "Philosopher," the French *philosophe* Cesar Chesneau Dumarsais wrote that, "our philosopher does not believe in exiling himself from this world... He is an honest man who wishes to please and make himself *useful*."<sup>25</sup> Here Dumarsais demonstrates the link between the epistemological and the ethical part of our question. The philosopher must be useful. He continues, "civil society is, so to speak, a divinity for him on earth; he burns incense to it, he honors it by probity, by an exact attention to his duties, and by a sincere desire not to be a useless or embarrassing member of it."<sup>26</sup> And so, the lone philosopher is not just misguided because he believes knowledge comes from inner reflection; he is evil because he is not a participant in civil society and commerce.

One last proponent of the man-as-sociable view who cannot rightly be left out is the Scottish historian and philosopher David Hume. Hume was the darling of the Paris salon crowd, friends with all of the Encyclopedists, and even Rousseau (until the latter accused Le Bon David of betraying him, too). In Hume were united the strong commercialism (what we might now call free-market capitalism) of Voltaire and the emphasis on social knowledge of the Encyclopedists. In fact, he went so far as to claim that, "*industry, knowledge and humanity*, are linked together by an indissoluble chain. [Emphasis Hume's.]"<sup>27</sup> He preached commerce and luxury as the means of improvement for man, and so for Hume too, the man who refused to be social, commercial, and somewhat indulgent was actually a saboteur of society.

Given the predominant view of the solitary person laid out here - as a wicked and misguided enemy of society - we are now

prepared to understand the idea behind Rousseau's betrayal: "*Only the wicked man is alone.*"

#### IV. Jean-Jacques Rousseau: The Confessions of a Solitary Walker

Jean-Jacques Rousseau is perhaps one of the stranger figures of western intellectual history; he straddles two worlds. Born to a watchmaker in Geneva, Switzerland, his path to renown was at no time certain, and yet he found himself at the very top of fashionable Paris salon life, rubbing shoulders with princes and Encyclopedists alike.<sup>28</sup> And here begins our paradox: Rousseau's contemporaries and colleagues were men like Diderot, D'Alembert, and Hume, and yet Rousseau himself rejected many of those thinkers' views of man and society. It may seem odd to put the main figure of our narrative two-thirds into the story; yet I contend that we cannot understand Rousseau unless we understand both his intellectual predecessors and his enemies. Rousseau was explicitly influenced by thinkers like Augustine and Montaigne, and he is a clear example of someone who uses "enlightenment through solitude" to subvert a dominant, this-worldly intellectual current. By examining Rousseau's solitary life in his autobiographical *Confessions* (a clear tribute to Augustine's book of the same name), we see just how he does this.

Rousseau wrote *Confessions* for two interrelated reasons: The first, to, in his words, "document the history of my soul," recording his emotions and inner experiences throughout his life.<sup>29</sup> The second, in short, to prove to posterity that he was fundamentally a good person.<sup>30</sup> Both goals, for Rousseau, were at odds with the dominant worldview of his colleagues. In the first instance, because the Encyclopedists believed that man is a creature of reason, which Rousseau did not; he criticized the Count de Saint-Pierre for the idea "that men are motivated by their intelligence rather than their passions."<sup>31</sup> In the second, because he believed that the urbane lifestyle of the *philosophes* led only to vice; "it is in the country that one learns to love and serve humanity," he wrote, "In the cities all one learns is to despise it."<sup>32</sup>

In trying to fulfill these two aims, Rousseau paints a picture of himself as a thoroughly solitary creature. One of his greatest delights is when he is able to move into a home called “the Hermitage” twelve miles out of Paris. Rousseau remembers the incident by writing, “here I was at last, at home in a pleasant and solitary retreat, at liberty to pass my days in this independent, unvarying, and peaceful life for which I felt I was born.”<sup>33</sup> No matter where Rousseau was, his favorite activity was the solitary walk. He writes that even on a visit home to Geneva where he was clamored after for his fame, “I did not lose my taste for solitary walks, nor my habit of taking them.”<sup>34</sup>

Solitary walks were not only a way for Rousseau to relax; it was in solitude that he gained the inspiration to write all of his great works. The most dramatic incident was when he conceived of his now classic text, the *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*. He describes the process thus: “Wandering deep into the forest, I sought and I found the vision of those primitive times, the history of which I proudly traced. I demolished the petty lies of mankind... Exalted by these sublime meditations, my soul soared towards the Divinity.”<sup>35</sup> Rousseau describes writing *Émile* in similar terms: “In that deep and delightful solitude, amongst the woods and the waters, to the sound of birds of every kind... in a continuous ecstasy I composed the fifth book of *Émile*.”<sup>36</sup> Present in these examples, we see three themes present in almost all of the earlier “enlightenment through solitude” writers: (1) knowledge gained through a turn inward in solitude, (2) the destruction or subversion of dominant views, and (3) religious/divine imagery and inspiration.

We are now prepared to understand why Rousseau wept that day in 1757. “*Only the wicked man is alone.*” Not so, thought Rousseau; in his mind, solitude brought great delights. Not only did it calm the soul, but it imparted knowledge away from the inanity of high salon culture. It also taught virtue, for in the country or the woods man is free to commune directly with God, and is free from the luxury and vice which Jean-Jacques so hated. Rousseau,

like Augustine and all the others before him, used solitude as a way to come to his own conclusions, conclusions which (often) fundamentally conflicted with those of his colleagues like Voltaire and Hume. And as a result, solitude itself came to be the battleground over which issues of epistemology and ethics would be fought.

[illegible]

Rousseau's tears dropped onto his parchment with abandon, smearing the ink wildly across the page. "I wrote to [Diderot] to complain, but so mildly, so affectionately that the letter was soaked with my tears, and should have been touching enough to draw tears from him."<sup>37</sup> The response sent, Rousseau received back the following: "Our opinions about hermits differ. Say whatever good of them you will, you will be the only one in the world of whom I shall think it true. There would be a great deal to say on the subject if it were possible to speak to you without annoying you."<sup>38</sup> At this, we may imagine that Rousseau wept more, and bitterly. And when his tears stopped, a frustration bordering on fiery anger took their place.<sup>39</sup> If nothing else, Rousseau was living proof that men are indeed led by their passions.

Why does this exchange of letters matter? Why is it that we cannot simply attribute the difference between Diderot and Rousseau to one being extroverted and the other decidedly less so? The answer to these questions is that for these two intellectual giants, debating solitude did not just mean arguing over the joys of being alone. Solitude came to stand for much larger issues of the self's relation to enlightenment and society. In an era where ideological differences were fiercely contested, the "enlightenment through solitude" tradition of Augustine and Rousseau became a symbol for a whole way of engaging with the broader world.

## V. An Exception and Final Considerations

If this all seems too tidy, too broad, there is a reason: it is. What are we to make, for example, of Rousseau's favorite book,

*Robinson Crusoe*?<sup>40</sup> At first glance, the novel fits nicely into the trope of “enlightenment through solitude.” Robinson, a naïve boy looking for adventure, unfortunately becomes stranded alone on an island, where eventually he finds God and learns all of the arts of civilization by himself. But there is a catch: the book was written in 1719 by Daniel Defoe, a British imperialist, fond of the movements of his day towards commerce and colonization.

This is simply to say that the categories are more fluid than they seem; Defoe was probably not trying to subvert any dominant intellectual currents in his work, and yet he used the same discourse as Augustine, Petrarch, and Pascal. And so, *Robinson Crusoe* is an exception to prove the rule. Rousseau loved it not for its commercialist ideology but for its emphasis on natural man, learning by himself in the school of nature. Defoe was able to tap into a trend used by more rebellious thinkers to make his own work more interesting. It just so happens that later troublemakers, like Rousseau, put it to their own uses.<sup>41</sup>

And so, we may conclude with some final reflections. First, the “enlightenment through solitude” trend did not end with Rousseau. It lived on in the writings of Romantics, especially William Wordsworth and later Americans like Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Henry David Thoreau, and thus has no doubt played an interesting role in American history as well. Second, it is still a contested issue, for it appears as if for now Rousseau’s enemies have won. The dominant worldview of the modern West is essentially commercialist – man is a social animal, and does good by contributing to the well-being of his fellow man through participation in the economy. Yet critiques of this system are more often than ever leveled against it, even still by the solitary walkers of the world. Rousseau’s tears have long since dried up, but his relevance has not.

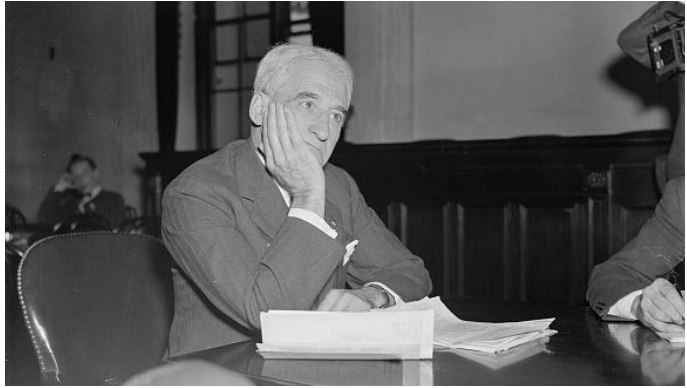
In the final analysis, those thinkers who have advocated and made use of “enlightenment through solitude,” articulated a worldview usually far different than that of their contemporaries. In taking up the Augustinian tradition, these thinkers have put

forward the bold idea that learning can be a divine and mystical experience, and that time away from the world leads not to the collapse of civilization, but rather to wisdom and virtue. In doing so, thinkers from Saint Augustine to Jean-Jacques Rousseau have, if nothing else, taught us the importance of being alone.

## ENDNOTES

1. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Confessions*, trans. J.M. Cohen (New York: Penguin, 1954), 423-4.
2. Rousseau, *Confessions*, 423-4.
3. Rousseau, *Confessions*, 423-4 ff., 544-5.
4. This essay has several parallels with other recent work on solitude, the self, and (auto)biography that the interested reader may consult. For example, see Barbara Taylor, "Separations of Soul: Solitude, Biography, History," *The American Historical Review* 3 (2009), which also makes reference to the Rousseau-Diderot debate in historical context. See also John D. Barbour, *The Value of Solitude: The Ethics and Spirituality of Aloneness in Autobiography*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004) for an examination of the ethical dimensions of solitude in the writings of several of the same figures that I analyze.
5. For general information on the Age of Enlightenment, see Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), Dan Edelstein, *The Enlightenment: A Genealogy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), and John Robertson, *The Enlightenment: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). For an alternative view with a large focus on Rousseau, see Charly Coleman, *The Virtues of Abandon: An Anti-Individualist History of the French Enlightenment*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014).
6. In order to be brief, this essay will not address the crucially important religious implications of this argument. To give a full account of the trends I have brought up, one would have to look at the religious writings of mystics, radical Protestants, and other religious groups who have preached and practiced solitude. This essay will focus more on philosophers, although most of the philosophers treated here were impacted profoundly by their religious views. Thus, further inquiry is needed in order to be comprehensive.
7. St. Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 146.
8. Augustine, *Confessions*, 146.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*, 153.
11. *Ibid.*, 88-89.
12. Petrarch to Dionigi da Borgo san Sepolcro, *The Essential Petrarch*, ed. and trans. Peter Hainsworth (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2010), 220-226
13. Petrarch, *Essential*, 225.
14. While for purposes of brevity I will not explicate Montaigne's importance, it must be at least noted. Montaigne, a French nobleman, was the archetypal example of the solitary philosopher. Withdrawing in the middle of his life into his study to read and write, his *Essays* (1580) paint a vivid picture of a man turning inward to discover truth for himself, away from the busy world.
15. René Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1998), 6-7.
16. Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, 6-7.
17. Saxe Commins, introduction to *Pensées & The Provincial Letters*, by Blaise Pascal (New York: The Modern Library, 1941), x-xv. Jansenism was a theology based on the writings of Cornelius Jansen, deemed heretical by the Catholic Church.
18. Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, trans. A.J. Krailsheimer (New York: Penguin, 1995), 37.

19. Pascal, *Pensées*, 39.
20. For information on the Royal Society, see *The Royal Society, Its Origins and Founders*, ed. Harold Hartley (London: Royal Society, 1960). The Royal Society was a gentlemen's society devoted to the study of natural history and philosophy under a Baconian model, exerting a large influence over Western scientific knowledge even to the present day.
21. Voltaire, *Letters Concerning the English Nation*, ed. Nicholas Cronk (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 51.
22. Voltaire, *Letters*, 30.
23. Denis Diderot, "Encyclopédie," in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader*, ed. Isaac Kramnick (New York: Penguin, 1995), 17.
24. Diderot, "Encyclopédie", 19.
25. Cesar Chesneau Dumarsais, "Philosopher," in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader*, ed. Isaac Kramnick (New York: Penguin, 1995), 22.
26. Dumarsais, "Philosopher", 22.
27. David Hume, "Of Refinement in the Arts," in *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1985), 271.
28. J.M. Cohen, introduction to *Confessions*, by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (New York: Penguin 1954), x. Basic biographical information about Rousseau can be found here as well as in several full-length contemporary biographies. For one, see Leo Damrosch, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Restless Genius* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005).
29. Rousseau, *Confessions*, 262.
30. Ibid, 479.
31. Ibid, 393.
32. Ibid, 427.
33. Ibid, 384.
34. Ibid, 368.
35. Ibid, 362.
36. Ibid, 483.
37. Ibid, 424.
38. As quoted in Rousseau, *Confessions*, 424.
39. Rousseau, *Confessions*, 425-6.
40. Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (London: Macmillan, 1866).
41. For Rousseau's views on *Robinson Crusoe*, see Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile or On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 184-8.



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## *CORPORATE CONSERVATISM AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT BY GENERAL ELECTRIC IN THE MID-20th CENTURY*

### *A Spark of Modern Corporate Social Responsibility?*

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Photo: Gerard Swope, President of General Electric Co., appearing before a Senate Subcommittee studying profit sharing plans today said he believed the government must adopt some form of incentive taxation if it hoped to induce industry to stabilize employment thought an annual wage. Declaring he 'hoped' profit sharing with employees was 'good business,' he added, 'but I don't know.'

Photo Courtesy of Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, photograph by Harris & Ewing, [LC-DIG-hec-25460].



“The best philanthropy, the help that does the most good and the least harm, the help that nourishes civilization at its very root, that most widely disseminates health, righteousness, and happiness, is not what is usually called charity. It is...the investment of effort or time or money... to give opportunity for progress and healthful labor where it did not exist before.” -John D. Rockefeller, 1909

In 1965, Milton Friedman gave voice to the increasingly conservative and critical business elite of America in his article “Social Responsibility: A Subversive Doctrine.” Friedman asserts that social responsibility, defined as those voluntary acts which better society as a whole, actually does nothing but undermine natural economic stabilization and create a “stepping stone to socialism.”<sup>1</sup> This argument articulated what many business leaders had said, publicly or privately, since the New Deal – that both government interference and the demand for a “more ethical business class” was not only unnecessary, but ultimately harmful to the economy and therefore to society.<sup>2</sup> The article also echoed many early arguments against public relations as a practice, including the philosophy of the “Gospel of Wealth.” This idea asserted that businesses, as generators of employment and prosperity, not only deserved all good things that they had accumulated, but also had already paid their societal debt by bolstering the economy.<sup>3</sup> One of the large, politically conservative companies at the forefront of this charge was General Electric, a conglomerate specializing primarily in appliances, energy management and aviation. This paper draws from an analysis of all print articles mentioning General Electric, as well as General Electric cross-referenced with “political” and “responsible”, in *Fortune*, *Business Week*, the *Wall Street Journal* and other publications between 1950 and 1980. In addition, it draws from General Electric documents, including several speeches and the Employee Relations Newsletter. In the period from 1950 – 1980, General Electric exhibited social responsibility primarily in the form of political involvement and advocacy, which in content was an ideological defense of capitalism and in practice a reflection of

theories of individual civic engagement during the time period. In merging traditionally juxtaposed ideas of responsibility and corporate conservatism, however, they paved the way for modern forms of corporate responsibility.

Friedman's assertion that the "social responsibility of business is to increase its profits"<sup>4</sup> contrasts sharply with modern textbook definitions of corporate responsibility, which include an almost collaborative search by corporations and society to "secure public acceptance, endorsement and support – in other words, social legitimacy."<sup>5</sup> Integral to understanding General Electric's attitudes and practices surrounding corporate responsibility is first the definition of corporate responsibility and corporate citizenship as it has emerged over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The exact definition of corporate responsibility - or corporate social responsibility, the terms are used interchangeably in this paper - is difficult to nail down precisely, though many agree that, as a concept, it involves "the idea that the corporation exists in society and has rights and responsibilities as a member (or citizen) of that society."<sup>6</sup> Corporate responsibility is a "normative challenge to business and executives to do good...[and] to do well," however that may be executed within any given business or corporate activity.<sup>7</sup> Social responsibility is so difficult to define precisely because it has, in practice, taken many different forms. Literature conceptualizes social responsibility in five major categories: 1) environmental, 2) social, 3) economic, 4) stakeholder values and 5) voluntariness.<sup>8</sup> From 1950 – 1980, General Electric focused their corporate citizenship in the social, economic and voluntariness aspects. In these forms of social responsibility, General Electric supported the idea that the corporation, with similar responsibilities and duties as citizens, had a place within the civic engagement of society itself. This paper, however, will make an important distinction in the definition of corporate responsibility, emphasizing the "voluntariness" aspect. It argues that some of General Electric's corporate activities, while they did "do good," were not really seen as a voluntary social *responsibility*, but

as a public relations necessity. This also challenges the definition of corporate responsibility to focus less on company actions and more on what companies saw as their own responsibilities of civic engagement.

It is important to understand that within this broad definition of corporate responsibility, General Electric represents only one example – and a slightly eccentric example at that. In their politicization of corporate responsibility, General Electric, while not alone, was definitely not representative of the entire business community in the mid-twentieth century. In fact, the business community was far from a consensus on corporate responsibility and ideas of what it constituted varied both from corporation to corporation and over time. Many companies in the mid- to late-20<sup>th</sup> century, such as General Motors, practiced corporate responsibility more as it is known today, through charitable giving or social investment.<sup>9</sup> Other businesses were fully in support of government regulation and liberal reforms, seeing “welfare programs as an inoculation against Communism.”<sup>10</sup> Still others, such as Friedman, believed it should not exist at all. This view was supported by the business press, including *Fortune*, which claimed in the 1960 article “Have corporations a higher duty than profits?” that the pursuit of profits was enough and social goods were the realm of government.<sup>11</sup> On this spectrum, General Electric did support civic engagement and corporate duty to society – just more in the political realm than in social giving.

In addition to defining corporate social responsibility, the paper will outline both General Electric’s business history and outside historical events to contextualize the development of the company’s corporate responsibility. General Electric is a historic powerhouse of American industry and innovation – both in manufacturing goods and in the marketplace of ideas. Founded in 1892 by Thomas Edison, it has grown to and maintained profitability as one of the largest U.S. companies. General Electric is the only company included in the original Dow Jones Industrial Index that is still listed today.<sup>12</sup> It began with a merger of electric

appliance companies, and has grown to include services such as aviation, manufacturing and healthcare. In addition to these innovations in technology, G.E. was also known in the mid-1900s for its aggressive ideological stance. The press regularly mentioned G.E.'s conservatism, with one paper declaring "G.E. is one of the major companies that as a matter of policy takes stands publicly on controversial issues,"<sup>13</sup> while *Fortune* Magazine described G.E. as carrying "on a steady propaganda effort...to win workers' support for its labor policies – and for its conservative political position."<sup>14</sup> G.E. also disseminated pamphlets among its workers explaining the company's viewpoints on everything from union negotiations to Congressional budget decisions. Within these pamphlets, General Electric's conservative position is still clearer, as it admonishes "those public servants who now too often fail to realize that taxing profits out of existence means taxing progress out of existence."<sup>15</sup> Not only was this conservative political position enough to gain media attention and commentary, but G.E.'s labor relations Vice President Lemuel Boulware became known for innovations in employee communication and union negotiations. These innovations included direct employee communication as well as a hard, "take-it-or-leave-it" attitude with union negotiators. Boulware and his policies not only affected industry-wide policies, but also influenced Ronald Reagan during his time at General Electric. Boulware's influence has been credited as a vital factor in Reagan's transformation to conservatism.<sup>16</sup> In this way, G.E. was as innovative with its social opinion and labor management policies as with machinery, and its staunch political views played a key role in the company's view of corporate responsibility.

External to the company, several major historical events influenced the emergence of General Electric's attitudes toward corporate social responsibility. Specifically, the New Deal and changing business attitudes toward regulation, as well as the Cold War, contextualize the development of these policies at G.E.. Increasing regulation at the turn of the century responded to public fears that corporations was becoming too big, and

therefore soulless.<sup>17</sup> Then, the New Deal marked a major piece of progressive legislation in response to the Great Depression.<sup>18</sup> After the New Deal was passed, many business leaders felt that federal government had overstepped, and campaigned actively against it.<sup>19</sup> This led to a pervasive fear of regulation that carried into the 1950s among corporate business leaders, as evidenced by the increasing importance many of them placed on public relations. General Electric, for example, hired a new public relations director in 1951 and moved the position of public relations director to Vice President.<sup>20</sup> As *Business Week* put it, this move was an “indication of how much the role of public relations in industry has grown since the days of William Vanderbilt’s famous outburst ‘the public be damned.’”<sup>21</sup> General Electric was also repeatedly prosecuted for antitrust cases throughout the period of 1950 – 1980, which could have played a role in furthering this fear of – what it perceived as – unnecessary government regulation and involvement. Into the 1970s, an attitude rose among business elites that government regulation was becoming onerous, and that taxes were too high and too burdensome.<sup>22</sup> For some companies, public relations was the way to try and avoid regulation.<sup>23</sup> General Electric went a step further and became politically involved.

In addition to fears of government interference, business attitudes were also shaped against the backdrop of the Cold War. During the Cold War, America and Russia engaged in a technological, ideological and proxy-military struggle for dominance of the post-WWII political landscape. Fears of communism were a constant that permeated American life. As a company closely tied into the defense industry, General Electric was a part of this ideological struggle. In 1950, 22% of G.E.’s business was military sales and in 1957 they won a contract to develop the J83 engine.<sup>2425</sup> General Electric was literally in the business of supporting the military through technology and equipment. This military connection and fear of communism is another contextual explanation for G.E.’s advocacy for and belief in capitalism as the driver of all things good.

Other than historical context, understanding General Electric's corporate responsibility policy necessitates first an understanding of all company engagements with its stakeholders. These interactions took two major forms: social philanthropic investment and political engagement. The former G.E. appeared to feel it needed to engage in to earn goodwill, while the latter it professed to be more of a voluntary public duty – arguably, its corporate responsibility.

Public relations, as mentioned previously, began to grow extensively among many companies during the early- to mid-1900s – and General Electric was no exception. Businesses wanted to be perceived as doing good and public relations was a way to tell this story. Between 1950 and 1980, General Electric undertook a variety of public relations and good will projects in order to avoid labor relations issues and government regulations. These social philanthropic investments were varied and often generic in nature. Many were education-focused, for example, G.E. offered fellowships at Stanford for high school mathematics teachers to encourage them to continue education<sup>26</sup> and donated money to higher education.<sup>27</sup> Locally, companies would hold events to serve the community. In 1953, for example, G.E. hosted one of its many employee and community relations events at a venue in Evendale, Ohio. The event was a mobile version of their local aviation machinery plant, and attracted a crowd of thousands. It proved, as one paper declared, “management's talent as promoters.”<sup>28</sup> G.E. also began to invest in projects of urban development and reinvestment in urban areas of poverty.<sup>29</sup>

Going into the 1960s, G.E. policy around these social gestures intensified. In 1956, G.E. was among several companies who began to promote community relations as a standard among their manufacturing facilities. General Electric “increased its... community relations staff six-fold in four years of operation, [and] sold an 18-booklet kit on how to organize a community relations program to more than 350 companies in the last 12 months.”<sup>30</sup> The average plant budget for community relations efforts varied from

\$18,000 to \$125,000.<sup>31</sup> Internally, in 1959, G.E. consolidated all relationship management – public relations, government relations, employee relations and union relations - into one department with greater authority.<sup>32</sup> These varied philanthropic efforts, employee events and internal and external commitment to relationship maintenance were integral to General Electric's story of evolving corporate responsibility.

Interestingly, though, while these activities were closer to corporate social responsibility as it is understood today, it is difficult to categorize them as having a sense of company "responsibility." G.E. seemed think they were necessary generators of goodwill, but never professed to see them as a company duty - or as something that they were particularly happy about. General Electric spokespeople, especially those in positions of company leadership, didn't claim that these social philanthropic efforts were part of the company mission, unlike later descriptions of political involvement. In many ways, they were simply a way to stay competitive and functional within the communities where factories operated. At the Evendale plant event, for example, one reporter noted that "aside from the employee relations angle, the show performed still another function. G.E. needs more employees at Evendale."<sup>33</sup> In one urban redevelopment project spearheaded by G.E., *Business Week* noted that by building up local community infrastructure, General Electric was allowed almost complete sales monopoly of products to those communities – essentially "selling itself to itself."<sup>34</sup> One of the only General Electric leadership comments relating to its community relations budget was, "if a planned community relations program can influence local public opinion only to such an extent as to get a strike-bound plant back into operation one week sooner, the savings will pay for a decade of constructive community relations, with a handsome dividend to boot."<sup>35</sup> Doing "good" in these instances was not a civic responsibility, but the achievement of a business objective.

In contrast to these social public relations, General Electric defined social responsibility through its promotion of corporate

conservatism and ideological defense of capitalism. These efforts were characterized by information campaigns about the good work of business and encouragement of political engagement among stakeholders. Unlike the goodwill generating projects, General Electric appeared see these efforts as its civic duty. While it can't be ignored that these politically conservative viewpoints ultimately benefit G.E. as a corporation, the expense and the fervor used, even at the potential expense of public popularity, display a sense of responsibility missing from the frank company statement on social philanthropy. This was evidenced in its communication to employees, stockholders and the general public.

One of the indicators of General Electric's politicized social responsibility in the early 1950s was its communication to employees, particularly in their Employee Relations Newsletter. As *Fortune* described the newsletter, "[it] is a sharp, hard-hitting bulletin rare among industry publications. It hits back at Union statements, denounces federal labor policies and presents its free enterprise arguments in frankly political terms."<sup>36</sup> In the July 15, 1949 newsletter, for example, General Electric declared that it felt duty bound to continue the Boulware policy of hard-line negotiations with labor unions, stating, "we were firm in our resulting conclusion to do nothing about a fourth round, which we were convinced would be contrary to the best interests of employees, customers, owners, government and public."<sup>37</sup> This broad declaration, in contrast to a desire to simply "avoid a union strike," indicates the stated belief of General Electric that sticking to principles of free market thinking was not just in its interests, but the best interests of the public more generally. This language is repeated again in relation to seizure legislation, claiming that "the public continues to suffer."<sup>38</sup> G.E. even went beyond informing its employees of the transgressions of the government against the good of the public to extend gestures of trust and encourage them to become politically involved. In the April 16, 1952 newsletter, in the context of government seizure, General Electric released a newsletter of classified information to employees two days before



the press. In it, G.E. requested, "In short, all good people have got to make it very clear that it has become very unpopular for union and government officials to do bad things to a good business – whether it is General Electric or the corner grocery....Now that this matter of seizure is to be taken up by Congress, it is hoped that our employees and shareowners will write their views to their Congress and Senators."<sup>39</sup>

The tone, as well as the content, of the Employee Relations Newsletter is an interesting piece of G.E.'s politicization of its social responsibility. In communicating with the average worker, General Electric doesn't sound condescending to the employee. Instead, it used an insider or us vs. them tone, as one political party member to another – poking jokes at liberal legislation and union leaders and using a "common sense" breakdown of arguments. The implication becomes that if you're on the other side of any of the opinions they express, you're allowing yourself to be misled to your own detriment. For example, one newsletter poked at the facial hair of labor leader John L. Lewis, as "Rep. Earl Michener raised the question of the greatest monopoly power existing in the United States today – that in the labor field, where a John L. Lewis, with a lift of his shaggy eyebrows, can completely paralyze an entire industry."<sup>40</sup> In another case, it made a joke out of Truman's call for "more productivity," saying "[he] better watch out. A fellow can get himself in trouble with a lot of important people by starting to 'talk sense' like that."<sup>41</sup> In other cases, it laid out their arguments with a "common sense" approach – for example, in stating "The average miner lost \$1,800 in wages alone this year [from strikes]...it will take well over 10 years for the raise in wages secured to make up this loss of pay. The economic folly for workers in these long-drawn out economic battles is indicated by the simple arithmetic" as well as "it seems fairly obvious that the proposal of the [United Electric Workers] is designed more for propaganda use in the inter-union fight."<sup>42</sup> The culmination of these tactics creates an impression that G.E. is arguing in favor of the workers and against the "manipulative unions" and government.

At one point, G.E. even uses a tone of solidarity in talking about the government, which they claim is “forcing everybody’s taxes and all other forms of expenses up – to the end of simply diluting the value of all *our* money.”<sup>43</sup> In the case of the seizure legislation, too, it explicitly said, “our whole high level of living is at stake – to say nothing for the moment of the even greater threat to freedom.”<sup>44</sup> This communication was largely effective – by 1969, “the company [was] diversified, with no dominant union. Many of its employees remained unorganized; a long history of fairness and excellent communications...effectively held employee support and loyalty.”<sup>45</sup>

In addition to employee communication, General Electric was also vocal in stockholder communications and urging political participation. In these cases, G.E. appeared to feel it was less necessary to convince stockholders of the right-mindedness of their conservative position. In fact, given how publicly G.E. stated its conservative positions, it’s unlikely that many people who chose to be shareholders adamantly disagreed with its policies. Instead, G.E. focused on stockholder political mobilization– not just to write Congress, as in the case of their employees, but to vote and become involved in party politics. In 1956, for example, G.E. was among 30 companies who backed workshops that “aimed at encouraging management participation in practical politics” – specifically, to vote and register people to vote.<sup>46</sup> In 1960, G.E. held special workshops and luncheons on how to “work...for the cause of a ‘free and competitive enterprise.’”<sup>47</sup> These shareholder education series were a novel idea, though it quickly became popular among other businesses as well – “lately more and more companies have been dabbling in public affairs – announcing stands on public issues, backing get-out-the-vote campaigns, urging participation in local politics, and distributing legislative voting records.”<sup>48</sup> Furthering the idea that General Electric saw encouraging political participation as a civic duty is the fact that these workshops would encourage political participation regardless of party affiliation – asserting instead that “Independents are the worst kind.”<sup>49</sup> This company-wide commitment to political participation was therefore spread

both among shareholders and employees.

Finally, G.E.'s free-market ideology and emphasis on political participation as a form of corporate responsibility was emphasized not just internally, but made public via the lecture platform. Cordiner, G.E. President 1950 – 58 and Chairman from 1958 – 63, was profiled by *Fortune* following his appointment in 1950, and specifically stated “the company should first consider the public it serves, second its own success” – but within this context, made the argument that company success created public service. He later advocated further for the role of big business and economic freedom as important to the success of the United States in the Cold War at a lecture at Columbia in 1956, saying “Without these economic enterprises, a nation today is a second-rate power... [this] is the worldwide struggle for men’s minds, in which success or failure of the U.S. economy...will be one critical factor.”<sup>50</sup>

Cordiner was not the only General Electric executive to speak publicly about the promotion of free market thinking as a company responsibility. Philip Reed, chairman of the G.E. Finance Committee, spoke at the Milwaukee Chamber of Commerce in 1958. In this speech, he implored the Chamber members to work for a better business climate through political action, claiming that the increased welfare benefits promised by the primarily liberal majority of newly elected 1958 Congressional representatives amounted to “political irresponsibility...and this is why the voice of business management simply must be heard everywhere... the voice of responsible, knowledgeable, social-minded managers presenting and discussing with their neighbors and legislative representatives the facts.”<sup>51</sup> Specifically, he pointed to the defeat of Right-to-Work laws, saying, “the recent defeat in five out of six states of bills designed to assure every worker his fundamental right to earn a living without being compelled to join a union against his will, clearly demonstrates how effective union bosses have been in misrepresenting the true meaning and purpose...and we of business management meanwhile sat quietly on our hands, failed to correct those self-serving misrepresentations with the truth, and

thus did our employees and our country a serious disservice.”<sup>52</sup> He appeared to believe that political action against business is the result of misinformation and that by engaging political in a campaign of re-information, business can serve themselves and, of course, society as a whole. He also warns of the dire consequences for democracy if business doesn’t mobilize – “the very future of American depends on our maintaining and strengthening the system of incentives – worker incentives, manager incentives, and of greatest importance, entrepreneurial incentives – which has made us supreme and which, perhaps alone, now stands between us and the communist world.”<sup>53</sup>

This argument for a better business climate as a responsibility to society and democracy is echoed even more passionately in 1959 with Robert Paxton’s (President, General Electric, 1957 – 1960) address to the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce. Paxton begins by discussing the origins of General Electric’s involvement in corporate responsibility, saying that “[At] the General Electric Company...we have gradually come to realize that, no matter how competent we may become in traditional functions, our capacity to operate as a productive, profitable and socially useful business is limited – and could in the end be destroyed – by economic and political influences that have received little or no serious managerial attention.”<sup>54</sup> Challenges to business by governmental regulation also challenge society. “Each citizen benefits directly by a healthy local and national climate for business, and his directly injured by conditions that stifle the vitality of business enterprise.”<sup>55</sup> Paxton then charged every business person present to become involved with political issues as a part of their responsibility, to speak with the voice of “moderation and with confidence,” claiming that without this communication, employees and communities would not understand the value of free enterprise. Moreover he consistently used General Electric as an example of a company “continually trying to discuss and illustrate these difficult questions...where good jobs and values come from, what makes them go away, what are the facts of life

concerning money and inflation, and why there is no such thing as a...free government 'hand out.'"<sup>56</sup> He even explained how "[General Electric] conducts training courses in job-related economics as a regular part of in-plant training...and participates in community-organized economic discussion groups."<sup>57</sup> These actions, though, he claims, must come from a broader sense of social responsibility and not simply as from party bias or as a "mere counterforce to union power...the business leader cannot act from such narrow motives...only if a businessman's interests are in harmony with the broad public interest will he have any hope of preserving his priceless asset of credibility."<sup>58</sup> However, while Paxton does say that General Electric "of course, conscientiously" does not back a specific candidate or party, "businessmen and professional people have been notoriously neglectful and distrustful of party politics... it is not sophisticated to remain independent of political parties; it is naïve."<sup>59</sup> In these communications, internal and external, General Electric leadership effectively argued that companies had a responsibility to the public, and that this responsibility was inherently political.

It is important to note that with the absence of internal company communication to analyze, it's impossible to know the exact intentions of General Electric leadership. It is therefore impossible to argue with absolute certainty that the company's political involvement was a sense of duty and not just another public relations stunt to benefit the bottom line. However, the passionate language of internal and external company communications on politics is not only telling, it is also jarringly different from the description of community relations efforts. Moreover, General Electric stood by its conservative beliefs even at the occasional jeopardy of public and government opinion, risky for a company who did so much government contract business. In labor relations, for example it maintained "determined to resist pressures from both government and public opinion."<sup>60</sup> Even managerial decisions were sometimes political, for example, "[they] preferred to locate new plants in right-to-work states."<sup>61</sup> Based

on these factors, General Electric's political involvement can be inferred as a corporate responsibility.

The modern implications of General Electric's use of political participation and ideology as corporate social responsibility in 1950 - 1980 points to interesting parallels between changing corporate social responsibility and theories of individual civic engagement over time. Specifically, a correlation can be drawn between changing natures of civic engagement and changing values of corporate responsibility – from participatory and political to volunteer-based and entrepreneurial.

In the mid- to late-1900s, people generally engaged more in group participation, voted in higher numbers, petitioned and picketed.<sup>62</sup> Then, beginning around the 1980's, this began to change – civic engagement became more individualized.<sup>63</sup> As Robert Putnam argues in his famous work, *Bowling Alone* (2000), people were less likely to join bowling leagues and participate in group activities and more likely to do things individually or among small groups of friends.<sup>64</sup> Voting numbers began to decline.<sup>65</sup> While the reasons for this continue to be debated<sup>66</sup>, it ultimately resulted in a modern era of high individual volunteerism, individuality and “entrepreneurship” in public service.<sup>67</sup> Corporate social responsibility policies in General Electric of 1950 – 1980 compared to modern General Electric parallel this changing civic involvement. Corporate responsibility at G.E. in the mid-1900s included group workshop involvement and civic activism through political participation. General Electric of 2005 could not appear more different, as it launched the Ecomagination campaign focusing on decentralized development of strategies to address environmental issues. In the late 2000s, G.E. Foundation also launched its Developing Health Globally program to provide healthcare to vulnerable populations.<sup>68</sup> These initiatives are individualized, focused on giving, and entrepreneurial. These correlations suggest that further research might indicate that as the nature of individual civic participation and ideals have shifted, so have ideas of what does or does not constitute corporate

responsibility – that what is expected from a citizen is similar to what citizens expect of the corporation.

“We noted the tenacity with which American society held on to the free enterprise system, despite frequent disillusionment. Indeed, the demand for “corporate responsibility” emanating from the American public square is in many ways the embodiment of that tenacity, of confidence that the system can be made to work in an ethically acceptable way – finding remedies without revolution.”

- Carroll et. al in *Corporate Responsibility: The American Experience*, describing the demand for corporate responsibility, 2012.

Today, corporate social responsibility is often held in direct contrast to corporate conservatism – one as the symbol of companies taking responsibility, one as companies avoiding responsibility. In the 1950s – 1980s, General Electric similarly argued that measures that would in the modern day be defined as corporate social responsibility were burdensome to business, society and freedom and should be combated with political involvement and education. It seems counterintuitive, therefore, to think of the political promotion of corporate conservatism as a form of corporate responsibility. Yet that’s exactly what it was – a company convinced that it was doing it’s civic duty by becoming involved in the political sphere, taking a political stance and encouraging political action, internally as well as externally. Ironically, even as these two concepts juxtapose, they create a cohesive dialogue. Even as General Electric was advocating for free governments, free markets, conservatism and unhindered enterprise, many concepts which today seem to directly contradict modern execution of corporate social responsibility, it was creating a dialogue around corporate social responsibility and the idea that businesses have responsibility. Though this form of corporate responsibility was fundamentally different from its modern definition, it did create a business environment where companies

felt they had a duty to society – however manifested. Ironically, in doing this, General Electric may have encouraged, fostered the growth of and contributed to the rise of corporate social responsibility as we know it today. Either way, its story is one which complicates notions of civic engagement among corporations – and raises questions about what has, what does and what will constitute corporate social responsibility in the second and third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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## *WOMEN, GOOD PEOPLE, AND BAD PEOPLE*

### *WOMEN IN EARLY SHANGHAI CINEMA*

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Photo: Nanking Theatre (now Shanghai Concert Hall) in 1934, showing *Tarzan and His Mate*.  
Image Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons, photographer unknown.

When Chinese film star Ruan Lingyu committed suicide in 1935, *The New York Times* described her funeral— a three-mile long procession during which three women killed themselves— as “the most spectacular funeral of this century.”<sup>1</sup> This reaction perfectly characterizes how audiences and the press, both international and domestic, viewed Chinese actresses in the 1920s and 1930s: tragic spectacles, afforded seemingly unrestricted visibility at catastrophic personal cost. Dubbed the “Hollywood of the East,” Shanghai held 151 of China’s 181 production companies in 1927, making cinema an increasingly visible industry that transformed women into stars. Yet the same men who profited from these actresses’ publicity condemned their visibility. In fact, gendered standards in the domestic press and stock roles in film limited actresses’ social mobility and forced them to play virtuous girls with tragic endings or wild women who become domesticated – endings which extended to the actresses who played them because of authentic acting and the invasive press.

Analyzing women’s roles in early Shanghai cinema requires understanding the changing status of Shanghainese women in the early twentieth century and the impact of cinema on social mobility. As discourse on women’s rights offered conflicting messages, cinema fueled the debate by putting women in the public eye. In 1937, sexologist Yao Hsin-nung described a “glorious dawn of... emancipation” for women in which the “splendor of the sing-song girls [courtesans]... [would] never shine again.”<sup>2</sup> His prediction was ironic, given that these same sing-song girls dominated the silver screen. Although Yao claimed these emancipated women “move[d] in society together with the menfolk,” the two sexes were held to different standards in the press. Just two years earlier, the press had condemned the concubine of a deceased president for remarrying yet hailed a high officer for doing the same. They even praised another official’s concubine for committing suicide upon his death, an act validated by films of the era and late imperial Chinese ideals.<sup>3</sup> In contrast to Yao, an anonymous author saw women as “sacrificed victims of an evil economic system and captives of evil men,” restricted to “dull factory work” and “glamorous but notorious

professions.”<sup>4</sup>

Cinema fell into the latter category. Called “second to no power in the world if properly used” by a 1920 *North China Herald* article, cinema had the potential to offer a new image of women to a mass audience.<sup>5</sup> These actresses, pioneers of Chinese cinema, were “some of the most upwardly mobile and visible women in 1920s and 1930s Shanghai,” according to Professor Michael G. Chang.<sup>6</sup> Off-screen, these stars modeled the modern lifestyle with their fashions, hairstyles, automobiles, and sexual lives, particularly cohabitation. On-screen, they influenced audiences’ feelings. After seeing a film, poet Tian Han nearly sent his own savings to the character, “a girl too poor to buy a pair of shoes she desired,”<sup>7</sup> before seeing the actress play a queen in another film and realizing his mistake. Although extreme, Tian’s reaction reveals how intertwined cinema and reality were, not only to the audience but to the culture.

Actresses Wang Hanlun and Yang Naimei had relative success capitalizing on the cinema’s social mobility. Throughout her life, Wang Hanlun (born Peng Jianqing) demonstrated a desire for independence, first divorcing her husband, then gaining economic independence, and finally becoming an actress.<sup>8</sup> Although her family saw this last step as a demotion and cut ties with her, Peng was able to reinvent herself as Wang Hanlun.<sup>9</sup> She shaped the image of the “modern girl” by displaying her unbound feet and cutting her long hair on camera.<sup>10</sup> In addition to being an actress, she formed a production company, Hanlun Film Company, and starred in and produced the film *Mangmu de aiqing* (Blind Love). When the director failed to show up, she ended up directing, editing, and promoting the film herself, a remarkable feat considering that her contemporaries believed that women lacked the physical strength to direct.<sup>11</sup>

Yang Naimei, although equally ambitious, was less successful. Like Wang, Yang became an actress against her family’s wishes and formed the Naimei Production Company, which produced *A Wondrous Woman*.<sup>12</sup> Based on the suicide of Yu Meiyun, *A Wondrous Woman*, written by and starring Yang, took many creative liberties. It turned the “rebellious” death of a single woman into the

act of a “self-sacrificial mother,” a staple of Chinese cinema.<sup>13</sup> These changes reflected the limitations on women’s social mobility; even a film written and produced by a woman followed the same patriarchal conventions that dominated Chinese cinema. Professor Michael G. Chang notes that even as women attempted to gain some control of the industry through writing and producing, they “could only grasp at an ideal of ‘liberation.’”<sup>14</sup> Yang’s company folded after *A Wondrous Woman*’s failure, and Yang died a penniless, forgotten star.<sup>15</sup>

In spite of Wang and Yang’s achievements, gendered standards in the cinema limited actresses’ expressions. When writer Bao Tianxiao asked some sing-song girls about the kinds of characters in movies, most likely around the 1920s, they replied, “Women, good people, and bad people,” recognizing that women occupied an entirely different sphere than men in films.<sup>16</sup> Although their response implies that women were not even seen as “people,” a more accurate term would be “characters.” While actresses were now allowed to act alongside men because of the “beauty” and “authenticity” they brought to the film, they were not expected to “act well” but “act good” and “like themselves.”<sup>17</sup> This standard not only limited the onscreen roles they could be given but also defined how they must live their lives off screen.

This “gendered constraint” stemmed from the “socially constructed ideal of women as ‘good girls.’”<sup>18</sup> Any actress who showed signs of duplicity by playing a character other than herself onscreen was labeled a “femme fatale” or “snake-like woman.”<sup>19</sup> As a result, even when offered controversial roles, actresses shied away from them, leading essayist Hu Shi to comment sarcastically, “Since nobody dares to play this role, the role must be unrealistic.”<sup>20</sup> The screen, after all, had its own reality. Actors, on the other hand, were not held to the same restrictions. A photo spread of the “four bastards” of Chinese cinema explicitly separated the villainous characters from the actors who played them. Actor Wang Xianzhai could be praised for his ability to “pose as a villain,” while a woman who posed, even as a hero, was condemned as a threat to the “centered subjectivity of womanhood based on chastity and loyalty.”<sup>21</sup>

In life, women could only play two roles: a good girl or a snake-like woman.

The press perpetuated these gendered standards by representing actresses as objects of gossip at best, prostitutes at worst. At its tamest, the press trivialized actresses' work, writing "small and gossipy" articles about their reputations, physical features, and relationships with men.<sup>22</sup> In fact, two of the four criteria used to rank actresses' abilities in 1937 were "moral conduct" and "private life," although the latter was exhibited in photo essays for a mass audience to appreciate and, more often, judge.<sup>23</sup> When actress Hu Die broke off her engagement to Lin Xuehuai, the press speculated that she had spent the night dancing with "the traitorous Young Marshall of the northeast, Zhang Xueling" even as Japanese armies invaded China. These rumors, associating unattached women with a lack of patriotism, persisted until Hu was married.<sup>24</sup>

Rather than simply reporting on actresses' lives, the press upheld the popular idea that actresses were merely prostitutes. A 1926 short story, "Dianju Yuanzhong" ("In the Movie Theater"), perpetuated cinema's association with prostitution by setting the scandalous encounter in a movie theatre.<sup>25</sup> A 1927 *Funü zazhi* article even contended that women who worked in the film industry were "the wives of actors, lowly women, and prostitutes" who led "the disgusting lives of streetwalkers." "We can guess what their values, their principles, and their hopes are," the article editorialized. It went on to list four types of actresses: those without other means of livelihood, those lured by high salaries, "unprincipled," fame-seeking prostitutes, and "principled" prostitutes disgusted by their occupation.<sup>26</sup> Ten years later, another magazine, *Qingqing Dianying*, categorized actresses into four similar classes, all gradations of prostitute.<sup>27</sup> Referring to actresses as prostitutes delegitimized their work and repressed their social mobility. Notably, these four classifications fall in line with several character types in early films. The practice of authentic acting encouraged the press to draw parallels between the films the actresses starred in and their personal lives.

In addition to being portrayed as prostitutes in the press, actresses played virtuous prostitutes with "wounded smiles" and

tragic endings onscreen, reaffirming matriarchal duty and patriarchal control.<sup>28</sup> These women represented the “principled prostitute” described in the *Funü zazhi* article, women disenchanted with prostitution but unable to escape. These characters could only redeem themselves and win audiences’ praise through tragic endings, even though they were virtuous and their unfortunate circumstances were beyond their control. In *Street Angel*, for example, Xiao Yun’s employers force her to become a prostitute and threaten to do the same to her younger sister, Xiao Hong (played by Zhou Yuan). Notably, Xiao Hong was Zhou Yuan’s birth name, encouraging audiences to read her as the same person. Although both sisters attempt to escape, the unsullied Xiao Hong survives to join her lover, Xiao Cheng, while the prostitute, Xiao Yun, is brutally murdered.<sup>29</sup> *The Goddess* goes a step further in giving women agency when the unnamed virtuous prostitute played by Ruan Lingyu murders the gambler who stands in the way of her son’s education. This action results in her containment from society and supports the negative image of prostitutes in the press. Although *The Goddess*, unlike *Street Angel*, gives the mother the power to defeat her aggressor, she does not act for the “articulation of the female voice” or the “attainment of woman’s self” but, rather, the “realization of... male fantasy,” her son’s education.<sup>30</sup> Not only does she sacrifice her own freedom, but she erases herself from her family by telling the principal, her son’s new guardian, to “tell [her son] that his mother is dead” so that he would not have to “bear the shame.”<sup>31</sup> Her decision echoed the difficult choice many actresses had to make, sacrificing their families in pursuit of a career. It also reinforced “paternal law” in a way that the audience could appreciate the mother’s dutiful acts while being reassured that she had been removed from society.<sup>32</sup> Even a virtuous prostitute, after all, could not end up happy and was not suited to raise a son.

If not prostitutes, these actresses played extravagant femme fatales, reminiscent of the *Funü zazhi*’s “unprincipled prostitutes,” who suffered consequences for their frivolity. Based on Guy de Maupassant’s “The Diamond Necklace,” *A String of Pearls* opens with the intertitle, “If a woman drags herself down the road of

vanity, her husband will be her victim surely.”<sup>33</sup> The film reverses *The Goddess*’s situation, with the dutiful husband, Wang Yusheng, going to jail because of his wife’s vanity. Unlike *The Goddess*, however, Wang is ultimately released after his wife toils as a seamstress, yet again restoring patriarchal order. Throughout the movie, women are associated with wasteful consumption. For example, a nameless shopper is so enthralled with the expensive jewelry that she does not notice a shop assistant gazing voyeuristically at her; even when he drops his mop on her, she remains fixated only on the jewelry and allows herself to be violated by both the male gaze and dirty mop.<sup>34</sup> Sun Yu’s *Queen of Sports*, too, follows the downfall of a promising athlete, Lin Ying (played by Li Lili), following her rise to fame. She begins reading fan mail in the classroom, wearing provocative dresses and high heels, and attending parties with college playboys.<sup>35</sup> These movies paralleled the path of the modern movie star. Just as the fictional press gave Lin the title “Queen of Sports,” the domestic press crowned actress Hu Die as China’s “Movie Queen.”<sup>36</sup> Although the press made these women into stars, they resented the actresses for acting the part. Like movie audiences condemned Lin, the press demonized stars who “made [themselves] up, donned fashionable clothes, swaggered down the street, and put on airs using [their] so-called stardom to attract the opposite sex.”<sup>37</sup> In doing so, the press reduced one of actresses’ main spheres of influence, their public image. The contradictory practices of mocking society for being enticed by stars while encouraging the enticement turned stardom into a venue of profit for the press rather than a means of social mobility for women.

By commercializing women’s ability to model the modern lifestyle, advertisements infringed on actresses’ self-expression, enforcing a cruel double standard. The press shamed actresses for pursuing the same modern lifestyle that they sold to the masses. “Queen of Sports” Li Lili became a real-life queen of sports when she sponsored several sports products and venues, further blending cinematic stories with reality. She and other actresses were also featured in ads for domestic products like toothpaste, makeup products like nail polish, and commodities like the Buick car.<sup>38</sup>



These products all represented the modern lifestyle which actresses modeled to the public. Perhaps by condemning this modern lifestyle, businesses hoped to make their own products look more scandalously appealing. The “extravagant femme fatale” character type presents women as the consumers of these products; however, men were expected to buy these commodities for their wives and lovers to display their social status. In *A String of Pearls*, for example, Wang’s wife asks, “Am I not dressed up fashionably?” not out of vanity but to seek his approval; he is driven to steal the necklace for her because of his own desire to improve his social standing.<sup>39</sup>

Amidst these good girls and snake-like women, the *nüxia* (female knight-errant) emerged in the 1920s, a heroic role that nonetheless maintained patriarchal standards. The *nüxia* offered actresses a chance to play a more powerful protagonist whose celebration did not stem from her tragedy. These women were allowed to assume androgynous or masculine roles. For example, *The Red Heroine*’s Yungu parts with her “long hair and feminine dress” and duels another woman as “a ritual of bonding,” a common practice among men.<sup>40</sup> In *Lustrous Pearls*, two women disguised as men rescue a bandit’s daughter and are rewarded with pearls (which ironically, turn a group of men against each other, in stark contrast to *A String of Pearls*).<sup>41</sup> The long shots of feet, legs, and wrestling bodies make male and female characters indistinguishable, presenting an unprecedented gender equality in Chinese films.<sup>42</sup> Of course, many of these films merely reiterated the messages of the other films while taking commercial advantage of the popular kung-fu genre. In several films, including *Lustrous Pearls*, the heroines must disguise themselves as men, subordinating “female power” to the existing “patriarchal order.”<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, these heroines, like the virtuous prostitutes, are motivated by their “passion for, if not devotion, to the other sex,” and by extension, the restoration of patriarchal order; only *The Red Heroine*’s Yungu is driven by her “allegiance to women.” While the heroines in the other films marry their male companions, the desexualized Yungu conducts her cousin’s marriage ceremony, taking on a masculine role.<sup>44</sup>

These *nüxia* roles gave the actresses a new public image that

conflicted with traditional portrayals in the press. Actresses like Wu Suxin and Hu Die became “synonymous with the swordswomen they portrayed,” contradicting the expectation of authentic acting.<sup>45</sup> Audiences began expecting Wu to play a “reckless spirit” who engaged in “tough games” against men.<sup>46</sup> Indeed, writer Shen Yanbing observed that audiences cheered for protagonist Hong Gu in films “not so much because she [was] played by the female star Hu Die” but because “she [was] a swordswoman and the protagonist in the film.”<sup>47</sup> While the practice of separating female characters from their actresses gave women the chance to play more complicated roles without fear of backlash, it also meant that whatever praise character Hong Gu received did not extend to Hu Die, who still had to conform to the “good girl” expectations of the press.

Like the *nüxia* of the 1920s, the revolutionary martyr, which emerged in the 1930s as the most ideal woman, transformed former “wounded smile” actresses into more independent women who, all the same, met tragic ends. As tensions between the Nationalists and Communists increased, screenwriters more blatantly politicized their stories with new, revolutionary modern women. A character in the film *Three Modern Women* proclaimed that the true modern woman was “most independent, most rational, most courageous, and most concerned about the public welfare.”<sup>48</sup> *A Woman of Today*, written by and starring actress Ai Xia, transforms empty-hearted modern girl Putao into a “liberated girl with a bright future.” Like the virtuous prostitute films, Putao is forced to resort to prostitution and is imprisoned for stealing money from her boss. In prison, however, fellow prisoner An Lin teaches her to escape “the modern epidemic of individualism and narcissism,” and she emerges from prison a liberated woman. Although Putao survives and looks to a bright future— an atypical ending, likely connected to the fact a woman wrote the screenplay— An Lin, “the woman with radical thoughts and a revolutionary mind,” remains confined in prison.<sup>49</sup> In both *The Abandoned Wife* and *Daybreak*, however, the revolutionary protagonists die tragically. *The Abandoned Wife*’s Wu Zhi-fang (played by Wang Hanlun) dies as a “women’s liberation martyr” after being shot by the police.<sup>50</sup> Likewise, *Daybreak*’s Lingling

(played by Li Lili) starts out as a virtuous prostitute who, after helping her revolutionary lover escape, is executed by the police.<sup>51</sup> While her death seems heroic, the fact that she dies rather than her lover follows the patriarchal pattern set in earlier films. Her death itself, following her request that the squad open fire “the moment she smiles her best,” can be read as a critique of the press, exposing women’s role as objects for men to admire; however, it could simply be a blatant example of the objectification of women. After all, while *Daybreak* stars a revolutionary martyr, one year later, *Daybreak*’s director Sun Yu again paired up with Li Lili to film *Queen of Sports*, a cinematic step backwards that condemned any women who demonstrated ambition.

Even these revolutionary martyrs, powerful onscreen, could not escape from the press. The press complained that the extravagant Yu Yu and her movie star lover in *Three Modern Women* should have committed suicide. Especially considering that the third woman, Chen Ruoyin, already commits suicide in the film, their criticisms promoted the idea that any woman who did not fit a certain, near-unattainable standard should kill themselves. Critics also complained that Ruan Lingyu’s character, telephone operator Zhou, should have been a “true blue collar proletariat... who lived in miserable conditions and, of course, did not wear a perm,” again limiting women’s influence over fashion.<sup>52</sup>

These criticisms blended the actresses’ life choices with the style of the film, a practice which continued in *New Women*, released a year later. In response to the criticisms, Ruan now played Wei Ming, a “physically and psychologically abused” schoolteacher, rather than Li, the revolutionary “masculinized strong woman... devoid of any sexuality.”<sup>53</sup> Yet far from being a virtuous prostitute, Wei Ming represented Ai Xia, whose life and suicide *New Women* was based on. Before her suicide, Ai defied some of the gendered standards of the press. In her essay “To My Sisters Interested in Film Acting,” she used the dehumanizing nickname the press had given her, “Wild Cat,” to avoid talking about her family, a default topic for women, by claiming that a cat “is not a human being, nor has a family.”<sup>54</sup> In doing so, she subtly criticized the press for

treating actresses as inhuman while transitioning to what she really wanted to discuss: society. Rather than merely mimicking emotions onscreen, she argued that actresses should “shoulder social responsibility,” similar to the revolutionary women.<sup>55</sup> Caught between “progressive hopes” and “retroactive habits,” Ai overdosed on opium in 1934. This tragic ending befit her onscreen characters so much that director Cai Chusheng decided to make *New Women* to expose how “slandorous and profit-driven media” destroyed such a talented actress.<sup>56</sup> Yet, in making *New Women*, he merely exposed Ai (and by extension, Ruan) once more to that industry.

*New Women* both commemorated and predicted the suicides of two actresses, acts of self-expression that ultimately revealed the restrictive nature of the movie industry. In the film, Ruan’s character, Wei Ming, and her date, Dr. Wang, attend a dance performance in which a Caucasian dancer is whipped. While Dr. Wang claps at the girl’s feigned distress, Wei envisions herself as a dancer with Western prison clothes and chained feet.<sup>57</sup> This sequence, on the surface, echoes *The Goddess*’s ending, supporting the confinement of women. Yet, as a dream sequence rather than reality, it critiques the film industry, revealing it as a theatre in which men appreciate the torment of women. Although Ruan’s feet were unbound, in the sequence, they are chained, restricting her movement even without the traditional practice of binding feet. Moreover, her Western prison clothes reflect how the press imprisoned actresses despite, or perhaps because of, their freedom to wear Western clothes. At the end of the film, Wei shouts, “I want to live!” emphasized by the intertitles flowing from her mouth.<sup>58</sup> Yet in the very next scene, her death is reported in a newspaper obituary, which is stepped upon by the factory workers. In presenting Wei (and by extension, Ai) as someone who wanted to live but was destroyed by society, the film removes her agency, destroying her final attempt at self-expression. The revolutionary factory workers literally stomp upon her suicide and, contradictorily, the newspaper itself, a symbol of the abusive media.

On March 8, 1935, shortly after *New Women*’s release, Ruan Lingyu, too, committed suicide, a deadly form of self-expression.

Using a quote from her suicide note, “Gossip is fearful,” writer Lu Xun condemned the press for “irresponsible sensationalism” in reporting actresses’ lives.<sup>59</sup> One *Qingqing* columnist posed the question: “If Ruan Lingyu hadn’t committed suicide, would you still express sympathy for her?”<sup>60</sup> While she was alive, the press advocated for her torment and death onscreen. Now that she was dead, however, the endless onscreen deaths of actresses had trained the public to sympathize with her. Although silenced by death, the act in itself arguably gave Ruan more voice than she had ever had. Unfortunately, even that voice was twisted by the press, with endless speculations, condemnations, and fake suicide notes.<sup>61</sup>

Cinema both elevated and tamed women. It put them in the public eye only to turn them into “good girls” or “femme fatales” and give them roles that culminated either in their deaths or domestication. The press used actresses to sell a modern lifestyle yet condemned actresses for living it, limiting cinema’s potential for social mobility. Actresses who tried to escape these confines had to sacrifice their lives by abandoning their families and walking the fine line between success and starvation, like Wang or Yang, or committing suicide, like Ai or Ruan. The cinema ultimately acted as a spotlight for a culture that encouraged women to kill themselves to meet societal standards and gave women a voice while dictating which words they could say. For women, the silver screen did not have much of a silver lining.

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# *MASCULINITY AND VIOLENCE IN THE WEATHER UNDERGROUND*

**Liliana Silverman**, originally from Brooklyn, NY, graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in December 2015 with a B.A. in History. This paper was prepared for Susan Johnson's History 600 course on men and masculinity.



In *I Am A Man!*, Steve Estes argues that the Black Panthers organization framed itself and its members as masculine through their embrace of self-protection and violence. Some white “New Left” organizations, including the Weather Underground, were inspired by the Black Panthers and in turn embraced similar concepts of masculinity. The Weather Underground began as a small group of white leftist radicals, who believed that white activists needed to embrace more direct action and use violent resistance in order to challenge capitalism and U.S. imperialism. Like the Black Panthers, the Weathermen was a mixed gender organization, in which women were both trained in arms and contributed to leadership. However unlike the Black Panthers, the Weathermen as an organization were united ideologically for fighting for women’s liberation. This paper will argue that despite the Weathermen’s embrace of women and its identification with feminism, the organization still created a masculine identity for its members by embracing behaviors that the larger society coded as masculine, such as violence and sexual voraciousness. Through their claim that the use of violent action was the only way to be truly revolutionary, men in the Weathermen and Weather Underground Organization (WUO) carved out a new identity for themselves by adopting a stereotypically working-class masculinity. Through their adoption of masculinity and militancy, men in the WUO attempted to distance themselves from their previous middle-class identities and align themselves with a worldwide revolution of the oppressed.

Estes is not alone in arguing that new left organizations such as the Weathermen embraced a masculinist identity, and other scholars have noted that women in the WUO embraced masculine traits. In her thesis “Women in Wargasm: The Politics of Women’s Liberation in the Weather Underground Organization,” Cyrana B. Walker argues the women in the WUO adopted masculinity and machismo in an attempt to challenge male patriarchy. Members were critical of the Women’s Liberation Movement for their lack of violence, labeling the movement as counterrevolutionary.<sup>1</sup> Women in the Weathermen instead chose to fight alongside men within

the organization, where they believed that they challenged the subjugation of women through their militarism. Walker's analysis shows that women within the organization were both successful and unsuccessful in their attempt to use masculinity as a tool to challenge patriarchy. While these women challenged traditional notions of femininity, they also created new expectations for themselves within the organization that were ultimately harmful. This was because women's adoption of masculinity acted in tandem with a belief that women were responsible for their own oppression due to the inherent weakness of the feminine.<sup>2</sup> Walker's thesis successfully shows that WOU's commitment to the liberation of women did not in any way change the masculinist nature of the organization. While Walker focuses on how women within the WOU created a masculine identity in an attempt to challenge traditional femininity, this paper explores how men within the organization used masculinity in order to validate their own identities as male revolutionaries.

In *Outlaws of America: The Weather Underground and the Politics of Solidarity*, Dan Berger also argues that the Weathermen prized masculinity. *Outlaws in America* focuses on creating a comprehensive history of the motivations and actions of the Weather Underground in order to understand the group's successes and shortcomings, as well as analyzing how today's activists can use the legacy of the WOU as a way to affect future change. While Berger's focus is much wider than the scope of this paper, he does touch on the politics of gender in the book's final chapter. In his analysis of gender, sexuality, and feminism, Berger argues that despite the active participation of feminist-identified women within the organization, the Weathermen as a whole was a masculine organization.<sup>3</sup> While Berger touches on the Weatherman as an organization that emphasized male culture, he focuses his analysis of masculinity on the treatment of women and feminism within the organization. Though masculine culture in the WOU did effect gender relations within the group, this paper seeks to show that the WOU's adoption of a masculine identity also affected the group's embrace of violence and militancy.

Violent action was one of the cornerstones of the Weathermen from the beginning. The Weathermen began as a faction within the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), a national organization with chapters in college campuses around the country formed in 1960. The organization was committed to civil rights and a more progressive government, while loathing both capitalism and fascism.<sup>4</sup> Despite the organization being at the core of the New Left throughout the decade, by 1969 SDS was facing many internal conflicts especially surrounding the presence of Progressive Labor (PL) members within the organization. Members of PL believed that the SDS should focus on educational organizing while others within the SDS, inspired by the Black Panthers as well as revolutionaries worldwide, believed it was time for action and militancy.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, the PL was staunchly communist, arguing that black people in the United States were members of the working class and should be organized as such, while those in the SDS who aligned themselves with the Black Panthers saw the black community as colonized people who had a right to national sovereignty.<sup>6</sup> These tensions within the organization came to a head at the 1969 SDS National Convention. The day of the convention, the SDS's *New Left Notes* had published a statement by some SDS members opposed to the PL titled "You Don't Need a Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind Blows," a statement that has since become known as the Weathermen's founding document. By the end of the convention the Weathermen emerged as the leading faction of the SDS and purged PL members from the organization.<sup>7</sup> After the organization gained some power within SDS, members began to organize and recruit for an October protest in Chicago, known today as the Days of Rage. While the Days of Rage protest did not have a large turnout, the action signaled the group's commitment to violent action.<sup>8</sup> By 1970, the Weathermen would become the Weather Underground Organization, as those most dedicated moved underground in order to commit revolutionary action, including a series of bombings to protest against United States imperialism and the involvement in the Vietnam War.<sup>9</sup>

As a communist organization, the Weathermen viewed class

identification as an important factor to consider in the development of a white revolutionary vanguard. In the months leading up to the Days of Rage protests in Chicago, Weathermen began to focus on recruiting working-class youth. Before the 1969 SDS National Convention, many members, including future Weathermen, had begun discussing the importance of moving away from the recruitment of college students and refocusing on mobilizing youth in the working class.<sup>10</sup> Weathermen believed that white working-class youth would be more willing to become revolutionaries than those in the middle class because they had far less to gain from a capitalist, imperialist society.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, Weathermen idealized the working class due to their belief that working-class people were somehow more experienced with violence, which would help radicalize and militarize the revolution. This was especially ironic, because most members of the Weathermen were from middle-class families, and had obtained at least some college education. In *Bringing the War Home*, Jeremy Varon argues that the status of the Weathermen as middle-class people was essential to their politics. Unlike the Black Panthers, who were poor, urban, and black, and could use that oppression as legitimacy for their message, the Weathermen lacked such authenticity.<sup>12</sup> Incorporating the white working class within their organization would give the Weathermen the authenticity as radicals that they so desperately craved.

While the recruitment of working-class youth was unsuccessful, the Weathermen's emphasis on working-class toughness reveals much about how they created their own culture of masculine violence. The Weathermen who went out as recruiters adopted a tough, macho persona in order to appeal to working-class youths' supposed nature. In her memoir, former Weathermen member Cathy Wilkerson recalls that because working-class youths felt that activists were "all talk and no action," the Weathermen would "prove incontestably that they were the 'baddest dudes in town.'"<sup>13</sup> This adoption of a macho, working-class revolutionary posture also allowed members of the Weathermen, especially its male members, to shed their middle-class upbringings through the

identification with masculine violence.

Weathermen did not only use masculinity as a tool to recruit the working class, but also masculine bravado to justify their rhetoric that it was time for true revolution. Susan Stern, a former WUO member, recalls addressing a group of students:

*We're all honky dogs. Because we were born with white skins, we have parents who can afford to send us all to colleges where we are piled with art and literature and pampered and spoiled for years, while the rest of the world starves... Women and children are dying and what are you doing?... You are either on one side or the other... For if you choose the wrong side, then you're a pig, and the people's army will off you.*<sup>14</sup>

Stern's call to leave behind privilege through the adaptation of macho militancy was not at all unique. Former Weatherman Mark Rudd recalls shouting at members of the Columbia SDS, "You can't be soft and wimpy anymore! You've got to be prepared for the revolution." He then shouted at the crowd that they better get guns and "get their shit together."<sup>15</sup> Such militant rhetoric also appeared in the communiques that the WUO published after their decision to go underground. These communiques were used in order to communicate the organization's message and actions to others within the anti-war movement. In the first WUO communique, "A Declaration of a State of War," Weathermen leader Bernadine Dorhn stated, "Our job is to lead white kids to a revolution," adding that WUO would attack an American symbol within the following 14 days.<sup>16</sup> By using this type of militant language, the WUO was able to conceptualize itself as the vanguard of the movement, allowing members to see themselves as the epitome of revolutionary action despite their small numbers and criticism from others on the Left. Weathermen, in effect, equated components of traditional masculinity with power.

While Wilkerson described the actions of Weathermen as "intellectuals acting tough," their masculine bravado was not just a performance, but was internalized within the organization.<sup>17</sup> Men in the Weathermen believed that in order to be true radicals they had to be brave, tough, and strong. This belief in the importance

of violence and masculinity was enforced both formally and informally by other WUO members. According to Mark Rudd, intimidation was commonly used when members had doubts. This intimidation could challenge a member's masculinity. Rudd recalls having doubts about going through with the Days of Rage protests after hearing a Cuban diplomat who thought the action was a bad idea because it would not reach a broad base of activists. When he relayed his doubts, one Weatherman asked him, "How could you be so weak?" This statement not only changed his mind about the action, but Rudd would later bully and intimidate other Weathermen to remain loyal to militant violence.<sup>18</sup> The use of intimidation to police member's masculinity and commitment to organizational dogma shows that the masculine nature of the organization extended into the internal interactions, and it was more than a recruiting tool or a role to play in public.

Such intimidation was formalized in "criticism/self-criticism sessions," which were run like interrogations in which members were challenged to admit to, recognize, and change their counterrevolutionary tendencies. Claims of weakness were a common theme in these criticism sessions. Stern recalls being told by a dropout of a Weatherman collective, "They told me again and again how weak I was and how I had to get tougher. That I had to get tough to fight the pigs at the Days of Rage."<sup>19</sup> By aiming at a member's weakness physical or otherwise Weathermen challenged individuals to live up to the masculine, violent standard that they lauded as revolutionary. "Criticism/self-criticism sessions" could also challenge a member's commitment to ideology. Former Weatherman David Gilbert recalls a criticism/self-criticism session in which a male leader was put through a "super marathon" where he was pressured to acknowledge that he was a male chauvinist. Gilbert believed that this leader persevered through "because he wanted to be a revolutionary and he knew that a full-hearted embracing of women's equality was an essential component."<sup>20</sup> It appears contradictory that this member was called out for chauvinism when the WUO was a masculinist organization. Sexism was seen as counterrevolutionary despite the fact that it

pervaded the group, as members were never truly able to reconcile their beliefs in women's equality with their beliefs that masculine traits were essential to revolution. Gilbert's recollection of a criticism session shows that members were willing to acknowledge and internalize their supposed wrongdoings because they so desired to be revolutionary.

Both Stern's and Gilbert's recollections show that "criticism/self-criticism sessions" facilitated the internalization of Weathermen ideology. Since Weathermen were so focused on violence, militant strength, and the casting out of weakness, it follows that men and women within the organization internalized Weathermen messages that masculine aggression was ideal for revolutionaries. As Stern explains, "The vogue was to be tough and macho, and I was as overly aggressive and abandoned as a Weatherman as I had been timid and frightened prior to it"<sup>21</sup> Weathermen did not only preach masculinity, they embodied it, creating an organization where masculine traits were prized.

Along with their identities as macho revolutionaries, men in the Weathermen were able to define their masculinity through their sexual exploits. In the year before the organization went underground, the Weathermen decided to, as they put it, "smash monogamy." Women in the organization spearheaded this initiative, as they believed that monogamy as an institution controlled women and that by embracing non-monogamy, sexism would be challenged and women liberated.<sup>22</sup> The Weathermen additionally viewed non-monogamy as way to strengthen bonds between individuals throughout the organization though sex and group sex. While non-monogamy, in theory, was supposed to liberate women, "smash-monogamy" lead to problems in practice. Men often were able to use the policy of "smash monogamy" as a way to have sex with many women, creating a culture in which, for men, sex was tied to power. This was especially true for men in leadership. Rudd states in his autobiography that due to his position within the organization, he was rarely turned down for sex.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, Stern felt that Weathermen leader Bill Ayres "expected every woman in the world to want him." She clarifies that this was common amongst



male Weathermen, especially those who had power.<sup>24</sup> The ideology of “smash monogamy” could even be used to by men to coerce women into sex. Stern recalls hearing Rudd tell her roommate, “You have to put the demand of your collective above your love. Nothing comes before the collective,” while her roommate pleaded to Rudd, expressing that she did not want to engage in sex.<sup>25</sup> While “smash monogamy” was created by Weatherwomen in order promote feminism within the organization, it instead fueled misogyny. Additionally, men in the organization tied virility and sexual prowess to their conceptualization of what it meant to be a masculine revolutionary, further creating a space where masculinity was a prized attribute.

Intimate relationships within the organization were also governed by rules that protected men and masculinity. While sexual experimentation was considered acceptable among Weathermen, the organization was difficult place for queer members, especially men. Former Weathermen Michael Novick, who was gay but not “out” to the group, recalls being harassed by men for “denying his desire to have sex with women.”<sup>26</sup> Novick’s treatment at the hands of his fellow Weathermen shows that the organization viewed heterosexual masculinity as necessity for male WUO members. While men could be criticized for not engaging in sexual relationships with women, men could get away with being abusive towards their female partners. Wilkerson recalled being told that Weathermen leader Terry Robbins hit his former partner several times. This alleged abuse occurred publicly and was observed by other Weathermen, and Robbins remained in the organization despite this abuse.<sup>27</sup> While the Weathermen believed that “smash monogamy” would liberate women and unify the organization, sex and relationships within the Weathermen were still most advantageous to masculine straight men.

The Weather Underground Organization, despite its commitment to women’s rights and female leadership, created a culture where masculine violence and straight male sexuality was equated with becoming a revolutionary. While many women adopted masculine militancy in an effort to free themselves from



oppression, men in the organization instead sought to identify with the violence and manliness they saw in working-class communities and communities of color. Men also were able to benefit from masculine behaviors sexually and interpersonally. Ultimately, while the Weather Underground aspired to break free from the oppression that pervaded the United States, the group was unable to leave behind the sexism and classism of mainstream American culture.

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## *CONTESTED DISCOURSE OF NEOLIBERAL TRADE IN CHIAPAS*

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Photo: Photograph of President William J. Clinton Participating in a North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Products Event on the South Lawn.

Photo Courtesy of the National Archives Catalog, #4483058

Coffee has the dual effect of stimulating the body as well as conversation. As a single point in a much larger commodity chain, coffee is not simply a drink shared among friends. Agricultural production in Latin America, turned into consumption by the American public, has had a complicated relationship over the course of history and coffee is no exception.<sup>1</sup> Spanning thousands of miles from Southern Mexico to the United States and involving a myriad of actors ranging from peasants to presidents, the process that ends with your double espresso latte with coffee from Chiapas is governed by a complex set of international laws and regulations. These laws came about as the result of multiple discussions, not in coffee shops, but over podiums on a national stage.

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1994 the culmination of thousands of hours of intense negotiation between Canada, Mexico, and the United States came to fruition with the official beginning of the North American Free Trade Agreement. NAFTA, as it is more commonly known, created a “Free Trade” area throughout North America that eliminated certain tariffs between the countries and lowered the restrictions to trade. The governments of the three countries were incredibly optimistic in their discourse regarding the expansion and promised their constituents that the wealth this agreement would bring far outweighed any consequences. These discussions were not conversations among equals, rather political discourse from state leaders to their respective publics. Further, decisions and the discourse were based upon shaped the global legal systems that controlled the flow of goods produced in Mexico and exported to United States consumers. Therefore, these agreements were often at the expense and without the input of the producers in marginalized regions. How did this complex inter-linkage impose itself at the grassroots level in Mexico and to what extent do the communities in this coffee production region reject this notion?

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1994 an armed force took the coffee production epicenter of Mexico, the southern state of Chiapas, by storm. From the town square of San Cristobal de las Casas, a group of men and women armed with assault rifles wearing black

ski masks and camouflage uniforms declared War on the State of Mexico. The timing of the revolt was not a coincidence; it was purposely planned to coincide with the start date of the agreement as a way to protest NAFTA. The insurgents called themselves the Zapatista Army of National Liberation ("*Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional*" or EZLN), a reference to Mexico's indigenous revolutionary leader Emiliano Zapata. Their demands included the immediate surrender of the Mexican State, the institutionalization of more direct forms of democracy, and above all the immediate repeal of the North American Free Trade Agreement.<sup>2</sup>

Interwoven into these events are questions of power between nations on an international scale, neoliberal economic expansion, environmental governance and a host of other lingering questions of what free trade zones will mean going forward in the 21st century. Through coffee I believe we can find a useful lens to examine these themes in greater detail. I turn now to my guiding question: How did the neoliberal discourse of the Clinton administration and President Salinas regarding the North American Free Trade Agreement differ from the understanding of the EZLN and how did this contested linkage manifest itself in relation to those who produced coffee in Chiapas?

In this paper I will work through the conflicting discourse of state leaders and the EZLN, to give historic and geographic context to NAFTA's effects on Chiapas coffee growers. This paper will be split into six parts. I begin by framing NAFTA through a global, economic and historical lens and furthermore, as a reaction to other trade agreements. The second section will trace how the Clinton administration built upon neoliberal logic to justify the creation of NAFTA. Further, I will examine how President Clinton and Salinas legitimized to their publics the concepts of neoliberal policies as a solution to the issue of "inevitable" globalization. I tease from these sources a unified theme of globalization framed as inevitable and discourse that disenfranchised local communities, sowing into fate the EZLN uprising.

Following this discussion, I will take a historical and

informational look at the state of Chiapas and the EZLN as a way of grounding the organization and coffee production in its geographic and historical context. By examining public communications and interviews framing unrestricted free trade as manipulative and an affront to the Zapatistas' indigenous way of life, I will explore how the EZLN developed discourse that fundamentally rejected neoliberal logic. I transition to show that this contestation was not unfounded, as the promises of both administrations were not kept. I conclude by arguing NAFTA's failings and contestation in Chiapas are integral to understanding how we consume coffee today, and what these agreements mean for the future of the environment.

### **I. Competing Trade Zones on an International Scale**

“...communism has been replaced by the exuberant uncertainty of international economic competition”-President Clinton, 8th December 1993; remarks on the signing of NAFTA

After the end of the Cold War, the North American Free Trade Agreement developed as a reaction to numerous other trade blocs coming to maturity around the globe. Trade bloc strength was increasing throughout the world in the 1980s and North America faced economic pressures from the formation of the European Union and Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement.<sup>3</sup> With government leaders of North America fearing the ability to compete economically on their own, an agreement exclusively between the United States and Canada developed. While driving an economy with one of the highest standards of living, United States industry feared an increase in international competition in the long run. Running as a pro-business conservative, President George H. W. Bush initiated the process of drafting the defining legislation for NAFTA with hopes of greater flexibility for businesses to operate and sell their goods internationally. Upon his inauguration Clinton took up the mantle and continued to emphasize the need to pass NAFTA, while simultaneously pushing for greater environmental protections.<sup>4</sup> President Salinas, on the other hand had very different

reasons for looking to join this developing agreement.

Rather than a long-term vision to become increasingly competitive internationally like the United States, President Salinas of Mexico saw this new agreement as a means of economic survival in the domestic sphere.<sup>5</sup> Marco Almazan [1997] gives a convincing macroeconomic narrative of the major events that lead to the passing of NAFTA. Almazan outlines Mexico's agricultural crisis of the mid 1960s, followed by government interventionism in the 1970s and then in a large reversal during the 1980s, the encouragement of privatization of resources and industry.<sup>6</sup> The Mexican Economy of the 1980s was to a large extent faltering and inflation was increasing. Furthermore, the purchasing power of the average Mexican was decreasing as the rest of the world saw unprecedented growth. Therefore reliance on the United States became the norm for Mexico as companies seeking cheaper labor sent raw materials and intermediate goods south of the border to have them assembled and returned to the United States.<sup>7</sup> Both administrations argued this reliance was a form of "globalism" that was inevitable and for both countries a source of economic strength.<sup>89</sup>

## II. Discussion of State Discourse

"...an economic order in the world that will promote more growth, more equality, better preservation of the environment, and a greater possibility of world peace"

-President Clinton, 8 December 1993

"...they tell us a story of the inevitability of that particular form of neoliberal capitalist globalization...glorification of the (unequal) free movement of capital on one hand with the firm control over the movement of labor on the other"

[Massey, 2005]

American and Mexican officials laid out specific expectations for NAFTA, outlining the underlying neoliberal logic.

Developed by famed economist Milton Friedman in the 1960s, “Neoliberalism” is a political application of “Free Trade” ideals, where-in market based solutions seen as the most efficient are pursued, as long as a strong state remains to maintain control of the decision-making. James McCarthy [2004] concisely describes neoliberal policies as “State functions aimed at curbing socially and environmentally destructive effects of capitalist production that are “rolled” back, attacked via *discourses* of national regional and urban economic competitiveness and “restructured in a variety of ways...”<sup>10</sup> In essence this discourse framed economic competitiveness as a necessity while simultaneously tasking the state with mitigating the damage.

As the United States Trade Representative leading up to and during the signing of NAFTA, political pundits saw Michael Kantor as the negotiator that made the agreement’s passage politically possible. In an extensive 2002 interview with Jim Young, chair of the Miller Institute at the University of Virginia, Michael Kantor reflected on his time during the Clinton Administration. Through this interview, Kantor staked out neoliberal claims to back his argument. Kantor emphasized the difference between “Free Trade” and completely unregulated trade between nations. In this sense “Free Trade” was defined by cooperating nations granting special privileges to each other to sell or buy goods within their respective markets with agreed upon restrictions. “Free Trade” therefore is not a completely open economy, rather a system where nations stipulate and agree upon the terms of trade. Kantor was the man who negotiated these stipulations. In this passage Kantor reflects on his work negotiating the passage of NAFTA through Congress:

*We could obviously in the short run lose some jobs. Industries were going to shift production overseas and labor-intensive industries would of course be more attractive than doing these things at home... You’re not going to stop capital from moving. Capital flows across boundaries in a modern world. What we need to do is make sure that we can take advantage of that same phenomenon by opening markets for our goods and services...”<sup>11</sup>*

This passage made several points, all of which show the neoliberal mindset that other political discourse would build upon. In general, Kantor viewed the departure of capital intensive, U.S. industrial sector jobs as inevitable and as if being the United States Trade Representative gave him no say in this significant decision. Further, he framed the decision as a question of capital, with the human aspect of job loss as inevitable. In neoliberal fashion, and through the framework of globalization being inevitable and out of his personal control, he suggested to reduce state intervention in trade.

In a similar vein as Kantor, Vice President Gore saw globalization as inevitable and free trade as the solution. However, Gore sought to expand the state through greater environmental protections via side agreements with Mexico. The Vice President preached that public policy could prevent environmental degradation that NAFTA would surely cause due to the expansion of industries. In a debate with 1992 and 1996 presidential candidate Ross Perot on “Larry King Live” Gore responded to Perot’s criticism that Mexico already had environmental protection legislation that it was not effectively enforcing. Here is Vice President Gore’s response:

*They do not yet have the kind of living standard and labor standards and environmental protection standards that we would like them to see, but they’ve been making tremendous progress. And the progress has been associated with this new relationship to the United States...The best way to preserve it is to enter into this bargain, continue the lowering of the barriers...We’ve got an agreement for the first time in history to use trade sanctions to compel the enforcement of their environmental standards<sup>12</sup>*

Here again we see neoliberal discourse with intentions of “lowering barriers” to flow of capital a driver of Mexico’s success. Gore’s discourse assumed United States capital would create more control of Mexico’s environmental governance. Gore saw market tools as the most efficient way to solve non-market issues such as environmental protection. It is interesting to note that Gore,



known for his support of environmental protection in the United States, even supported NAFTA's "help the economy to help the environment" rhetoric. Through this focus on the environment we also begin to see relationships of power between nations come to the forefront. Gore's discourse of sanctions on Mexico, without mention of domestic environmental responsibilities, points to the hegemonic upper hand the United States held in these negotiations.

Many thought that Clinton would consider reversing or severely reducing the reach of NAFTA after winning the Presidency with organized labor's support. Public fear surrounded the notion of "exporting jobs" at the expense of the American worker. In spite of opposition and with painstaking negotiation, Clinton won over enough of his political base to push forward with the effort.<sup>13</sup> At the signing ceremony of NAFTA, President Clinton took the occasion to speak on those fears in an attempt to quell them. After personally thanking both Michael Kantor and Vice President Gore, Clinton laid out his core philosophy underpinning NAFTA as such:

*We cannot stop global change. We cannot repeal the international economic competition that is everywhere. We can only harness the energy to our benefit. Now we must recognize that the only way for a wealthy nation to grow richer is to export, to simply find new customers for the products and services it makes.*<sup>14</sup>

Clinton was able in his speech to be very convincing that NAFTA would bring new jobs and a better future for the United States, however, he does so under the fundamental assumption that increasing market participation is the only option that the nation faces. Throughout this speech we see the underpinnings of a neoliberal agenda that gives no room for localized community decisions. Clinton spoke in lofty vague terms and framed "global change" and "economic competition" as unstoppable and intangible forces. Through this framework, Clinton minimized his perceived control over the market. At the same time, Clinton framed NAFTA as a *national* solution to a *global* issue, painting the individual as passive and acted upon by the world markets.<sup>15</sup> It is from this bully

pulpit the Clinton Administration used economic hegemony to push this agenda on its neighbor to the south.

As his grip on political control was loosening, President Salinas was willing to attempt new types of economic structures as a means to help raise employment and living standards of the politically influential Mexican middle class. In 1991, attempting to spur economic growth and in anticipation of a trade agreement with the United States, Salinas amended the Mexican constitution to eliminate the “*ejido*” system. This system, which had guaranteed communal land rights for indigenous communities, had been in place since the end of the Mexican revolution of 1910. This system was used extensively in southern Mexico and the loss of these communal land rights spurred many in Chiapas to join EZLN.

Building off the popularity of these sweeping changes in the middle class, Salinas pushed for export based programs that used natural resources.<sup>16</sup> President Salinas looked toward his northern neighbor and largest trade partner in the United States for a new type of solution. In a commencement speech given to the MIT graduating class of 1993 Salinas praises the United States and outlines his goals for Mexico’s advancement:

*But NAFTA, I want to emphasize, is a job creating agreement. Because by increasing competition in our three nations, and its competitive capacity, it will allow us to compete with regions which are getting together in Europe, and in the Asian Pacific countries. NAFTA is an environment improvement agreement, because with additional resources, we will take better care of our environment. NAFTA is a wage-increasing agreement, because we are committed to increasing real wages in Mexico, more than they have increased today, when NAFTA is ratified<sup>17</sup>*

The neoliberal notions of competition leading to advancement are seen in his speech and were used to convince the Mexican middle class of the opportunities for growth that this agreement would spur. The inequity of power between nations was expressed more subtly here, with Salinas giving a speech about improving the lives of the everyday Mexican from a podium at

one of the United States most prestigious universities. Irony aside, Salinas used the discourse of additional resources leading to greater environmental protection, even as Mexico expected a huge increase in industrial production taking advantage of its minimum wage and creating unprecedented pollution.<sup>19</sup> In this speech, Salinas claims to have made great improvements in Mexico. However, he also frames control of the economy and the populations of Mexico and the United States as being acted upon. He explains these changes by means of a mechanism outside of the government's control, instead of shaped by an agreement created by both governments to dictate trade between the two countries.

Both the Clinton Administration and President Salinas framed globalization as an inevitability beyond their control, with the creation of this free trade zone between their countries as the best way to “keep up” in an increasingly interconnected world economy. These leaders fundamentally understood their role as reacting to the threat of globalism through a perspective that they thought would protect their citizenry. Neither head of state acknowledged in their discourse the power of grassroots community or how this new connection between nations might harm individual livelihoods. Instead, they used the language of “net job loss” and “increased efficiency of competition” to justify NAFTA's passage. Both heads of state portrayed NAFTA as a lifeboat for the public, without truly listening to the needs of individuals or acknowledging the risks. Ironically, these state leaders' minimization of community-based action foreshadow the conflict that would develop in Chiapas, as the Zapatista movement reached out to individuals who felt left behind by this arrangement.

### III. Chiapas and EZLN History in Context

“...Chiapas is the most important, with 27.69% of all the coffee producers in the country” [Nestel 1995: 15.2]

“...land is conceived as a productive resource...but land, for the Indian, is something totally different...it is his culture”

[Almazan 1997: 48; quoting a Jesuit priest in close contact with indigenous people of the region in 1991]

The ecological, demographic and economic makeup of Chiapas varies widely from the other states of Mexico. With over 28,000 square miles Chiapas is home to just under 5 million people. Of this population, a majority were not a part of the cash economy at all back in 1993. Instead, indigenous groups in the area traded harvested crops for production goods, an important fact in considering that the promises of NAFTA surrounded the increase in real wages and cheaper products.<sup>20</sup> One of the most important of these harvest crops was coffee, which many depended on for their livelihoods. In 1993, Chiapas was responsible for producing more coffee than any other state in Mexico, the 3rd largest coffee exporting country in Latin America and the 5th largest in the world.<sup>21,22</sup>

Due to its location far from the U.S. Mexico border, Chiapas was geographically isolated from many of the benefits of NAFTA.<sup>23</sup> Further, Chiapas was far from Mexico City and the public goods that served the capital district. Many services such as healthcare, education and policing were maintained at the local level. Of this population, a majority was of indigenous descent. These factors disadvantaged Chiapas communities, as there was minimal support from the Federal government in the transition leading up to NAFTA. From this disgruntled indigenous population with a history of local autonomy and geographical isolation arose the Zapatista movement.

Much is known about the actions of the EZLN after they stormed the capital of Chiapas, but less research has been focused on the building of the EZLN coalition and history of the communities it inhabited. Historian Marco Almazan [1997] examines the structures that governed Mexico's indigenous communities through a political science lenses, relating them to the implementation of NAFTA and the rise of the EZLN movement in Chiapas specifically. Almazan shows that although the state was

often able to implement laws and control in these regions, these indigenous regions were, in practice, semi-autonomous states where small villages governed themselves and co-operated with the state when it benefited them.<sup>24</sup>

It was in this type of semi-autonomous and community organized region of Chiapas that the Zapatista Army of National Liberation was founded in 1983, in reaction to what they saw as poor treatment by the government. They initially demanded more rights that would allow them, as a collective of indigenous peoples, to lobby the government.<sup>25</sup> Through her collection of testaments in “The Fire and the Word; A History of the Zapatista Movement” Gloria Ramirez tells the story of campesinos that were part of the EZLN during the mid 1980s. During these years the group continued to organize and grow. Through community gatherings and organization the EZLN was able to provide better healthcare and education in these semi-autonomous regions compared to the central state.<sup>26</sup>

This grassroots understanding of organization and autonomy from the state was the foundation that the EZLN was built upon. At the core of the EZLN doctrine was the connection of these indigenous communities with land and local peoples. This land dated back to the passage of the Mexican Constitution and Article 27 that protected indigenous land from being sold. It was with the amending of Article 27 and the dismantling of the “*ejido*” system in 1991 by Salinas that added fuel to the fire and spurred an increase in EZLN participation by indigenous peoples.<sup>27</sup> The leadership of the EZLN saw the passage of NAFTA as a submission of power to the United States by the Mexican State, and the change of the legal status of their land two years prior as a preemptive measure to this submission.

#### IV. EZLN Discourse

“It is not only that we do not set ourselves the task of taking power, but we propose that the very relationship of power with society must itself change”<sup>28</sup> -Subcomandante Marcos,  
31 January 1998

In sharp contrast to the State leaders of Mexico and the United States, the EZLN saw the reforms proposed under NAFTA as a “death sentence” to their way of life and a marginalization of individuals in their communities. Rather than seeing globalization as an unstoppable force these militants viewed this agreement as a way to consolidate power among these nation states while simultaneously disempowering them from representation as a community.<sup>29</sup>

EZLN relied on the word of mouth as well as messages given to preselected reporters to spread their discourse. EZLN were also notable as the first guerilla group to utilize the Internet in distributing their messages.<sup>30</sup> The messages or “communiqués” from the group to the outside world were given by a masked figure called Subcomandante Marcos. Marcos, whose identity was never revealed, stood in stark contrast to Clinton and Salinas claiming only to be a voice piece of the people. In the Zapatista declaration of war Marcos stated:

*...the war we declared is a measure of last resort...we ask your committed participation to support this plan of the Mexican people who struggle for work, land, housing, food, health, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice and peace. We declare that we will not quit fighting until we achieve fulfillment of these basic demands of our people, forming a free and democratic government of our country<sup>31</sup>.*

In their initial public speech, knowing that the world would take note, the EZLN explained that the war was declared in an attempt to attain the basic necessities of life for these indigenous communities. Note the distinct difference in understanding of who will function in this new endeavor by the EZLN. Subcomandante Marcos went to great lengths to reach out to the Mexican population in order to stress that it was not his leadership, but the work of those around him that would make the effort possible.

This speech painted the Mexican State as incompetent and framed the solution of revolt as immediately within reach of each

individual. Marcos' discourse placed control in the hands of the indigenous communities, framing the conflict not over intangible forces, but in understandable needs. Access to "...work, land, housing, food, health, [and] education..." were all tangible objects that effected each community directly. The EZLN understood NAFTA not as an international abstraction, but as tangible oppression.

The EZLN challenged neoliberal logic by conceptualizing globalization as tool for community solidarity. Through the Internet and communications with international media, the Zapatistas solicited and received support for their cause from around the globe. As a post-Cold War guerilla movement reacting against neoliberalism, the EZLN represented a new type of political entity. Thomas Olesen's "Globalizing the Zapatistas: From Third World Solidarity to Global Solidarity?" [2004] forcefully argues that the Zapatista movement was the first global solidarity movement. Highlighting their call for community involvement "... the Zapatistas refuse to play the role of vanguard in the struggle against neoliberalism. Instead they ceaselessly emphasize the power of diversity and networked forms of interaction and resistance".<sup>32</sup> The EZLN's ability to use international means of communication, to call for localized struggle, disrupted the neoliberal logic used by Clinton and Salinas. The EZLN showed an ability to engage on a global scale while maintaining and promoting community solidarity. Through this discourse, the EZLN rejected the notions of Clinton and Salinas, which claimed that Chiapas communities were merely static and acted upon. The Zapatistas instead conceptualized globalization as a means to promote community solidarity on the world stage.

## **V. Environmental and Coffee Connection**

"Connections between neoliberalism, environmental change, and environmental politics are all deeply if not inextricably interwoven" [McCarthy: 2003]

The EZLN backlash against neoliberalism was not unfounded as many of the promises of NAFTA did not come to pass.<sup>33</sup> It is interesting to see that coffee production remained relatively constant and Mexico's share of coffee production world wide during the years immediately before and after NAFTA actually remained the same as well. Below is the United Nations trade data for all coffee production and exportation from 1990-1996.<sup>34</sup>

Year	Net weight (kg)	Trade Value (US\$)
1990	208,994,576	\$373,192,000
1991	221,311,360	\$407,824,928
1992	204,588,784	\$282,532,000
1993	195,838,144	\$284,964,992
1994	178,899,856	\$414,164,512
1995	188,027,216	\$771,075,008
1996	269,113,344	\$749,743,680

However, there are some important features to focus on from the data. Note the jump in produced coffee from 1995 to 1996, while there is actually a fall in the Trade Value. This means that the average price of a Kilogram of coffee dropped from \$4.10 in 1995 to \$2.79 in 1996. This type of volatility was not seen before NAFTA.

While the overall coffee economy and its exportation value is crucial in understanding how NAFTA controlled trade flows, the producers on the ground were often more exposed to the swings of the market. Using data reported by Mexico's "Cámara de Diputados" we are able to look more closely at how coffee growers in Chiapas were affected by the transition that occurred after the ratification of NAFTA.<sup>35</sup> The following data shows the relative prices of coffee at the very earliest stage of the coffee cherry. The coffee cherry is defined as the earliest part of the coffee production process, in essence the price each local producer received during that year per metric ton of coffee cherries.

The difference in price trends between Chiapas and Mexico



more generally are rooted in the region's demographic make up and historical context. The large number of indigenous individuals in Chiapas meant the amount of coffee being produced in the ejido system was higher than other areas. Chiapas was particularly harmed by the terminated of the ejido system in 1991. A shock to the economy and change in land tenure obviously disrupted production. This did not place these communities on a firm footing going into the transition period of adopting NAFTA.

*Peso per metric ton of coffee cherries from 1989-1998:*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Peso/Metric Ton</b>
1989	\$1,629.5
1990	\$2,495.0
1991	\$2,061.2
1992	\$739.6
1993	\$665.8
1994	\$700.0
1995	\$1,851.9
1996	\$1,945.9
1997	\$1,998.0
1998	\$1,742.9

It is also important to note the devaluation of the peso during the “peso crisis” of 1995. From the signing of NAFTA in 1993, to the year 1996, the peso devalued by 50%. This devaluation meant that although the price for coffee was higher, the amount of purchasing power these farmers possessed actually halved. For those that used the Mexican currency in Chiapas, their life savings practically vanished. And for campesinos that bartered extensively, they were able to afford even less with their goods. NAFTA led to variability in commodity prices that left the agricultural workers at the whim of the international markets, which the Mexican

government did little to control.

If we only consider the trade data, the implication for environmental protection is not immediately apparent. However, by considering the effects of environmental governance, a framework emerges that can clarify what is at stake for Chiapas when U.S. consumers drink coffee under a contested neoliberal trade agreement. McCarthy [2003] unpacks the complex environmental implications of NAFTA and the importance of how industry interacts with nation states. Clinton's speech leaned heavily on the environmental protection side-agreements to pacify environmentalists via the environmental agreements that Vice President Gore worked to put in place. However, as James McCarthy explains, many of these protections were at odds with the fundamental purposes of NAFTA and ultimately nullified many of the environmental protections Gore had used to legitimize his support for the agreement.

These side agreements were superseded by NAFTA itself, which McCarthy points out, were fundamentally at odds with environmental protections. Chapter 11 of the North American Free Trade Agreement ensures that investors from one country are treated the same as a company from the country they reside and investors can lay claims against the government if they feel they have been treated unequally. While this seems fair in theory, in practice corporations were put on an even level as nations, while being able to sue for lost revenue due to a country's environmental safeguards.<sup>36</sup> McCarthy uses the example of *Metalclad v. Mexico*, where a town in northern Mexico was unable to stop a "...a foreign firm [Metalclad] ignoring local governance and treating the reopening of the dump as if it were a purely private matter..." (334). The city was not able to have input in the expansion planning through permits and after the litigation process finished, Mexico was ordered by a NAFTA tribunal in Washington D.C. to pay Metalclad \$16.7 million dollars. The result of this lawsuit not only highlights weakness of trade negotiations that occurred between unequal nations, but it also speaks to the very issues raised by the

EZLN in their contestation of NAFTA. The individuals in Chiapas had a subdued legal authority over matters that directly affected their communities under the precedent set by this ruling. Even more extraordinary, McCarthy highlights that this type of litigation process cannot be brought by individuals at the community level, but only by investors or stakeholders in the company.

Under the contested conditions of the neoliberal policies that govern the flow bringing coffee from the campesinos of Chiapas to the United States market, a reduction of community control occurred at one end of the commodity chain. Due to the volatility of opening coffee markets more extensively and reduced availability of legal recourse to control industrial conditions, communities in Chiapas continue to be economically and politically marginalized while their environmental protections have become less stable.

## VI. Conclusion

It is clear that the discourse by the Clinton Administration and President Salinas was based on neoliberal logic. These political actors framed globalization as immovable and constructed the people of Mexico and the United States as static economic actors. The EZLN, in sharp contrast, highlighted the importance of individual action and pushed for a government that was more receptive to their needs.

With neoliberal policies based on reduced state intervention as their fundamental understandings, the Clinton Administration and President Salinas did not take into account the situation of the marginalized classes of Mexico and did not understand the implications for poor workers not in the money economy. While NAFTA did not affect the quantity of production of coffee in Mexico, it did affect those who grew it. The volatility of coffee prices after NAFTA hurt the stability of indigenous communities. Furthermore, legislation allowed for corporations to strong-arm communities in Mexico into allowing the continuation of practices that the side agreements of NAFTA were suppose to protect. I am

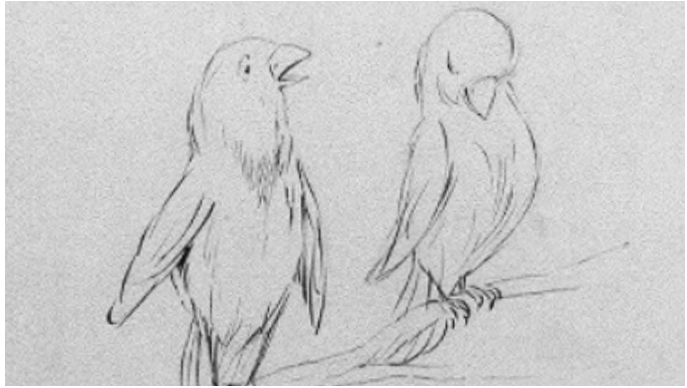
not claiming that every time you purchase coffee you perpetuate this system, but you are in a way connected to Chiapas. Next time you pick up a cup of coffee you can start a conversation about how to change the nature of this connection.

Much has been done in the way of increasing fair trade as a reaction to this reduction in community control in the face of NAFTA. These actions should be applauded. However, I view this as a temporary fix for a much larger and more urgent issue. Mexico's agricultural sector has been fundamentally reshaped by NAFTA.<sup>37</sup> Increased awareness from the American public on how these agreements are framed and written into law is incredibly important. As the United States deals with developing economies, especially in Latin America, close attention must be paid to avoid pushing aside marginalized communities simply for the sake of economic efficiency.

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37. Cheap corn flooded into Mexico from the United States with little time or preparation for Mexican small plot owners to adapt to this change in market. "Fair Trade Corn" is not a feasible or long-term solution as American corn production continues to be strong.



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## *THE FEMALE WHO FORGOT TO BE COY*

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In 1871, Charles Darwin described female mating strategies in *The Descent of Man*. He wrote, “The female...is less eager than the male...she is coy.”<sup>1</sup> A century later in the 1970s, Robert Trivers, the reviver of sexual selection, and Richard Dawkins, an evolutionary biologist, discussed female behavior in noticeably similar terms. Trivers wrote that females employ a “coy performance” to test male fidelity and Dawkins argued that “feminine coyness is in fact very common among animals.”<sup>2</sup> Despite the pervasiveness of the term “coy” between Darwin and the 1970s, by the 1990s, the term “coy” had all but disappeared from publications about animal behavior.

Why did the term “coy female” persist for nearly a century and then exit the scientific vernacular? Despite the similar statements, Darwin’s intended meaning of “coy” differed wildly from Trivers and Dawkins. While Darwin’s observations of nature reflected gender roles in Victorian England, Trivers and Dawkins echoed the homogenous scientific community of the 1970s, which consisted almost entirely of white males.<sup>3</sup> When Darwin wrote *The Descent of Man*, Western European culture established that males were active, political and dominant, whereas females were passive, domestic and submissive.<sup>4</sup> However, when Trivers and Dawkins defined the female as coy, they actually described the female’s mating strategy, rather than restating Victorian culture. Essentially, in the 1970s, male scientists observed female mating strategies and deemed it “coy.” Yet a major shift occurred in the 1970s that could explain why “coy” faded quickly out of the literature: women scientists began joining major animal behavior fields, like primatology, *en masse*. Feminists argue “standpoint theory” contributed to the fall of the “coy female.” According to standpoint theory, women possess a privileged perspective that allows them to spot gender bias because gendered assumptions frequently contradict women’s experience.<sup>5</sup> For example, a woman scientist may see alternative female behavior in the field that contradicts the trope of the “coy female.”

In the traditional narrative of the fall of the “coy female,”

primatologists usually receive credit for eliminating “coy.” In 1981, Sarah Blaffer Hrdy, a primatologist educated with Robert Trivers, penned *The Woman That Never Evolved*. She hoped her book would “dispel long-held myths about the nature of females.”<sup>6</sup> Hrdy spent years observing primate behavior and her observations frequently contradicted her male counterparts. She described “the female [primates] who forgot to be coy...who, unlike Bateman’s *Drosophila*, ardently seek to mate more than once or twice.”<sup>7</sup> To this day, Hrdy’s tour de force remains one of the most concise, eloquent confrontations against male gender bias.

While primatology receives credit for dismantling the “coy female,” feminists and historians of science alike have ignored ornithology<sup>8</sup> as a primary battleground over the “coy female,” even though ornithology serves as one of the most concerted efforts to destroy the “coy female.” Patricia Gowaty, a female ornithologist, nearly single-handedly ended “rape” as a scientific term. After they removed “rape” from the scientific language, Susan M. Smith, Deborah Buitron, Susan Lumpkin and Patricia Gowaty systematically disseminated the “coy female.” Between 1981 and 1988, female ornithologists removed “rape” from scientific jargon, confronted the background assumption of the “coy female” and ultimately pushed the “active female” into mainstream biology.

Both scientists and historians of science have noticed the “coy female” prior to this thesis. In 1986, Hrdy addressed the “coy female” in an article titled *Empathy, Polyandry and the Myth of the Coy Female*. In 2014 in her book *Looking For A Few Good Males*, historian of science Erika Milam claimed sociobiologists used the “coy female” an active, though gendered, evolutionary strategy.<sup>9,10</sup> Yet all of these aforementioned scholars overlooked ornithology as a driving force for ending the “coy female.”

I propose three steps in the progression of the history of the “coy female.” First, I will briefly demonstrate the origins of the “coy” female with Charles Darwin and I will also introduce the theory of sexual selection as Darwin understood it. Second, I will briefly analyze Trivers’s theories and show how female



biologists, specifically Patricia Gowaty, critiqued “rape” as improper scientific jargon that served as important precursor for dismantling stereotyped female bird behavior. Next, I will examine the major women who provided evidence that female birds both accept and actively seek extra-pair copulations. Finally, I will show that these women did indeed alter the face of sexual selection research.

### **On the Origin of the "Coy Female"**

This story begins, as many stories do, with Charles Darwin who first introduced the “coy female.” In 1871, Charles Darwin published *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* to answer the question: why did some male animals, specifically birds, have bright, heavy plumage that hindered their survival and therefore, contradicted natural selection?<sup>11</sup>

Putting aside the “sick” he felt when saw he peacock’s tail and organizing his notes, Darwin accounted for beauty in nature with the theory of sexual selection in *The Descent of Man*.<sup>12</sup> He defined sexual selection as “reproductive competition between individuals of the same sex and species.”<sup>13</sup> Darwin named two major forces behind sexual selection, but female choice is most important for this story. Sexual selection, according to Darwin, created a reproductive differential that resulted in flamboyant traits because females chose and mated with males with elaborate traits that became more and more common the population.<sup>14</sup>

Despite his progressiveness for assigning females a powerful evolutionary role, Darwin certainly subscribed to Victorian gender stereotypes. For example, borrowing from the quote in the introduction, Darwin writes, “the female ...is less eager than the male...she is coy,” whereas the male “plays the ...active part in the courtship.”<sup>15</sup> Darwin also made males active because “in Victorian England, males were known to be more vigorous than females.”<sup>16</sup> Since Darwin, the coy female and the active male formed the basis of sexual selection theory.<sup>17</sup>

Although Darwin’s male peers denied female choice as a mechanism for evolution, first wave feminists, particularly

Antoinette Brown Blackwell, used female choice to support women's equality. In 1875, Antoinette Brown Blackwell published a "polite critique" of *The Descent of Man* titled *Sexes Throughout Nature*.<sup>18</sup> Blackwell embraced female choice, unlike Darwin's contemporaries, and argued natural selection simply proved females were not inferior, but rather equal *and* different to males. Blackwell believed in the power of the female experience. She writes "in this field of inquiry *pertaining to the normal powers and functions of Woman*, it is [male evolutionists] who are at a disadvantage."<sup>19</sup> Though Blackwell still endorsed certain Victorian gender stereotypes, her response became an important precursor to the second wave feminists' criticisms of science. In 1981, primatologist Sarah Blaffer Hrdy described Blackwell's criticism as "the road not taken" because Blackwell acknowledged male gender bias in science and also recognized the power of female choice.<sup>20</sup>

The scientific culture that revived the trope of the "coy female" in the 1980s was highly homogenized: only a small handful of white, male scientists influenced the ideas of their successors. In 1948, Angus John Bateman resurrected gendered rhetoric about female mating behavior when he observed sexual selection in *Drosophila melanogaster*, otherwise known as fruit flies.<sup>21</sup> He discovered males had higher variability in reproductive success than females and conjectured that anisogamy orchestrated the differences in both behavior and reproductive success between males and females.<sup>22</sup> Anisogamy was the idea that female's large, passive gametes limited her ability to reproduce; sperm did not limit males, rather the number of available females constrained them.<sup>23</sup> As a result, males exhibit "undiscriminating eagerness" while females employ "discriminating passivity."<sup>24</sup> The basic nature of active sperm versus passive egg reflected the behavior of male and female animals in nature. Bateman's hypothesis served as a cornerstone for Robert Trivers's groundbreaking work.

Trivers's article applied Bateman's results "very widely" to animals beyond *Drosophila*.<sup>25</sup> In the article, Trivers surmises anisogamy induces a parental investment differential: "what

*governs the operation of sexual selection is the relative parental investment of the sexes in their offspring.*"<sup>26</sup> Because females invest more energy into raising young, they should assess male fidelity. As a result, females employ a "coy performance...[to] test...the male's willingness to brood the female's eggs."<sup>27</sup> Trivers returned to Bateman's anisogamy and concluded that coy mating strategies stemmed from differentiated "mobile" and "immobile" sex cells.<sup>28</sup>

The most important hypothesis Robert Trivers developed in his paper was "the mixed reproductive strategy" (MRS) in monogamous birds. Trivers shows that breeding systems provide a "general framework" for sexual selection that Darwin lacked when he originally formulated the theory.<sup>29</sup> He regarded breeding systems, like monogamy and polygamy, as the basis for parental investment because they largely affected male and female animals reproduction strategies.<sup>30</sup> For example, monogamy forces males to pursue a MRS. In order to maximize fitness, they need to care for their female partner and her offspring while simultaneously inseminating other females for maximum reproductive output.<sup>31</sup> As an evolutionary response to MRS, females develop coy mating behavior to select a faithful male.

In the following years, E.O. Wilson, inspired by Trivers, popularized Trivers's work that became widely read by the general public. In 1975, E.O. Wilson's *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis*<sup>32</sup> defined sociobiology "as the systematic study of the biological basis of all social behavior."<sup>33</sup> In Wilson's sociobiology, the active male versus passive female permeates his analysis of nature. However, by the 1980s a concurrent phenomenon, the mass entrance of women into science, led to a large-scale critique of gendered science.

### **Feminists Critique Gendered Science**

By the 1980s, female scientists critiqued both the backwards gender stereotypes and the background assumptions inherent in sexual selection research. After second wave feminists like Betty Friedan encouraged women to enter the workforce, by the late 1970s and early 1980s, the number of women in science

increased dramatically.<sup>34</sup> One historian of science at the time commented, "Every day, it seems, more female faces are appearing in the laboratories of official science."<sup>35</sup> A number of talented women established themselves in biological fields, most notably primatology, and began challenging gender bias in science.<sup>36</sup> Female biologists recognized the "coy female" as a narrow view of female sexual behavior.

In the 1980s, a handful of female scientists, including Ruth Bleier, Sandra Harding, Sarah Hrdy and others, assessed scientific thought from a feminist perspective. Specifically, they examined how human prejudice filtered into scientific assumptions. The feminists focused on background assumptions, such as the "coy female" and errors in sociobiological thinking.<sup>37</sup> First, feminist scientists showed that science and society influence the other. Second, they condemned the coy, passive female who blinded male scientists in all fields. Finally, they argued sociobiology jumped from innocuous biological fact to generalizations about animal and human behavior.

Feminist critiques of science sought to prove science and society influence each other. According to feminist standpoint theory, Western culture molds scientific research. In 1984, Ruth Bleier provided perhaps the most concerted attack against gender bias in science. She contended "one unchanging feature of our Western history" is "that all the dominant cultures are patriarchal."<sup>38</sup> As a result, "science, like all culture, reflects that consistent historical bias."<sup>39</sup> In traditional patriarchal culture, males occupy dominant, aggressive political roles whereas females possess maternal instincts and passive qualities. Bleier claims this implicit bias shapes the types of questions scientists ask:

*The question, 'Why are all males aggressive?' produces very different answers from one asking, 'Are males of all species aggressive, and under what circumstances and how is "aggressivity" displayed?'*<sup>40</sup>

Yet, science held, and still holds, a revered position as "fact-based."

In the 1980s, scientists refused to acknowledge biases in their research. Indeed, in 1986, Sandra Harding wonders why “it is a taboo to suggest that natural science, too, is a social activity, a historically varying set of social practices?”<sup>41</sup> Marion Nemenwirth agrees and writes, “Science has always been embedded in cultural history, influenced by political, economic, and social forces in society at large.”<sup>42</sup>

Yet white, male scientists conducted biased research without realizing the “unspoken and unacknowledged” cultural biases that were “integral part of our consciousness.”<sup>43</sup> Sandra Harding maintains that “men’s dominating position in social life” resulted in only partial understandings in science.<sup>44</sup> For example, a male scientist might not notice a female soliciting copulations because patriarchal society dictates that women are more monogamous than men. Feminists believed women entering science would help end gendered research. Because women occupy a “subjugated position,” they can recognize and challenge gender bias. Moreover, they could provide more complete understandings of scientific phenomena.<sup>45</sup> Unlike the aforementioned male scientist, a female might wonder why a paired female is wandering into a neighboring male’s territory. Nemenwirth agrees and says women could “ultimately have an impact on the goals and values of scientists.”<sup>46</sup>

Feminist scientists also believed science, specifically sociobiology, perpetuated gender stereotypes dangerous to women in human society. In *Science and Gender*, Ruth Bleier criticizes sociobiologists for neglecting culture as an influence in behavior. She claims sociobiologists assumed behaviors, like aggression and passivity, evolved. For example, males dominate females because aggression is encoded in their DNA. As a result, she concludes sociobiology was “dangerous to the interests and well being of women and minorities” because it validated female subordination, male aggression, rape and murder.<sup>47</sup>

Finally, feminists argued against the background assumption of the “coy female” and the “aggressive male.” According to feminists, sociobiologists attributed differences

in reproduction to innate differences in male and female natures.<sup>48</sup> Ruth Bleier scolds male scientists for making the “leap from obvious facts” about “eggs and sperm” to “sweeping and unwarranted generalizations about...presumed female characteristics [like passivity].”<sup>49</sup> For example, based on the premise of anisogamy, E.O. Wilson concluded that it paid for females to be “coy.”<sup>50</sup> Therefore, attributing coyness to nature made it unchangeable. In other words, the “coy female” produced a “mind-numbing and eye-blinding effect” on scientists because they assumed the behavior to be innate.<sup>51</sup> As a result, scientists ignored contradictory female behavior.

While other feminist scientists critiqued science at large, primatologists began to specifically question the validity of assertions in their own field. Primatologist Sarah Hrdy presented the most famous rebuttal of coy primate behavior in 1981 when she published *The Woman That Never Evolved*. Hrdy argues male scientists neglected alternative possibilities, such as females who were “assertive, sexually active or highly competitive, who adroitly manipulated male consorts or who were as strongly motivated to gain high social status as they were to hold and carry babies.”<sup>52</sup> Then, she presented contradictory data in primates. She described how female Barbary macaques “solicited, established and terminated numerous sexual relationships.”<sup>53</sup> Her analysis in turn provided ammunition for feminists. Hrdy proved the “coy female” was not a predominant feature of nature, and therefore, humans did not reflect engrained genetic traits.

Yet Sarah Blaffer Hrdy was not the only female scientist to provide evidence for an “active female.” Indeed, while primatology served as an incredibly vocal, successful example of shattering gender stereotypes entrenched in science, feminists and historians typically overlooked the important role female ornithologists played. Like Hrdy with primates, female ornithologists also gathered data that contradicted the “coy female” in birds. Their contributions to the argument proved extremely important both within the field and on society as a whole.

### **Female Ornithologists Remove the Term "Rape"**

In the 1960s and 1970s, scientists became increasingly interested in "rape" and widely used the term until around 1980. This segment explores how male ornithologists employed "rape" to describe certain mating habits in birds and then shows how in the 1980s, Anne Fausto-Sterling, Ruth Bleier and most prominently, Patricia Gowaty, ended the term "rape" in scientific literature. When feminists removed "rape" from scientific vocabulary, they paved the way for the destruction of the "coy female," leading to important societal impacts.

Though rape was not a new term prior to the 1970s, it gained popularity after Trivers's published his article about MRS. Indeed, the term "rape" had a long history in animal behavior beginning as early as 1965 biologist Frank McKinney described male ducks raping "strange females."<sup>54</sup> After Trivers's paper, parental investment and the mixed reproductive strategy provided an evolutionary explanation for rape behavior. Scientists embedded "rape" within Trivers's mixed reproduction strategy (MRS). The most prominent example is David P. Barash's 1977 paper about forced rape in waterfowl that served as evolutionary justification for rape in humans.<sup>55,56</sup> Another scientist, Pierre Mineau, discusses "rape" in birds and ponders whether "the female may actually 'welcome' some rapes so as to increase her progeny's genetic variability."<sup>57</sup> Both Barash and Mineau removed female agency.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, a nearly imperceptible shift occurred in the study of "rape": scientists began using the terms "forced copulations" or "forced extra-pair copulations."<sup>58,59</sup> In 1981, Masahiro Fujioka and his team observed, "In recent years there has been a growing interest in ... promiscuous copulations"<sup>60</sup> and only added "rape" in parentheses. The aforementioned Frank McKinney penned a later paper and wrote in a footnote, "We no longer use the word 'rape.'"<sup>61</sup> McKinney's footnote begs the question: why did scientists eliminate "rape" from their sexual selection jargon? The answer is two-fold. First, Douglas Gladstone popularized "forced extra-pair copulation" as a

substitute. Second, three female scientists, Patricia Gowaty, Anne Fausto-Sterling and Ruth Bleier, eloquently criticized “rape” that ultimately ended the use of the term.

In 1979, Douglas Gladstone provided an alternative term for “rape” that ornithologists adopted by the early 1980s. In lieu of “rape,” he employed “forced extra-pair copulation” to describe aggressive mating behavior.<sup>62</sup> In 1982, Patricia Gowaty, a feminist evolutionary biologist who studied birds, critiqued the “sexual terms in sociobiology” including, “‘rape,’ ‘coy,’ ‘cuckoldry,’ ‘adultery,’ ‘homosexual,’ [and] ‘harem.’”<sup>63</sup> For example, Richard Dawkins frequently employed a variety of similar terms in *The Selfish Gene*: “wife,” “step-children,” “domestic-bliss,” “engagement,” and “faithful husband.”<sup>64</sup> In the short paper, she singles out the term “rape” and argues against it for three reasons. First, “rape” has a specific meaning in sociobiological context, but also carries “social repercussions”:

*This special sociobiological use of ‘rape’ makes the word paradoxical jargon. Jargon is the specialized and technical meaning which is quite restrictive [in sociobiology], yet ‘rape’ as a word we all recognize, does not make the new connotation obvious.*<sup>65</sup>

Second, Gowaty also contends, “emotionally evocative” terms such as rape “reflect current, male-centred American attitudes.”<sup>66</sup> Third, “[a]nthropocentric value judgments of activities of non-human animals are inappropriate in science.”<sup>67</sup> Gowaty jokes that phrases like “homosexual rape in acanthocephalan worms” simply cannot be taken seriously.<sup>68</sup>

Ruth Bleier and Anne Fausto-Sterling pounded the final nail into the coffin of “rape” in 1984 and 1985 respectively and critiqued the implications of “rape” in nature on a bigger societal scale. Both feminists elaborated on the larger societal danger of “rape” as a scientific term. Bleier criticizes Barash for two reasons. First, she questioned his shoddy research. Second, like Gowaty, Bleier refutes “rape” as a proper scientific term. She says the word denies rape as “a sexual act of physical violence committed by men against



women.”<sup>69</sup> Anne Fausto-Sterling echoes Bleier and says Barash failed to report important observations. For example, Fausto-Sterling demonstrates that “ducks living under abnormal, high-density situations” show some of the behaviors Barash observed, yet Barash did not comment on the living conditions of the birds in his original study from 1977.<sup>70</sup> Most importantly for both Fausto-Sterling and Bleier, in his later work titled *The Whisperings Within*, Barash uses rape in mallard ducks to explain rape in humans. Fausto-Sterling writes that Barash believes rape represents a “proximate effector of the ultimate genetic cause [to increase biological fitness].”<sup>71</sup> In other words, rape could be explained from an evolutionary perspective and blames biology, not the rapist, for his or her actions. A biological view of rape, according to Bleier, defuses it “as an urgent political issue.”<sup>72</sup>

As “rape” became a taboo in scientific literature in the early 1980s, the new terminology ushered in a slow revision of mating behavior. Not only did Gladstone first popularize the term “forced extra-pair copulations,” in the same paper he also questions the validity of anisogamy:

*[Anisogamy is] the standard explanation of male willingness and an absence of female receptivity. It cannot be denied...that an egg contains more calories than a sperm...[Authors] are concerned with...the energetic content of the egg and the sperm. For the egg, being one large cell, this may be a fairly accurate reflection of cost of production. For every four sperm produced, however, a meiotic division is needed and many millions of sperm are being produced in each coitus.*<sup>73,74</sup>

Gladstone claims his peers exaggerate the value of the female egg and the cheapness of male sperm. He also wonders why scientists have not discussed “when it would be better for a female to have multiple fathers for her offspring.”<sup>75</sup> His questions ignited further inquiries.

Both Gladstone and Gowaty set a precedent for subsequent research. In 1983, McKinney and Mineau reviewed papers on forced copulation in all waterfowl. Both authors previously wrote

about “rape” but this paper incorporates Gowaty’s critique and Gladstone’s questions because they included female perspectives. In the paper, Mineau and McKinney hoped to clarify “forced copulation,” “forced extra-pair copulation,” and “pair copulation” in waterfowl and the possibility that some species employ MRS.<sup>76</sup> They concede that although many scientists evoke Trivers’s mixed reproductive strategy to support rape, MRS was largely theoretical until the 1980s. Unlike Barash’s exclusion of female response in 1977, they discuss female reactions to forced copulations. Yet Mineau and McKinney simply could not overcome the prejudice of the “coy female”: they examine why females may solicit copulations, but conclude that the risks most likely outweigh the benefits.<sup>77</sup> Also, they only discuss only three types of copulations (pair copulation, forced pair copulation and forced extra-pair copulation). All assumed the female could not willingly solicit sex outside of her pair bond.

The end of the term “rape” cleared the way for female biologists to also stop the “coy female.” As Patricia Gowaty so eloquently explained, “rape” served as an umbrella term for all sex outside of monogamous pair bonds. Moreover, “rape” connotes male domination and female passivity. By ending the term, feminists removed gender bias and allowed scientists to explore more inclusive female behavior.

### **Feminist Ornithologists Use EPC's to Banish the "Coy Female"**

The story about how female ornithologists ended the “coy female” embodies feminist standpoint theory. Between the years of 1980 and 1990, Susan M. Smith, Susan Lumpkin, Deborah Buitron, Patricia Gowaty, and Mary Fitch, found two-dimensional analyses of female behavior incongruent with their own field research and insisted on a more nuanced view. These women paid attention to the female who gallivanted into neighboring territory and wondered if she was indeed foraging. This section demonstrates how female ornithologists terminated the “coy female” in three distinct steps: first, Susan Lumpkin responded to Tim Birkhead’s

work on black-billed magpies and added an active female to his work; second, Deborah Buitron, Mary Fitch and Gary Shugart adjusted Trivers's MRS to include a "willing female," and also positioned extra-pair copulations (EPCs) as beneficial to the female reproductive strategy; third, Patricia Gowaty and George Karlin provided genetic evidence that females were indeed seeking copulations. Finally, in 1988, all the aforementioned pieces of data culminated in Susan Lumpkin's article that, according to a history of ornithology, changed the study of EPCs.<sup>78</sup>

In 1981, Susan Lumpkin responded to Tim Birkhead's study about black-billed magpies and suggested an alternative, female perspective. In 1979, Tim Birkhead,<sup>79</sup> a young ornithologist, proved male black-billed magpies remain closer to their partners during the female's fertile period.<sup>80</sup> His discovery verified that males do indeed guard females during their fertile period to preserve their paternity. While Susan Lumpkin agreed with Birkhead's analysis, she felt that he "overlooked the role of the females both in determining the onset of guarding and in controlling the rates of copulation."<sup>81</sup> Lumpkin argues males cannot determine when their mate's fertile period begins; therefore, females signal their fertile periods to males by soliciting copulations. Moreover, Lumpkin suggests females might manipulate the onset of mate guarding and copulation by feigning sexual responsiveness "whenever it becomes advantageous to the female to be guarded by her mate."<sup>82</sup> Although Lumpkin only speculated about possible female roles, she certainly challenged the passive female.

In 1983, Lumpkin continued to disseminate the passive female in an article about female manipulation of males. First, she provided a warning by saying researchers tend to regard females "as passive spectators," but in reality, females simply have differing reproductive interests than males.<sup>83</sup> Lumpkin demonstrates how around twenty-five percent of "sexually responsive" females will solicit copulations from neighboring males if their mate neglects his guarding duties.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, Lumpkin discovers that, contrary to Birkhead's black-billed magpies, females solicit copulations a

full ten days before their first “oviposition.” She argues that females manipulate males for protection.<sup>85</sup> For example, males may protect females from predators or, most intriguingly, females may be preventing desertion by occupying the male’s time.<sup>86</sup> Rather than relegate the female to a dominated role, Lumpkin examines how female mating goals differ from males, and how that difference impacts evolutionary behavior.

In 1983, Deborah Buitron proved females actively employ EPCs as a part of their mating strategy. Based on the behavior of male and female black-billed magpies, she argued EPCs are part of both male and female reproductive strategies.<sup>87</sup> For example, she observed intruding males initiating courtship displays most frequently during peak fertile period. Buitron supports Trivers’s MRS and agrees males will seek EPCs to increase his total number of offspring.<sup>88</sup>

Yet unlike male ornithologists, Buitron contended that females also play an active role in extra-pair copulations. Previous authors assumed “extra-pair copulations are forced,” but after four years observing black-billed magpies, Buitron concludes black-billed magpies did not force copulations.<sup>89</sup> Rather, Buitron claims that “females must cooperate for a successful copulation to occur.”<sup>90</sup> When males commenced displays, fifty-percent of females responded by “begging for him as if he were her mate.”<sup>91</sup> Yet females “selectively” chose their partners because females did not always beg for males and did not readily allow copulations.<sup>92</sup> According to Buitron, their high level of selectivity supports Gladstone’s hypothesis that females engage in extra-pair copulations to ensure the highest quality genetics for their offspring.<sup>93</sup>

The following year, Mary Fitch and Gary Shugart edited Trivers’s MRS to include an active, willing female. They wrote that while scientists thoroughly examined “male’s willingness to participate in opportunistic fertilizations,” they believed females also used EPCs in their reproductive strategy.<sup>94</sup> First, Fitch and Shugart demonstrated EPCs required a “willing female.”<sup>95</sup> The “working assumption” in “influential studies since Trivers” was

males forcefully fertilize females. However, like Buitron before them, they recognized that in many species of birds, males could not forcefully fertilize females. Rather, females needed to acquiesce to EPCs. They contend:

*In many avian species, females must provide active willing cooperation to enable cloacal contact for successful copulation and fertilization... Assuming that males are unable to force fertilization in females, then stability of males' mixed strategy is contingent upon copulation with willing females.<sup>96</sup>*

Heeding Gowaty's critique of evocative language, Smith chose "willing female" instead of promiscuous or "fast" to avoid biased, evocative language previously used by scientists. Also like their predecessors, Fitch and Shugart critiqued male scientists for concentrating on male behavior and missing "willing females if they were present."<sup>97</sup> Not only did EPCs require a willing female, a successful male mixed strategy needed a complementary mixed strategy in females. Therefore, they embedded the "willing female" into Trivers's theoretical framework.

Fitch and Shugart showed how female gulls do indeed employ a MRS "contingent on pairing status."<sup>98</sup> They surmise that "[i]mplicit in Trivers's suggestion of males' mixed strategy is that females also pursue a mixed behavioral strategy."<sup>99</sup> During their study, they concluded that female mating strategy depends on whether she is paired or unpaired. For example, paired males successfully solicited copulations from unpaired females. They argue females use EPCs to ensure the "best available male" fertilizes her eggs.<sup>100</sup> However, paired females did not attempt to copulate with mated males "despite ample opportunity."<sup>101</sup> Fitch and Shugart contend that paired females avoid EPCs to guarantee their mate's paternity. If a male doubts his paternity, he may stop providing parental support.

In 1984, Patricia Gowaty provided the first genetic proof for EPCs. She and her coauthor reported direct evidence for multiple paternity and multiple maternity in wild passerines. Based on

Trivers's MRS model, they expected to find multiple paternity.<sup>102</sup> Indeed, they discovered of all complete families sampled, twenty-five percent contained multiple parentage. However, Gowaty did not draw conclusions based on the prejudice of the "coy female." Rather, she contemplated the roles of both the male and female in multiple parentage. For example, she wrote females might have mated "with more than one male to produce a multiply sired brood."<sup>103</sup> Perhaps, Gowaty speculated, females sought genetic diversity for their offspring.

In 1988, Susan M. Smith coalesced the aforementioned data and penned the most comprehensive study of EPCs in birds. In Tim Birkhead's review of ornithology since Darwin, he claimed Smith's paper served as the turning point in "extra-pair copulation" research.<sup>104</sup> Smith published her research about EPCs in black-capped chickadees as a frustrated answer to two-dimensional analyses of female mating behavior. Like Sarah Blaffer Hrdy and primates, Smith possessed intimate knowledge about the behavior of black-capped chickadees. She writes in a letter post-publication:

*[I] simply got tired of reading paper after paper addressing the topic of cuckoldry, which either stated or implied that if only a male could prevent any other male from entering his breeding territory, he would thereby avoid any danger of being cuckolded. The unstated, unexamined assumption in these papers was that females don't behave—or, at the very least, don't move. But I had seen a number of extra-pair copulations in my colour-marked chickadees and knew this typically occurred in the territory of the "other" male. After reading one too many fatuous papers assuming females don't move, I sat down with my field notes and pulled it all together.<sup>105</sup>*

This letter embodies the dilemma of the "coy female" and the power of standpoint theory. Smith recognizes how the "unstated, unexamined assumption" of the immobile, inactive female prevented male scientists from noticing females solicit copulations in neighboring territories.<sup>106</sup> Furthermore, like Hrdy before her, Smith used her experience in the field to present evidence of active females seeking copulations from neighboring

females.

Indeed, Smith collected evidence from Birkhead, Gowaty, Lumpkin and Buitron to efficiently punch holes in each prevailing theory about female behavior. In her introduction, Smith addressed every assumption scientists, specifically Trivers and Dawkins, made about general female behavior. First, she notes “mate-guarding... varies markedly from species to species.”<sup>107</sup> Scientists could not make overarching claims about all bird behavior. Second, a growing body of evidence, including the genetic evidence provided by Gowaty and Karlin, proved “extra-pair copulations” were “both frequent and widespread.”<sup>108</sup> Therefore, females either needed to accept or seek copulations. Finally, she noted that male scientists, specifically Trivers and Dawkins, emphasized female costs for EPCs yet overlooked benefits.<sup>109,110</sup> Smith cited Buitron and Fitch and Shugart for showing how females benefited from EPCs: females ensure fertilization and perhaps receive good genes.

While previous research showed that females at least *accept* EPCs, Smith hoped to show that females actually *seek* copulations to acquire “better genes.”<sup>111</sup> She used data gathered over fourteen years and “learned to pay particular attention to the sight of a lone female crossing into the territory of a higher-ranked male.”<sup>112</sup> In seventy percent of the EPC attempts Smith witnessed, female chickadees entered neighboring male’s territory. Most importantly, they always entered the territory of higher-ranked males.<sup>113</sup> Smith also noted that females mated with top-ranked males did not seek EPCs, meaning these females maximized their offspring’s fitness with the highest quality male. Based on these two pieces of evidence, Smith determined that females sought good genes for their offspring. She concludes her article by saying “the unstated assumption here is that females never move beyond the boundaries of their home territory.”<sup>114</sup> In other words, scientists assumed females were passive participants in sexual behavior, even though females should have their own reproductive agendas. Smith hopes that after her paper pointed out the active females, “more records of female-initiated EPCs will be found.”<sup>115</sup>

Indeed, Tim Birkhead says in *Ten Thousand Birds* that after Smith's article, scientists began to assume that *only* females initiated EPCs.<sup>116</sup> Ironically, scientists had to reincorporate the idea that males also solicit EPCs; yet, this story proves that feminists succeeded to remove the "coy female" from EPC research. After female ornithologists strove to include female perspectives, female birds earned a prominent place in the field of sexual conflict.

### **How the New "Active Female" Impacted Research in the 1990's**

Susan Smith's groundbreaking article served as the catalyst for research in EPCs. Whereas Gowaty, Buitron and Lumpkin contributed separate evidence for the active female, Smith corralled their research to form a cohesive argument for *female-initiated* EPCs. After Smith's article, biologists began seriously investigating female choice; they focused on how females employ EPCs to prompt sperm competition. This section examines how the female ornithologists from the 1980s instigated a "paradigm ruffle."<sup>117</sup> Once they removed the shackles of the "coy female," scientists began to examine how the "active female" may control paternity using EPCs. Furthermore, male scientists, most prominently Tim Birkhead and Anders Møller, also engaged with female-centric questions. Indeed, Tim Birkhead became a major advocate for female perspectives in the 1990s.

By removing the "coy female," scientists imported an "active female" into evolutionary theories and reignited "thorny" female choice, specifically in sperm competition.<sup>118</sup> Sperm competition became an umbrella term to discuss how sperm competes to fertilize eggs. In 1970, G.A. Parker published the first definitive work on sperm competition and he warned against regarding "the female ... as an inert environment in and around which [sperm competition] evolves."<sup>119</sup> Despite Parker's warning, researchers instead focused on how sperm competition occurred primarily between males battling for access to females, called "male-male conflict." After the women from the 1980s proved females accept EPCs and also actively seek them, scientists speculated that perhaps



females use EPCs to instigate sperm competition.

In 1992, Tim Birkhead and Anders Møller published their seminal work on sperm competition in birds, aptly titled *Sperm Competition in Birds*.<sup>120</sup> They incorporated feminist critiques from the 1980s. Indeed, the back cover asks the female-centric question: “Why should females copulate with more than one male?” This question indicates that they would examine female perspectives throughout their monograph. Indeed, Birkhead and Møller dedicate chapters to discussing costs and benefits of EPCs for *both* male and females. They asked deliberately provocative questions to “encourage others to go out and collect more data.”<sup>121</sup> The most important question they asked was: “male or female control of paternity?”<sup>122</sup> They answered with largely hypothetical statements, thereby inspiring researchers to provide solid evidence that females control paternity.

Their call for more data certainly fostered further research. Indeed, in a review from 1993, Tim Birkhead and Anders Møller argued EPC research reignited female choice. The “active female” became the “architect of sperm competition” and used EPCs to acquire better genes from superior males.<sup>123</sup> In 1992, for the first time, Bart Kempenaers provided definitive proof that females pursue EPCs for superior genetics by embedding EPCs within the good genes hypothesis. The good genes hypothesis states that females choose mates by some arbitrary indication of the quality of their genes. Kempenaers discovered males who receive more visits from females fathered significantly more extra-pair young. These males survived better and were bigger than males who fertile females abandoned. Kempenaers concluded this data supported the hypothesis that females solicit EPCs for good genes.<sup>124</sup>

Birkhead and Møller claimed empirical evidence like Kempenaer’s forced theoreticians to rethink the female role in reproduction.<sup>125</sup> As a result, in the early 1990s, researchers shifted from “male-driven processes to female-driven ones.”<sup>126</sup> They also summarized recent data that females may control paternity at several different stages of the breeding cycle. In “postcopulatory

and prefertilization mechanisms,” females control sperm competition. Research showed that a female controls when she mates with a specific male. Females stop copulating well before the end of their fertile period, which suggests they actively determine parentage. For example, the last male a female mates with fertilizes her eggs. She can control with whom she copulates last by soliciting copulations from her mate or a superior passer-by. Finally, Birkhead and Møller discussed a new field of research<sup>127</sup> that studies how females select sperm internally in their reproductive tract. They hypothesize that in birds with high levels of forced copulation, like waterfowl, females may evolve internal mechanisms to choose the paternity.<sup>128</sup>

The following year, the “active” female had its greatest triumph yet. Tim Birkhead organized a conference about female choice that embodied the paradigm shift in the early 90s and served as a “marker for the era of active females.”<sup>129</sup> Patricia Gowaty published a review about the conference and lavished glowing praise upon the growing field. “Female points of view are coming of age as some time-honored ideas [such as the “coy female”] rearrange to accommodate novel observations and theoretical perspectives.”<sup>130</sup> At the conference, twenty-five behavioral ecologists discussed “female mechanisms to control paternity.”<sup>131</sup>

Indeed, “as one of the oldest participants in the conference,” Gowaty could “remark on the changing face of mating systems questions.”<sup>132</sup> She implicitly thanks the women from the 1980s when she writes, “the new perspective places females in the very center of ‘sperm competition.’”<sup>133</sup> The passive, uninterested female was no longer but rather the “active female” orchestrated male-male competition. For example, one presenter at the conference discussed “chase flights” in females that twenty years earlier would have been called “coy.” He observed that females initiated these flights during their egg-laying period to initiate male competition. According to the paper, females solicited males into a chase to gauge male fitness. Rather than categorize this behavior as part of a coy mating strategy, the author framed this odd behavior as an

active strategy.<sup>134</sup> Most importantly, he made females active arbiters of reproduction.

The gender demographic of the conference also demonstrated the success of feminist critiques. In the 1980s, female biologists primarily argued for the “coy female,” but by the 1990s, a male scientist organized the conference and a handful of males presented research on female-centric perspectives. Also, Gowaty commented that though she would have liked more female scientists present, she found the ratio of women to men hopeful. Indeed, Gowaty and her counterparts pushed for females to study ornithology so more female researchers could recognize gender bias.

Even six years earlier, the assumption of the active female frequently faced widespread skepticism.<sup>135</sup> The conference proved feminists helped integrate the active female into mainstream research. Now, young behavioral ecologists championed the “active” female. Support for female perspectives was no longer a band of lone female voices, but a chorus of both male and female voices.

### **The Story Goes On**

Even though this thesis presents a neat narrative arch, the story certainly is not over. In 2012, Patricia Gowaty, ornithologist and feminist extraordinaire, debunked A.J. Bateman’s famous 1948 experiment. His experiment proved that reproductive difference between males and females in *Drosophila* led to sexual selection. In the paper, Gowaty credits Bateman with restarting the field of sexual selection and most importantly, also served as the framework upon which Robert Trivers hung parental investment. She writes that even though Bateman’s Principles were highly controversial, her team was the first to replicate the experiment.<sup>136</sup> Gowaty and her team discovered he had “relatively weak evidence” that “sexual selection primarily acted on males through female choice and male competition.”<sup>137</sup> In her lifetime, Gowaty helped shatter the “coy female” and also destroyed the very foundations that gendered sexual selection rested on. Indeed, Patricia Gowaty

embodied the power of standpoint theory.

Yet not all is triumphant. Accusations against gendered language still transpire today. A recent kerfuffle in 2010 demonstrates that sex roles in sexual conflict research remain a prevalent issue. Two female researchers, Kristina Karlsson Green and Josefin Madjidian, investigated “how the sexes are described in sexual conflict research.”<sup>138</sup> They found that researchers ascribe different words to males and females. While scientists depict male behavior with “intimidation,” “manipulation,” “coercion,” and “persistence;” researchers describe female activity with words like “resistance,” “avoidance,” and “reluctance.”<sup>139</sup> According to the authors, apparently “anthropomorphic” terms are still “commonplace,” despite the efforts of Patricia Gowaty and her ilk in the 1980s.<sup>140</sup> Moreover, the duo found that researchers still emphasize female costs over male costs. Like the feminists in the 1980s, Karlsson Green and Madjidian believe awareness of one’s own biases will eliminate the problem.

Although this may seem like a gloomy development, women scientists have made incredible progress since the 1970s. A group of intelligent female ornithologists handily dismantled the “coy female” and male scientists joined the cause in the 1990s. The pioneering women certainly changed the face of animal behavior. More importantly, though, they debunked the science and in turn, influenced how society views “rape” as well. Not only did their work alter their own fields, but it affected the rhetoric on a broader cultural scale. Indeed, Antoinette Brown Blackwell displayed remarkable clarity and foresight when she called for women to join science fields.

## ENDNOTES

1. Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man And Selection In Relation To Sex*: (New York: Digireads, 2009), 179.
2. Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 149.
3. Marion Namenwirth, “Science Seen Through A Feminist Prism,” in *Feminist Approaches to Science* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1986), 25.
4. Kimberly Hamlin, *From Eve To Evolution: Darwin, Science and Women’s Rights In Gilded Age America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 2.
5. *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v. “Feminist Standpoint Theory,” accessed May 13, 2015.

<http://www.iep.utm.edu/fem-stan/#H3>.

6. Sarah Blaffer Hrdy, *The Woman That Never Evolved* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 14.
7. Sarah Blaffer Hrdy, "Empathy, Polyandry, and the Myth of the Coy Female," in *Feminist Approaches to Science*, ed. Ruth Bleier (New York: Pergamon Press, 1986): 135.
8. The term "ornithology" presents a problem in modern research because there are few traditional "ornithologists" remaining. However, in the 1970s and 80s, ornithology still appeared as a research tool into animal behavior. For example, many sources employed birds for field research to discuss a certain animal behavior. Moreover, research focused on the birds as a group themselves and a single researcher typically specialized in one species of birds. Therefore, I will categorize these researchers and the field generally as ornithologists.
9. Erika L. Milam, "Beauty and the Beast? Conceptualizing Sex in Evolutionary Narratives" in *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010): 276 – 301.
10. Erika L. Milam "Making Males Aggressive and Females Coy: Gender Across the Human-Animal Boundary," in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 37, no. 4 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012): 935-959.
11. Cronin, Helena. *The Ant and the Peacock: Altruism and Sexual Selection from Darwin to Today*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press (1991), 446.
12. Quoted in Cronin, Helena. *The Ant and the Peacock*, 441.
13. Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man And Selection In Relation To Sex*, 179.
14. Ibid, 173.
15. Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man And Selection In Relation To Sex*, 179.
16. Erika L. Milam. *Looking For A Few Good Males*, 22.
17. In "Making Males Aggressive and Females Coy," Erika Milam alleges Darwin and 1960s anthropologists used the "coy female" for different reasons. Whereas Darwin used it as a passive quality, anthropologists reignited "coy female" as an active strategy. Certainly this is true, but nonetheless both blinded scientists to female behavior.
18. Sarah Blaffer Hrdy, *The Woman That Never Evolved* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 12.
19. Ibid., 7.
20. Hrdy, *The Woman That Never Evolved*, 13.
21. Erika L. Milam, "Making Males Aggressive and Females Coy," 936.
22. A.J. Bateman, "Intra-sexual Selection in *Drosophila*," in *Heredity* 2 (1948): 350.
23. A.J. Bateman, "Intra-sexual Selection in *Drosophila*," 364.
24. Ibid., 367.
25. Robert L. Trivers, "Parental investment and sexual selection," in *Sexual Selection and the Descent of Man 1871-1971*, B. Campbell, ed. (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1972): 138.
26. Robert L. Trivers, "Parental investment and sexual selection," 141, emphasis his own.
27. Ibid., 148.
28. Ibid., 173.
29. Ibid., 136.
30. Ibid., 144.
31. Ibid., 143.
32. The first "modern synthesis" being the consolidation of Darwinism and Mendelism that revolutionized evolutionary biology.
33. Edward O. Wilson, "Introduction," in *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis*. (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1975), x.
34. Michelle Aldrich, "Women in Science," in *Signs* 4, no. 1 (1978): 126.
35. Londa Schiebinger, "The History and Philosophy of Women in Science: A Review Essay," in *Signs* 12, no. 2 (1987): 305.
36. Michelle Aldrich, "Women in Science," 126.

37. Sergio Sismondo, "Feminist Epistemologies of Science," 76.
38. Ruth Bleier, "Introduction," in *Science and Gender: A Critique of Biology and its Theories on Women*. (New York: Pergamon Press, 1984), 2.
39. Ruth Bleier, "Introduction," in *Science and Gender*, 2.
40. Ibid., 4.
41. Sandra Harding, "Gender and Science," in *The Science Question In Feminism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 41.
42. Marion Namenwirth, "Science Seen Through A Feminist Prism," in *Feminist Approaches to Science* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1986), 33.
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44. Sandra Harding, *The Science Question In Feminism*, 16.
45. Ibid., 16.
46. Marion Namenwirth, "Science Seen Through A Feminist Prism," in *Feminist Approaches to Science*, 30.
47. Ruth Bleier, "Sociobiology, Biological Determinism, and Human Behavior," in *Science and Gender*, 16.
48. Ibid., 18.
49. Ibid., 19.
50. E.O. Wilson cited in Ruth Bleier, "Sociobiology, Biological Determinism, and Human Behavior," in *Science and Gender: A Critique of Biology and its Theories on Women*. (New York: Pergamon Press, 1984), 19.
51. Ruth Bleier, "Introduction," in *Feminist Approaches to Science* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1986), 8.
52. Sarah Blaffer Hrdy, *The Woman That Never Evolved*, 14.
53. Sarah Blaffer Hrdy, "The Primate Origins of Human Sexuality," in *The Woman That Never Evolved* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 148.
54. McKinney, Frank, "Spacing and Chasing in Breeding Ducks," in *The Wildfowl Trust* (1965): 97.
55. David P. Barash, "Sociobiology of Rape in Mallards," in *Science* 197, no. 4305 (1977): 788-789.
56. David Barash also wrote *The Whisperings Within* that extrapolated his research in mallard ducks to humans.
57. Pierre Mineau and Fred Cooke, "Rape in the Lesser Snow Goose," in *Behaviour*, 70, no. ¾ (1979): 289.
58. Frank McKinney, "Forced Copulation in Waterfowl," in *Behaviour* 86, no. ¾ (1983): 251
59. Masahiro Fujioka and Satoshi Yamagishi, "Extramareital and Pair Copulations in the Cattle Egret," in *The Auk* 98 (1981): 134
60. Masahiro Fujioka and Satoshi Yamagishi, "Extramareital and Pair Copulations in the Cattle Egret," 134.
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62. Douglas Gladstone, "Promiscuity in Monogamous Colonial Birds," in *The American Naturalist* 114, no. 1 (Oct. 1979), 545.
63. Patricia Gowaty, "Sexual Terms in Sociobiology: Emotionally Evocative and Paradoxically, Jargon," in *Animal Behaviour*, 30, no. 2 (1982), 631.
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67. Ibid., 631.
68. Ibid., 631
69. Ruth Bleier, "Sociobiology, Biological Determinism, and Human Behavior," in *Science and Gender*, 32.
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71. Ibid., 193.
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33.

73. Douglas Gladstone, "Promiscuity in Monogamous Colonial Birds," 548.

74. *Ibid.*, 550.

75. *Ibid.*, 549.

76. Frank McKinney, Scott R. Derrickson and Pierre Mineau, "Forced Copulation in Waterfowl," 254.

77. *Ibid.*, 259.

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88. Deborah Buitron, "Extra-Pair Courtship in Black-billed Magpies," 218.

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93. *Ibid.*, 219.

94. Mary A. Fitch and Gary W. Shugart, "Requirements for a Mixed Reproductive Strategy in Avian Species," in *The American Naturalist*, 124, no. 1 (1984): 116.

95. Mary A. Fitch and Gary W. Shugart, "Requirements for a Mixed Reproductive Strategy in Avian Species," 116.

96. *Ibid.*, 116, emphasis added.

97. *Ibid.*, 123.

98. *Ibid.*, 123.

99. *Ibid.*, 123.

100. Mary A. Fitch and Gary W. Shugart, "Requirements for a Mixed Reproductive Strategy in Avian Species," 123.

101. *Ibid.*, 124.

102. P.A. Gowaty and A. A. Karlin, "Multiple Maternity and Multiple Paternity in Single Broods of Apparently Monogamous Eastern Bluebirds (*Sialis sialis*)" in *Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology* 15 (1984): 91.

103. P.A. Gowaty and A. A. Karlin, "Multiple Maternity and Multiple Paternity in Single Broods of Apparently Monogamous Eastern Bluebirds (*Sialis sialis*)," 93.

104. Tim Birkhead, Jo Wimpenny and Bob Montgomerie, "Selection in Relation to Sex," in *Ten Thousand Birds*, 347.

105. Susan M. Smith, personal communication cited in Tim Birkhead, Jo Wimpenny and Bob Montgomerie, "Selection in Relation to Sex," in *Ten Thousand Birds* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 347, emphasis added.

106. Susan M. Smith, personal communication, 347, emphasis added.

107. Susan M. Smith, "Extra-Pair Copulations in Black-Capped Chickadees: The Role of the Female,"

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108. Susan M. Smith, "Extra-Pair Copulations in Black-Capped Chickadees: The Role of the Female," 15.

109. An epistemological examination of "extra-pair copulations" seems to extend past the scope of this paper. Based Google Ngram Viewer and Google Scholar searches, the term "extra-pair copulations" first appeared between 1978 and 1979. The term exploded in the 1980s.

110. Susan M. Smith, "Extra-Pair Copulations in Black-Capped Chickadees: The Role of the Female," 16.

111. *Ibid.*, 16.

112. *Ibid.*, 19.

113. *Ibid.*, 19.

114. *Ibid.*, 21.

115. *Ibid.*, 21.

116. Tim Birkhead, Jo Wimpenny and Bob Montgomerie, "Selection in Relation to Sex," in *Ten Thousand Birds*, 347.

117. Patricia Gowaty, "Architects of Sperm Competition," in *TREE* 9, no 5. (May 1994), 161.

118. Tim Birkhead and Anders Møller, "Female Control of Paternity," in *TREE* 8, no. 3 (March 1993), 100.

119. G.A. Parker, "Sperm competition and its evolutionary consequences in insects," in *Biological Review* 45 (1970): 559.

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121. Tim Birkhead and Anders Møller, "Preface," in *Sperm Competition in Birds* (San Diego: Academic Press, 1992), ix.

122. Tim Birkhead and Anders Møller, "Sperm precedence and mechanisms of sperm competition," in *Sperm Competition in Birds* (San Diego: Academic Press, 1992), 82.

123. Patricia Gowaty, "Architects of Sperm Competition," 160.

124. Bart Kempenaers et. al., "Extra-pair paternity results from female preference for high-quality males in blue tit," in *Nature* 357 (June 1992): 495.

125. Tim Birkhead and Anders Møller, "Female Control of Paternity," in *TREE* 8, no. 3 (March 1993): 100.

126. Tim Birkhead and Anders Møller, "Female Control of Paternity," 100

127. Later to be called "cryptic female choice."

128. Tim Birkhead and Anders Møller, "Female Control of Paternity," 102.

129. Patricia Gowaty, "Architects of Sperm Competition," 160, 162.

130. Patricia Gowaty, "Architects of Sperm Competition," 160.

131. *Ibid.*, 160.

132. *Ibid.*, 162.

133. *Ibid.*, 160.

134. *Ibid.*, 161.

135. Patricia Gowaty, "Architects of Sperm Competition," 162.

136. Patricia Gowaty, Yong-Kyu Kim and Wyatt W. Anderson, "No evidence of sexual selection in a repetition of Bateman's classic study of *Drosophila melanogaster*," in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 109, no. 29 (2012): 11740.

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138. Kristina Karlsson Green and Josefin A. Madjidian, "Active males, reactive females: stereotypic sex roles in sexual conflict research?" in *Animal Behaviour* 81 (2010), 901.

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## *PHOENIX'S ASHES*

### *The CIA, the Phoenix Program, and the Development of U.S. Coercive Interrogation Doctrine*

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Photo: Photograph of an old, dark jail cell in sunny Arizona, 2004.

Photo Courtesy of Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith, [LC-DIG-highsm-04163]

The early years of the Cold War were a trying time for Americans; between Senator Joe McCarthy's fear-mongering and the Red Scare's imagined threat of communist brainwashing little seemed safe. Although McCarthy's allegations eventually evaporated, the public and more importantly the government remained fearful of the threat of "brainwashing." This fear led, in the early 1950s, to the creation of a CIA project tasked with investigating the means and methods for a coercive assault on the human psyche. This program, later found to be named MKUltra, delved into the hidden recesses of the brain in hopes of discovering the key to breaking a subject's will to resist interrogation. Although initially unsuccessful, when the Cold War escalated to proxy war in the 1960s, the lessons of MKUltra were applied to the Phoenix program in Vietnam. The establishment of the Phoenix program was the result of the CIA's attempted fight against the "Viet Cong infrastructure." During this period, Phoenix served as a "trial-run" which allowed the CIA to test a combination of brutal psychological interrogation techniques in conjunction with equally devastating physical torture. After the war's end, the program's conduct was revealed leading to a review, and ultimately the abolishment of, the CIA's method for disseminating its torture doctrine. The Cold War was not over, however, and the lessons learned in Vietnam were disseminated to US allies in the next region that the US feared communist subversion, South America. As had been the case in Vietnam, US involvement in these new, post-Phoenix, programs was ultimately revealed. Despite the revelations, purveyors of this form of interrogation went effectively unpunished due to an inability or unwillingness to consider psychological abuse akin to torture. This impunity led to an institutionalization of the new coercive doctrine as no significant punishments were ever meted out. After the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Centers the US again employed its highly developed system of torture and interrogation techniques, which had been allowed to fester in the interim years. The same methods that had been employed in Vietnam, and taught in South America, were disseminated

throughout US military and intelligence communities, effectively picking up where the past had left off. Ultimately, these practices led to the continued allegations of abuse at Guantanamo Bay and the prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq.

As early as 1950 the CIA began a program of sponsoring research into the use of drugs and psychological methods for purposes of interrogation. Fearing that the Soviet Union would develop coercive interrogation methods before the US could, from 1950 to 1965 the CIA conducted its own interrogation research under the top secret MKUltra project. During this time the agency sponsored numerous institutions which performed experiments on sometimes unwitting participants using drugs and/or a combination of psychological assaults for the same end. After years of research the CIA concluded that drugs did not constitute a viable method for mind-control or interrogation. During this same period, however, the CIA had also been sponsoring research into attacks on the mind in order to “break the victim psychologically.”<sup>1</sup> Researchers had been experimenting with the effects of sensory deprivation and the notion of self-inflicted pain, which produced the results the CIA had been looking for. It was found that sensory deprivation, even in the short term, produced what CIA sponsored psychologist Donald Hebb called “a devastating impact on the human psyche.”<sup>2</sup> Without the use of any external factors, a subject could be pushed to the point of a mental-breakdown; the CIA had discovered what came to be known as no-touch torture.

Armed with this new weapon, in 1963 the CIA produced the “KUBARK Counterintelligence Interrogation” manual, which distilled the findings of MKUltra into one succinct interrogation guidebook. For the next 30 years the KUBARK manual was the basis of CIA and US interrogation policy, all of which was predicated on the notion that sound interrogation “rests upon... certain broad principles, chiefly psychological” as the manual states on page one.<sup>3</sup> The manual asserts that the method for interrogating a resistant subject is a multi-phase process, which would be seen in the practices of the Phoenix program and later at Guantanamo

Bay and in Iraq. First, a period of sensory deprivation in order to confuse and disorient the subject and begin to weaken them mentally, secondly a process of self-inflicted pain is implemented. This self-inflicted pain was of particular importance because it “causes victims to feel responsible for their suffering and thus capitulate more readily to their torturers.”<sup>4</sup> Used in conjunction, sensory deprivation and self-inflicted pain produce a psychological pain at least as, if not more, damaging than the physical variant. This development established the framework for torture under the Phoenix program. Initially aimed at rooting out the “Viet Cong Infrastructure,” Phoenix quickly became a mix of violent physical and psychological abuse and marked the beginning of US torture doctrine.

The newly developed KUBARK techniques were disseminated by the CIA via the US Agency for International Development’s (USAID) Office of Public Safety (OPS). The OPS program started in 1955 when USAID began “advising foreign police in a small way.”<sup>5</sup> Later USAID’s role was expanded under the Kennedy administration due to perceived “communist threats of all-out guerrilla war.”<sup>6</sup> At this point the OPS’s mission was to train police departments in Asia and Latin America which one US official described in 1962 as “even more important than Special Forces in our global [counterinsurgency] effort.”<sup>7</sup> Thus, the OPS was expanded within USAID and subsequently placed under the control of the CIA, which allowed “field operatives an ideal cover for dissemination of the Agency’s new interrogation techniques.”<sup>8</sup> Armed with a means for disseminating its psychological interrogation doctrine the CIA set about training the Vietnamese National Police. Under the expanded program, the CIA trained this force in counterinsurgency and interrogation practices and in the final years of the Vietnam War eventually transferred control of the program to the National Police.

In the years prior to Phoenix, however, the CIA embarked on a project to expand and centralize the intelligence agencies in South Vietnam. The objective at the time was to create an “effective

counterinsurgency force” to battle the growing Viet Cong guerillas but as this failed to produce the desired results a new method was called for in 1963.<sup>9</sup> The Saigon Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) served as the CIA’s counterpart in this effort and became an umbrella organization for all intelligence operations in Vietnam. In 1964 Provincial Intelligence Coordination Committees (PICC) were established throughout Vietnam with the goal of “extending CIO operations into the provinces.”<sup>10</sup> Under the direction of the PICCs was a Provincial Intelligence Center (PIC), a prison where suspects were taken for “questioning and then confined”.<sup>11</sup> An American CIA liaison officer ran each PIC and was responsible for training the Vietnamese interrogators there who still used the “old French [physical] methods” of interrogation and “had to be re-taught with more sophisticated techniques.”<sup>12</sup> In 1965 the Counter Terror (CT) program was established by William Colby, the then CIA Far East Division Chief, which according to CIA analyst Victor Marchetti used “assassination, abuses, kidnappings and intimidation” to attack the Viet Cong.<sup>13</sup> The name, and the practices, generated negative publicity which lead to the name being changed to “Provincial Reconnaissance Units” (PRUs) in 1966.<sup>14</sup>

By that year it became clear to US command that a counterinsurgency would need to be waged if there was any hope of defeating the Viet Cong. At the same time, however, the Vietnamese National Police force was wracked with “poor leadership and rampant corruption” and it was clear that existing counterinsurgency efforts had failed.<sup>15</sup> New pacification programs thus began and in late 1966 District Intelligence Operations Coordination Centers (DIOCCs) were established and tasked with using intelligence “reports to prepare ‘target folders’ on suspected political leaders.”<sup>16</sup> The same year, the CIA-trained Vietnamese branch chief of IV Corps (the Mekong Delta region) in Vietnam proposed a program called Phung Hoang. Based on the mythical Vietnamese Phoenix the program reflected his “view that the VC cadres were to be monitored, not killed.”<sup>17</sup> The later Phoenix

program would be based on a melding of the DIOCCs and Phung Hoang upon its creation.

However, before Phoenix flared into existence the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) was established in Saigon. Formulated in 1967 by Robert Komer, then head of the US pacification effort, "CORDS was intended to serve as a centralized bureaucracy which would align all existing intelligence programs under one organization."<sup>18</sup> CORDS was subsequently tasked with creating a "multifaceted assault on the communist underground through a mix of penetration, arrest, and assassination by an array of nonmilitary forces."<sup>19</sup> However, it was quickly weakened by infighting, an inability to adequately intern suspects, and a massive influx of raw intelligence data that quickly overwhelmed its analytic capabilities. In an attempt to fix the analytical problem, the Intelligence Coordination and Exploitation program was created, which consisted of a "reporting and information system using automated data processing systems."<sup>20</sup> According to those who formulated it, this system "with its computer brain and assassin's instinct" would be able to "make the Vietcong wither from within."<sup>21</sup> Despite some initial reservations, in 1967 the South Vietnamese Government officially backed the program by issuing the "Directive on the Neutralization of the VCI."<sup>22</sup> Six months later, then President Nguyen Van Thieu established Phoenix in its final form "as a program, not an organization" with the goal of identifying and neutralizing the VCI.<sup>23</sup> A sound approach at first glance, the program had deep institutional flaws which became apparent in the following years.

Few, if any, notable successes and a lack of required equipment meant that the Phoenix was generally ineffective and was eventually abandoned when little actionable intelligence was produced. From 1967 to 1969 the CIA effectively headed the program during which it trained and advised the Vietnamese interrogators and PRU teams, both of which continued to operate after the Agency withdrew. In 1969 control of the program was transferred to the Vietnamese National police in effect creating

a layer of plausible deniability. Although the interrogation and operations centers for each district were subsequently staffed by Vietnamese National Police forces, each usually had “a young American Army lieutenant as an advisor” which allowed the CIA to claim that it had “no agents below the province level.”<sup>24</sup> Thus, torture was now performed by Vietnamese nationals while advisors simply looked on. Furthermore, the “more sophisticated techniques,” those taught by the CIA, were carried out by the National Police though low success rates meant that physical abuse often became a fallback. Additionally, although the “sophisticated” methods were widely praised by the Agency the equipment on which the practice relied was “usually reserved for regional interrogation centers, where expert interrogators could put them to better use.”<sup>25</sup> These factors produced an ineffective and brutal system.

The case of Nguyen Van Tai and his ordeal highlights how the combination of these failings played out to produce poor results. Tai, a former Deputy Minister of Public Security in North Vietnam and important Communist Party member, was captured inadvertently during a drag-net operation in 1970. Vietnamese interrogators attempted to question him for eight months unsuccessfully until 1972 when an “American specialist” was called in, confirming continued CIA involvement.<sup>26</sup> In a textbook example of KUBARK interrogation practices Tai was held in solitary isolation for some five years while various interrogators worked to break him mentally. He was housed alone in an all-white cell which was blasted with industrial air conditioners.<sup>27</sup> The white cell an example of sensory deprivation and the air conditioning a means of atmospheric manipulation called for by KUBARK. Furthermore, his interrogator scheduled sessions at varying times “so as to throw off his internal clock,” another example of the KUBARK method of breaking a subject by manipulating their perception of time.<sup>28</sup> Despite these and other manipulations, Tai “spent over four years in solitary confinement, in a show-white room, without ever having fully admitted who he was” to his captors.<sup>29</sup> If there was any doubt



about the utter failure of KUBARK doctrine, Tai's case confirms it.

As this example illustrates, the CIA's "sophisticated" forms of coercive interrogation failed to produce the intended results and instead opened the door for the brutal physical variant. This was partially because the "decision to reduce the CIA's operational role in Vietnam led to the replacement of Agency men by young military intelligence officers, often straight out of school."<sup>30</sup> Many of these young officers had only received six-months of training in intelligence or paramilitary affairs before being deployed which created a woefully mismanaged system."<sup>31</sup> Yet Phoenix was not just a torture program and its assignation aspect cannot be overlooked.

These assassinations were carried out by the PRU teams which were comprised of "a dozen or more South Vietnamese mercenaries, originally recruited and paid handsomely by the CIA"<sup>32</sup> In 1969, 8,515 supposed Viet Cong cadre were captured and 6,187 killed according to William Colby, then head of the pacification effort. The following year Phoenix "accounted for 82.9% of all Viet Cong killed or captured" reaching its peak at 8,191 assassinations in 1970 alone.<sup>33</sup> However, because a monthly enemy "neutralized" quota had been put in place, "volume rather than quality neutralization became the pattern."<sup>34</sup> Contributing to the problem was the stated policy of capturing Viet Cong cadre. Chaotic field conditions made this unrealistic and as John Wilbur, a Navy SEAL Lieutenant who served in the initial PRU program, put it, "you don't just say 'put up your hands, you're under arrest!'"<sup>35</sup> To make matters worse, the PRUs began to rapidly degenerate. A mix of "psychologically unstable" personnel was transferred from the military to serve as advisors.<sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, the squads themselves continued to be made up by recruits of "unsavory pasts" namely "local hoodlums, soldiers of fortune, draft-dodgers, defectors and others."<sup>37</sup> Additionally, the CIA bailed out Americans "who were doing jail time for murder, rape, theft [and], assault in Vietnam" under the condition that they sign up to work in the PRUs. These factors contributed to the breakdown of the program and its brutal results.

Ultimately, the Phoenix program proved to be a flawed endeavor that failed to meet its stated objective of undermining the Viet Cong Infrastructure and in fact only served as a springboard for US torture doctrine. Nobody, neither the US nor South Vietnamese Government, knew exactly how many VCI cadres there were in South Vietnam throughout the war with estimates ranging from 30,000 to 104,000.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, the PRUs routinely lied about their killed and captured statistics to give the impression of better results. Typically, the PRUs would “count the bodies at the village... again at the district... [and] at the province.”<sup>39</sup> Moreover, “if a dead Viet Cong was found on a battlefield...and papers on the body identified him as a Communist...he was put down on Phoenix statistics.”<sup>40</sup> This meant that there was no “breakdown on how many VCI [were] actually ‘neutralized’ by the Phoenix program itself.”<sup>41</sup>

In addition to its legacy of assassination, Phoenix was characterized by the widespread implementation of brutal torture. In particular, the PICs were the site of the most flagrant abuses. Orrin DeForest, a CIA officer who served in Vietnam in 1969, said when describing the centers, “They were ineffective. They were sordid. They were a pile of shit.”<sup>42</sup> Additionally, in a 1971 *Los Angeles Times* article another former Phoenix advisor stated that torture often occurred in the PICs, although he said that “interrogators usually use psychological rather than physical techniques.”<sup>43</sup> The advisor went on to describe “some of the favorites” employed by interrogators; “cover a suspect’s face with a wet washcloth. Pour soapy water over the cloth each time he refuses to answer a question” and if that did not work “tie a suspect to a chair and attach wires to a 12-volt car battery. Shock the suspect every time he refuses to answer a question.”<sup>44</sup>

Compounding these two problems was the fact that, due to the resulting breakdown in intelligence quality, PRUs often had no idea if they were targeting actual cadres. From 1970 to 1971 “only 3 percent of the Viet Cong ‘killed, captured, or rallied’ were full or probationary Party members above the district level” and half of those captured or killed “were not even Party members.”<sup>45</sup>

For example, although Phoenix counted nearly 60,000 killed, captured, or defected, in 1971 studies done by the US Embassy in Saigon found that “the enemy’s political organization [remained] intact in most of the country.”<sup>46</sup> The summary of one Phoenix operation published in a 1969 *Wall Street Journal* article eloquently summarizes the program; “Results of the operation: Eight kills, one after torture. Seven prisoners taken for interrogation. One war memorial dynamited. One hospital burned. No friendly casualties.”<sup>47</sup>

As the nature of pacification efforts in Vietnam was revealed in the United States, public outcry began to emerge. Already in 1969 an editorial in the *New York Times* had insightfully remarked that, “when the Vietcong attempts to destroy the Saigon regime’s infrastructure....it is committing atrocities. But when we murder civilians employed by the Vietcong we are merely carrying out ‘pacification.’”<sup>48</sup> During the same year the program and its actions were brought into public view during the investigation of Colonel Robert B. Rheault who was accused of executing a suspected Vietcong spy. Ultimately, the charges against him were dropped when the CIA refused “at the behest of the Nixon White House” to let its agents testify. Similarly, during the trial of the officer of the platoon responsible for the My Lai Massacre, official documents stated that the “CIA ordered the hamlet wiped out because it was filled with nothing but Vietcong and Communist sympathizers.”<sup>49</sup> By this point public interest and concern led to more investigations.

Congress launched a full investigation into the extent of US torture practices but, despite what should have been glaring reason for indictment, no formal punishment was levied and only minor actions were taken. During the investigation, William Colby demonstrated what would become the CIA’s go-to method for covering up its actions; plausible deniability. When asked by Senator Fulbright (D-Ark.) if “persons arrested under the Phoenix program” had been executed Colby replied, “I would not testify that no one has been killed wrongfully...but our policy is very clear on this and we are going to enforce it.”<sup>50</sup> Although technically not

caught in a lie, as testimony of former PRU members like John Wilbur shows, the stated CIA policy was an unrealistic expectation that made the program prone to extrajudicial killing.

Furthermore, during this period Colby went on to defend the program saying that “it could not be regarded as a ‘counter-terror’ organization despite “some illegal killing.”<sup>51</sup> This should have been a damning statement as the PRUs themselves were the direct descendants of the Counter Terror program that Colby himself had established in 1965. However, this connection was not drawn and Colby deftly defended Phoenix as crucial to the fight against “a secret communist network trying to impose its authority thru [*sic*] terrorism and threat.”<sup>52</sup> During the same hearings, K. Barton Osborn, a veteran of Phoenix from 1967-1968, recalled some of the brutal practices that took place during his time in Vietnam. In vivid detail he described “the insertion of a six-inch dowel into the ear canal of one of my detainee’s ears and the tapping through the brain until he died; and the starving to death of a Vietnamese woman suspected of being part of the local [Vietcong] political education cadre.”<sup>53</sup> Despite this damning evidence, the investigation was impeded by the question of what exactly constituted torture. Former PRU advisor Richard Welcome’s comments summed up the ambiguities of the debate. “Prisoners were abused. Were they tortured? It depends on what you call torture. Electricity was used...water was used, occasionally some of the prisoners got beat up. Were any of them put on the rack, eyes gouged out, bones broke? No, I never saw any evidence of that at all.”<sup>54</sup> Despite the testimony and evidence presented, “all the sensational revelations... failed to expose anything approaching the full extent of the Agency’s torture training and thus produced little lasting reform.”<sup>55</sup>

By this point Phoenix had flared out of existence with the end of the war in Vietnam. However, in the interim years the CIA had been hard at work disseminating its new techniques to its counterparts in Latin America. The work had started between 1965 and 1966 when US Army Intelligence began a program called “Project X” with the goal of developing “an exportable foreign

intelligence package to provide counterinsurgency techniques learned in Vietnam to Latin American countries.<sup>56</sup> Eventually, a set of manuals were developed by the Army which were not only similar to the aforementioned KUBARK interrogation manual, but went well beyond. Distributed by the U.S. Army School of the Americas, established to train Central and South American military officers, the Project X guidebooks advocated that “officers offer bounties for captured or killed insurgents, spy on nonviolent political opponents, kidnap rebels’ family members and black mail unwanted informants.”<sup>57</sup> At the time, the School of the Americas instructed “hundreds of Latin American officers” in these extreme forms of counterinsurgency.<sup>58</sup> The practice did not subside in the years following the Vietnam War and actually evolved during the Project X years.

Between 1989 and 1991 the school, then relocated to Georgia, distributed nearly 700 copies of the handbooks to officers from “ten nations, including Bolivia, Columbia, Peru, Venezuela, Guatemala, and Honduras.”<sup>59</sup> It was during this period that the CIA’s Honduras “Human Resources Exploitation Training Manual - 1983” appeared which returned to a more KUBARK-esque emphasis on nonviolent psychological techniques. The manual’s section entitled “Non-Coercive Techniques” began by explaining that “all non-coercive ‘questioning’ techniques are based on the principle of generating pressure inside the subject” which had been the basis of KUBARK.<sup>60</sup> It stated that the moment of arrest should “achieve surprise and the maximum amount of mental discomfort” and that after arrival at a facility for interrogation the subject should remain blindfolded, and be “provided ill-fitting clothing” as any sense of familiarity “reinforces identity and thus the capacity for resistance.”<sup>61</sup> Finally, the manual presents a list of coercive techniques, “deprivation of sensory stimuli, threats and fear, pain, regression,” all the conspicuous products of MKUltra and the mind control experiments of the 1960s.<sup>62</sup> Of particular note is the role of self-inflicted suffering on which the manual states, “pain which he (the subject) feels he is inflicting upon himself is more likely to sap

his resistance.”<sup>63</sup> Thus, the prisoner should be made to “maintain rigid positions such as standing at attention or sitting on a stool for long periods of time” in order to “exhaust his internal motivational strength.”<sup>64</sup> During the period from the end of Vietnam to the publication of the Honduras manual in 1983 “the two essential elements of this interrogation method remained constant - sensory disorientation and self-inflicted pain.”<sup>65</sup> As had been the case in Vietnam, however, these practices failed to produce few real results and only contributed to the violence and upheaval within the countries they sought to pacify.

Unsurprisingly, history repeated itself and the US’s involvement in South American police training was revealed. A *New York Times* article in 1970 reported that Dan A. Mitrione, “one of 58 public safety advisers” in South America had been kidnapped in Uruguay and 10 days later reported that he had been found dead, apparently executed.<sup>66</sup> After the article’s release, an Uruguayan police official stated in the *Jornal do Brasil* that Mitrione had been involved in “violent techniques of torture and repression” on behalf of the Uruguayan government. Subsequently, a US embassy spokesman denounced the claim saying that it was “absolutely false and has no basis whatsoever in fact.”<sup>67</sup> Years later, however, a former Cuban double-agent published a book confirming that Mitrione had been involved with torture, and that his deputy in the OPS office was a CIA agent, confirming the continued link between the CIA and torture.<sup>68</sup>

At the same time Congress had begun investigations into the role of U.S. police training programs following the revelation of “evidence of police torture” in Brazil. During these investigations, Senator Claiborne Pell (D-RI) asked the question “but from a police viewpoint, you would agree that psychological, nonphysical methods of interrogation can be just as effective as the physical, as torture?”<sup>69</sup> This remark revealed the assumption which characterized the investigation that “psychological torture was not really torture.”<sup>70</sup> In 1974 Congress had effectively killed the Office of Public Safety asserting that “the safety program led to a multitude

of sins in support of military dictatorships.”<sup>71</sup> However, by that point “the CIA had already stopped using it as a cover...shifting its training to the U.S. Army’s Military Adviser Program” and there was no lasting “public pressure to restrain the Agency’s propagation of psychological torture.”<sup>72</sup> Effectively, torture had become an institutional part of the US intelligence system.

Therefore, when the United States was attacked on September 11th the White House simply had to give the order to re-employ the methods that had been lying dormant in the interim. Almost immediately, attorneys for the Bush administration devised “carefully cloaked” legal arguments stating effectively that the president could “override laws and treaties...to order torture or ignore the Geneva Conventions.”<sup>73</sup> Moreover, it was decided that since the US naval base at Guantanamo Bay was not on US soil, it was exempt from US laws, thus giving the CIA the go-ahead to begin using what came to be called “enhanced interrogation techniques.” By 2002, with detainees increasingly being brought to Guantanamo for interrogation, the CIA modified its psychological approach to exploit “Arab cultural sensitivity to sexuality, gender identity, and fear of dogs.”<sup>74</sup> The sensory deprivation techniques of KUBARK were re-implemented and a photo taken in 2002 of recently arrived detainees in Guantanamo Bay showcases the practice. The photo shows them kneeling, their hands encased in thick mitts, their wrists bound in front of them, ears covered with industrial ear muffs, vision obscured by opaque goggles, breathing restricted by a surgical mask, and dressed in baggy orange jumpsuits and stocking caps.<sup>75</sup> Despite the public outcry at such treatment, the practice picked up after the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the insurgency that erupted in the wake of the occupation.

As the U.S. began its counter insurgency efforts in Iraq, the practices developed at Guantanamo were transported to the country as inmates began to crowd its prisons. Following an oral order to “Gitmo-ize” Iraqi intelligence by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, General Geoffrey Miller, then head of detention facilities, provided an interrogation manual and CD containing



“training information” to military police interrogators at Abu Ghraib.<sup>76</sup> A subsequent memo put out by then US. Commander in Iraq Lieutenant General Ricardo S. Sanchez summarized this “sophisticated psychological torture, derived from the CIA’s basic methods of sensory disorientation and self-inflicted pain.”<sup>77</sup> These guidelines were redacted shortly thereafter, as military lawyers objected to their harsh nature, but the damage was already done. Continually pressed for intelligence, interrogators at Abu Ghraib were tasked with “an initial phase of intensive disorientation to prepare the detainees for later interrogation” which quickly became a pattern of “sadistic, blatant, and wanton criminal abuses.”<sup>78</sup> This abuse went beyond the sensory attacks of KUBARK and included sexual humiliation and sadistic violence.

Not long after the scandal broke, an image appeared on the cover of *The Economist* demonstrating the continued pervasiveness of the coercive techniques suggested by the Honduras manual.<sup>79</sup> In the image, a detainee is shown standing with his feet together atop a small box with his arms outstretched, two textbook forms of stress-positions. He is draped in a large, poncho-like garment and his head is obscured by a black hood, another textbook example of sensory deprivation and mental regression discovered and perfected under MKUltra. Finally, wires are connected to the finger-tips of each hand and extend off to the side presumably to a battery or other device for inducing electrical shocks. Not only had the psychological forms of torture persisted, physical coercion had as well.

During this same period James Steele appeared in Iraq. A veteran of the dirty-war in El Salvador, Steele had been tasked with training government forces that developed a reputation as death squads.<sup>80</sup> Shortly after the start of the US occupation in 2003, he was put to work advising and training Iraqi police officers. According to Rajiv Chandrasekaran, a *Washington Post* reporter inside Iraq at the time, it was never clear to anyone what exactly Steele did. He would travel outside the Green Zone to visit police stations and often joined a paramilitary group that had been



established to pursue the criminal groups which had arisen in the post-invasion chaos.<sup>81</sup> This same unit was accused of torturing a group of prostitutes that it had arrested by shocking them with a hand-cranked field telephone, a likely accusation given that Steele often accompanied them and that this technique had been in practice in Latin America and Vietnam.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, the Iraqi units trained by Steele “conducted some of the worst acts of torture during the US occupation” completing the formula for Iraq’s descent into chaos and further demonstrating the consequences of un-rebuked torture.<sup>83</sup> Evidence of detainee abuse in Iraq continues to surface to the present day and in February of 2016 almost 200 photos documenting detainee injuries were released by the Pentagon.<sup>84</sup> Despite revelations like this release, the perpetrators of the abuses have yet to be brought to task for their actions, thus contributing to the shadowy legacy of abuse and coercive interrogation.

In the decades since Phoenix it has become obvious from the numerous other programs it spawned that any endeavor of that brutal nature is destined to fail. Torture has consistently been proven to not produce reliable intelligence and, as the case of Nguyen Van Tai illustrates, those who harbor valuable information can steel themselves in the face of their tormentors. Although the US has learned this lesson this time and again it has repeatedly been exposed as proliferating ever-more-complex forms of coercive interrogation. As was the case in Vietnam, again in Latin America, and most recently in Iraq, each has experienced a prolonged period of violence in the wake of the US’s actions there. This alone should provide sufficient evidence that “modern and sophisticated” forms of psychological coercion constitute a form of torture, the results of which are not the stability and safety that are promised, but chaos and violence. This aspect of the debate has continually been overlooked and must be addressed if there is ever to be real and meaningful change.

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-ARCHIVE Editorial Board 2016

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