

ARCHIVE

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ARCHIVE

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COVER IMAGE

This photo shows a side view of Bascom Hall from the southeast, taken after the portico was remodeled in 1895 but before the dome burned on October 10, 1916.

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

The 2017 Editorial Board is proud to present the 20th edition of ARCHIVE. Created through student initiative, ARCHIVE is an annual collaboration of student editors using the skills they have learned as history majors to highlight their peers' works. Since 1998, the editors of ARCHIVE have showcased undergraduate historical research in a student-run journal. This edition continues that tradition.

Our board members come from diverse academic backgrounds and value the opportunity to create a publication as part of a team. We have chosen the articles for this 20th-anniversary edition from a large pool of submissions from inside and outside the University of Wisconsin-Madison. We would like to thank our faculty advisor, Sarah Thal, for her guidance throughout this process, as well the Department of History.

Within this issue of ARCHIVE, you will find a variety of historical scholarship. Hannah Teller and Marissa Korte analyze the intersection of social history and medical perceptions through Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and HIV/AIDS. Likewise within the field of public health, Hanan Lane explores cumbersome bureaucratic compromise and health care in "New York's Municipal Health Crisis."

Other articles track the wide-ranging impacts of imperialism and slavery. Lezhi Wang's piece traces the rise and fall of piracy in the South China Sea at the turn of the 19th century, comparing the motivations of three different groups and the shifting imperial policies that led to their demise. Luke Voegeli's analysis of alcohol and slave culture seeks to understand the societal perceptions, ramifications, and traditions that allowed both slavery and drinking to prosper in South Carolina and beyond. Alexandra Aaron demonstrates how Christian theological arguments of freedom motivated abolitionists in 18th-century Connecticut.

Three of our pieces focus on the turbulent time period around World War II in the United States. Kyle Watter traces conflict within the German-American community coming to a head in competing Wisconsin summer camps just before the outbreak of war.

Highlighting the power of baseball as a quintessentially American way of coexistence and assimilation, Ben Pickman tracks the multilayered interaction between blacks and Jews on and off the field throughout the early 20th century. Emma Sayner's essay analyzes how gender roles and expectations were conveyed in the letters couples sent to and from the home and war fronts.

We are excited to bring you this 20th edition of ARCHIVE. For more information about the evolution of our journal, visit our website at uwarchive.wordpress.com.



HINDENBERG V. SCHURZ

How Wisconsin's German Americans Helped Defeat American Nazism

Kyle Watter is a junior at UW-Madison studying History, Conservation Biology, and Cartography GIS. He is from Cedarburg, Wisconsin, which is near the town where Camp Hindenburg and Camp Carl Schurz were formerly located. Watter's interests include classical, medieval, and Islamic history, and he hopes to someday work for the federal government as a wildlife biologist.

In 1936, Fritz Julius Kuhn, dressed in the uniform of the Third Reich, stood before a crowd of 1,500. German Americans in New York City to christen the newly organized *Amerikadeutscher Volksbund*, also known as the German American Bund, or simply the Bund. Kuhn, standing amidst swastika banners, told the fervent crowd that the Bund would unify German Americans into a single cohesive political and cultural organization to fight “Jewish Marxism and Communism.”¹ In Milwaukee, however, German Americans united to oppose the National Socialist program of the Bund. The saga of rivalry and reaction in Grafton, Wisconsin, between two summer youth camps, the Bund’s Camp Hindenburg and the Federation of German-American Societies’ Camp Carl Schurz, exemplified this cultural civil war. The Federation’s programs at Camp Carl Schurz, combined with its efforts in the “German Athens” of Milwaukee successfully projected a German-American culture and

Photo: The German-American Bund parade in New York City on East 86th St. on Oct. 30, 1939 attempted to gain support from German Americans./ World-Telegram photo.
Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons, New York World-Telegram, and the Sun staff photographer.

heritage alternative to the Bund's Nazi Germanocentrism, accelerating the failure of the German American Bund in 1941.

Fritz Kuhn, a charismatic, naturalized American citizen, launched the Bund formally in 1936 in New York. The Bund rose out of the ashes of an earlier pro-Nazi organization, the Friends of New Germany.² However, despite the name change, the German American Bund did little to disassociate itself from its predecessor's National Socialist ideology. Kuhn's inaugural speech outlined the philosophy and goals of his new organization:

[The Bund] shall educate the American people to become friends of the New Germany.... the Germany of today... the Third Reich! [The Bund declares] to oppose all racial intermixture between Aryans and Asiatics, Africans or other non-Aryans; to fight communism; [and] to break up the dictatorship of the Jewish-international minority..."³

The German American Bund took up the mantle of National Socialism in the United States. It was a homegrown Nazi movement, dedicated to the Third Reich, but independent of it.

Many scholars of pre-war Nazism in the United States argue that the Bund was untenable as an organization and posed little real threat to the institutions of the nation. As Stephen L.R. Petrie of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire states in his thesis: "Ultimately, the German American Bund in Milwaukee was an organization inherently doomed to failure..."⁴ Another scholar, Leland Bell, professor emeritus of history at Central State University in Wilberforce, Ohio, writes that, "throughout its brief and stormy history, the German American Bund faced a succession of difficulties and problems..."⁵ The first opposition to the Bund came from labor leaders, who picketed their rallies and spoke out against their anti-labor ideology.⁶ The federal government, local and state politicians, and the American Legion all accused the Bund of un-American and subversive activities. Legislators introduced bills to suppress the Bund.⁷ The FBI conducted investigations of Bund properties,

and the Dies Committee in Congress held hearings concerning the organization's activities. However, modern scholars' skepticism that the Bund could ever succeed denies the organization's appeal to Americans, German or otherwise. These scholars also deny the critical role anti-Nazi German Americans played in counteracting the Bund's attempts to equate German-American culture with their brand of National Socialism.

As the threat of war loomed in Europe, the Bund grew increasingly fearful of how the German-American community would be treated by the U.S. government should Congress declare war on Germany. Their concerns were anchored in history: German Americans and German-American culture suffered severe persecution and repression during World War I.⁸ The Bund twisted the fears of German Americans to fill its ranks. Trying to legitimize its self-declared role as the defender of German Americans, it organized events celebrating German culture. However, as Kuhn declared in 1936, the German culture advanced by the Bund was the culture of the New Germany, the Third Reich. They sang "Horst Wessel," held Nuremburg-style rallies, dressed in Nazi uniforms complete with swastikas and the lightning-bolt "S" symbols of Hitler's infamous Schutzstaffel, organized a *Jugendschaft* youth movement mimicking the Hitler Youth, and bragged about their audience with Hitler when the Bund visited Germany during the 1936 Olympics. In sum, the Bund portrayed itself as the ally of both German Americans and the Third Reich against hostile conspirators and reactionaries entrenched in the upper echelons of American society.

At the same time, the Bund's publications and rallies exploited Americans' deep reluctance to enter into another war in Europe. Before the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, isolationism gripped the United States. Faced with the rearming of Germany and the rise of Nazism, many Americans looked at military intervention with the hard skepticism they learned from their experiences in the previous World War. American blood and treasure had been spilled in the trenches of the Somme and the forests of the Ardennes, all to win "the war to end all wars" and make the world "safe for democracy". But the war accomplished neither of those lofty goals, leaving

American citizens disillusioned over what they saw as a wasteful and ineffectual war. The last thing the “lost generation” wanted was another brutal war in Europe. Congressmen heeded the grumblings of their constituents, forcing President Franklin D. Roosevelt to sign three bills into law guaranteeing absolute neutrality. These laws forbade the U.S. from giving military aid to either Great Britain and France, or Germany.

Many Americans also sympathized with the staunch anti-Communist stance of the Bund. Combating communism and all other forms of Marxism occupied a central position in the ideology and political goals of the Bund. Their German and English weekly newspaper *The Free American* published many articles “revealing” the secret threats and plots of Communists, including an article claiming American Communist party members would lose their freedom to the national Communist party leadership.⁹ The aggressive and sometimes violent picketing of Bund events by labor organizations garnered it some public defense. Congressman John C. Schafer of Milwaukee, a conservative Republican and ardent anti-Communist, blasted many of the groups picketing the Bund rallies, denouncing them as Communists or Communist sympathizers.¹⁰ The anti-Communist ideals of the Bund earned it some degree of tolerance and defense despite its racist and fascist bend.

Finally, as the unofficial missionary of National Socialism and Hitler’s cult of personality in the United States, the Bund had a great stake in keeping America out of the European war. Through lurid headlines in *The Free American*, the Bund attempted to justify Hitler’s atrocities. Take, for instance, the headline following the German invasion of Poland in 1939: “Poles Committed First Act of War; Attacked Gleiwitz, Miles Inside of the German Border Line.”¹¹ *The Free American* also suggested a vast web of conspiracy between the Jews, the British, and the Communists. In their 1940 and 1941 editions, each front page of the newspaper included the tag “The U.S.A. is NOT a 'British' Bolshevik Nation! Keep the U.S.A. out of Bolshevik 'Britain's' Wars!”¹²

The Bund was not content in spreading their ideology exclusively to adults; they wanted to indoctrinate children as well. Their

efforts to win the hearts and minds of Milwaukee's youth centered around Grafton, Wisconsin, a small rural town less than thirty miles north of the city. Bund members from Milwaukee had picnicked under the shade of the cedars along the banks of the Milwaukee River in Grafton while their children swam and played as early as 1934.¹³ But in 1937, the German American Bund's Midwestern chapter formally organized a youth camp on the west side of the river.¹⁴ They named the site "Camp Hindenburg" in honor of Paul von Hindenburg, a German World War I hero and former president of Germany.¹⁵ The camp was located on a twenty-acre wooded tract of land leased from a local farmer.¹⁶ George Froboese, the Bund leader of the Midwestern region, described the purpose of Camp Hindenburg: "Our highest aim... is to remove young people... from the atmosphere of the big cities, the Mae West and Eddie Cantor atmosphere, and to lead them, physically and mentally, towards a better existence in the open air."¹⁷ These initial efforts garnered some success. In its first season 103 young German Americans stayed at the camp.¹⁸

THIS RIVALRY CAME TO A HEAD IN 1935 OVER A PLANNED GERMAN-AMERICAN DAY CELEBRATION.

Despite its posturing and grandiose claims, the German American Bund did not represent the German-American community in actuality, especially in the "German Athens" of Milwaukee. Nor was the Midwestern chapter of the Bund on good terms with the umbrella organization that did, the Federation of German-American Societies. German immigrant and activist Bernard Hofmann founded the Federation in 1932 to "preserve our economic and cultural interests as Americans in our new home, America."¹⁹ Hofmann intended the group to take an apolitical approach, bridging the deep religious and political divides within Wisconsin's German-American community.²⁰ The Bund's immediate predecessor, the Friends of New Germany, deeply resented this approach, and sought to dominate the Federation. This rivalry came to a head in 1935 over a planned German-American Day celebration. George

Froboese and his allies demanded that the Federation display the Third Reich's swastika flag at the event, arguing that the controversial banner was in fact the official flag of the German nation.²¹ After a fierce debate, the Federation voted by secret ballot against displaying the swastika, triggering a caustic argument between the anti-Nazi and pro-Nazi delegates.²² Eventually Hofmann restored order by removing Froboese and his allies from the meeting. Immediately after the Nazi sympathizers departed, the remaining delegates voted to bar the Friends of New Germany from all future meetings.²³ This abrupt break set the Federation and the Bund on a collision course over the heart of the German-American community in Wisconsin.

Following the sundering, the Federation initially refused to acknowledge the break in the German-American community. Their weekly paper *Deutsche Zeitung* continued to report on Bund events, while Hofmann tempered his criticism of the Bund. He once commented regarding a speech Froboese was giving that "at least he is going to make a speech in the language of Americans."²⁴ However, on March 12, 1938, the Federation formally abandoned its neutrality and adopted a resolution condemning the Bund and its activities after a violent Bund rally held in honor of George Washington's birthday.²⁵ Labor union picketers had clashed with the jackbooted Bund security forces, invoking the specter of Hitler's brownshirts in the already suspicious minds of Milwaukeeans. The Bund had thrown the gauntlet, and after three years of attempted neutrality, the Federation had picked it up, meeting the threat of the Bund's cancerous National Socialism with their own brand of German-American culture.

The Federation recognized that the Bund was attempting to equate German-American identity with the Third Reich's National Socialism. In response they presented a German-Americanism alternative to the Bund's Nazi fantasy culture. The Federation remained unapologetically German, holding German festivals and German language classes, but emphasized that loyalty to the United States was paramount. Hofmann, speaking at a concert put on by the Federation, reminded the attendees that, "We are meeting here

today to show our unity with America. This is our homestead and our homeland now, and the homeland of our children... Since we took the oath of citizenship, we belong to this country. What we do we will do under one flag, the American flag.”²⁶ The Federation’s continued advocacy for German culture, American patriotism, and national loyalty challenged the Bund’s attempts to exploit German pride for their National-Socialist cause.

In 1939, the Federation opened a new front in their campaign against the Bund. In response to the Bund’s Camp Hindenburg, the Federation resolved to begin their own summer youth program. Before 1936, the Federation had put little effort towards creating a youth movement for German-American children. But that changed in 1939, when the Federation pulled off a major coup. The *Milwaukee Journal* reports: “The Federation looked over the Bund’s camp. It looked like a fine place. So the Federation obtained a lease on the campsite and the Bund was out in the cold.”²⁷ Undeterred, the Bund purchased a new campsite on the Milwaukee River a short time later through a subsidiary, the Grafton Settlement League.²⁸ These two camps, separated geographically by a mile of water but ideologically by leagues, began an intense rivalry.

The Federation intended their new camp to serve as a direct contrast to Camp Hindenburg. They named the camp after Carl Schurz, a liberal German immigrant and Wisconsin statesman who perfectly embodied the Federation’s idea of German-Americanism.²⁹ More than 2,000 Federation members attended the dedication of Camp Carl Schurz in 1939.³⁰ The dedication ceremony boasted several important Milwaukee figures: assistant Milwaukee city attorney Carl Zeidier, secretary to the mayor Otto Hauser, and Bernard Hofmann, the Federation president.³¹ The speakers “reviewed the life of [Carl] Schurz, the immigrant German boy who became an outstanding American, and urged Germans to stand by the democratic principles of their adopted homeland.”³² Ziegler further declared to the gathered guests that, “Too many Americans today have an erroneous concept of citizenship as something that is naturally theirs. It is a privilege that must be earned by loyalty to America and not to any other country.”³³ In this ceremony, the Fed-



Photo: Carl Schurz was a German revolutionist and American statesman and reformer. Carl Schurz, half-length portrait, facing right.
M.B. Brady. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

eration delivered a platform that masterfully countered the present threat of the Bund's attempts to hijack German-American culture. But their approach to the Bund also protected German Americans from the seething distrust of the "Huns" still lingering from the first World War. By portraying themselves as exuberantly and undeniably loyal to the United States, even against their countrymen, they insulated their community from any anti-German sentiments that may arise should the United States join the European war.

Meanwhile, a mile south at Camp Hindenburg, the Bund also had planned a special dedication ceremony for their new site. They invited Fritz Kuhn, the national leader of the German American Bund to visit Milwaukee and speak at the camp. He arrived in Grafton with his entourage, escorted by uniformed members of the Milwaukee Bund.³⁴ They marched to Camp Hindenburg, and as they passed Camp Carl Schurz they belted out "Horst Wessel," the anthem of the Third Reich, to goad their anti-Nazi opponents.³⁵ At Camp Hindenburg itself, Kuhn delivered a fiery speech drenched with vitriol under a banner loudly proclaiming "Germans Awake!"

urging the crowd of 350 to defend the camp to the last man.³⁶ With the thundering oration of Fritz Kuhn the die was cast: Camp Hindenburg must win its rivalry with Camp Carl Schurz or perish.

Kuhn's visit, however energizing, failed to translate into organizational success. During the middle of the 1940 camp season, the Bund made its most damaging mistake. In early June, A.H. Becker—a member of the nearby Port Washington American Legion—and Deputy Sheriff Albert Heidel decided to investigate Camp Hindenburg.³⁷ The presence in the camp of German-speaking men wearing what appeared to be Nazi uniforms proved enough to arouse the suspicion of the patriotic Legionnaire and lawman. They entered the camp and began jotting down the license plate numbers of the cars parked there.³⁸ A uniformed Bundsman quickly accosted them, telling them they could not write down the plate numbers, as they were on private property. Deputy Heidel showed his badge and responded, "We have a right to take the license numbers here. This is a public gathering and you are charging 10c admission."³⁹ In response to the Legionnaires' investigation, the Bund decided to close Camp Hindenburg to all "aliens," or non-Bund members.⁴⁰ The *Cedarburg News* reported that Bund members began parking their cars out of view from the entrance.⁴¹ The same article ironically commented that the Federation camp was open and entertaining a large crowd, unlike the Bund camp, which experienced a drop in attendance following the license plate scare.⁴²

Moreover, reaction to this event firmly planted Camp Hindenburg in the public's suspicion, and provided the Federation with all the dirt needed to bury the Bund. The *Milwaukee Journal* published an exposé revealing the history of the Bund, George Froboese, and Camp Hindenburg in rather unflattering terms following Becker's investigation.⁴³ Even though nothing came of the license plate numbers, the seclusion Camp Hindenburg veiled itself in suffocation. If a camp full of uniformed Nazi sympathizers speaking a foreign tongue was suspicious, such a camp also barring the public eye and hiding its membership was downright seditious. Rumors that the Bund was training some kind of army to act as a fifth column for Hitler in Wisconsin spread like wildfire. Attending the supremely

unpopular camp became a social liability. Rather than a struggle to defend the camp to the last man, the Bund's activities at Camp Hindenburg slowly dried up. The smashing success of Camp Carl Schurz did not help ease the pressure bearing down on Camp Hindenburg. The Federation consistently managed to capture the approval of the popular press. In 1941 the Federation announced that Camp Carl Schurz would accept children of all nationalities.⁴⁴ Later that year, the Federation revealed that it would provide scholarships for underprivileged children who wanted to attend the camp but whose families lacked the financial means.⁴⁵ All the positive press made it impossible for Camp Hindenburg to compete with Carl Schurz. The rivalry between the camps was over, and the Federation had won.

TO THE BUND, THE UNITED STATES MAY BE HOME TO
MANY GERMANS, BUT IT WAS NOT THE FATHERLAND.

On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, bringing the United States into World War II. The German American Bund knew its days were numbered following the declaration of war. The headline of the final issue of *The Free American* read "Our Country, Right or Wrong, When Invaded," and urged all German-Americans to fulfill their civic duty to the United States.⁴⁶ The German American Bund disbanded shortly after war was declared, and many of its members were rounded up by the U.S. government and de-naturalized.⁴⁷ The Federation of German-American Societies continued to advocate for the German-American community during World War II, until local political squabbling led to its extinction.⁴⁸ This wholesale defeat of the Bund's national organization mirrored the local defeat of Camp Hindenburg, ending not with a bang, but a whimper. The German community answered the challenge of Nazism and preserved their legacy of Americanism against the cancer of National Socialism.

The contest between the Federation of German-American Societies and the Deutscher American Bund over the soul of the German-American community in Milwaukee centered on the

question of what it meant to be a German American. To the Bund, German Americans were ethnic Germans who lived in the United States, but whose blood compelled loyalty to the German community and state. While these ethnic ties did not compel German Americans to sedition against American interests, they instead mandated advocating for friendship and against aggression towards the German state. To the Bund, the United States may be home to many Germans, but it was not the Fatherland. The Federation took the opposite view. They were unapologetically proud of their German heritage and culture, but they also were wholly loyal to United States. They fully embraced Americanism and showed their pride in the institutions of democracy, tolerance, freedom, and equality, but retained their unique German flavor. To them, German-Americanism was a new identity, something fresh and unique that could only arise in the New World. To them, the native home of the German American could be nowhere else but the United States of America. This is where the Bund failed. They tried to exploit the Germanness of German Americans, but underestimated the power and intractability of the American aspect of German-American culture. When the national *Bundesführer* Fritz Kuhn visited Camp Hindenburg, he addressed the crowd underneath a large banner proclaiming provocatively “Germans Awake!” This trivial detail betrays their fatal flaw: they maintained that “German” and “German American” were synonymous, when they were not. The Bund failed to awaken Germans because they were not surrounded by Germans as they thought, but by German Americans, a breed apart.

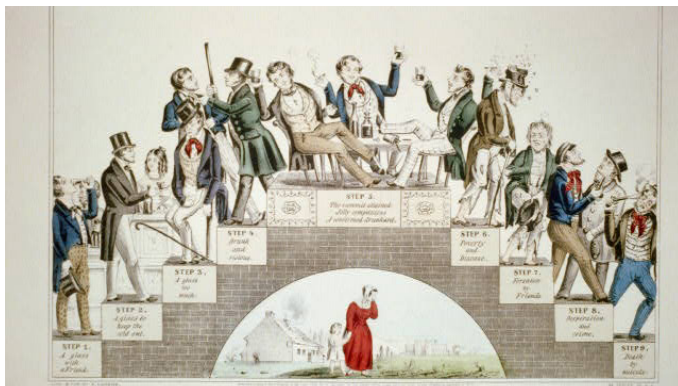
Here illustrated is the foundational truth and promise of the United States. Americans are a people bound not by race, creed, or ethnicity, but rather by a mutual loyalty to the institutions of the United States. Men and women from near and far journey to this nation and become Americans, bringing with them their unique cultures and values. These immigrants start out as German, Nigerian, Chinese, or any other unique nationality and become German Americans, Nigerian Americans, Chinese Americans, and so on, vastly different from each other culturally, but united by a shared loyalty to the institutions of their new home. They are new men and

women, different even from their family in the old country. As long as the United States continues embracing immigrants and establishing them as Americans first, free and equal as their fellow citizens, this nation will be safe from the factionalism of identity demagoguery. As long as the melting pot continues to simmer, the grand American experiment will continue to roll ever forward. 

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BABY OR THE BOTTLE

Effects of Social Movements on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome in the United States

Hannah Teller is a junior at UW-Madison studying Legal Studies and History. She is an active member in Chi Omega Fraternity and a campus ambassador for the Gift of Life Bone Marrow Foundation. She is currently studying abroad in Galway, Ireland.

In 1973, two Seattle physicians discovered and officially diagnosed fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS). Members of the Dysmorphology Unit at the University of Washington School of Medicine published three articles in the medical journal *Lancet* that detailed the first eight cases of FAS.¹ Despite the human race's long history of alcohol consumption and drunkenness, FAS had been mischaracterized and ignored. The confusion and late diagnosis of FAS could be attributed to the difficulty of characterizing the physical effects of the disorder as the symptoms of FAS can be seen in a variety of birth defects. Nonetheless, is there more to the mystery of FAS than the difficulty in classifying congenital defects? What was the role of social movements in the discovery of FAS? Historically, social concerns have dictated the way scientific and medical discoveries have been perceived or interpreted. The evolution of medical knowledge and social thought is intertwined in FAS's progression.

Photo: A 1846 lithograph by Nathaniel Currier promotes the Temperance movement, highlighting a man's transition from social drinking to suicide.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress. "The Drunkard's Progress" (New York: N. Currier, c1846).

How did social reformers throughout the 20th century impact the way alcohol consumption during pregnancy was viewed?

The historiography of FAS serves as a modern example of the intertwining relationship between medical discovery and social control. The eugenics movement slowed the scientific research of the syndrome and promoted alcohol consumption while the Clean Living movement of the 1970s and 1980s challenged drinking—a decidedly immoral behavior—and shed light on the dangerous effects of alcohol consumption during pregnancy. Furthermore, while the eugenics movement and the Clean Living movement both affected the course of FAS, the eugenic movement's influence faltered due to inconsistencies in scientific research while society continues to feel the impact of the more effective Clean Living movement.

In order to analyze social influences on the medical history of FAS, it is important to understand the syndrome itself. FAS is diagnosed through four main criteria: the maternal consumption of alcohol either through regular or binge-drinking episodes, the appearance of craniofacial² abnormalities in a newborn child, some type of abnormal growth pattern during gestation or as a newborn, and central nervous system abnormalities.³ Despite the four qualifications for diagnosing a newborn child with FAS, there is a considerable amount of mystery associated with the disorder.

It is difficult to specifically identify the craniofacial abnormalities and their attribution to alcohol consumption during pregnancy as abnormalities can range from microcephaly⁴ to droopiness of the eyes or simply a thin upper lip.⁵ The central nervous system abnormalities include any type of brain disorder or neurological impairment, including poor hand-eye coordination or even hearing loss, which can be challenging for doctors to identify until later adolescent development.⁶ The Institute of Medicine staff concludes FAS is “the most common known nongenetic cause of mental retardation... and constitutes a major public health concern.”⁷

In FAS, the science is not universal—diagnosis of children with FAS is variant across the country and throughout the medical field.⁸ One obstetrician in a study about FAS awareness described his first case: “Just knew we had a small baby that looked kinda funny... it

had sort of a weird facial structure.” Another physician noted in the study: “I think it’s sort of the nature of the syndrome [that] makes it hard to diagnose. Some of the changes can be subtle, and someone who is not trained on what these kids look like could miss it or could call it something else.”⁹ Thus, the complex medical symptoms and variance in diagnosis could have potentially contributed to the late discovery of FAS and the general mystery surrounding the disorder.

Historical Implications of Maternal Sobriety and the Fetus

Scholarship concerning maternal alcohol consumption during pregnancy is disputed throughout history. Classical texts provide evidence ancient scholars defined the negative effects of alcohol consumption during pregnancy and advised pregnant women against it.¹⁰ For example, in the biblical story of Samson, his mother is finally told she will bear a child and an angel instructs her: “Behold now, thou art barren, and barest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing (Judges, 13: 3-4).”¹¹ Despite the clarity of this warning from an angel, scholars dispute the context of this story as historical evidence of an awareness of FAS’s potential effects. Instead, historians point to the immorality of alcohol consumption as potential reasoning.¹²

Soranus of Ephesus, a Greek physician in the second century A.D., was quoted saying “in order that the offspring may not be rendered misshapen, women must be sober during coitus... because the offspring bears more resemblance to the mother as well not only in body but in soul.”¹³ Again, this is a clear indication of how scientists identified a causal link, but also signifies the importance of maternal impressions during pregnancy, apart from alcohol consumption.

Furthermore, the idea alcohol consumption at the time of conception is the cause of deformity was a belief widely accepted in Ancient Greece, Rome, and Carthage.¹⁴ Historical medical understandings of alcohol and reproduction implied there was underlying speculation about alcohol-related health problems, but an

official discovery of birth defects alcohol causes were never recorded, and ancient interpretations were often misguided.¹⁵ Although historical texts support some elements of the modern scientific understanding of FAS, there is speculation the medical diagnosis was downplayed because of alcohol's dominant role in society.¹⁶ It was not until the 18th and 19th centuries that social movements offered an explanation for birth defects in children.

The Eugenics Movement and Alcohol

The eugenics movement began in the late 19th century, and was largely influenced by Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* and the idea of natural selection. The first scholarship of eugenic thought was published in the 1860s by the British pioneer Sir Francis Galton, and it popularized the principle of natural inheritance of mental qualities.¹⁷ The movement gained notoriety when the time's leading scientists began experimental trials testing eugenicist theories about heredity and social order. In addition, the first International Congress on Eugenics in 1912 included scientists from England, Germany, France, and the United States. The success of the first International Congress represented the growing cooperation for the eugenics movement in the Western scientific community.¹⁸

The eugenic beliefs' scope of influence is critical to discuss the effect of social movements on the discovery of FAS. The previously discussed studies show how the eugenics movement disrupted common Temperance thinking that alcohol was a health concern and stressed heredity caused the degeneracy associated with birth defects. Temperance crusaders in the United States advocated for completely prohibiting alcohol sales and consumption. Temperance supporters, mostly white women, advocated that alcohol was a source of all societal evil.

Eugenics challenged Temperance ideals by asserting other factors besides drink, specifically genetics, could be the sources of social problems.¹⁹ The eugenics movement shifted American thinking from blaming alcohol as the causal agent for physical and mental disabilities. Although the movement did not halt the Temperance movement or revolutionize science, it created a distraction from

alcohol's negative impact. The disruption of the eugenics movement contributed to the late discovery of FAS, as the harmful consumption of alcohol by pregnant women was dispelled by eugenic beliefs. eugenics' impact in politics, economic policy, and psychology had lasting effects in the beliefs in the genealogy of degeneracy.

THE HARMFUL CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL BY
PREGNANT WOMEN WAS DISPELLED BY EUGENIC BELIEFS.

In the beginning of the 20th century, the eugenics movement in the United States and Great Britain turned to the traits of alcoholism as a facet of "feeble-mindedness."²⁰ Although alcohol addiction was often associated with idiocy, laziness, and criminality, most eugenicists did not link alcohol consumption by pregnant women to mental and physical disabilities in children. Instead, many eugenicist scientists believed mental disability was genetically inherited. This belief supported the eugenic claim the human race could be improved through the controlled breeding of desirable human traits and the elimination of flawed hereditary characteristics. The period's leading eugenic scientists experimented with how criminality, disability, and disease were passed from generation to generation.

Eugenicists blamed the defective hereditary traits of parents who happened to be alcoholics, instead of the consumption of alcohol itself. In "Alcohol," from the series of "How to Live: Rules for Healthful Living Based on Modern Science," a 1925 publication created by the Hygiene Reference Board of the Eugenicist-leaning Life Extension Institute, the authors cited experiments that show alcohol is not an unhealthy agent.²¹ Instead, alcohol's negative effects were attributed to the genetic traits passed in families.²² Eugenicists advocated that alcohol addiction was a manifestation of other terrible traits that were causing mental and physical defects in children. Physicians and medical professionals used family lineages to follow the generational adoption of hereditary traits and justify eugenicist thought.²³ This assertion shaped the American public, because eugenicists challenged the idea that alcohol was the social poison by blaming the hereditary nature of negative traits and the external

environments of the “degenerate” class.

The Kallikaks

Prominent American psychologist and eugenicist Henry Herbert Goddard studies how the Kallikak family created a significant theory about hereditary traits within generations of the family. Goddard began studying the behavior and development of “feeble-minded” children at the Vineland School in New Jersey in 1906.²⁴ At the Vineland School, Goddard spent time observing and interacting with children in the hope of finding the cause of “feeble-mindedness.”²⁵ Goddard studied a young woman named Deborah throughout her early adolescence to young adulthood and measured her intelligence. In his studies, he traced Deborah’s genealogy all the way back to early American settler Martin Kallikak Sr., who went to a tavern and met “a feeble-minded girl by whom he became the father of a feeble-minded son.”²⁶ Goddard wrote, “This illegitimate boy was Martin Kallikak Jr., the great-great-grandfather of our Deborah, and from him have come four hundred and eighty descendants. One hundred and forty-three of these, we have conclusive proof, were or are feeble-minded, while only forty-six have been found normal.”²⁷ Goddard’s study on the Kallikak family revealed a stark difference between Martin Sr.’s legitimate descendants, who were characterized as pious and moral leaders, while the illegitimate son’s descendants were criminals, drunks, and “social pests.”²⁸ Goddard considered the Kallikak family findings evidence for his theories about the genetics of human degeneracy. The Kallikak family offered an explanation for humanity’s increasing immorality and the connection between “bad blood and bad behavior.”²⁹

The Kallikak family study demonstrated a shift in scholarship and scientific thinking about the cause of physical and mental disability. Interestingly, in a separate study, Goddard published a paper in 1909 about the mental deficiency of another unnamed family connected to the Vineland School. In this study, he notes the possibility the father’s alcoholism could have caused physical weaknesses in the offspring.³⁰ Goddard labeled alcoholism as a trait of

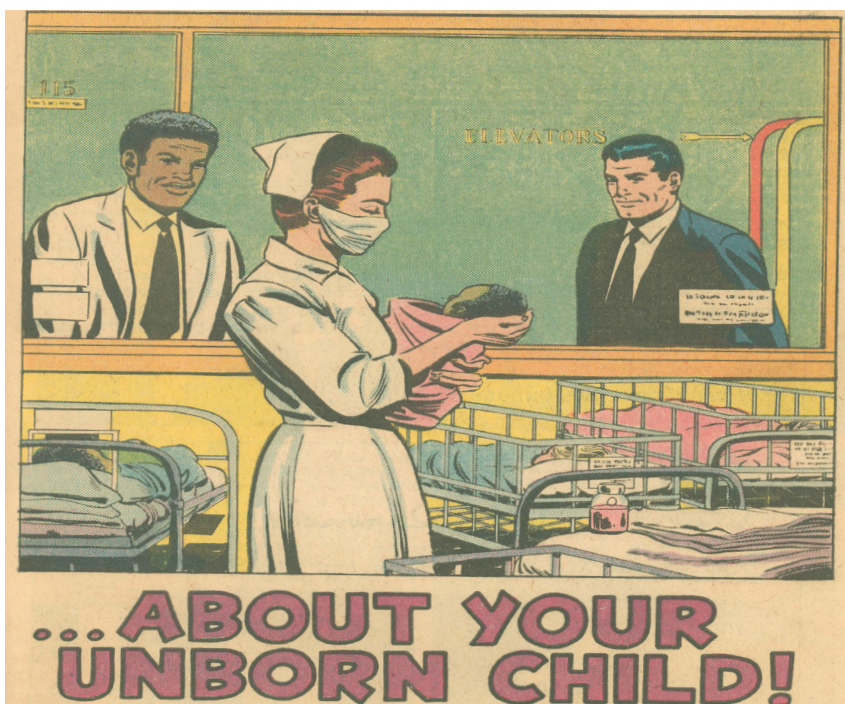


Photo: In this 1980 comic, the fictional Dr. Rex Morgan warns a pregnant woman against drinking alcohol. Courtesy of the Government Comics Collection. "Rex Morgan, M.D. talks about your unborn child!" (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Department of the Treasury, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, c1980).

being "feeble-minded," similar to the characteristics of promiscuity, criminality, idiocy, and laziness.³¹ Eugenists of the Francis Galton Laboratory for National Eugenics, Karl Pearson and Ethel Elderton, published a monograph in 1910 that studied parental alcoholism's effect on offspring.³² Using statistical methods, they concluded alcohol was not the catalyst for flawed genetic traits. Elderton and Pearson asserted "alcoholism in the parent may, like insanity, be the somatic mark of a defective germ plasm in the stock. The child is defective not because the parent is alcoholic, but because it is the product like the parent of a defective germ plasm."³³ The German biologist August Weismann introduced germ plasm theory in the 19th century. The theory claimed hereditary characters are produced by particles or substances called "germ plasm" in the chromosomes or nucleus.³⁴ Germ plasm cells are, in theory, passed hereditarily and promoted eugenicist thinking that biological de-

fects are passed from parent to child.³⁵ The popularity of Goddard's findings in the United States coupled with the growing acceptance of eugenicist thought contributed to how Americans viewed the social problem of birth defects.

The eugenicist movement's effects were felt in science, economics, and politics. Notably, Goddard's Kallikak family study had political implications for how American lawmakers responded to the social problem of dependent "feeble-minded" children. Often wards of the state, children with mental and physical abilities were reliant on government aid to survive. In a 1919 Report of the Commission on Provision for the Feeble-Minded, titled "The Kallikaks of Kansas," the Kansas Division of Child Hygiene proposed legislation for the forced sterilization of mentally irresponsible persons in order to prevent reproduction of "feeble-minded" children.³⁶ The report explains its title in the opening section: "The descendants of the feeble-minded girl, traced to the sixth generation, number nearly five hundred paupers, prostitutes, criminals, and degenerates, who have cost their state one and one-half million dollars—and the end is not yet. Each uncured—for feeble-minded boy or girl in Kansas is a possible Kallikak, and there are thousands of them."³⁷

Flawed Science: Weak Methodology in Eugenicist Research

The eugenic movement was not entirely successful in dispelling negative beliefs about alcohol nor incidentally preventing the discovery of FAS because scientific communities disagreed about the reliability of eugenic research. The eugenics movement's weakness was its flawed research methodology as the studies of major eugenicists were often criticized for being partial to a certain viewpoint and lacking the necessary controls for proving their hypothesis. For example, Elderton and Pearson's scholarship was looked down upon for their misuse of controls; they used moderate drinkers as control group rather than complete abstainers to compare their findings.³⁸ In the 1910 correspondence section of *British Medical Journal* of Inebriety a critic of Elderton and Pearson wrote, "As a matter of handling statistics, Professor Karl Pearson seems to have completely answered his critics, yet no one with much practical

medical knowledge can doubt that he is wrong with his conclusions.”³⁹

Goddard’s Kallikak family study was often critiqued for being a “scientific parable,” a complete mischaracterization of science in order to further his views of religious morality and social order.⁴⁰ Skeptics of Goddard’s conclusions criticized his field workers as having minimal training as well as their ability to diagnose mental retardation.⁴¹ Most critics questioned Goddard’s validity in comparing the “good Kallikaks” to the “bad Kallikaks,” as the entire research was reliant on the fact Martin Sr.’s son was illegitimate from a random bar maiden.⁴² Goddard did little to answer critics, but many eugenicists came to his defense.⁴³

In addition, competing theories from other leading researchers contradicted eugenicist thought. A study performed by William Charles Sullivan in 1899 at a Liverpool women’s prison measured the prenatal effects of maternal alcohol consumption.⁴⁴ Sullivan was not a eugenicist, and his research was published in widely circulated and non-affiliated journals of medicine.⁴⁵ His findings predicted fetal and infant mortality rates were significantly higher in the children of alcoholic women.⁴⁶ Sullivan studied a variety of women, those both sober and with a history of alcohol abuse. He concluded that of the 120 children born to “drunken mothers,” over half died under two years or were still-born.⁴⁷ Sullivan also tracked the children’s mode of death, drinking habits of the mothers, and family history. His ability to use experimental controls and strict scientific reasoning was celebrated throughout the research community. Sullivan’s study took place earlier than most early 20th century eugenic research, which impacted how the eugenics movement was critically analyzed. Sullivan’s study, especially his fundamentally sound research model, closely aligned with the modern clinical trials associated with the discovery of FAS. Yet his experiment was drowned out by the popular and radical eugenicist movement, despite how Sullivan’s work reflected the modern science behind the discovery of FAS.

Although the eugenics movement did not halt the Temperance movement or revolutionize science, it created a distraction for the

negative impact of alcohol. The disruption of the eugenics movement contributed to the late discovery of FAS, as the harmful consumption of alcohol by pregnant women was dispelled by eugenic beliefs.

A Period of Turmoil and Conflicting Movements Brought Forth Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

The eugenics movement continued through the mid-20th century, but more popular social movements took center stage in the 1960s. Through nonviolent protests and civil disobedience, the period's liberal social movements created effective change with the passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Equal Pay Act. The decade is characterized by the mobilization of liberal social forces and Democratic leadership, including anti-war efforts, successful expansion of urban aid, and a push for gender equality. This era is largely associated with second wave feminist and the liberal "hippie" movement, which preached peace, freedom, and sexual liberation. The ideological differences between conservative white Americans and liberal movements' strength created a mounting tension.

The Clean Living movement of the 1970s and 1980s ran counter to the predominant liberal social reforms of the previous decade. The 1976 election of President Jimmy Carter demonstrated a fundamental shift in American ideology and a wave of increased support for Christian evangelical values in government.⁴⁸ From this election to modern politics, the Christian right in the United States government has used rhetoric emphasizing "family values" to promote an agenda that preserved the ideal of a "traditional family," which contrasted feminist values and homosexuality. Politicians championed the family as an institution for social policy that fought immoral practices like incest and addiction.

Conservative white Americans supported the Christian right and special interest groups of the Clean Living movement, which helped shape national perspectives about FAS.⁴⁹ The Clean Living movement also targeted alcohol addiction, including the consumption of alcohol by pregnant women, as an immorality of the time. This movement coincided with the emerging problem of female

alcoholism as a visible social problem in the 1970s and drug abuse in the 1980s. Social conservatives perceived the sexual freedom, drug abuse, pornography, and abortion the liberal movements of the 1960s widely accepted to be detrimental to society.⁵⁰

THE CLEAN LIVING MOVEMENT TRANSFORMED FAS INTO A MORAL CRUSADE.

There is a distinctive relationship between the discovery of FAS and the Clean Living movement. The Clean Living movement gained popularity around the same time as the discovery of FAS in 1973. The movement did not cause its discovery, but pushed the problem of alcohol consumption by pregnant women to the forefront of American society. The Clean Living movement transformed FAS into a moral crusade against the same behaviors the liberal movements of the 1960s sought acceptance for. With the help of conservative legislation, pro-family grassroots organizations, and public campaigns, FAS became a sensationalized national epidemic. Following the discovery of the syndrome in 1973, medical scholarship multiplied quickly about a topic that had yet to be discussed in the previous century.⁵¹ Suddenly, a social fear of the syndrome caused it to be a priority of scientific research. The fear of FAS's birth defects resonated with widespread anxieties in American society while the scientific discovery of the harmful effects justified underlying concerns about alcohol.

It is important to understand how FAS was a production of the time period it was discovered in. Considering the historical evidence, which suggests the link between alcohol consumption and birth defects was not a new idea, the "rediscovery" of FAS was a reflection of a chaotic period of social unrest in the United States. Similar to the modern diagnosis of alcoholism, which was previously considered a hereditary degeneration or mental weakness, moral trends can influence the medicalization of certain behaviors or physical characteristics.

The contemporary Clean Living movement, which conservative Christian ideals heavily influenced, was not a unified whole but

rather a compilation of smaller interest groups that believed in regulation to promote a healthier America.⁵² The groups focused on alcohol and drug abuse, tobacco consumption, and the immorality of pornography and abortion. The Clean Living movement's strength is found special interest groups ability to organize and make social change. The special interest groups who fought against a variety of related social problems were effective in gaining popular support and lobbying for political action. Most importantly, and unlike the eugenicist movement, the scientific evidence from FAS's discovery supported their claims. Thus, the conservative and religious groups were able to connect the prevalence of FAS in the United States to a national problem about family and health.

The concerns about preservation of the traditional family contributed to a widespread "panic" about morality in the United States. To the Clean Living movement the issue of FAS represented a larger problem of the American individual's inability to take personal responsibility, similar to the crusade against drunk driving in the late 20th century.⁵³ Social conservatives viewed FAS as a failure in parenting and associated it with the increased incidence of alcoholism in white women.⁵⁴ By pinpointing these specific issues, the supporters of the Clean Living movement and members of the Christian right spread awareness about FAS's potentially magnified prevalence.

According to the Center for Disease Control's Birth Defects Monitoring Program, 1,782 FAS cases in about 9 million births from 1979 to 1992 were reported or diagnosed.⁵⁵ That is about two fetuses born diagnosed with FAS per 10,000 births.⁵⁶ The prevalence of FAS is widely disputed by obstetric experts, however, because the CDC does not monitor and collect data from all 50 states. The syndrome's subtleties and its general diagnostic mystery have also led several researchers to criticize the methodology of FAS statistics. Birth defects are difficult to accurately measure at the national level and a majority of studies are inconclusive for concrete prevalence numbers.⁵⁷ FAS also disproportionately affects children of color. The inequalities in diagnosis across ethnicities is highly correlated with smoking, poverty, malnutrition, and older

maternal age.⁵⁸ The statistical ambiguity is also a concern regarding appropriate responses from lawmakers, as many researchers have questioned the national reaction to FAS as being overhyped and mischaracterized.

Clean Living Success: The Politicization of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

The actions of special interest organizations, including Families Moving Forward Program, Families Affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, March of Dimes, and the National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome were successful in creating change by shedding light on the prevalence of FAS.⁵⁹ NOFAS was influential in pushing an agenda against alcohol consumption during pregnancy, most notably its creation of a medical school curriculum on FAS.⁶⁰ In 1977, the initial federal government response to FAS was creating the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and issuing a statement warning alcoholic mothers about the risks of drinking while pregnant.⁶¹

In 1978, the Committee on Human Resources held a hearing before the subcommittee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse on Alcohol Labeling and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.⁶² During the hearing, the subcommittee introduced a bill to require the Food and Drug Administration to label every alcoholic beverage with "Caution: consumption of alcoholic beverages may be hazardous to your health and habit forming."⁶³ Only a few years later, the rhetoric of conservative Republicans and social interest groups brought FAS into the political reform spotlight. In 1981, Edward Brandt, the Acting U.S. Surgeon General, issued the statement: "The Surgeon General advises women who are pregnant (or considering pregnancy) not to drink alcoholic beverages and to be aware of the alcoholic content in food or drugs."⁶⁴

Just as the eugenics movement pushed alcohol out of the public eye because of ideas about hereditary defects, the social movements of the 1970s and 1980s brought attention to alcohol's role in social problems. In 1984, Congress gave final approval to a bill raising the minimum drinking age to 21 years old, which was supported and

lobbied for by grassroots organizations from Mothers Against Drug Driving to the Boy Scouts of America.⁶⁵ That same year, Congress increased the attention on FAS by establishing the week of January 15th as “National Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Awareness Week.”⁶⁶ Elizabeth Armstrong and Ernest Abel, a sociologist and professor of obstetrics respectively, label the period of the discovery of FAS as a “reinvigoration of the temperance mentality in American life” featuring a “new wave of mortality.”⁶⁷ The government responded swiftly to pass legislation that supported the moral position against FAS and the consumption of alcohol in high-risk situations, including pregnancy.

Apart from official legislation, warnings against FAS have been normalized and integrated into everyday life. In the 1980 booklet, “Rex Morgan, M.D. Talks... About your Unborn Child!” sponsored by the federal Department of the Treasury, Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco, and Firearms, the fictional Dr. Rex Morgan talks to pregnant women and their husbands about the preventable birth defects associated with alcohol consumption during pregnancy.⁶⁸ The booklet, in a colorful comic book, showed a suave Morgan treating a pregnant patient who has hurt her finger after a night of drinking. When Morgan realizes she was drinking to celebrate her pregnancy, the doctor lectures her and warns her husband about the danger of the behavior.⁶⁹ The husband asks if alcohol can hurt the baby and Morgan responds, “This damage can be both physical and mental! Most severe is what we now call the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome!”⁷⁰ Popularized public service announcements contributed to the United States’ fixation with the negative effects of alcohol. The media coverage of FAS, drunk driving, and immoral behavior impacted widespread awareness in the United States of alcohol’s dangers.

The Clean Living movement and federal legislation that resulted from FAS’s discovery made a lasting impact on how Americans view alcohol and pregnancy. The decades following the initial government response to the science behind FAS continued to build a national sentiment about the syndrome. Wisconsin implemented a law that required informational brochures about FAS to be distributed to any couple applying for a marriage license in 1985.⁷¹ In

1989, the “label law” was changed to include a warning about the risk of birth defects from drinking during pregnancy on all alcoholic beverages.⁷² Widespread initiatives against FAS shifted the public’s understanding of the risks by taking the universal stance that any amount of alcohol is unsafe during pregnancy. The slogan of NOFAS was “No safe time. No safe amount. No safe alcohol. Period.”⁷³ Media coverage of FAS developed in the 1980s through the early 2000s and was a tool of inciting fear to spur pregnant women into avoided alcohol. Public service announcements featured innocent babies and the characterization of threatening alcohol, as pregnant women cannot avoid the looming presence of FAS in American society.

Armstrong summarizes the progression of alcohol movements and their influence on society: “the deepest parallel between late-19th century notions of alcohol and heredity and the contemporary diagnosis of FAS is the way in which knowledge—particularly medical knowledge, which enjoys a privileged status in American society—may function as a form of social control.”⁷⁴ The science of FAS was manipulated and socialized to make the physical and mental defects associated with alcohol into a modern social problem. Armstrong acknowledges the scientific evidence against alcohol consumption during pregnancy, but identifies that social movements have developed the attitudes toward drinking and pregnancy. As more research was published on FAS and the issue gained greater attention, American lawmakers took a more punitive stance on the use of alcohol during pregnancy.

A general anxiety over the prevalence of FAS led some mothers to abort pregnancies out of fear of increased risk of FAS and of the harassment by strangers of women drinking while visibly pregnant.⁷⁵ In 1996, a 35-year-old Wisconsin woman named Deborah Zimmerman was charged with attempted murder after giving birth to a girl who was born with a blood alcohol level of 0.199.⁷⁶ Zimmerman had a history of alcohol abuse and spent the night of her child’s emergency C- section at a local bar in Racine, Wisconsin.⁷⁷ The baby was born at a very low weight and with mild facial abnormalities, immediately prompting a FAS diagnosis. Zimmerman was

the first woman to be criminally charged with harming an unborn child via alcohol consumption during pregnancy.⁷⁸ The controversial case became a national sensation for media outlets and demonstrated a fundamental change in the role of alcohol during pregnancy. Women were being held accountable for their actions in a new way, and thus the concept of responsibility during pregnancy was redefined. As a result, pregnant women faced increased social scrutiny and an altered perception of risk during pregnancy. After three years of court battles, the Wisconsin Second District Court of Appeals dismissed the charges against Zimmerman, because Wisconsin statutory law did not define an unborn fetus as a human being.⁷⁹

Measuring the Legacy of Social Movements on the Progression of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

The eugenicist movement and “Clean Living” movement altered the progression of FAS in the United States. The eugenicist movement’s impact was a general distraction from the potential harms of alcohol. Instead of blaming alcohol as the causal agent during gestation for physical or mental disability, eugenicist thinkers pushed the ideology genetic traits, including “feeble-mindedness” were entirely biological and did not acknowledge the potential environmental factors as reasoning for disability. The popularity of eugenicist thought in the early 20th century distracted from the possibility of recognizing FAS as a scientific disorder. The movement would have been more successful in spreading their ideas and adopting political reforms for eugenicist initiatives like sterilization, but a majority of eugenicist scholarship was disproved because of flawed methodology. The movement’s strength did not last late into the 20th century.

Its official discovery in 1973 and the efforts of the Clean Living movement thrust FAS back into the forefront of American society. The conservative, evangelical right and organizations of the Clean Living movement mobilized to create political change preventing FAS. The Clean Living movement’s success was aided by a period of turmoil in American society and through championing the fight

against FAS as a moral crusade. The legacy of the Clean Living movement is still felt today as the social and political reforms continue to work to prevent alcohol consumption during pregnancy. 

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THEOLOGY AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR CHANGE

Religious Revival and Abolitionist Sentiment in 18th-Century Connecticut

***Alexandra Aaron** is a senior at UW-Madison majoring in History with a focus on American and political history. She is from Philadelphia. Alex has interned at the Wisconsin Capitol, for a 2016 presidential campaign, and is currently working for a nonprofit watchdog and advocacy organization based in Madison. She will be working in Washington, D.C., after graduation.*

Abijah Holbrook arrived in Torrington, Connecticut from Massachusetts in 1787 with two slaves, Jacob and Ginne Prince. Influenced by “motives of humanity and benevolence,”¹ Holbrook found himself compelled to free both slaves after twelve years in Connecticut. Not long thereafter Jacob Prince was granted membership in the Goshen Congregational Church, which was successful in evangelizing both him and his former master. For Holbrook, and for citizens throughout Connecticut during this period, the decision to free his slaves likely reflected not only growing abolitionist sentiment, but also a religious movement that demanded it.

Abolitionist efforts in middle to late 18th century Connecticut proved forceful as Americans struggled to reconcile the political tenets of their revolutionary cause with an increasingly popular and profitable slave trade. However, that political enlightenment was not the exclusive motivation for challenges to the institution of

Photo: At religious meetings in North America, Christian leaders taught moral lessons that contradicted the institution of slavery.

Jacques G. Milbert. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

slavery. At the same time in a religious movement centered in Connecticut influential theologians preached not only religious revival, but also abolition. For many of these religious leaders there was no issue of greater importance, and it became their mission to reach the hearts and minds of the people of Connecticut in order to effect political change.

The corresponding timing and influence of abolition and religious revival was no coincidence, and the impact of one on the other is clear. As revivalism in Connecticut spread during the middle of century and the publication of religious scholarship by prominent theologians increased, the slave population began to rapidly decline. By the 1780s, legislative efforts to abolish the institution were underway. These efforts were positively impacted by the religious revivalism of this era and region, and specifically the abolitionists and religious leaders who employed theological reasoning to appeal to an increasingly devout constituency.

The influence theology had on abolition and the underlying reasoning in support of their appeal can be classified into three categories. The first category includes the condemnation of the long held justification of slavery as a means for missionary purposes. It was clear to these theologians and abolitionists that slavery had become an institution solely to benefit the commercial interests of men more concerned with the economic gains to be derived from their slaves than evangelizing them.

The second category will focus on the failure of slavery, and specifically the relationship between master and slave, to reflect Jesus Christ's examples of compassion, mercy, and brotherhood. If to proselytize was the prescription, and this led to brotherhood and consequently equality under g-d, then it was clearly against g-d's will to enslave their brothers and sisters in Christ.

Lastly, for many theologians and abolitionists, it was not simply the institution of slavery they found so deplorable, but the ways in which Africans came to be enslaved and their subsequent treatment in America. In this period of religious enlightenment, it proved more difficult, or at least more complex, to argue slavery as contrary to biblical scripture than it was to argue that treatment of

Africans in bondage was savage, oppressive, and ultimately inconsistent with Christian values.

These three arguments are reflected throughout a variety of speeches, sermons, and articles composed by prominent theologians and abolitionists in Connecticut, who utilized their skills and knowledge to effectively condemn slavery as contrary to the interests of both slaves and freemen, as both were to suffer the consequences, in this life or the next.

Significant scholarship has been dedicated to examining the work of theologians, specifically Jonathan Edwards and Samuel Hopkins, and their contributions to the religious movements of this region and time period. However, less attention has been paid to the contributions these theologians, and their lesser known peers, made to the contemporaneously occurring abolitionist movement. The theologians discussed herein consistently employed the same theological reasoning to appeal to their constituents when advocating on behalf of abolition. My intent with this paper is to examine the juxtaposition of middle to late century Connecticut religious and abolitionist scholarship through the lens of the theological reasoning as a means to achieve both interests.

Religious revival significantly impacted the citizens of Connecticut and proved most fervent during the middle and late 18th century, encompassing what many call the first and second Great Awakenings. These movements saw rapid growth of Protestant membership and conversion in Connecticut, as well as throughout larger New England and the Mid-Atlantic Colonies.

However, it was in Connecticut that the country's first revivals occurred, which spawned some of the most prominent theologians, including one of the century's most celebrated religious leaders, Jonathan Edwards. He led one of the first "awakenings," or revival meetings, in Northampton, Connecticut, which implored churchgoers to be "born again."² These revivals spread quickly around the state and to other colonies with the support of Edwards.³ Evangelism had never been so effectively employed, as thousands of Americans participated in this religious revival, espousing not only faith in g-d, but also in contemporary teachings that emphasized a

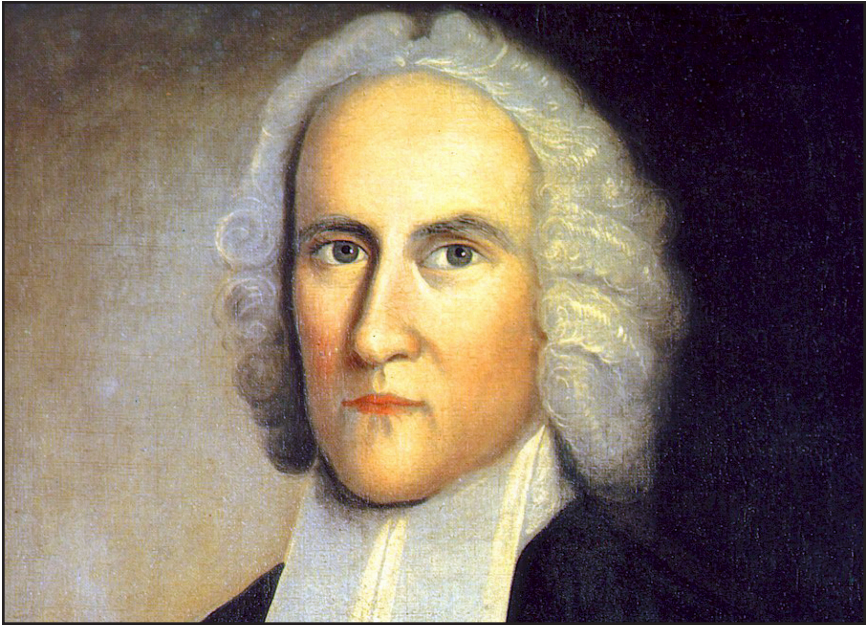


Photo: Jonathan Edwards' Christian morals contrasted sharply with the reality of slavery.
Author unknown. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

personal religious experience and a strengthening of devotion and faith. In 1732 a church in Lyme, Connecticut experienced a significant increase in membership when more than 50 newcomers joined in less than a year.⁴ Throughout Connecticut, religious societies were formed that would foster growth in faith and devoutness amongst these communities.

Many believed the original Great Awakening, which began around 1735, grew out of a reaction to a lack of piety and loss of morals among colonists, in sharp contrast to their Puritan predecessors. Preachers and ministers of 18th century revivalism rejected and condemned materialism and a changing economic construct that was more reliant upon industry and consumerism as a leading cause of what they saw as religious ruin in America. Part of these economic realities was a growing dependence upon slave labor, even in New England and Connecticut. In reaction a forceful abolitionist movement was born.

Slavery in Connecticut was never formally established, but

instead sanctioned through a series of court cases and statutes. Relative to other colonies, Connecticut's African slave population was somewhat small, with its peak population at 6,500 in 1774, and then quickly declining from there.⁵ The increasingly popular abolition movement reflected growing anxieties towards the institution of slavery. Beginning in 1774, a series of legislative measures were passed that reflected these anxieties. In October of that year the legislature enacted that "no Indian, negro, or mulatto slave shall at any time hereafter be brought or imported into this State, by sea or land, from any place or places whatsoever," and in 1780 a bill for the gradual emancipation of slaves passed the upper chamber of the legislature.⁶⁷ By 1784, the bill passed both chambers, enacting that "whereas sound public policy requires that the abolition of slavery should be effected, as soon as may be consistent with the rights of individuals and the public safety and welfare, no negro or mulatto, born after March 1, 1784, should be held as a slave after reaching the age of twenty-five."⁸

Even subsequent to these measures, Connecticut's abolition movement continued to advocate for further action and enforcement of recently passed abolition laws, and in 1790 the "Connecticut Society for the Promotion of Freedom" was established. This society became influential amongst scholars, theologians, and abolitionists across Connecticut and New England, with Yale College president and Brown University founder Ezra Stiles serving as the society's first president.⁹ By 1800 the slave population had dropped to 951 and within ten years that number would drop to 310.¹⁰ Though slavery was not officially outlawed in Connecticut until 1848, the institution had all but ceased decades prior as a direct response to the influential abolition movement.¹¹ The influence the movement commanded through the second half of the 18th century juxtaposed with the revivalism that impacted it.

Religious revivalist and abolitionist movements experienced rapid growth contemporaneously in this time period and region. The religious revival in Connecticut affected not only its' white citizens, but black and enslaved citizens as well. Beginning in the 1740s in Connecticut, missionaries made efforts to reach blacks

whose salvations likewise hung in the balance. In Albert Raboteau's *Slave Religion* he wrote the "Great Awakening represented the dawning of the new day in the history of the conversion of slaves to Christianity," and that "blacks were among those lifted to new heights of religious excitement."¹² As revival endured through the century, so too did these efforts. In the thirteen years between 1786 and 1799, the Methodist Church in New England gained more than 250 black members just two years after the church adopted a rule that every slaveholding member was required to, within a year, execute a legal agreement freeing their slaves or forfeit membership with the church.¹³ William Sweet in *The Story of Religion in America* wrote that "opposition to slavery became common among Congregational ministers in New England" and that "they were undoubtedly a large factor in bringing about the emancipation acts which were passed."¹⁴ He described the "Connecticut [abolitionist] society was the strongest of the earliest societies."¹⁵ Antislavery sentiment fostered in these protestant churches amongst congregants extended to the abolition societies to which they belonged. As their faith grew, so too did their opposition to slavery. It was the religious leaders they revered who articulated for them the theological grounds for this opposition.

Some of the strongest opposition voices were in response to long held claims that slavery was a means to accomplish missionary purposes, the first category by which we can classify the impact theology had on abolition. Indeed, it became increasingly clear that the institution was not only exclusively exploited for the interests of wealth and commerce, but that it was harmful to missionary purposes. On February 4, 1785, Connecticut resident and renowned theologian Samuel Hopkins addressed a New York abolitionist society condemning slavery as a means of inspiring religious faith.

During this revivalist period Protestants took their evangelizing responsibility very seriously, to the extent that it defined their movement. Moreover, it was not only their fellow white colonists they sought to proselytize, but all "lost souls." Hopkins invoked scripture, claiming Christ "commands us to go and preach the gospel to all nations" and not to go and "with violence bring them

from their native country.”¹⁶ He argued that had slave traders committed as much effort to evangelizing Africans as they did to enslaving them, Africa and its many nations would have “been full of gospel light.”¹⁷

Hopkins described Western Africa, where Africans were most often captured and enslaved, as hardly “places of gospel light,” and it was not only that “so little pains are taken to instruct them” but that their “masters guard against their having any instruction” in order to maintain their ignorance and ultimately bondage.¹⁸ Slave ships did not arrive to Africa bearing bibles and preachers, but instead chains. To Hopkins, the deception was all too clear. He questioned Christians’ ability to continue to “pretend” to justify the slave-trade, arguing that to do so would require the “utmost stretch of charity to suppose that anyone ever did, or can buy or sell an African slave, with a sincere view.”¹⁹

SLAVE SHIPS DID NOT ARRIVE TO AFRICA
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His gravest concern was not the deceit employed to procure slaves, but the lasting affects the trade and brutal treatment inflicted on them would have upon efforts to evangelize Africans, the second category that defines theology’s influence on abolition. He questioned how this reflected Christian Americans and how one could witness to potential converts, while simultaneously enslaving them. The slave traders, those that called themselves Christians, only served to “prejudice them in the highest degree against the Christian religion” due to the “treatment they receive from professed Christians.”²⁰ In another speech delivered in 1791 by Congregationalist minister James Dana before the Connecticut Society for the Promotion of Freedom, Dana agreed that the maltreatment of Africans was detrimental to their purposes, and Christians and humanity would have been better served had traders brought “books and teachers into Africa” and had they been treated as “children of the same family, as having the same father.”²¹ He invoked scripture, explaining the charge of Christians to “use not liberty for an occa-

sion to the flesh but by love serve one another.”²² In this he suggested that prioritizing the profits to be derived from the slave trade contrary to g-d’s demands could yield worldly wealth and serve one well in this life, but surely not in the next.

Prominent Connecticut preacher Levi Hart declared before a town hall meeting in 1774 that redemption and conversion depends on “procuring, preaching and bestowing liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to the bound.”²³ If slavery is bondage, to find faith in Jesus Christ and commit oneself to Christianity is salvation and freedom from bondage. Thus it was clear to theologians like Levi Hart that these two institutions, slavery and Christianity, were incompatible. A *Connecticut Journal* article published in 1773 notes this incompatibility, and opines that since missionary interests were clearly not the concern of slave traders, commercial interests did not justify the immoral and impious treatment they imposed.²⁴

The extent of the hypocrisy became evermore clear among an increasingly pious people. In *The Negro Community Within American Protestantism*, historian Leonard Haynes proffered that colonists who profited by the slave trade initially found it easy to “justify their consciences in believing that the enslavement of the Negro was an act of mercy because only through slavery could large numbers be brought to Christ.”²⁵ These justifications, however, rung hollow, as slave traders and masters profited from an increasingly brutal institution. He wrote, “conscientious slave masters in the colonies rapidly faced America’s first dilemma” as it became clear that to convert and even baptize slaves served to civilize and enlighten them.²⁶ This ultimately had the potential to decrease their economic value, with the potential to lead to a loss of property.

For abolitionists, nothing could be more true. Evangelism was important because to convert and to baptize would serve to civilize and enlighten, and to continue to enslave Christian brothers and sisters would be abhorrent. The belief that the institution of slavery ran contrary to the Christian value of fellowship characterizes another important theme employed in the arguments proffered these theologians and abolitionists.

References to brotherhood and appeals to Christ were woven into sermons, speeches, and articles. Enslaving evangelized Christians, when scripture demanded otherwise, did not sound logical to these evangelical abolitionists. Invoking this scripture James Dana defined the body of Christ as one of many members, all of whom stand equal before g-d and are called to treat one another with compassion and mercy.²⁷ Samuel Hopkins called all Christians and freemen to not only treat these “brethren” with compassion, but to “endeavour by lawful ways and means to enable them to share equally with us in civil and religious liberty” because by nature they are “as much entitled to as ourselves.”²⁸

In Levi Hart’s sermon, he condemned those that engaged with the institution of slavery as attempting to “to subvert the original excellent form of society,” where g-d and subsequently Christ liberated all that sought them.²⁹ To be ignorant of the salvation and hope they provided was true bondage. He went on to explain that “where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” Christians were entitled to liberty, which inherently could not be reconciled with slavery. In Levi Hart’s *Connecticut Journal* article he reflected on scripture, positing what methods Christ and his apostles employed to appeal to prospective converts and that it would have proven impossible to argue for brotherhood and salvation while simultaneously attempting to enslave them.³⁰

This argument that Christian values, which espoused brotherhood and compassion, were incompatible with slavery was especially effective, and supports the third category that explains theology’s impact on abolition. In this time period, in the context of burgeoning Lockean philosophies and revolutionary fervor and war, the theme of equality grew increasingly popular amongst American colonists who felt the British subjugated and oppressed them. It seemed obvious to them that g-d created all men equal, and thus all were entitled to liberty. One could condone enslaving Africans if they continued to be branded as barbarians and heathens, and thus subhuman. But to acknowledge them as Christians and equals while simultaneously enslaving them was contrary to their Christian values and consequently to their political cause.

Haynes spoke to this problem, explaining that it was viewed as acceptable for Christians to enslave “barbarians, infidels, and Mohammedans,” but it was a deep part of their “religious heritage that made it unlawful Christians to make slaves out of other Christians.”³¹ The immorality of enslaving fellow Christians, while using the rationale of making Christians out of Africans to justify the slave trade, created an untenable dilemma.

In Connecticut and throughout New England, it was widely acknowledged that slaves were treated better than their southern counterparts. Many argue there was a blurred line between slave and servant in New England. Haynes noted that it was not uncommon for slaves to be admitted to the family circle.³² In this region it would have been easier for white families and slave owners to acknowledge slaves as civilized and capable of conversion. As the importance of evangelism grew with 18th century revivalism, so too did the incompatibility between the two institutions. In the context of this revival ministers and theologians proclaimed the importance of conversion while preaching brotherhood amongst Christians. Slaves were included in these conversion efforts, and because bondage contradicted brotherhood, slavery itself quickly became unsustainable.³³

It was not the nature of the institution alone that many Christians believed to be contrary to Christian values. It was their belief that the treatment of slaves alone was problematic and perhaps grounds for abolition. In Jonathan Edward’s speech before the Connecticut Society for the Promotion of Freedom, delivered in 1791, he described the treatment of slaves and the horrors endured to prove the immoral and unchristian character of the trade.³⁴ He discussed how during the Africans’ enslavement and journey from Africa they experienced such “distress and despair from the loss of their parents, their children, their husbands, their wives, all their dear connections, and their dear native country itself, starve themselves to death, or plunge themselves into the ocean.”³⁵ He further described the deplorable and dangerous conditions slaves endure in their travels, leaving them susceptible to disease and death.³⁶

Historians, including James Dana, remind us that slavery is

often a consequence of war. However, he cited the problem as one where securing the nation or citizens' rights were not the basis or intention of the battle, and that it was considered "inglorious, savage and brutal to insult a conquered enemy, and reduce him to the lowest servility."³⁷ While condoning slavery as a product of war, and not necessarily contrary to scripture, it was the unchristian treatment of the slaves that for many proved the worst offense. It was not merely a matter of defeat and enslavement but the methods employed, which are antithetical and wholly contrary to the Christian law that commands one to love thy neighbor as oneself.

Levi Hart expounded upon this charge, demanding Americans to consider the experiences of slaves, violently seized from the "honour and safety of Connecticut," and without cause "overpowered by numbers and butchered," so that they may be "sold for a trifling sum as your inhuman purchasers rejoice in their success."³⁸ It proved impossible to effectively argue the treatment of slaves as consistent with g-d's commands, which functioned to threaten the legitimacy of the institution itself.

WHAT WAS TO BE THE SPIRITUAL FATE OF THESE MEN WHO CALLED THEMSELVES CHRISTIANS?

From a religious perspective, the practice of slavery was viewed as troubling not only for the slaves who endured this treatment, but also for those that inflicted it. What was to be the spiritual fate of these men who called themselves Christians? Edwards regarded slavery as a vice, similar to stealing, alcohol abuse, or fornication. His view was that these vices, especially slavery, would "enfeeble both the body and the mind," while engaging in a practice so "contrary to every principle of justice and humanity, of the law of nature and of the law of g-d."³⁹ It was not only the slaves whose salvation was foregone, but also the traders who neglected their Christian charge to evangelize Africans.

From Abraham to Philemon, there are numerous examples of slavery cited throughout scripture. Even as abolitionists strove to interpret these examples as inconsistent with contemporary slavery,

neither testament explicitly condemns the institution. Notwithstanding, themes of compassion, brotherhood, mercy, and liberation from bondage are prevalent themes throughout the Bible, and specifically Christ's teachings. The argument that slavery and the treatment of the slaves was antithetical to these teachings was more compelling, and perhaps more palatable, than to argue against the institution itself.

Ultimately, it was a combination of the three arguments discussed herein which draws a compelling connection between the revivalism of the period and the abolition of slavery. By examining the institution of slavery within the framework of religious ideology, theologians were able to effectively articulate and persuade their congregants and communities that the institution of slavery was inconsistent with the Christian values they advocated. Through their work these theologians succeeded in denouncing the myth that slavery was an effective means for evangelizing. They did so by promoting the belief that black Christian Americans were entitled to equality under g-d and to enslave them reflected poorly upon Christ's example. Lastly, they successfully employed religious teaching to convey that beyond the fact that the institution of slavery itself was problematic for the reasons discussed above, the cruel treatment of slaves was incompatible with, and moreover belied all Christian values.

These convictions were reflected in both the abolitionist and religious movements that swept through New England, and specifically Connecticut, during the middle to late 18th century. As constituents of Connecticut grew in their faith, so too did their opposition to slavery. Theologians in this region and time period effected not only revivalism, but changing attitudes towards the institution of slavery. It was these attitudes that were ultimately responsible for the legislative change that undermined and eventually abolished slavery. 

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SINCE YOU WENT AWAY

The Gendered Experience in World War II Letters

Emma Sayner is a junior from Northfield, Minnesota. She is pursuing a degree in History and Political Science at UW-Madison and is particularly interested in the intersection of politics, conflict, and culture in world history. This paper was written for Professor Mary Lou Roberts' History 600 class, *Gender and the Second World War*.

With the declaration of war in 1941, thousands of young couples were physically separated as American men enlisted in the Armed Services. Whether halfway across the country or on the other side of the world, soldiers and their sweethearts had vastly different and seemingly irreconcilable experiences during the war. Life on the home front challenged women to embrace new independence as they balanced the family budget with their husbands' limited military incomes, joined the work force in traditionally masculine jobs, and rationed foodstuffs and other vital resources.¹ Likewise, many young men experienced the incommunicable horrors of frontline battles.² Undergoing significant disruptions to their lives independent of each other, men and women could no longer service their significant other appropriate to their traditional role in the family. Ironically, the war shattered the structure of the family,

Photo: This 20th century photo is of a soldier writing a letter, keeping up the co-fabricated reality for his loved ones back home.

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the very symbol for the American war effort.

How did men in the Armed Services and their women at home construct their differing lives during the war? How did gender roles shape their experiences? Ultimately, how could the family unit, an icon of the war, survive while the war itself simultaneously challenged core family values? Letter correspondences between soldiers and their significant others help answer these questions, because during the World War II era, letters were the only means of communication for soldiers and their friends and family at home.³ However, these letters are far from perfect representations of the experiences and feelings of the writer. Rather, they are thoughtfully crafted constructions of their lives. Archived correspondences between couples reveal a co-fabricated reality: a reality residing in the crafted space of letters, reflecting the lives the couples wanted to present to each other, rather than the authentic experiences of their daily lives. Through an examination of how men and women framed their daily experiences in relation to each other, I argue that the family survived as an American cultural phenomenon of World War II through the co-fabricated reality existing within letter correspondences.

**A REALITY RESIDING IN THE CRAFTED SPACE OF LETTERS...
RATHER THAN THE AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCES OF DAILY LIFE.**

A prominent World War II scholar, Robert Westbrook, examined American War Propaganda and political theory to understand how the family became a central icon to the American war effort. According to Westbrook, the United States depended on the cultural importance of the American family to become the national symbol for “what we’re fighting for.”⁴ In a liberal society that emphasized individual agency over public welfare, the notion of fighting for the public sphere had little traction; therefore, cultural icons “have legitimated the sacrifices of war by relying heavily on appeals to private... obligations, including the moral commitments believed to exist between men and women.”⁵ Rather than protecting the nation at large, the American soldier fought to protect his

sweetheart and their future together, which the American enemies seemingly threatened. The war effort was consequentially mobilized behind the icon of the American family.

During this era, the family unit was inseparable from the gender roles it encompassed; therefore, the notion of fighting for the family reinforced the importance of strict gender roles. Around the 1940s, the family consisted of a strict gendered hierarchy: the husband was the head of the household, and the wife was the servicer to his needs. Societal norms expected men to provide for the financial well-being and physical protection of their family, prompting them to be the primary decision maker in the home. In contrast, the women serviced the health and comfort of the family; their primary concerns included cooking, household chores, and childcare.⁶ As the center of the home, women had to maintain a healthy and happy environment for their husbands to return to from work. Therefore, when Uncle Sam articulated “the obligations of Americans to support the war effort as a duty they owed to the family that raised them, the family they were themselves raising, the family they would someday raise,” he also created an obligation for individuals to conform to the expectations of their gender.⁷

While the promise of the American family became increasingly important during World War II, the realities of war physically separated young couples, ruining their individual ability to replicate the ideal family. For women on the home front, war disrupted every aspect of their traditional family life and obligations, and provided them with new, unconventional responsibilities. Some challenges included shortages and rationed goods,⁸ possible employment in a traditionally masculine job,⁹ and learning to live without a male figure in the household. Similarly, combat soldiers faced traumatic experiences, and consequently struggled to communicate their new lifestyle to their loved ones back home.¹⁰ As Emily Yellin neatly summarizes, “American women were called upon by their country to venture beyond the safety... of what had always been the most socially acceptable realm for them... And they were asked to send their husbands... far away, into the greatest unknown as well.”¹¹ Ultimately, young couples’ physical separation during a period of

great societal upheaval jeopardized their ability to act out their gendered responsibilities within the family.

I

Separated by oceans and isolating experiences, letters became an instrumental tool for couples to maintain a sense of normalcy together. As Gerald Linderman explains, letters from home provided soldiers with an invaluable escape from battle and a reminder of the home they were fighting to protect.¹² An advice column in the *New York Times* reminded those on the home front that “the link between [soldiers] and what they know and love best is much less a patriotic ideal than a very tangible if often humbly written letter from home.”¹³ Thus, maintaining proper letter correspondences became a vital responsibility for women on the home front during World War II.

Yet, according to these messages, it was a particular type of letter the soldiers needed. As a crucial symbol for love and support, letters from home had to maintain a sense of normalcy for their recipient. Letter writing advice to soldiers’ friends, family members, and sweethearts generally emphasized the importance of modest, cheery letters. A *Chicago Tribune* article urged girls on the home front to “just write a letter telling what’s going on in your part of the world... the sort of thing you’d chatter about verbally were you face to face,” but also stressed the “one thing all you fair letter writers must observe, and that is to refrain from telling your troubles.”¹⁴ Advising women to write conversationally, the article encouraged the author to maintain a sense of cheery normalcy in her letters, and in following this advice, women presented themselves as the docile homemaker their loved one had left behind.

Many of the letters American women wrote to their boyfriends and husbands in the Armed Services reflect this advice. For instance, Mary Lou Ortiz wrote to her husband overseas, “I went to the show Sunday as usual, and saw the picture, ‘So Proudly We Hail.’ I think that the picture was really good.”¹⁵ Similarly, La Verne Maertz wrote to her fiancé about her New Year’s party with her girlfriends. Like Mary Lou, La Verne shared the trivial happenings at the par-

ty, framed in general cheerfulness. Describing in detail a game she played, she concluded, "it certainly was cute and we enjoyed doing it very much."¹⁶ La Verne and Mary Lou's letters shared rather unimportant happenings in their life. In the context of their relationship, women constructed themselves as a cheerful and simple gal worth fighting for.

Often times, the mundane happenings women shared with soldiers reflected traditional female responsibilities. For example, women typically wrote about their duties as a homemaker and mother. Florence Wanserski, a young mother and wife of a Navy boatswain's mate, usually included descriptions of her daily chores in letters to her husband, George. One letter to George began with: "I washed yesterday and ironing today so that's about all that's happening to me."¹⁷ Telling her husband about how she was maintaining the household, Florence portrayed herself as the ideal wife and homemaker. In other letters, she emphasized her responsibilities as a mother. She wrote to her husband:

The other morning I was in the basement and when I came up Dick had taken a piece of candy out of the dish and you should have seen him. He was sticky from head to foot. His hair was stuck together and hung like strings. The same day George [Jr.] got gum all over one ear and I had a time trying to clean them up.¹⁸

Through small anecdotes from the larger aspects of her life, Florence maintained the image of herself as a mother and homemaker.

Florence and George had a family together prior to his enlistment; therefore, they already had a material conception of their gendered obligations to each other. For younger couples, particularly ones who had yet to live together, the promise of family was a common theme in their letters. Another woman, Florence E. Webb, met her future husband while he was enlisted; therefore, their relationship developed primarily through letters. Over time, she constructed her letters to fulfill her gendered obligations in the re-

lationship. She wrote to her fiancé, "I am learning to bake. Tonight I made some Toll House Cookies, and since they turned out good, I shall send you some next time. Since the war with Germany is just about over I thought I should learn to bake."¹⁹ Hinting towards the future, her letters depicted her anticipation to become a wife and homemaker. Through acting out their family responsibilities in letters, women like Florence Wanserski and Florence Webb contributed to the co-fabricated reality in which the idea of the family continued to exist during the war.

Responding to their sweetheart's letters, servicemen further contributed to the co-fabricated reality. While men did not have the same source of explicit letter writing advice as women, their letters home also embodied cultural norms surrounding the family, including the idea that men were supposed to protect their family. Detailed descriptions of their specific military duties and experiences rarely appeared in letters. Combat soldiers and military authorities generally "agreed on the necessity to sanitize the home version of the battlefield experience,"²⁰ and therefore decided "to confine oneself to the casual and the cosmetic,"²¹ in their letters home. Therefore, rather than personal testimonies of their daily experiences, their letters home became "ritual exchanges."²² Shielding their sweetheart from the realities of war, men embodied their roles as protectors of the family.

Consequently, many soldiers wrote about their time away from training and military duties. For example, George wrote to his wife, Florence:

New Years Day Harold, myself and three other fellows went for a swim at the local Y.M.C.A. I used a whole bar of soap on myself while taking a shower and did I feel clean. After the swim we took a walk on the outskirts of town...²³

Similarly, a soldier in the European theater, Joseph Clyde Haney, refrained from writing about his experiences in battles. Instead, he wrote to his wife, "I've taken in some shows here in camp- most

of them are ones that I've seen before," and continued, "today was one of the few nice days we have had in some time. I imagine it's getting pretty chilly at home now."²⁴ Similar to how women wrote about their life, the largest substance of George and Joseph's letters contained lively anecdotes about their day, and their narratives refrained from describing the obscurities of military life. The servicemen's letters about shows, hygiene, walks through nature, and the seasonal weather patterns made their lives appear somewhat relatable to the lives of their wives at home.

THROUGH THEIR LETTERS, SOLDIERS BUILT A LIFE
ACCESSIBLE TO THEIR LOVED ONES' IMAGINATIONS.

Other excerpts from soldiers' letters provide further insight into their daily routines. For example, George told his wife that he was, "up at 6 this morning. Before breakfast I straightened things out and washed out the bath tub, ate breakfast pie, milk, and coffee then went to mass."²⁵ Likewise, Richard Schwartz shared his daily life at training with his girlfriend, writing, "up at the crack of 3:45 AM and finished at 7:30 PM. Just took a shower, got into some clean clothes, and hustled over to the Pier to enjoy the cool breezes."²⁶ Far from their physical home, their letters shaped their experience to resemble their routine at home, allowing them to act out their roles as a husband and father. Through their letters, soldiers built a life accessible to their loved ones' imaginations. These soldiers censored their description of their daily realities and depicted their military lives as comparable to their family lives, consequentially fulfilling their family obligations within the co-fabricated reality.

Through these ordinary, trivial stories exchanged between soldiers and their sweethearts, couples constructed their lives to reinforce their gendered roles in the home. Living in vastly different worlds, letters emphasized the ways their lives continued to stay the same, which built a co-fabricated reality where their relationship continued to maintain the ideals of the American family. Whatever hardships plagued their lives independent of each other, their letters created a reality in which they could continue their habitual

lives. For women, this meant embodying their roles as a diligent and cheery homemaker. Likewise, men focused on the ways their routines could still resemble their life at home. While the war distorted so many aspects of their prewar lives, couples held on to ways their independent lives developed in conjunction with each other.

II

Soldiers and their sweethearts also used letters to discuss family events and exchange news to compensate for their physical separation. The *New York Times* encouraged women to write about the “doings in the community, news about girls, doings of friends, who’s marrying whom, exploits of the home team, [and] social activities.”²⁷ The advice suggested that letter writers should construct a bridge for soldiers, connecting them to their home and community. Lila Miller, wife of a soldier stationed in England, wrote to Elmer about her mother’s birthday: “Mom’s birthday you know. They were all out there except... Ida. She never goes. Mom got a lot of pretty gifts. Got a dress and pins, bedroom slippers, Pyrex baking dishes, crochet dailies... and chairs and I gave her a hand painted waste basket.”²⁸ Through her letter, she provided a vivid description of the family event, allowing her husband to feel that he was a part of the gathering. Additionally, women often wrote about wedding news and invites. Florence kept George informed about upcoming weddings, asking him, “what do you think of Eleanor and Steve getting married... I wonder if I will be invited to the wedding?”²⁹ Florence’s letter engaged George in a discussion about their friends, crafting the letter to include George in her conception of home. Essentially, letters from women allowed soldiers to experience community events on the home front within the co-fabricated reality.

Sometimes, soldiers had their own news to share. Through these exchanges of news, soldiers presented the image that despite their physical separation, their home remained central to their lives. For example, Joseph often wrote about the other letters he received. He told his wife, “Got a letter from Dad yesterday. Guess they are really tight on Gasoline now. He said that he hasn’t used

the coupon I gave them but was going to have to very soon.”³⁰ Joseph’s comments demonstrated his understanding of home. Similarly, Elmer wrote to Lila about visiting their family friend, Emil, in a military hospital in England. Elmer wrote: “He’s getting along fine - his wound is healing and I don’t think there will be much of a scar either - he started walking around without crutches today, but he said his foot hurts after he walks a while.”³¹ Through crafting their letters around family members and friends, soldiers revealed how their family remained central to their military lives.

When they did not have news to share, Elmer and Joseph used letters to ask for updates on the home front. Asking about his daughter, Elmer wrote to Lila, “[Mary] is going on 2 years now she must be getting to be a pretty big girl - and I suppose she’s just as mischievous as ever- does she talk much yet?”³² Joseph also commonly asked his wife about his son, Butch. He reminded her, “received your letter this noon about Butch. Please let me know right away what the doctor has to say after he examines him.”³³ Soldiers’ letters portrayed their continued investment in the family, despite the physical separation. The exchange of news about family and friends contributed to the co-fabricated reality in which their family could continue to exist.

III

While the co-fabricated reality crafted individual lives to seem pleasant and normal, the lives of men and women were not immune from difficulties and anxieties. During a time of societal upheaval and rapid change, the physical separation of young couples often led to fears of infidelity. Mary Roberts describes how “soldiers were uneasy about the loyalties of their wives and girlfriends back home,”³⁴ while women simultaneously questioned their soldiers’ “sexual faithfulness.”³⁵ Unsurprisingly, a disloyal partner presented a huge challenge to the couple’s future together, and therefore threatened the image central to the co-fabricated reality: family.

Given these concerns, long periods without mail led letter writers to express their distress. Marjorie wrote to her new husband: “I sweat out that mail-man all day and then when he passed our

house without stopping, I was so 'let-down.' I know it wasn't your fault- but I couldn't help hoping to hear from you."³⁶ More explicitly, Elmer noted his anxieties during a prolonged period without mail. He told Lila, "I didn't get a letter today either, I don't know if the mail is held up some place or not - there isn't anything wrong is there honey?"³⁷ For both men and women, a lack of mail created a sense of anxiety over the unknown. As the absence of letters suggest, these correspondences helped mediate anxieties produced by their physical separation.

Letters further addressed anxieties over infidelity through sexual suggestions. As Richard told his girlfriend, "I eat plenty and the food is wonderful but the work is making muscles out of it and I am beginning to look and feel swell... Honey, you is going to own a pretty fine hunk of a man when the army gives me up to you."³⁸ Through his description of his physical strength and appearance, Richard's letter constructed his body to conform to the ideals of masculinity. In his letter, he propagated his sexual appeal for his girlfriend. Furthermore, Marjorie wrote to Mondell, "I wish you were here right now - teasing me, hugging me, and (as you say) 'pitching woo'"³⁹ Through notes like these, couples replicated their sexual relationship, allowing them to construct their loyalty to each other. Sexual overtones produced within the co-fabricated reality helped resolve the anxieties of infidelity that threatened the virtue of the American family.

Expressions of loneliness commonly appeared in letters, serving as another reminder of their dependence on each other. Only a few days after parting from her husband, Marjorie wrote:

Darling, I had a hard time getting to sleep last night. Sweetheart, it will never be the same without you. I know now I could never live without you. Stewart, I learned to depend on you so much for so many little things that now I seem so lost without you.⁴⁰

She recognized his absence as the reason for her troubles and used it as a means to remind him that she was diligently waiting for him

at home. Similarly, men also expressed a dependence on their loved one through an emerging sense of loneliness. Richard wrote to his girlfriend Jean, "I can't seem to get interested in anything because my mind keeps slipping off to thoughts of you - thinking of all the wonderful times we spent together just makes me that much lonelier."⁴¹ Jean's physical absence in Richard's life crippled his ability to enjoy himself; his disabled happiness reinforced his dependence on his sweetheart. For both men and women, complaints of loneliness became an illustration of their affection for each other. Ultimately, couples loneliness conveyed throughout letters reminded their loved one of the value of their relationship, and therefore strengthened the image and need of family in the co-fabricated reality.

IV

In addition to serving as important reminders of couple's faithfulness, letters occasionally functioned as a tool for communicating vital information about the family's financial situation, which was necessary for the family's survival. Typically, these discussions contributed to the family imagery that existed within the co-fabricated reality, because they allowed men to remain the head of the household even in their physical absence from the home. For example, Elmer wrote to his wife, "I made out an allotment for \$40 last week, I wanted to do it before I left the States but couldn't - so you will get that check too next month about the same time as you get the other one."⁴² Similarly, Joseph wrote to his wife, "I wrote to you Sat. telling you that I was sending you another \$50.00 - well I am going to send \$125.00 instead." He provided specific details about their financial situation that he arranged and then reminded his wife to "take care of yourself and don't worry! Take a sum down and go visit Mom now and then!"⁴³ The suggestion that his wife use the money to visit family allowed him to maintain control over how his paycheck was spent, and reinforced his ability to take care of his wife. As the financial decision makers, Joseph and Elmer preserved their position as breadwinner within the family despite their absence from the home.

While Joseph and Elmer appeared to maintain their financial

security during the war, other families struggled. Florence and George's correspondences present a more heightened concern for their dwindling budget and provide an insight into the challenges the war brought to the family. George expressed frustration over his inability to address the problems, and how he would potentially lose his status as the family breadwinner. He wrote:

I know you have no money left but I am so helpless out here it will have to be your problem of feeding yourself and the children. It sure is Damn distressing when one has to give his all for his country and in return his family has put up with hardships such as you have been doing.⁴⁴

Angered by his inability to respond to their family's financial problems, he reluctantly placed the responsibilities on his wife. Florence continued to share the details of their financial situation. Although with a more gentle approach, she also expressed concern over their dwindling budget. She wrote:

The allotment check hasn't come yet so I paid the rent with money out of our savings, I hope it comes tomorrow because I've only got about 55C left. I took \$3 of our savings and \$5 of your pay so that shows where our money goes. Now don't you start worrying because it may take longer to get here from Washington. Harold left a little money again so I won't starve.⁴⁵

Although her husband could not change their situation, Florence continued to share the specifics of their financial condition. This practice allowed George to know how Florence allocated his paychecks. In her daily life, Florence had to make the actual monetary decisions; however, the letters provided George with a sense of control over the family budget, and allowed Florence to relieve herself of some of the financial responsibility.

Ultimately, however, the persisting problems in their financial life broke the façade of the family that existed within the co-fabricated reality. When it shattered, it created extreme distress for the family, particularly for George. He went to war to protect his family, but yet no longer provide financially for them; in fulfilling one gender responsibility, he broke another. In the midst of their fiscal concerns, George wrote to their Wisconsin Congressional Representative to request his discharge. Representative Stephen Bolles responded to George, "I have just uncovered your letter of recent date...I have talked with the Navy Department regarding your case and they said that if conditions are as you state in your letter, they feel sure that your commanding officer will grant your request for discharge."⁴⁶ In response, the Navy Department investigated the Wanserski family's situation: "the Bureau appreciates the fact that it is necessary for families concerned to readjust their living conditions because of the call of Reservists to active duty," but it concluded, "careful consideration of Wanserski's case fails to show his release to be warranted at this time."⁴⁷ While the request for discharge failed to change George's situation, his attempt suggests that George valued his position as the family breadwinner over his role in the Armed Forces.

HE WENT TO WAR TO PROTECT HIS FAMILY... IN
FULFILLING ONE GENDER
RESPONSIBILITY, HE BROKE ANOTHER.

The family's financial situations also created anxieties for Florence. In the margins of a letter from Representative Bolles to Florence, a note written in her hand writing reads: "I wonder if I could get the job of his secretary."⁴⁸ Although no other indications of her employment exist, the marginal comment reveals how the distress of the financial situation caused Florence to consider employment outside the home. Her potential employment would have further challenged her typical position within the American family. This disillusionment of the co-fabricated reality had an impact on the Wanserski family. The correspondence between Florence, George,

Representative Bolles, and the Navy Department demonstrates how George's inability to provide for his family created extreme distress for all involved parties.

V

Despite the occasional disruption to the co-fabricated reality, men and women used letters to overcome the challenges to traditional family values presented by the war. The importance of the family was developed most extensively in the couple's narrative of their future together. Often times, women used letters to discuss post-war plans. In a series of letters, Marjorie arranged a fishing trip for her husband and her father. Wanting to help facilitate the relationship between her newly wedded husband and her father, she wrote to Stewart, "it's a date for the fishing trip. And Dad is waiting for you to come so he can go."⁴⁹ Through these plans, she reminded him that he was an accepted member of her family, and that he will return from war to normal family life. Similarly, La Verne wrote to her husband that her girlfriends agreed, "that after all the fellows are home after the war, we want all want to have a date together... We're all waiting for that day and I hope it is soon."⁵⁰ The future plans depicted in letters created a home for soldiers to return. Women's letters expressed anticipation for the end of the war, emphasizing their hopes for a life together afterwards.

Letters between couples crafted an idyllic future centered around their relationship to their loved ones. Speaking to their one year of marriage, Marjorie wrote to Mondell, "It was a wonderful year, hon, and we can make all the rest just as grand. Just being together again will make everything all right. We belong together."⁵¹ Whatever hardships plagued their relationship, Marjorie's letter suggested their reunion would resolve their problems. Similarly, after complaining about his loneliness from his separation from his family, George concluded:

Oh well I guess I will have to be patient and as you say this can't last for ever. Gee Honey when it does come to an end and I just can't help but feel every-

thing will turn out alright, wont we enjoy being together again, you Geo, Dick and I. We will just be one grand happy family.⁵²

Like Marjorie, George's letter illustrated a blissful future with his family. With the end of the war, the co-fabricated reality could pave the way for the full realization of the dream American family.

Despite desperate attempts, not all of these futures matured. The iconic "Dear John Letter" posed the greatest threat to the moral of a soldier. As the New York Times reminded its readership, "a demoralizing letter, whether intentional or not, can be as damaging to Uncle Sam's armed forces as an enemy's bullet."⁵³ Despite such warnings, letters arrived bearing tragic news to its recipient's heart. While still in training, Richard received a series of letters from his girlfriend, Jean Merten, who eventually ended their long-distance relationship. As the letters began to falter, Richard wrote: "Darling, knowing how madly I love you how could you even suggest that I try to find another girl - for that you do deserve a spanking...Have faith and don't for a single moment ever doubt my love."⁵⁴ Another man's letters eventually replaced Richard's letters to Jean Merten. For this soldier, his dreams of his future with Jean fell apart through the same means that they were created. Unfortunately for men like Richard, the failure of relationships meant the deterioration of the family dream that was strongly embedded in the American war experience.

As the sudden stop of letters from Jean suggests, there are many complex stories behind every letter, much of which remains unattainable to the historian. Each letter writer and recipient came from a unique set of circumstances, and every letter demonstrates a personality and narrative that my research attempted to generalize. However, taken together, these correspondences provide us with a larger conception of World War II that transcends the lived experiences of their authors. In whole, they created an immaterial, idealized reality, one that placed young love and the American family at the center of the war experience.

This collective construction helps us recognize how the cultural

icon of the family survived the challenges of the war. Rather than attempting to reconcile their differing experiences, letter writers constructed a reality in which both members of the relationship could fulfill their obligations to their loved one and to the cultural construction of the family. The co-fabricated reality allowed soldiers and their sweethearts to embody the societal expectations of their gender, reinforcing the family as the center of the war effort. Whatever disruptions plagued their lives, letters provided the space for couples to maintain their pre-war lives and prepare for their future together. Ultimately, families depended on the co-fabricated reality to help return to their lives normalcy in the years following World War II. 

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ALCOHOL AND SOCIALIZATION IN SLAVE SOCIETIES OF THE NEW WORLD

Luke Voegeli is a senior at UW-Madison studying History and Political Science. Luke currently lives in Washington, D.C., and works as the development and communications intern at Advancing Girls Education in Africa. During fall 2014, Luke traveled to Kenya to work at a village-based orphanage for children affected by HIV. While in Kenya, Luke conducted an independent study looking at modernization, tradition, and politics in rural areas. Luke also independently traveled in Western Kenya, Asia, New Zealand, and the southwestern United States before returning to UW-Madison to finish his undergraduate degree.

One of the earliest recorded slave ships to arrive in the New World departed from Portuguese Guinea and arrived in San Juan, Puerto Rico on November 15, 1520. The ship embarked on its long and arduous journey across the Atlantic with 324 slaves. Of the 324 slaves that left Portuguese Guinea as cargo, only 259 disembarked in the New World.¹ This mortality rate was common on slave ships. It is estimated that 14 million Africans were enslaved and sold into the transatlantic slave trade. Of this 14 million, only 9 million survived the brutal journey to the New World. This means that approximately 36% of captives either perished during the voyage or in the first year of slavery.² “It is not in the power of the human imagination to picture itself in a situation more dreadful and disgusting,”

Photo: Frequent slave auctions in states like South Carolina served to further the narrative that slaves were meant to be obedient and docile.

Author unknown. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons and the British Museum in London.

Alexander Falconbridge wrote in his 1788 account of his experience on a slave ship off the coast of Africa.³ The transatlantic slave trade, also known as the triangle trade, legally and illegally lasted nearly 400 years.⁴ The triangle trade was broken into three voyages: the journey from Europe to Africa, Africa to the New World, and the New World back to Europe. The trade was, in its entirety, driven by commerce and profits. In 1807, Great Britain outlawed the transatlantic slave trade. The same year Britain imported 297.9 million pounds of sugar and 3.77 million gallons of rum from the New World.⁵ Rum was a commodity that changed hands at every transactional point of the triangle trade.

Rum was an integral part of the triangle trade. It also became an integral part of human socialization and society. Rum production first began in Barbados during the 17th century. Allegedly, it was the slaves on the island of Barbados who first created an alcoholic beverage from the by-products of sugar production. In 1839, *The North American*, based out of Philadelphia, recorded the following about the origins of rum: “Ardent Spirits were unknown except as a medicine in the druggist shop, until the cane sugar and molasses makers of the West Indies brought rum into the world.”⁶ Rum could be made from sugar cane juice, molasses, or cane syrup.⁷ Given the tropical, sunny climate of the West Indies, sugar cane products became the main export for the West Indies’ slave-driven economy. As a result, slaves worked exclusively with the sugar cane plant.

In 1848, a British newspaper provided the following account of rum production in the West Indies: “The slaves in the West Indies cook rum in a very scientific manner. They first fill a bottle with water and invert the nozzle into the bung of the barrel full of rum. Water being the heaviest sinks down, and the spirit rises in its place, and [indecipherable] thus makes a swap on scientific principles.”⁸ Prior to this “scientific” manner of distilling and mass producing rum, it was crudely distilled and consumed primarily by the slaves. As the story goes, a thirsty slave discovered rum when he dipped a spoon into a tray of leftover *melaza*, a byproduct of sugar production. The liquid had fermented and become alcoholic.⁹ This story

most likely originated in the early 17th century, because by the end of the century, rum was being traded across the Atlantic. Though rum was initially looked down on by the planter class as drink of the lower classes and slaves, the planters also quickly became enchanted by spell of the spirit. It was not long before rum became one of the primary exports from the West Indies. Rum soon came to be widely consumed across the Western world.

THOUGH RUM WAS INITIALLY LOOKED DOWN ON BY THE
PLANTER CLASS AS DRINK OF THE LOWER CLASSES AND
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The planter class and other upper classes held strong convictions about social status and drink. Many believed there was a proper and an improper way to drink. There was a drink for the bourgeois, and a drink for the lower classes. The rich, bourgeois, Anglo-Saxon planter class liked to paint themselves in a light in which they were the only segment of society that could properly and responsibly enjoy alcoholic beverages. As a result, marginalized populations featured portrayal in a negative light when consuming alcohol. This included those of color, those of lower socioeconomic status, and slaves. These lower classes were often portrayed as weak, violent, or criminally inclined when drunk and deemed incapable for properly drinking alcohol. Because of this portrayal, they were commonly banned from drinking, or drinking in the same places as the rich elite. This essay will show how alcohol manifested itself in the slave community, and how it came to be used as a measure of power and control. Alcohol came to represent a struggle to maintain and unravel the institution of chattel slavery in the New World. The strict monitoring of the slaves' consumption of alcohol was an effort to reinforce the power that the white plantation owners had over their slaves' social interactions, as well as a way to assert white supremacy. Additionally, this essay will show slaves used alcohol to challenge white supremacy through religious ritual, drunken partying, and most terrifyingly to the planters, through through drunken insurrection.

Since biblical times, alcohol has been consumed as a beverage, social lubricant, and a means of intoxication.¹⁰ Different types of alcohol also had regional and cultural significance. Around the 12th century in Christian Europe, strict caste systems of drinking emerged. Who drank what and how much they consumed was determined by class. There were three classes or castes: the clergy, the nobility, and the commoners. Of the three classes, the clergy, who had monastic ties, allegedly drank the least. They drank wine daily in memory of their Lord, Jesus Christ. The nobility commonly drank to a level of gluttony. They had access to any alcohol they desired and had no religious restrictions. Ironically, the nobles were not amused when the commoners drank in a similar fashion. As a result, they forbade the commoners from engaging in such behavior.¹¹ As time went on, such ideas about who could drink what, how much, and when remained intact. In Colonial America, commoners were often punished and shamed for being excessively intoxicated.¹² There was a staunch divide between the drinking habits of the elite, white, “bourgeois masters of drinking” and the downtrodden masses.

Benjamin Rush, American founding father and physician, documented the divide of drink by class in his early 19th century work, *Inquiry into the Effects of Spirituous Liquors upon the Human Body*. This short work, intended as both a moral and medical treatise, advocated ideas of temperance. Rush writes, “these fermented liquors [wines] are composed of the same ingredients as cider and are both cordial and nourishing... Unlike ardent spirits which render the temper irritable, wines generally inspire cheerfulness and good humor.”¹³ Rush is suggesting in this passage that while some alcohol merits great concern as to the effect on the “bodies and minds” of individuals, other alcohol may be nourishing. At this time in early America, wine was not readily available to the lower classes. Rush himself was not a member of the lower class; he was well-traveled, highly educated, and revered as a Founding Father. Therefore, Rush fit the profile of the “wealthy elite” and probably could readily access wine. However, rum and other arduous spirits were readily available and cheap. Rum was flooding into Colonial America

from the slave-driven, sugar economies in the West Indies. Advertisements for rum by the crate were scattered across the classified advertisement sections of most major 18th and early 19th century American newspapers.¹⁴ Rum was taking the world by storm, and the vast majority of it was pouring out of the West Indies.

In the West Indies, a culture based around rum was in the makings. At times, rum consumption ran completely rampant in the West Indies' society. Newspapers from Antigua, Jamaica, Barbados, and Grenada commonly reported incidents of riotous behavior due to the consumption of rum. In one reported event, an Irish laborer named Patrick Roper became so intoxicated that when he went to blow out his candle, his head allegedly exploded.¹⁵ Even if no other people on the Caribbean islands were expected to moderate their drinking habits, the slaves were. In many parts of the West Indies, slaves constituted 80 to 90% of the population.¹⁶ The planter class deemed slaves incapable of moderating their habits. As a result, the masters tried to regulate slaves' access to alcohol. Slaves in the British West Indies were not disallowed from drinking rum and other alcohol. Rather, they were issued rum rations.

Looking at newspapers from the British West Indies, it appears that this practice of rum rations for slaves was widespread. In 1859, Reverend William Garland Barnett recorded a West Indies' immigration document in the aftermath of the abolition of slavery in the British colonies. On July 26 of that year, Reverend Barnett recorded the following: "In the days of slavery every tropical tongue was eloquent in descriptions of the comfort of the slave, his abundant rations of food and rum and his happy exemption from those vulgar earth-born cares that distracted the heart of his languid master, residing in his humble Belgravian home."¹⁷ Barnett shows a favorable opinion of slavery in the West Indies. His assertion that prior to abolition there were abundant rations of rum and food for the slaves signifies that he believed that white slave owners knew what was best for their slaves. To Barnett, white masters knew how much their slaves needed to eat and how much was appropriate for them to drink. Under the ownership of white men, the slaves were well-guided, while

without the guidance of their white masters, they could be easily be led astray. Barnett asserts that without the guidance of the masters, the ex-slaves were less productive and more prone to criminality. Barnett's convictions help illustrate the institutionalized idea of the white savior and concepts of white supremacy. Without the guidance of the white overseer, people descended from Africa were not deemed capable of drinking in moderation.

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The system of rationing ardent spirits to slaves also existed outside of the British West Indies. Frederick Douglass records in his renowned and influential 1846 autobiography that slave masters in Maryland often gave their slaves whiskey and rum on holidays. Douglass writes, “. . .the slaveholders not only like to see the slave drink of his own accord but will adopt various plans of making him drunk.” According to Douglass, over the six-day Christmas holiday, overseers and plantation owners liked their slaves to be inebriated so as not to plan an insurrection. “It was deemed a disgrace not to get drunk on Christmas,” writes Douglass.¹⁸ American planters decided when, where, and how much liquor was released to their slaves. This in itself was a form of rationing. As a result, slaves spent their holidays drinking rather than discussing politics, insurrection, or the horrors of chattel slavery. Alcohol was not permitted to run rampant on the plantation. Rather, it was permitted in controlled environments only when advantageous to the planters. On one hand, the planter class used alcohol to make slaves drunk, and therefore less prone to uprising. On the other hand, the planters argued that when slaves became drunk, they were criminally inclined and a danger to the white community. In both cases, it is the planters who had the final say when, where, and how much liquor their slaves received.

Several other documents published during the mid 19th century reiterated Douglass' account of owners rationing ardent spirits,

or rather providing slaves with enough liquor to drink until intoxicated. In 1857, Reverend John Dixon Long of the Methodist Episcopal Church published a book called *Pictures of Slavery in Church and State*. Long wrote the book based on personal reminiscences of slavery both in Maryland and down the southeastern coast. He reiterates Douglass' notion of alcohol as a means of oppression when he writes, "Rum is a giant curse on any people. It is one of the great pillars that support the temple of slavery. Rum and slavery are inseparable...Drunkenness does more to corrupt the slaves than anything else." Long goes on to argue that rum disables the slave from thinking about liberty and hence reinforces the institution of chattel slavery.¹⁹

Both Douglass and Long argue that the practice of giving rum or other ardent spirits to slaves was used as a means of repressing the slaves, and distracting them from the realities of slavery. Though many of the slaves happily took the alcohol that was given to them, they were not free to choose where, when, and how they acquired the alcohol. Slave owners in Maryland encouraged their slaves to become drunk over holidays. Slave owners in the British West Indies issued rum ratios and, in some cases, increased ratios to reward good behavior. In both cases, the plantation owners and overseers, to some degree, regulated the intake of alcohol. In doing this, they were either asserting that they knew better than the slaves about their bodies on reinforcing the slaves' place below them in society.

One of the key aspects of slavery was the assertion of paternalistic supremacy of master over slave. In this case, it was the assertion of white supremacy using alcohol as the facilitator. In the case of ardent spirits given to slaves in great quantities on holidays in Maryland, plantation owners were reinforcing stereotypes that only they, the elite whites, understood how to properly consume the substance. These paternalistic claims of the planter class reinforced both dominance and concepts of ownership. In a sense, Long's assertion that "alcohol is one of the great pillars that supports the temple of slavery" is not so far from the truth. Rum was being produced in the West Indies en masse by slaves. As important as rum

was to the institution of slavery, rum was becoming more and more important in the world at large.

With the institution of chattel slavery in the West Indies mass producing sugar, rum was readily available and cheap throughout the New World. The availability of rum helped foster a Caribbean rum culture in which the drink was glorified along with the culture of drinking. Poems such as Lord Byron's *Don Juan's Shipwreck*, celebrated the consumption of rum. It appealed to the drinking culture of the sailors and residents of the Caribbean. *Don Juan's Shipwreck* was also widely published in newspapers and journals of the time. The poem describes the glorious shipwreck of a Spanish ship sailing to the West Indies. Toward the end the poem, when it is clear that the ship will be sunk by the storm, the poem reads, "Kept still aloof the crew, who, ere they sunk,/ Thought it would be becoming to die drunk./Give us more grog they cried."²⁰ The obsession with rum spread further than the Caribbean. It also permeated the cultures of Colonial America and Europe.

Sir Richard Rum was a comic American play written in 1794. Initially the play was run as a satire. In the play, the figure Sir Richard Rum represents rum. He is put on trial for a slew of crimes against an array of people. Sir Richard pleads not guilty. Subsequently, a number of his victims are brought to the stand to testify against him. These victims are ordinary people such as blacksmiths, bakers, and weavers. Richard allegedly lured and seduced them into the bars, and then abused them in some manner. Ultimately Sir Richard Rum is acquitted for his crimes. Through a satirical framing, Sir Richard Rum provides readers with a good indicator of just how prominent rum was in early 18th century America. In the end, Sir Richard is acquitted, not because he committed no crime, but because he was such a popular drink that despite his heinous crimes, the people still loved him.²¹ Problems associated with liquor in the white community were commonly brushed off as funny. However, when people of color and slaves drank alcohol and committed crimes, it was not regarded in the same humorous manner.

Slaves are repeatedly mentioned in Caribbean newspapers in relation to crime and alcohol during the 17th to 19th centuries.

When slaves and people of color drank to excess without the permission of whites or their masters, it was not reported in the same manner as when the Irish laborer, Patrick Roper, became so intoxicated that his head exploded. When slaves made the newspaper for being drunk, it was almost always in relation to stupidity and crime, and, in many instances, it was linked to insurrection. Chance

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was a slave accused of “entering into a conspiracy to subvert and overthrow the constitution of the island, and to murder white people.” Chance’s trial took place in Kingston, Jamaica. In his defense, Chance’s master asserted that, “Chance has never been riotous except when drunk.”²² In essence, Chance’s master was using alcohol as an excuse for Chance’s actions and for him being a negligent patriarch. To explain Chance’s actions, which went against the imposed narrative of slaves in Jamaica, his masters blamed alcohol. Another newspaper article from St. George’s, Bermuda records two “blacks” who were fooled into becoming intoxicated and subsequently murdered and robbed of their possessions.²³ In an effort to curb supposed criminality, there seems to be a great deal of evidence of laws against slaves becoming intoxicated.

American newspapers often reported similar accounts of drunken slaves committing crimes. Frederick Law Olmsted recounts in his 1856 publication *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States*, “Indeed we have a declaration of the slayer, that the blow, by which he was exacerbated so as to return it by the fatal stab was inflicted by a bottle of brandy. In this fact, we fear, is a clue to the whole history of the transaction.” Olmstead directly quotes from an article published in 1855 in the *Georgia Temperance Banner*.²⁴ In Olmstead’s publication, the crime that was committed appears to have been motivated by the adverse effects of brandy on the slave. Long writes in his 1857 book, *Pictures of Slavery in Church and State* that, “Nine-tenths of all crime committed by slaves are

traceable to its [rum's] influence.”²⁵ Long has no statistics or cited sources to back up his claim. It is likely that his claim is speculative. Through this claim, Long is proliferating and perpetuating the stereotype of black criminality. When slaves drank to excess, it was criminal. The implication of this stereotype was that white men, in particular, rich, elite, white men, knew how to drink, while slaves had to be guided in their consumption of alcohol in order to consume it in a respectable fashion.

In essence, to be guided in drinking meant that the white plantation and slave-owning class controlled and rationed alcohol. Slaves were expected to take their rum rations and use them according to the narrative laid out for them by the rich, white, plantation owners. Any deviance from this narrative was viewed as reproachable and reported as such. White men were strongly discouraged from drinking with slaves or engaging in any form of entertainment with them. Becoming drunk with slaves was a breach of social conduct for a white man. In some places in the British West Indies, becoming drunk with slaves called for a forfeiture in status. A newspaper from Antigua reported the following law: “The testimony of slaves may, however, be taken against any person of free condition, who shall be provided to have associated with them in cockfighting, gambling or getting drunk.”²⁶ White people who drank with slaves, in essence “lowered” themselves to the level of slaves when engaging in drunken activities with them. As a result, not only were slaves restricted in what they could drink, but they were also socially restricted from most drinking circles.

A Jamaican newspaper, discussing recommendations to the assembly for consolidation of a “Slave Bill,” suggested an amendment to the Slave Bill. The amendment stated that freed residents of color forfeited some of their rights if they were found to associate with slaves in gambling and drinking.²⁷ An article found in the *New York Weekly Journal* discusses a law which forbade the interaction of more than three “Negro, Mulatto or Indian Slaves” on the Lord’s day.²⁸ Laws such as these were de jure segregation of classes. This was a conscious effort by the lawmakers and those that influenced them to create a sort of caste system and forbid interaction. It was

a means to create and proliferate stereotypes and to reinforce the profitable institution of chattel slavery. The last thing the ruling class wanted was interaction between the lower classes and slaves. This type of interaction, in the view of slave owners, opened the door to the possibility of alliances and insurrection among oppressed classes of the colonies.

Fear of insurrection based on an alliance of poor whites and black slaves was not unfounded. John Brown, a notorious radical abolitionist, once tried to organize a revolution based on the cooperation of slaves and poor whites. This conspiracy is recorded in Charles Sumner's 1854 book *Defense of Massachusetts*. Sumner wrote, "John Brown's effort was peculiar. It was not a slave insurrection. It was an attempt by white men to get up a revolt among slaves."²⁹ In order to prevent such insurrections, interactions between poor whites and slaves were strongly discouraged. Allowing poor whites to drink and gamble with slaves was, in essence, providing a platform for people of different races and social statuses to view each other as equals. These interactions broke down the concept of white supremacy. Maintaining the stereotype of the helpless, misguided, savage African who was better off in servitude was vital to the institution of slavery. Establishing any semblance of equality between blacks and whites or slaves and freedmen jeopardized the legitimacy of slavery.

In 1858, *The Anti-Slavery Bugle* reported that the governor of Missouri had been caught drinking and interacting with black people, saying "... A few days ago he [The Governor of Missouri] was found drunk at a negro wedding." *The Anti-Slavery Bugle* went on to discuss an opinion of the incident recorded by *The Jefferson City Inquirer*, which reads, "If frolicking with negroes, drinking with negroes, eating with negroes isn't establishing 'negro equality,' we would like to know what is."³⁰ *The Jefferson City Inquirer* was publishing a view that appeared to be widespread at the time, that racial equality was dangerous. Had the Governor of Missouri rationed alcohol to his slaves, this would not have been viewed as a problem. The problem arose because he was "frolicking" and drinking with the "negroes" in a manner that humanized people of color. The

governor had breached a norm, thereby bringing shame upon his constituents. Alcohol was a common denominator, and therefore, its consumption by slaves and people of color had to be regulated so as not to create any semblance of equality between whites and blacks or slaves and freedmen.

Plantation owners and white populations greatly feared insurrection. The prospect of slave insurrection was extremely frightening in some areas of the West Indies, slaves constituted 90% of the population.³¹ The idea of a slave rebellion was one of the most terrifying and offensive breaches of the narrative whites imposed on their slaves. Assuming the supposed stereotypical simple, docile nature of the slaves, it was hard to believe that they would rise up in arms against their masters. In and of themselves, the stereotypes of alcohol-influenced insurrection and the simple slave were contradictory notions. The planters grappled with these contradictory notions when trying to explain rebellious behavior exhibited by slaves. Raping, murdering, pillaging, and self-emancipating were certainly not actions that the white planters desired their slaves to even consider. Outright rebellion refuted the stereotypes of simplicity and docility.

In the event of a slave revolt, it was not uncommon for planters to dismiss the origins of the revolt as the adverse effects of alcohol. Admitting the cruelty, inherent oppression, and lack of equality in the institution of chattel slavery was out of the question. Reverend Barnett articulates the commonly held notion of the time that people of African descent were better off as slaves in his “descriptions of the comfort of the slave.”³² Prior to the Civil War, distinguished pro-slavery members of the Southern Antebellum states came together to write *The Pro-Slavery Argument*. In this compilation of essays they argued that, “The negro race, from their temperament and capacity are peculiarly suited to the situation they occupy.”³³ This pro-slavery argument asserted that black people were best suited in life to serve as laborers. Assuming that slaves were, in fact, “peculiarly suited to the situation they occupy” and comfortable, there was no good reason for slaves to revolt. Therefore, the planter class was forced to search for ulterior motives to explain any revolt

among slaves. An often repeated narrative was that as the result of excessive drinking without the master's consent, slaves became violent or "riotous" and rebelled against the master's authority.

Chance, the aforementioned slave who was accused of "entering into a conspiracy to subvert and overthrow the constitution of the island, and to murder white people," represents a clear example of this notion. During his trial Chance's master asserted that, "Chance has never been riotous except when drunk." In essence, Chance's behavior was brushed off as not of his true nature but was instead attributed to drunkenness.³⁴ The proceedings recorded in this article suggest that it may have been alcohol that led Chance to plot the murder of white folk and his supposed attempt to overthrow the government. Alcohol, as in the case of the "criminally inclined slave," was used as an excuse for "atypical" slave behavior. Rather than addressing the systemic causes of slave revolt, the planters focused on factors such as alcohol which were never the *raison d'être* of slave insurrection. The explanation for revolution and "egregious crimes" of slaves removed any fault from the planters, and placed the blame entirely on the alleged inferiority of the slaves.

A slave revolution represented a very serious threat, not only to the very existence of the plantation owners, but also to the slave-driven world economy. Slave economies in the New World were able to mass produce cotton, tobacco, sugar, rum, molasses as well as an array of other commodities Europe soon came to depend on. Eric Williams, the first prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago, argued in his 1944 book *Capitalism and Slavery* that the commerce initiated by the triage trade, set the foundations for modern-day capitalism.³⁵ Preventing slave rebellions was vital in order to protect the economic interests of colonial power. When slaves successfully rebelled in the French colony of Saint Domingue, later renamed Haiti, the resulting economic impact brought France to its knees. As a result of the staggering loss of capital, France was forced to abandon its effort to recapture the colony and ultimately sold the Louisiana territory to the nascent United States for a meager 15 million dollars.³⁶

The Haitian Revolution, which began in 1791, is arguably

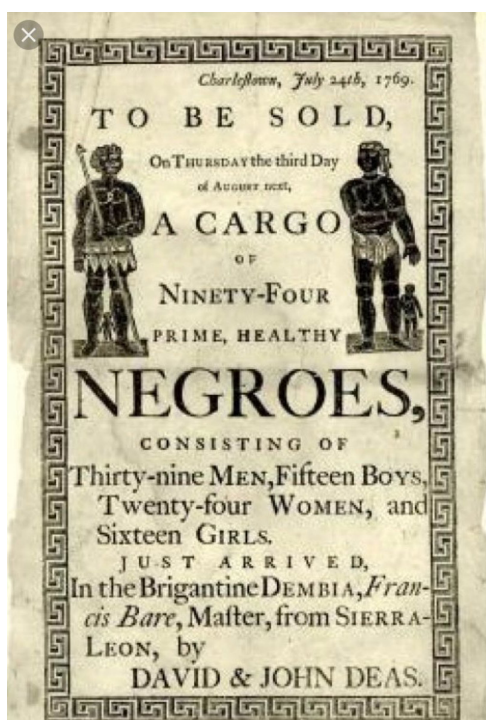


Photo: The prominence of slavery and subsequent rum consumption within various social classes in the new world created a remarkably hypocritical and complex culture for generations to come.

Author unknown. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

the most successful slave uprising in modern history. The origins of the revolution can be traced back to a single event shrouded in secrecy and a pact sealed in blood and alcohol. This event was called Bois Caiman. Because of this secrecy, it is difficult to present a decisive account of what actually transpired. Slaves of West and Central African origins attended the Bois Caiman ceremony. Allegedly, the slaves began the revolution with a ritual pact in which they drank blood from a sacrifice. This drink likely included alcohol. Ritual pacts such as the alleged pact at Bois Caiman were common African rituals

across Africa and the diaspora. The Igbo, originating from West Africa, had a ritual pact drink which entailed blood being smeared on kola nuts and added to palm wine or other alcohol.³⁷ Those faithful to *vodun* also practiced using alcohol in blood-pact beverages in a process was called *drinking vodun*. Such rites were observed throughout the African diasporic world.³⁸ Though the Haitian revolution is not remembered for the consumption of alcohol, it is notorious for its pact or “pact to the devil.”

In 2010, after the disastrous Haitian earthquake in which over 100,000 people perished, Pat Robertson, an outspoken evangelical Christian, asserted that the people of Haiti perished as punishment for their “pact to the devil.”³⁹ The blood and alcohol pact is a prominent legacy of the Haitian Revolution. Over 200 years later,

there is still a belief that it was a deal with the devil. Christians in the Western world believed that the slaves and freed blacks at Bois Caiman were invoking the devil through cultural practices which involved foreign African gods. The failure to conform to Christianity and to recognize Jesus Christ as the Savior made the slaves "inherently lesser" than the planters. The planters inherently feared what they did not understand. At the same time, religions of the homeland created common ground for slaves against the planters. This common ground constituted a real danger to the planter elite. Rather than trying to understand the religions of the slaves, the planters deemed them satanic. Only evil could come of the slaves' "false idols." Since many practices in slave religions utilized alcohol, there was an added incentive to regulate the slaves' access to alcohol. Hypocritically, white Christian slave owners also used alcohol as a blood-pact. The Christian taking of communion involved the drinking of wine, invoking the blood of Christ, and the eating of bread, invoking the body of Christ, a practice that was very reminiscent of the slaves' religious blood-pact.

Bois Caiman was not the first incident, nor the last, of slaves drinking a blood-alcohol mix as a pact. This practice had deep roots in West African religions. In many West African religions, alcohol was thought to empower ritual settings. The power of alcohol was used as a catalyst for invoking the power of the dead. Obeah was a common religion among West Indies' slaves of Igbo origin. The planters greatly feared Obeah, who was commonly associated with great evil and sometimes murder. In 1869, the *Royal Gazette* of Hamilton, Bermuda, reported the following account of a murder: "All the parties to the murder in taking the Obeah oath to secrecy were sworn on a mixture of rum, salt, and the blood of the murdered man."⁴⁰ The planters feared Obeah as well as other religions of African origin. If planters were to allow slaves to drink liquor without the consent of their masters, there was a fear they would use it in ritual practices to summon evil and invoke the devil. In 1850 in Montego-Bay, Jamaica's *Cornwall Chronicle and County Gazette* recorded an account of the perceived wickedness of Obeah, saying, "... one of the cases, which is a charge of *obeah* presents

an awful amount of wickedness, corrupt influence, extortion and credulity. In cases similar to that alluded to there is no adequate punishment.”⁴¹ There are many accounts of rum and other spirits being used in ritual Obeah practice. Given the fear which Obeah caused, the planters made laws restricting both the practice and any substances or objects that could be used in or perceived as encouraging the practice.

In his article *Obeah: Healing and Protection in West Indian Slave Life*, Kenneth Bilby references an early Jamaican Anti-Obeah law. The law dates back to 1781, outlawing the practice of Obeah on the island. The law also specifies a variety of objects that Obeah practitioners might have used, that included: parrots’ beaks, dogs’ teeth, alligators’ teeth, broken bottles, and rum.⁴² Masters were expected to forbid the possession of the listed materials. Allowing slaves to have unrestricted access to these materials enabled the slaves to practice Obeah, and therefore, opened the floodgates to hell. Given the common ground which religions such as Obeah gave slaves, these practices represented a great threat. If alcohol was used as part of religious rituals, slaves’ access to alcohol had to be restricted. Alcohol was a powerful tool. If used correctly, it could reinforce slavery. If used incorrectly, it was believed to lead to crime and the worship of false idols. Obeah constituted the ultimate breakdown of all plantation law and was the tinder which stoked the greatest fear of the planters: revolution.

One of the first major rebellions on American soil was the Stono Rebellion, which began on September 9th, 1739, in Stono, South Carolina. Within two days, 21 whites and 44 blacks were killed.⁴³ The Stono Rebellion, unlike Chance’s plot or Bois Caiman, did not have its origins in alcohol. Rather alcohol extinguished the Stono Rebellion. Alexander Hewatt recorded the rebellion in 1779: “While Carolina was kept in a constant fear and agitation from this quarter, an insurrection openly broke out in the heart of the settlement which alarmed the whole province. A number of negroes having assembled together at Stono first surprised and killed two young men in a warehouse and then plundered it for guns and ammunition.”⁴⁴ War between the English and Spanish encouraged

the Spanish to make promises of freedom to the slaves in order to disrupt the English settlements.⁴⁵ The Stono Rebellion was triggered by the alleged promise of freedom that would be provided in the Spanish colony in Florida. An Angolan slave named Cato led the revolt, which was ultimately put down. Many of the slaves who participated in the revolution were executed, and the others were resold and scattered.⁴⁶

According to newspapers and oral histories, the Stono Rebellion was put down when the rebellious slaves foolishly became intoxicated. In 1740 the *General Evening Post*, printed in London, published a story about the incident. This account reports that, by the time the militia caught up with the slaves, “many of them were drunk with rum that they had taken from the houses.”⁴⁷ Years later George Cato, the great-grandson of the revolutionary, recorded the African American oral history of the event. Recounting a similar history to that of the *General Evening Post*, Cato explains that slaves moved from plantation to plantation, taking “what they want[ed], including arms, clothes, liquor and food.” In George Cato’s oral history, alcohol also seemed to be a deciding factor that led to the revolutionaries being overrun. In concluding his account of the history, George Cato asserts, “From that day to this no Cato has tasted whiskey.”⁴⁸

George Cato seems to lament that the revolution was presumably brought to an end because of drinking. To the Cato family, this end was shameful. While in many cases, white planters explained crime and revolution as the adverse effects of alcohol on the body and mind of the simple slave, in the case of Stono, the slaves became drunk, and the revolution imploded. They could not “handle their liquor” and became ineffective. This seems to be a great contradiction of the notion that drinking alcohol without the permission of the planters led to crime. However, this notion is consistent with the stereotype that only rich, white men could properly consume alcohol.

Revolution was the antithesis of the docile, simple slave stereotype. The idea that alcohol was intimately tied to the Stono Rebellion is very interesting. Historically, alcohol has often aided

in facilitating revolution. According to historians such as Christine Sismondo, the American Revolution was born out of the Green Dragon Tavern in Boston.⁴⁹ The bar is now revered. It is listed as a “Historical Boston Tavern” and is a tourist attraction. Sam Adams, a renowned American revolutionary, posthumously had a beer named after him. Alcohol’s involvement in the American Revolution is often celebrated. In contrast, alcohol’s involvement in the Stono Rebellion is viewed as the downfall of the revolt. The revolting slaves had mounted a successful revolution but ended up being overrun by the militia because they were intoxicated. This is not the same heroic narrative as the masculine, and at times, beer-driven American Revolution. The Stono narrative links slave consumption of alcohol to utter abasement. It reinforces the supposed “supremacy” of whites and their drinking habits and culture.

In the wake of the Stono Rebellion, the white population of South Carolina attempted to make revolts such as the Stono Rebellion less likely. There was a great fear that the revolution would inspire copycat revolutions.⁵⁰ As a result, the “1740 Slave Codes” or “Negro Act of 1740” was passed in order to further suppress the slaves and make revolutions such as Stono less likely and harder to carry out. These slave codes presented 58 new enactments, which consisted of laws that forbid slaves from gathering without white supervision, prohibited slaves from learning to read, and imposed stricter penalties for non-conforming slaves. The laws also included a prohibition on the sale of alcohol to slaves. The original text reads:

That if any keeper of a tavern or punch house, or retailer of strong liquors, shall give, sell utter or deliver to any slave, any beer, ale, cider, wine, rum, brandy, or other spirituous liquors, or strong liquor whatsoever, without the license or consent of the owner... so offending shall forfeit the sum of five pounds, current money, for the first offence. . . .⁵¹

This passage of South Carolina’s 1740 Slave Codes addresses both the unwanted consumption of alcohol without the master’s

consent and the unwanted mingling of whites and blacks. If the planters were the only legitimate source of alcohol, they could regulate and ration the substance to their slaves as they saw fit. Hence, these rations, regulations, and laws were a struggle for power over a seemingly powerless population.

South Carolina was not the only slaveholding colony to enact laws against slaves drinking without the consent of their masters. Recorded in 1828 in the *Grenada Free Press*, the House of Assembly in St. George's, Grenada proposed a clause which would forbid slaves from using profane language, becoming drunk, and doing anything "indecent in the streets."⁵² In essence, this clause was an attempt to dissuade and punish slaves showing any form of resistance to the authority of the white planter. Slaves were not allowed to drink without the planters' say so. In 1811, the city of St. Louis, Missouri passed a city ordinance making it illegal for brewers to sell beer to slaves. If they were caught selling beer to slaves, they were fined ten dollars. Another city ordinance fined slaveholders 300 dollars if their slaves were caught selling liquor to other slaves without the permission of the other slaves' masters.⁵³ Despite this strict prohibition of slaves acquiring and drinking alcohol, slaves still found ways to drink.

In South Carolina, there was an alleged illicit trade of liquor between poor whites and slaves.⁵⁴ Frederick Law Olmstead reported this trade in his 1856 book *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States*, saying, "They [poor whites] are said to be extremely ignorant and immoral, as well as indolent and unambitious... They are said to corrupt the negroes, and to encourage them to steal, or work for them at night and on Sundays, and pay them with liquor."⁵⁵ Clearly, there was a continuing interaction between the poor whites and the slaves. This interaction was discouraged but could not be stopped. There was incentive on both sides to interact. The interactions allegedly took place on Sundays and in the evenings when the work day for slaves had finished. During this time they often bartered and traded with entrepreneurial poor whites in order to acquire alcohol. The poor whites gained money or labor, and the slaves gained alcohol. Since it was illegal for

slaves to purchase alcohol from stores, they were forced to use the black market. Despite documented laws, slaves acquired alcohol for both social and religious consumption.

Alcohol was not hard for slaves to acquire. In the British West Indies, they worked exclusively with sugarcane and distilled rum. When rum and other ardent spirits were outlawed and made more difficult to acquire, slaves still found ways to drink. Before Africans were slaves in the New World, they consumed liquor in Africa. They drank for the same reasons as the whites in the New World, both socially and religiously. To say that slaves drank merely to escape their reality as slaves is an oversimplification. Social human beings of all creed and ethnicities, to some extent, drink to escape the monotony or horrors of daily life. Slaves drank because they were social human beings. They drank to invoke their gods, much like Christians continue to do on Sundays. Most slaves did not commit criminal acts when they drank. In fact, there is evidence which suggests that slaves were not heavy drinkers. Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson, the colonel of a black regiment in the Civil War reported that his black recruits rarely drank to excess, despite alcohol being readily accessible.⁵⁶ Eugene Genovese argues in his book *Roll Jordan Roll* that slaves, despite socially consuming alcohol, remained rather sober as a population.⁵⁷ Criminal acts with reference to slaves and alcohol were disproportionately reported in local newspapers in order to proliferate a terrifying, subhuman image of the dangerous, drunken slave and to excuse the failures of “negligent” patriarchal planters. This image rationalized slavery. It institutionalized the notion that slavers were subhuman. The strict monitoring of the slaves’ consumption of alcohol was an effort to reinforce the power that the white plantation owners had over their slaves’ social interactions, as well as a way to assert white supremacy.

Alcohol as a tool of slavery was hypocritically twisted to fit the purposes that facilitated the planters. On one hand, the planter class used alcohol to make slaves drunk and therefore less prone to uprising and crime. On the other hand, the planters argued that when slaves became drunk, they were compromised and

therefore criminally inclined, revolutionary, and dangerous to the white community. These beliefs were reinforced by stereotypes of both simplicity and criminality. These stereotypes helped justify the institution of slavery. Blaming alcohol for insurrections and rebellious behavior of slaves helped white planters avoid the moral injustices they were committing by enslaving millions. It was a deceitful shift of the burden of blame. If slavery made the slaves' lives better as argued by the slave owners, it could not be slavery itself that led the slaves to revolt. Stereotypes and double standards surrounding alcohol intake reinforced the belief that slaves were subhuman, and needed the guidance of their white masters in all facets of life. The scramble to regulate and ration alcohol to slaves represented a struggle for power using a powerful substance as a mechanism of control. 

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Under- standing AIDS

HOW STEREOTYPES SHAPED AN EPIDEMIC

The Co-Occurrence of HIV and Mental Illness

Marissa Korte is a graduating senior studying History and Biology at UW-Madison. She has worked for three years in a neuroscience research lab on campus, which sparked her interest in mental illness. Upon graduation, she plans to continue her research on the HIV/AIDS epidemic in a public health setting.

Sexuality and drug use: though they have always been present in society, these issues went largely undiscussed in America until the end of the 20th century; in the context of mental illness, the conversation on these taboo topics was almost nonexistent. Mental health care in the US experienced an expansion following World War II as soldiers returning from war with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) created an urgent need for psychological care. From this point on, the federal government took an active role in mental health care policy that encouraged a shift in the population of Americans with serious mental illness (SMI) out of mental institutions and into the community.¹ When the AIDS epidemic began in the United States in the early 1980s, little knowledge on the behavior of people with SMI existed and the information available relied on untrue stereotypes.² As the epidemic spread and research evolved, focus in the fight against AIDS shifted towards risk-factors associated with contracted HIV, namely sexual behavior and

Photo: This pamphlet by Surgeon General Everett Koop was the first acknowledgement by the federal government that HIV transmission was exacerbated by certain risk factors regardless of sexuality.
Courtesy of C. Everett Koop, "Understanding AIDS" (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1988).

substance abuse. Government and health care institutions failed to recognize HIV risk behaviors in people with SMI because of negative stereotypes about both mental illness and AIDS. As a result, HIV spread uncontrolled within this population during the 1980s and early 1990s. Through the 1990s, improving research expanded the understanding of HIV/AIDS and SMI, but education and prevention methods were limited by a focus on at-risk individuals rather than the entire population of people with SMI.

Mental Health Care in America Before the AIDS Epidemic

A growing knowledge and interest in mental health care among medical professionals in the 20th century led to the establishment of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in 1946. This government organization aimed to provide research, training, and assistance to states for treatment of the mentally ill.³ The development of the NIMH represented an overall shift in responsibility for mental health care from a personal, communal, and state level to a federal level. Prior to World War II, responsibility for people with SMI fell completely on the centralized system of mental health institutions (mental asylums and hospitals) where the majority of Americans with mental illness were readily committed.⁴ Scientific advancements in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s in neuroscience and pharmacology led to the creation of psychotropic drugs such as antipsychotics, antidepressants, and anti-anxiety medications that could be used to treat mental illnesses. As these drugs improved and understanding of the brain advanced, optimism grew among the psychiatric community that people with SMI could live outside of mental hospitals. The NIMH moved away from institutions and turned its attention to community mental health centers (CMHCs) to “demonopolize the state role in mental health services” and the costs associated with long-term institutional care.⁵

The “deinstitutionalization” movement was defined by the mass removal of individuals with SMI from institutions and an increase in federally sponsored community health care. The Community Mental Health Centers Act of 1963 funded the creation of CMHCs nationwide, outpatient mental health centers that provided a

range of therapies and treatments. CMHCs helped to increase early identification and prevention of SMI, as well as to create a more integrative and continuous federal model of mental health care for patients removed from inpatient care by providing a source of consistent outpatient care in the community. Another important step towards deinstitutionalization was the addition of the Social Security Amendments of 1965, including Medicaid and Social Security Disability Insurance. These programs increased vital resources available to the mentally ill, a population that often struggled to hold a job, afford health insurance, or even maintain stable housing in the community. The government encouraged releasing patients from institutions with the hope that disability payments, Medicaid coverage, CMHC care, and medications would allow them to live in the community successfully.⁶ By the late 1970s, fifty percent of the NIMH budget supported CMHCs as outpatient services expanded rapidly to address social concerns centering around mental illness in the general population.⁷ Nevertheless, contrary to the purpose of CMHCs to serve those with SMI, most services went to treating short-term disorders common in the general population. Consequently, some of the most severely mentally ill individuals who had been deinstitutionalized and depended on CMHC outpatient care had less access to treatment than ever before.⁸

President Reagan's efforts to decrease federal welfare programs in the United States throughout his presidency had a detrimental impact on people with SMI. Massive cuts of up to twenty-five percent in federal programs pushed most of the responsibility of health care to the states, intensifying difficulties in integrating mental health services with welfare programs. Reagan quickly repealed legislation aiming to improve federal leadership in community health care and services for those with SMI. Federal support ended for the 760 existing CMHCs that provided mental health services for up to fifty percent of the nation's general population, the largest volume of services provided in all mental health care. This money instead went to a single block grant to the states.⁹ The move to primarily state services decentralized mental health care and reduced federal support in a critical time, while undoing most of three decades of

federal work in mental health care.

The budgetary limitations of CMHCs meant a great deal of mental health care fell on general hospitals and federal welfare programs. The decrease in federal funding meant hospital budgets were stretched incredibly thin as people with SMI and patients with HIV became increasingly dependent on their care as the epidemic ensued. To make matters worse, states used criteria for disability at odds with existing definitions of mental illness to review every three years those awarded disability compensation in accordance with amendments made to the Social Security Act in 1980. Although those with SMI accounted for just eleven percent of all disability recipients, they made up thirty percent of those deemed unworthy of welfare.¹⁰ The decentralization of mental health care from 1980-1988 took away important outpatient care and government benefits on which most patients with chronic SMI depended for support and healthcare, leading to a decrease in stability and health in this population. Ultimately, these changes contributed to the disproportionate prevalence of HIV among those with SMI.

Effects of Deinstitutionalization on the Spread of HIV

Beginning in the 1960s, deinstitutionalization had huge repercussions for those with SMI by allowing them to reside in the community and altering methods of institutional care. The mental health consumer movement that emerged in the 1960s was composed of previously institutionalized individuals who advocated for the rights of people with SMI and focused their efforts on increasing noninstitutionalized care.¹¹ Concerns over the rights of individuals with SMI among activists as well as members of the legal system emerged during the civil rights movement. In 1975 the "least restrictive" treatment requirement was implemented by law. This included limitation of treatment duration, stricter guidelines for what constituted institutionalization, and a patient's right to litigate institutionalization; in effect, reducing the number of individuals with SMI institutionalized and decreasing their time spent in inpatient care.¹² From 1966 to 1980, mental institutions released six percent of their patients each year; in fact, the number of pa-

tients released each year surpassed the number of admitted patients by 1970. Hospitals commonly admitted patients for short-term inpatient care followed by long-term outpatient care in community health centers.¹³ Some positive results followed; studies found that two-thirds of patients released “could be maintained in the community if sufficient transitional facilities and adequate aftercare was provided” and that patients preferred and were empowered by their independence.¹⁴ Moreover, a lower population of patients in hospitals allowed for more resources and staff per patient, transforming hospitals from “custodial institutions to active treatment centers.”¹⁵ However, the reality was that the fragmented systems of support for vulnerable individuals with SMI diffused responsibility and left many patients without the care they needed.

THE SOCIAL ISOLATION... FORCED MANY TO EXCHANGE
SEXUAL FAVORS FOR FOOD AND SHELTER.

The first generation of young adults with SMI to grow up in the community rather than institutions saw the most adverse effects. The decrease in hospital care deprived many people with SMI of the consistent housing, medical care, and social interaction once provided by institutions.¹⁶ Mirroring the actions of their peers led to deficits in functional skills and increased aggression and volatility, thus worsening their affective symptoms. Twenty nine percent of persons with SMI had a diagnosed substance abuse disorder (usually a combination of drugs and alcohol)¹⁷ and about twenty five percent of homeless adults had SMI; these often occurred in concert,¹⁸ exacerbating existing mental illness. The social isolation resulting from mental disorders, combined with insufficient government resources available for individuals with SMI, removed necessary support systems, which forced many to exchange sexual favors for food and shelter. As a result, those who were put back into institutions harbored a mistrust of government establishments that led them to resist treatment or assistance.¹⁹ Not only did these behaviors erode mental health, but they also presented major risk factors in the emerging HIV/AIDS epidemic.²⁰ Deinstitutionalization relied on the government’s false assumption that the federal

and state level mental health care and social services were integrated and successful; this belief created increased opportunities for vulnerable individuals with SMI to engage in unsafe and potentially life-threatening behaviors previously impossible in an institutional setting. However, health care professionals considered this population of Americans with SMI living in the community unlikely to contract HIV because they lacked information on their behavior outside of institutions. The absence of people with SMI in the community before deinstitutionalization contributed to the knowledge deficit because without a major presence in the public, they did not present any major concerns that required public attention.

Misconceptions About Sexual and Drug-Use Behavior Among Individuals with SMI

Research regarding the behavior of individuals with SMI was very limited before the 1980s due to their limited visibility in the public prior to deinstitutionalization and stigmas attached to mental illness. The term “Neglect and Psychiatrization” described the response of mental health professionals to sexuality among patients—sexuality was not viewed as important for SMI patients, so doctors often ignored it. Psychiatrists often viewed sexuality among persons with SMI as a treatable symptom of their mental disturbance because of a presumed incapability to have meaningful sexual relationships.²¹ Individuals with SMI were commonly believed to be either asexual or to exhibit hypersexual, perverted sexual behaviors. Prohibition of sexual activity between patients in most institutions contributed to the perceived asexuality of patients. As a result, the study of their sexual behavior was extremely limited; in fact, only four clinical studies were conducted between 1966-1980, and the results tended to agree with stereotypes. A study conducted in 1977 found that only 3.1 percent of patients in a psychiatric hospital were sexually active over a two-year period while no data was available on sexuality outside of inpatient settings.²² The study of sexuality and mental illness mostly focused on how sexual activity could be a symptom of SMI. One 1972 study found that most psychiatrists believed sex was a contributing factor to psychosis and

stunted patients' recovery; they recommended abstinence.²³ Psychiatrists made little attempt to understand sexual activity in people with SMI as legitimate sexual expression.²⁴ A substantial deficit in the understanding of sexual behaviors in the mental health community resulted in a scarcity of sex education as well. This misconception of sexuality among those with SMI as well as the ignorance of many psychiatrists contributed to the almost total absence of sex education for patients. One health educator in 1980 stated that sexual education in mental hospitals was so limited because

few state-funding institutions feel they can risk the adverse publicity that would result from an acknowledgement of their patients' sexual expression. The denial [had] continued for so long that the public [was] shocked by the need for sex education. If people [were] competent enough to deal with sexual expression, the thinking goes, why [did] they need state support for their care?²⁵

Sexual education for those with SMI seemed completely unnecessary and even put institutions at risk for intense scrutiny. The issue of patient sexuality confused mental health professionals and the unclear or nonexistent policies on sexuality in many institutions reflected this confusion.²⁶ The lack of safe sexual education due to the limited understanding of sexual risk behaviors among those with SMI meant deinstitutionalized patients had little or no knowledge on safe sexual practices at the start of the AIDS epidemic.

Stereotypes prevailed regarding substance abuse among those with SMI, contributing to a lack of knowledge in the mental health field and among the public regarding the comorbidity of these behaviors. The notion was that people with SMI, especially those with schizophrenia, were too disorganized or socially withdrawn to obtain and use IV drugs.²⁷ In its efforts to address social concerns regarding substance abuse, the government established the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Association, which focused most of its research in the 1970s on the use of CMHCs to combat the

social ills, including mental illness, caused by drugs and alcohol. As substance abuse disorders came to be seen increasingly as mental illnesses, research on mental illness and substance abuse focused on the mental health consequences of drug and alcohol use. The one-sided cause and effect relationship in question was not indicative of the comorbid relationship between SMI and substance abuse discovered in the next decade. The lack of information on sexual and drug-related behaviors of people with SMI both enabled the spread of HIV and hindered necessary HIV prevention methods among this population.

The Emergence of HIV/AIDS as a Gay Epidemic in the 1980s

The predominant effect of AIDS on gay men in urban areas created the image of AIDS as an exclusively gay disease in the US. From the first documented case of AIDS, initially called “Gay-Related Immune Deficiency” in five gay men in Los Angeles in 1981, the disease spread with a fury.²⁸ Despite the growing prevalence of HIV among heterosexuals, IV drug users, and women, the stigmatization of AIDS had wide effects on research and prevention in the US, as well as long-term consequences for the general population assumed not to be at risk. The slow response to the AIDS epidemic from the government and scientific community that contributed to the spread of HIV was magnified in minority populations such as the mentally ill.²⁹

The depiction of AIDS in the government, scientific community, and media continued to promote the idea of AIDS as a gay disease despite its spread outside this population. The Reagan administration argued AIDS was a consequence of promiscuous sexual behavior exhibited by gay men, effectively shifting the blame and focus of the epidemic onto the gay community. The federal government aimed to preserve a limited welfare state and protect conservative family values threatened by homosexuality, rather than act to combat the AIDS epidemic.³⁰ Congress passed the first bill to fund AIDS research in 1983. The limited twelve-million-dollar funding was indicative of the lack of response on the government’s behalf; Reagan did not mention AIDS in public until 1986.³¹ Research on

AIDS also encouraged the focus on homosexuality by discussing AIDS in terms of high-risk groups likely to contract and spread HIV, delineating all gay men as one such risk group. The media reinforced the link between AIDS and gay men by referring to AIDS as a gay plague while failing to report on early cases amongst non-gay men.³² Whatever limited funding, research, and attention was paid to AIDS in its early years focused on gay men and mostly disregarded the incidence of AIDS in any other population.

The notion of AIDS as a gay disease led government and medical organizations to ignore the risk HIV posed to those with SMI. In 1983, the CDC report discussing AIDS risk factors stated that “most cases have been reported among homosexual men with multiple sexual partners, abusers of intravenous (IV) drugs, and Haitians... However, each group contains many persons who probably have little risk of acquiring AIDS.” Not only does this language emphasize gay men in the context of the epidemic, but downplays other risk factors by asserting that AIDS does not pose a threat to the majority of individuals using IV drugs. It gives no mention to those diagnosed with HIV and only “[suggests] the possibility of heterosexual transmission.”³³ The CDC drastically understated the risk of transmission through the two major transmission routes in the SMI population, mirroring the trend of early AIDS research and knowledge to focus only on gay men.

The first recorded case of AIDS in a patient with SMI in a New York City psychiatric hospital was not a gay man, but a heterosexual woman in 1983. One doctor in the hospital at the time stated that this case forced the hospital staff to “[overcome] our denial and [acknowledge] that we needed to learn how to treat patients with AIDS.” The denial of mental health professionals that a psychiatric patient would contract HIV speaks to the misconceptions about behaviors of the mentally ill. The doctor noted that although the presence of an AIDS patient seemed inevitable in New York City, the hospital did little to prepare for it.³⁴ Combining the lack of knowledge on sex and drug-use behaviors in people with SMI with the focus on gay men in the epidemic, it comes as no surprise that many mental health professionals were not prepared to face AIDS.

Considering the high rate of infection among gay men and inaction of the government and other institutions, the gay community was forced to identify itself with AIDS in order to combat it. The gay community became a powerful entity in the fight against AIDS since the government institutions that would have normally taken control of epidemics failed to do so.³⁵ The mental health consumer movement, on the other hand, kept its focus on fighting for the rights of people with SMI to control their treatment both in and out of institutions.³⁶ Since HIV in the SMI population had yet to be publicized or researched, it was not yet an important issue for mental health activists to address. Bearing in mind the relative unimportance of AIDS to the consumer movement, and that people with SMI only recently entered the public arena, government and research institutions were not forced to address the threat AIDS posed to the mentally ill. Thus, gay activists maintained a dominant voice in the push to address the AIDS epidemic throughout the 1980s, which further promoted the idea of AIDS as a gay illness while people with SMI remained unrepresented.

The government finally addressed the need for AIDS to be dealt with as an issue of public health in 1985 but did not establish the Presidential Commission on HIV to do so until 1987.³⁷ By this point, AIDS had spread to thousands of Americans, leading to an increase in awareness in both the public and government as to the risk of HIV in people other than gay men. In a document entitled "Understanding AIDS" distributed to every household in America in 1988, Surgeon General Everett Koop broke the trend of the government in treating AIDS as a gay phenomenon. Koop wrote "who you are has nothing to do with whether you are in danger of being infected with the AIDS virus. What matters is what you do," which helped to destigmatize AIDS as a gay disease.³⁸ With these words, Koop firmly stated that certain "risky behaviors," not identity, increased a person's likelihood of contracting AIDS. These behaviors included sharing drug needles, anal sex, sex with anyone engaging in the previous behaviors, sex with prostitutes, and unprotected sex with an infected person. He acknowledged the growing incidence of HIV among heterosexuals and called for the use of condoms by

all sexually active, non-monogamous individuals. Koop's innovative, open discussion of sexuality aimed to change behavior to stop the epidemic; most importantly, he opened HIV risk to include anyone exhibiting those behaviors rather than only gay men.

Research on Americans with SMI in the 1980s

Even as research into both SMI and AIDS dramatically increased by the end of the 1980s, HIV risk factors among those with SMI still went unacknowledged. Following the 1970s focus on social research, the Reagan administration directed the NIMH to stop supporting research on societal issues and to focus instead on the understanding, treatment, and prevention of mental disorders on a neurological level.³⁹ As risk factors associated with HIV/AIDS became more widely recognized, the focus of AIDS research shifted from gay men to individuals engaging in behaviors likely to spread HIV. Nonetheless, the government and researchers continued to ignore the gravity of HIV risk factors in the mentally ill and their implications in the spread of the disease among the SMI population. The delayed response by government and medical institutions to HIV in minority populations such as those with mental illness was predictable considering the limited response to the beginning of the AIDS epidemic as a whole.

The most significant research on mental health of early 1980s was the five-site Epidemiologic Catchment Area Study (ECAS) conducted from 1980-1985 on the prevalence of mental disorders outside of mental institutions and service utilization of those with mental illness. This study became a benchmark in the history of mental illness policy, serving as the basis of knowledge for many future government decisions and research studies in mental health. Most importantly, the ECAS produced some of the first substantial information available on people with SMI living in the community rather than institutions, the growing deinstitutionalized population about which little was known. The astonishing results of the research revealed almost twenty percent of adults in the US suffered from a diagnosable mental disorder in any six-month time period. The study also found that 4.6 million Americans had a SMI,

an alarming number of citizens that received little attention in the AIDS epidemic.⁴⁰

The ECAS provided groundbreaking information on the prevalence of alcohol and drug abuse in the population of Americans with SMI. Individuals diagnosed with one SMI were discovered to be significantly more likely than the general population to suffer from one or more other disorders, most commonly substance abuse disorder. Additionally, the study noted fifty three percent of people with a drug disorder also had a mental disorder, and thirty seven percent of people with an alcohol disorder had a co-occurring mental disorder.⁴¹ At no point in the research, however, was this comorbidity linked to likelihood of HIV contraction. Although IV-drug use had been acknowledged as a significant factor in the spread of HIV before the release of the ECAS data in 1985, neither the government nor mental health professionals researched the co-occurrence of HIV and mental illness. Consequently, preventative HIV education on the dangers of substance abuse for those with SMI did not exist. The absence of response to such significant data was characteristic of the response to the AIDS epidemic, but intensified in the population of Americans with SMI due to the concentration on gay men rather than risk groups like IV drug users. The failure of government and research organizations to recognize the danger AIDS posed to people with SMI enabled its spread within the population.

The same report by the NIMH contained almost no research on the sexual behaviors of individuals with SMI; in fact, only two findings in the entire five-year report discussed topics related to sexuality. One aspect of the study focused on the affective symptoms that accompanied the onset of major depression and found a diminished sex drive to be one such symptom in both men and women.⁴² However accurate, this research supports the stereotype that people with SMI had less sex than the general population due to sexual dysfunction caused by their mental disorder. Another finding showed a higher prevalence of sexual assault among women with some psychiatric disorders. Though the results indicated that "sexual assault is a risk factor for specific types of psychiatric mor-

bidity,” they were inconclusive and focused primarily on the psychiatric effects of sexual assault.⁴³ This data, although unconvincing, represented a trend in psychiatry to view those with SMI as vulnerable to sexual assault. Though this view held some truth, it encouraged the belief that those with SMI could not have healthy sexual relationships. These findings on sexuality cannot be deemed false simply because they support stereotypes. However, they contribute to a body of knowledge that promotes stigmas surrounding SMI while contributing nothing to the deficit of knowledge on the sexual behaviors of the mentally ill that put them at risk for HIV. Since the ECAS had such a lasting influence on government and research institutions in mental health care, the blatant lack of information on sexual behavior of individuals with SMI meant the continuing indifference to its study.

Since sexual contact was and is the main route of transmission for HIV in the US, the understanding of sexual behaviors among the general population was crucial to the fight against AIDS.⁴⁴ The few studies that did report on sexual practices among people with SMI varied widely, impeding the understanding of sexuality and mental illness. Later figures contrast earlier studies on people with SMI that found low sexual activity in inpatient settings, though such low rates of sexual activity could largely be attributed to prohibition of sex among patients and the tendency of staff to ignore sexual activity. Although the research did not specify the use of substances, number of partners, or exchange of sex for goods, it did find only a twenty-three percent rate of contraception use.⁴⁵ These figures are alarming when observed in the context of an AIDS epidemic; however, the inconsistent nature of the small amount of data on the sexuality of people with SMI fostered a lack of concern for this population in the fight against AIDS.

The Turning Point in AIDS and SMI Research in the 1990s

The 1990s marked a significant change in the identification and treatment of HIV in the SMI population. At the start of the epidemic, some mental health professionals debated the costs and benefits of universal HIV testing for psychiatric patients. The same doctor

that treated the first AIDS patient in a New York City psychiatric hospital noted the “strong sentiment against routine testing [was] influenced by the limited therapeutic benefits of test results for patients, as well as by the test’s potentially harmful effects, including adverse psychological reactions, stigma, and discrimination in the community.” Anticipating these consequences, doctors only tested patients with symptoms of HIV, a history of risk-behavior, or those directly exposed to the infection, leaving the prevalence of HIV in the SMI population unknown.⁴⁶ One researcher argued that the “cost-benefit equation” in identifying AIDS only changed in 1987 with the Federal Drug Administration’s approval of azidothymidine (AZT), a life-changing antiviral medication that extended the lives of HIV patients. AZT gave health professionals incentive to detect HIV and the risk behaviors associated with it.⁴⁷ The development of a treatment for HIV may have been one of many factors that contributed to the turning point in the study of HIV among individuals with SMI, or vice versa. But a more likely factor was the gradual shift in the fight against AIDS from recognizing, treating, and preventing HIV in specific risk groups to the entire population.

This slow but significant shift in the understanding of AIDS occurred in medical communities and government institutions nationwide. Dr. Chris Ovide, a clinical psychologist who worked in mental health care throughout the AIDS epidemic, acknowledged that the mental health community indeed changed their practices as a result of evolving stigmas associated with AIDS:

It started out developing and improving because of the awareness. I think it wasn’t just the mental health community but our community at large that had a bias towards HIV/AIDS patients to begin with. I think in most respects mental health practitioners are much more liberal in their thinking and much less judgmental so it was not like there was any animosity or lack of concern but it took us a while as a culture, a community to realize this wasn’t confined to homosexual men but in a much wider net.⁴⁸

The diminishing stigma of AIDS as a gay disease not only enabled more universal AIDS research, but also created a new focus on the epidemic's relationship with mental health.

Dramatic growth in both AIDS and mental health research and funding by the federal government in the 1990s caused an increase in understanding of the comorbidity between AIDS and SMI. Organizations such as UNAIDS began to approach AIDS with the mindset of a government lobbyist, using media and political clout to influence government funding. Activists found that the only effective method of spurring government action was to “beat up the facts”—taking real figures and presenting them to show a threat to the general population. The US government was successfully persuaded to increase federal spending on AIDS from \$300 million in 1996 to over one billion dollars in 1999, and funding continued to grow throughout the early 2000s.⁴⁹ President George H. W. Bush's novel efforts in the early 1990s to increase behavioral studies in mental health research strengthened the NIMH's investigation into behaviors of individuals with SMI, a previously neglected topic of research.⁵⁰ Moreover, advocacy groups became increasingly vocal in destigmatizing mental illness and forging closer ties with the medical community to “mainstream” mental illness research. The mounting attention given to both AIDS and mental illness in this decade produced an immense amount of knowledge that unequivocally proved the increased risk of HIV contraction in Americans with SMI.

BLOOD TESTING REVEALED AN OVERALL SEROPREVALENCE
OF HIV OF 7.8% AMONG INDIVIDUALS WITH SMI,
COMPARED TO 0.4% IN THE GENERAL POPULATION.

The NIMH funded the first studies of HIV infection among psychiatric patients in 1989; in the following decade, the understanding of the co-occurrence of HIV and mental illness increased dramatically thanks to developing knowledge on the behaviors of people with SMI. The results of the study were so profound that the NIMH projected that 29 percent of Americans with SMI would

develop AIDS.⁵¹ These substantial findings spurred government and research institutions into action. The first eleven studies conducted from 1991-1996 on the occurrence of HIV in people with SMI focused on both psychiatric inpatients and outpatients. Blood testing revealed an overall seroprevalence of HIV of 7.8% among individuals with SMI, compared to 0.4% in the general population at the time. These data suggested similar demographic patterns to that of the general population: higher incidence among black and Latino patients than white and a huge increase in seroprevalence when “risk behaviors” were identified. Particular to SMI, however, was the similar prevalence among men and women but marked increase in HIV with a dual diagnosis of SMI and substance abuse disorders. Interestingly, the lowest rate of infection was found among long-stay psychiatric patients, which may speak to the failures of deinstitutionalization in adequately serving patients outside of institutions.

The overall indifference to and misunderstanding of behaviors of the SMI population ended in the 1990s as the newfound correlation between SMI and HIV forced the study of the uncomfortable topics of sexuality and substance abuse in the mental health community. At this point, it remained unclear whether the increased incidence of HIV among people with SMI was a result of their mental illness per se, or the increased risk factors associated with mental illness. To address this, researchers devoted their efforts to studying HIV risk behaviors in the population with SMI. In fact, a 1999 book entitled *Sexuality and Serious Mental Illness* was one of many that described in-depth the behaviors of those with mental illness. It notes that “the scarcity of prevalence data about the sexual and drug-using behaviors of adults with serious mental illness slowed the design of usable AIDS prevention interventions for psychiatric patients, allowing the virus to spread without impediment well into the 1990s.”⁵² As more data on sexual and drug-related behaviors of those with SMI came to light, the HIV epidemic in this population was attributed more to risky behaviors commonly associated with SMI than mental illness itself. The significance of risk behaviors in the incidence of HIV among this population shows how the long-

term effects of deinstitutionalization played into the AIDS epidemic.

The study of both psychiatric inpatients and outpatients disproved historical stereotypes of mental illness that had previously been empowered by the lack of information to disprove them.⁵³ The reported sexual activity of patients turned out to be far higher than early research had shown: results ranged from fifty-four to seventy-four percent sexual activity, comparable to if not higher than the sexual activity reported in the general population. Not only was sexual activity prevalent within this population, but research discovered people with SMI frequently engaged in sexual risk behaviors associated with HIV. By 1996, 28 studies had been published on the HIV risk factors among those with SMI. The data overwhelmingly found a higher rate of multiple sex partners in people with SMI, although less than one third used condoms. Moreover, a significant percentage of sexually active individuals with SMI traded sex for resources or had sex with IV drug users. Finally, a higher percentage of men with SMI had sex with men than the general population, although some have partially attributed this to gender separated psychiatric units. Knowledge on drug injection and needle sharing, a serious risk factor in the spread of HIV, indicated that IV drug use was also far more common among those with SMI, as well as needle-sharing.⁵⁴ The research in HIV risk behaviors conducted in the 1990s filled in the gaping holes on behavioral research in mental illness, while creating an immediate need to address the risk of HIV infection in this population.

While many factors contribute to the disproportionate prevalence of HIV among people with SMI, mental health professionals concluded that psychiatric symptoms, particularly a lack of interpersonal skills, had a clear role in the increased risk behaviors. Deficient social skills necessary for safe sex practices, such as assertiveness, raised concerns that people with SMI were taken advantage of sexually. Deficits in communication and personal skills meant they may have been less likely to insist upon condom usage or able to clearly express their desires. The limited social support systems available to many with mental illness deprived them of

positive influences on sexual behavior. Consequently, any assertiveness in sexual settings that could jeopardize financial or social support could have serious economic repercussions.⁵⁵ The high rate of drug and alcohol abuse in people with SMI was linked to poor judgement as a result of their mental health. Psychiatrists thought that cognitive impairment that can accompany mental illness may limit patients' ability to retain knowledge of HIV prevention and thus damage impulse control and decision making.⁵⁶ As stated earlier, such psychiatric symptoms were often amplified by the consequences of deinstitutionalization: lacking support systems, inconsistent care, and instability.

Education and Prevention Methods

Once the rate of infection, risk behaviors, and contributing psychiatric factors were understood, it became the duty of mental health professionals to combat the AIDS epidemic among the mentally ill by first acknowledging their behaviors. Dr. Chis Ovide stated that along with the increasing awareness "and the increasing numbers [of AIDS cases], treatments improved medically and mental health became seen as more important or very important as the treatment of HIV/AIDS patients."⁵⁷ Numerous health care manuals published in the late 1990s reiterate the same strategies for addressing AIDS in both inpatients and outpatients in community mental health centers. One such handbook for mental health professionals, *AIDS and People with Severe Mental Illness*, calls mental health care providers the "gatekeepers to HIV testing, treatment and prevention opportunities for [people] with severe psychiatric disorders." The common practice was to obtain a risk history with an HIV risk assessment, a series of specific questions about a patient's current and past behavior (IV drug use, unprotected sex, frequency and types of partners, use of contraception). Admittedly, the manual stated that these topics were rarely discussed in mental health care because of their "sensitive nature," so mental health professionals were usually not trained to ask their patients about these topics. Mental health care providers recommended doctors begin routinely requiring an HIV risk assessment as a part of a patient's medical

history.⁵⁸ Psychiatrists endorsed HIV testing if the patient engaged in risk behaviors, asked for a test, or exhibited symptoms of the disease.⁵⁹ The novel discussion of sex and drug use in mental health settings was vital to addressing the threat AIDS posed to patients and providing treatment. Treating patients with HIV was of the utmost importance as it could help reduce its spread, but the education and prevention practices necessary to reduce transmission were insufficient.

Even in 1986 the CDC deemed “information and education the only weapons against AIDS,” yet still in the 1990s no concrete education system existed for people with SMI.⁶⁰ A few education programs were created for psychiatric patients but they were never formally evaluated or implemented. Health care manuals like *AIDS* and *People with Severe Mental Illness* describe commonly used AIDS programs known as “cognitive-behavioral approach to risk reduction, based on the premise that behavior change can be facilitated by convincing people that they are able to change their behavior then motivating them to do so.” These education models proved successful on risk groups like gay men and adolescents in developing behavioral skills necessary for HIV risk reduction through behavioral change.⁶¹ This approach to prevention was tested and found to be remarkably successful in people with SMI, so psychiatrists emphasized the need to translate such models to better fit individuals with mental illness. Yet the widespread application of such tactics was not evident by the end of the 1990s. “Risk reduction” approaches implied that a patient needed to be at risk for HIV in order to have the motivation to learn and change their behaviors. Medical professionals did not consider people with SMI to be a risk group, so education predominantly went to those that admitted to involvement in risk behaviors in a risk assessment.

Though manuals and mental health professionals called for the “development, implementation, and evaluation of HIV prevention interventions for people with SMI, as well as the integration of HIV prevention programs into mental health systems,” it is unclear what action was taken to do so.⁶² Despite the recognition that HIV affected the SMI population disproportionately and the understanding of

their risk behaviors, mental health care failed to mobilize necessary changes. For one, institutional policies on sexuality of psychiatric patients were still very limited and often contradictory. One psychiatric patient noted that “they tell you there is no sex allowed in the hospital. Then they pass out condoms and tell you to be sure to use them for safe sex.” With no clear policy on sexual activity, patients frequently had no guidelines for acceptable sexual practices.⁶³ Dr. Chris Ovide, who worked for over a decade as the clinical treatment director of a psychiatric unit, expressed that patient HIV education was by no means a universal policy at the institution in which he worked. AIDS education was staff dependent: doctors or nurses would provide education to patients as they saw fit, but only after evaluating a patient’s behavior and understanding of AIDS. So education also depended on the patient, as doctors “would establish what the [patient’s] level of learning was and then [the doctor] would provide individual care for each person.” With no general education or prevention module, patients released from inpatient care may or may not have learned any prevention methods or gained any understanding of the risk behaviors associated with HIV.⁶⁴

The increased likelihood of HIV transmission in people with SMI could have been augmented by the deficiency in prevention education provided by the mental health care system. The general population by the late 1990s had a high level of knowledge on HIV transmission and prevention that the SMI population lacked, preventing this group from adequately protecting themselves against HIV. For instance, up to half of the psychiatric patients questioned in a 1997 study believed that HIV could be transmitted by using public restrooms, while one third believed condoms could be reused. Limited or inaccurate knowledge of HIV/AIDS contributed to a low perception or fear of personal risk of contracting HIV, which, in turn, caused poor motivation to alter sexual behaviors to reduce risk of infection. Since risk reduction models assumed education to only be pertinent to individuals with HIV risk factors, many psychiatric patients did not learn important prevention strategies. Though knowledge alone could not have reduced HIV risk

behaviors, it was crucial to any behavioral change. Only the combination of psychiatric symptoms that increase HIV risk behaviors in concert with limited education of such risk factors could explain the high incidence of AIDS among the SMI population.

Conclusion

The epidemiological progression of AIDS understanding and research played a significant role in the occurrence of the disease in the seriously mentally ill. At the birth of the epidemic, research determined AIDS posed a significant threat primarily to one risk group—gay men. Government and health institutions responsible for curbing the spread of AIDS failed to see those with SMI as one such risk group because of the focus on AIDS as a gay epidemic and the scarcity of information on the behavior of the mentally ill. As the epidemic's focal point shifted from gay men to risky behaviors that increased the likelihood of HIV transmission, AIDS in Americans with SMI still went unnoticed and unstudied in the epidemic despite their growing presence in the community following deinstitutionalization. It was not until the 1990s that the co-occurrence of HIV and mental illness came to light as the risk of AIDS became more widely recognized outside of the gay community. Research on risk behaviors was crucial to combatting the disease, but little accurate information existed on habits of the SMI population. The AIDS epidemic forced the study of sex and drug use behavior in the mentally ill for the first time. Contrary to stereotypes of those with SMI, this population engaged in risk behaviors on a much greater scale than the general population. Mental health professionals saw an opportunity to attenuate the spread of HIV in people with SMI in and out of institutions by identifying risk behaviors and then taking further action. By discussing the increased prevalence of HIV among the mentally ill in terms of the HIV risk behaviors that patients displayed rather than discussing SMI itself as a risk factor for HIV, preventative education for those with SMI was principally given to those engaging in specific risk behaviors. Subsequently, the larger population of people with SMI was denied the education that could prevent them from engaging in risk behaviors related to

AIDS.

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FEEDING ON EMPIRES

Piracy in the South China Sea at the Turn of the 19th Century

Lezhi Wang is a junior studying History and Dutch at UW-Madison. He comes from Tianjin, a North Chinese city famous for its comedians. When history gets too depressing, Lezhi listens to old comedy records. He is currently working on his thesis about the trafficking of girls in the Dutch East Indies. This paper was written for Professor Alfred McCoy's History 600 class, *Empire & Revolution: U.S. and European Empires in Southeast Asia*.

Four score years after the official eradication of the notorious buccaneers in the West Indies, pirates began to roam in the East Indies with even larger scale and vehemence.¹ Hundreds of thousands of people in the vicinity of the South China Sea surged to participate in ship-raiding and coastal marauding at the turn of the 19th century. From the estuary of the Pearl River to the western coast of Dutch Kalimantan, a collective fear of the “pirates” thence erupted.

In this simultaneous yet uncoordinated insurgence, the Il-lanuns of the Sulu archipelago, the Chinese of the Fujian and Cantonese coasts, and the Iban Dayak of Sarawak were the three notable participants. The Sulu and Chinese pirates respectively unleashed themselves in the 1770s and 1790s, while the Ibans became a problem only after 1800.² Chaos ensued in the inter-Asia trading system, which provoked Western European powers, still recovering from the Napoleonic Wars, to pour in their imperial energies. Un-

der the combined efforts of Western and indigenous forces, the last organized pirate fleet off the Cantonese shore surrendered to the Qing regime in 1810, restoring the factor trade of Canton.³ Pacification of the Illanuns and the Ibans took place more gradually, until the Spanish Manila and the Brooke family (also known as the “White Rajas”) declared their subjugation in 1851 and 1845.⁴

The peoples discussed in this essay were by no means similar: they spoke different languages, used different vessels, and were dominated by different powers. There are, however, parallels behind their scattered locations and different socio-political circumstances. When analyzing the complexities of each piracy eruption from both economic and geopolitical perspectives, their collective rise and decline can be traced to two simultaneous and congruent trends in the Southeast Asian Theatre in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The first trend, the transition of Western powers in the region from informal empires to early formal empires, was marked by the pirates’ sharp turn from favoring settlement and trading to full-fledged conquest and domination. The second trend, the relapse of indigenous hegemons from their original political stage, involved the disintegration of the traditional powers such as the Qing Empire, the Bruneian Empire, and the Spanish Philippines. Together, these power shifts created economic opportunities that propelled piracy and a policing vacuum that enabled piracies to survive. In the end, the pirates met their eventual demise when overwhelmed by the advancing Western empires.

All three groups of pirates discussed in this essay had different, confusing ethnonyms. The Ibans, a group of Austronesian people concentrated on the Sarawak riverbanks in Malaysia, were also called “Sea Dayaks.”⁵ They practiced slash-and-burn agriculture and were known for their headhunting tradition.⁶ Meanwhile, the prahu-faring, slave-mongering peoples of the Sulu Archipelago, called Illanuns by Europeans and Malaysians, often included not just the ethnic Illanuns, but also the neighboring Taosugs of Jolo, Visayans, Samals, and Maguindanaons.⁷ The Spaniards collectively referred to them as Moros because of their Islamic religion.⁸ Finally, the parties ravaging China’s southern coast contained elements of Han

Cantonese (Punti), Tanka, and Hakka origins. In the eyes of the settled peoples who were often victims of piracy, pirates' identities were defined by their nomadic, predatory behaviors rather than the complicated ethnic differences within them.⁹ Thus, in conformity with the major literature I rely on, the names "Iban," "Illanun," and "Southern Chinese" are used in this essay for the sake of clarity.

From Consumer to Enslaver: Economic Factors Behind Piracy

The vigorous expansion of commerce in 18th and early 19th century Southeast Asia provided an unprecedented abundance of profitable trade for the traditionally impoverished sea peoples. Earlier Portuguese and Dutch attempts to penetrate the archipelago economically brought back revenues, but they made negligible difference to the indigenous populaces when compared to the 18th century intra-Asian trade.¹⁰ Covering and connecting a multitude of emporia from Madagascar to Nagasaki, this extensive trading web needed both indigenous and European traders to function. The South China Sea and the peoples and polities dwelling on its rim played crucial parts in its operation as producers, transporters, consumers, or, in the following cases, predators.

To understand the motivation behind the massed banditry around the South China Sea at the end of 18th century, one has to acknowledge the economic indigence that riddled the region on the eve of its economic takeoff. The social-historian Eric Hobsbawm states that bandits typically "require[d] very little other than what the local peasantry or herdsman consume[d]."¹¹ In reality, the living conditions of aforesaid sea-dwellers hardly even reached that of the local peasantry. Fishing was the near-universal industry of the Cantonese coast and the Sulu islands, while the Sarawak Ibans subsisted on slash-and-burn agriculture.¹² Branded "poorest of the poor," Chinese coastal fishermen sometimes resorted to a tradition of part-time piracy when subsistence through fishing was not possible.¹³ The limited slave-raids ordered by the Sulu aristocrats (termed *datus*) in most of the 18th century catered southward to Makassarese and Bugis fishing fleets in Borneo and Sulawesi.¹⁴ Nevertheless, these criminal activities motivated by subsistence and

survival could not compare to the organized piracy later present in the South China Sea in terms of scale.

Meanwhile, wealth began accumulating along the shipping routes of the blooming trans-Asian trade. Canton, with a rich hinterland and Macau lying at its foot, boasted the unparalleled status of a commercial terminus in the forming trans-Asian trading web.¹⁵ Since 1683, the Qing Empire adopted open policies toward foreign trade.¹⁶ Further expanding Canton's privilege, an imperial decree in 1757 constrained all commercial activities with Westerners to the Canton factories.¹⁷ The Indiamen of the English East India Company (EIC) and the Dutch East India Company (VOC), alongside private traders, brought European woolen, Indian cotton, Manila silver, and Moluccan spices and sea-goods to the Thirteen Factories in exchange for tea and silk.¹⁸ In addition to the fresh European business élan, traditional tributary missions and long-distance trade with the Middle East and Southeast Asian sultanates remained active.¹⁹ From the 1760s on, Hong ("factorial") merchant oligarchs together with the government-backed Hokkien junk traders constituted a class of urban nouveau-riches.²⁰ So long as the imperial court was satisfied with the taxation surplus obtained from the positive balance in factorial trade, foreign traders in the Pearl River estuaries enjoyed *de facto* laissez-faire governance.²¹ On the waters from Macao to Canton, there was barely any presence of Qing law enforcement or military forces.

On the other hand, the coastal fishmongers and sharecroppers from southern Fujian to the Tonkin Bay unsurprisingly remained poor. The constantly growing population of the Cantonese region, reaching 5.3 million in 1820 (compared to 1.3 million in 1723), kept labor forces abundant, wages low, and food prices high. Since cultivable land in the Pearl River Delta was comparatively scarce, the populace depended on rice brought back by the junk traders from Southeast Asia.²² Fathers were often pushed to the point of selling their boys to fishermen as slave labor, and more and more peasants who had lost their land sought refuge in the outer seas.²³ By 1793, the presence of a large, mobile population on the sea, the absence of policing agencies, and the availability of rich commerce

traversing the nearby waters all prepared the coastal poor Chinese for piracy. For instance, some coastal villages located on the busier trading routes already developed the precedence of “wrecking”—destroying ships to steal their cargo—to compensate their meager legal income.²⁴ Traditionally dismissed as the margin of civilization, the sea had now become what James Scott describes as a “state space,” a zone attractive to both the state and the outlaws.²⁵

FARMERS WERE OFTEN PUSHED TO THE POINT OF SELLING
THEIR BOYS TO FISHERMEN AS SLAVE LABOR.

Roaming the seas since 1790, the pirates of the South China Sea formed a confederation in 1805 with sophisticated official codes and organizations.²⁶ At its peak in 1807, the most powerful one of its six contingents (“banners”) was able to muster more than 300 war-junks and 20,000 fighting men.²⁷ Operations included seizing shipping, looting coastal villages, abducting personnel for both shipborne labor and ransom, and extorting protection money. The rich traffic in the South China Sea provided the pirates with a diverse booty ranging from tea to birds’ nests. The coastal ships that sustained the metropolis of Canton, when captured, supplemented the pirates with more essential goods such as salt, rice, and fish.²⁸ The Bangladesh opium trade, which had just begun to take off in the late 18th century under the EIC, was so paralyzed by the piracy threat that it was discontinued in 1795.²⁹

With deep connections ashore, the pirates also established clandestine tax-offices in the hinterland and even publicly operated a black market in Chiang-ping, a crime town at the Sino-Vietnam border. The pirates were well aware of the cosmic riches absorbed into the Pearl River estuary in the previous decades of trade. As a result, they indiscriminately extorted ransom and protection money from the Chinese and foreigners.³⁰ Sailing up and down the Pearl River annually, the Confederation was able to elicit as much as 10,000 taels of silver from a single village for protection. In another case, 7,654 pieces-of-eight were paid in a single ransom for the British captive Richard Glasspole, whom the pirates abducted from

a pinnacle boat.³¹ In southern Fujian, major pirate Cai Qian asked for 800 pieces-of-eight for each ship entering port and another 400 for exits.³² At a point in the first decade of the 19th century, every ship near the Cantonese shore had to bear “passports” issued by the pirate bosses.³³

Several factors rendered the mid-Qing piracy insurgency unique in the history of China. Whereas earlier Chinese rebels relied on ideological devices (e.g. the restoration of a previous dynasty) or religious causes (e.g. the White Lotus and the Boxers), the southern Chinese piracy was founded entirely on the economic distress and opportunities. Moreover, maritime upheavals in earlier dynasties usually involved the participation of local warlords, political dissidents, and rebellious merchants.³⁴ In contrast, the Southern Chinese pirates were composed monolithically of destitute seafarers, with only a few exceptions of fishing-captains and unsuccessful merchants.³⁵ The rich became the pirates’ targets instead of their patrons.

In the southern waters, profits from the trans-Asian trade also propelled the development of maritime predation. The prime case was the Sulu piracy, which spanned from the 1770s to the mid-19th century. Whereas the Qing Empire and the Canton harbor served as a major consumer and target market in the Asian trade, the Sulu Sultanate supplied the trade with its luxury products. The need for slave manpower in the production of these goods later escalated into full-flung marauding and piracy. The Illanuns, a group serving under Sulu employment as professional enslavers, spread fear across the Southeast Asian archipelago.

The Sulu Sultanate was a confederation of different ethnicities under the nominal sovereign of the Sultan of Sulu. It was ruled in effect by the Taosug-speaking Muslim datus residing on the Jolo Island. The Taosugs, who considered their ownership of slaves the prime manifestation of status, traditionally traded slaves with the remote Macassareses and the Sulawesi Bugis fisheries.³⁶ In the 18th century, they enlisted the recently immigrated Illanuns as professional slave hunters. These Illanuns, who came from the Philippine island Mindanao, brought with them much-needed martial

strength and naval skills.³⁷ That being said, before the Sulus' systematic involvement in the Asian trade, the scale of the slave trade was always limited to the local fishing demand.

The Sulu Sultanate's participation in the trans-Asian trade system began in 1768 when the British founded a trading post in Balambangan island, a subject of Sulu. The EIC officer, John Herbert, decided that opium was the prime cargo to open up a trade with Jolo and thus institutionalize British influence. The Taosug datus became immediately addicted, and the thirst for opium (which outlasted the existence of the Balambangan settlement) continuously propelled them to seek more revenues to finance its purchase.³⁸ The datus once tried to rob cargoes of opium from British private traders but soon resolved to engage in legal trade with the EIC, Manila, China, and later Singapore.

As illustrated by Om Prakash in his book *Merchants, Companies and Trade: Europe and Asia in the Early Modern Era*, the intra-Asia trading web was often a more profitable business for European traders than the trade between Asia and the metropolises themselves.³⁹ Occupying the perfect strategic location amid the trading route between British India and China, the Sulu Sultanate was the heart of the intra-Asian trading system. Annually, the Country and Company ships would pick up the sea goods and other luxuries and sell them at much higher prices to the Chinese. In exchange, the Taosug datus received opium and British manufactures, while the Illanun raiders obtained modern weapons and equipment to bolster their armory.⁴⁰ Trading bird's nests (Tripang), sea cucumbers (Beche de mer), beeswax, and cinnamon for Chinese merchandise through the junks was a common scene in Jolo, a traditional Chinese tributary.⁴¹ However, it was the active British merchant fleets that stimulated the significant increase of such transaction between 1768 and 1848.⁴²

Different from the conventional Chinese pirates who thrived by directly preying on the nearby commerce, the blooming Sulu trade in the 18th and 19th century, called "regional redistribution" by James Warren, involved slave raiding as an essential component. The production of any of the Sulu luxuries called for intensive la-

bor. Contemporary accounts reported with astonishment the great hazards pearl divers encountered, as they “never use[d] any expedient to facilitate their continuing under water.”⁴³ Taosug datus were able to mobilize some of the more artisan-like ethnic groups to assist the production, e.g. the Orang Bajas who specialized in the obtaining of bird’s nests from dangerous caves of North Borneo.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, with the demand for such goods fast expanding, the solution had to be slave labor. “Beeswax may be procured in almost any quantity,” reported one source in 1831, “...in every part of Coti, was it taken by the Bugis assisted by their slaves.”⁴⁵ By the 1830s, around 68,000 men worked in the production of mother of pearls and bird’s nests, many as slaves.⁴⁶

The Illanuns and their Balangingi comrades had thus assumed the task of procuring the essence of Sulu society, slaves. Equipped with fast prahus, advanced artillery, and small arms, the ferocious slave raiders roamed and terrorized the vast seas of the Southeast Asian Archipelago. While the Illanuns in service to the Taosug datus did supply the latter with a continuous population of slave labor, many Illanun communities that were strong enough began to prey independently on the increasing mercantile traffics in the Malacca and the South China Sea areas.⁴⁷ Although the formal possessions of European powers, e.g. Spanish Manila, Dutch Java, and British Penang, suffered tremendously from the harassment of the Illanuns, they could not retaliate decisively because their respective metropolises still depended on the merchandises produced by Sulu slaves. This dilemma was especially explicit for the Spanish Philippines, which hesitated repeatedly over whether it should launch attacks on the Sulu heartlands.⁴⁸ Hence, when direct territorial domination started to replace economic exchange as the ultimate task of the Western powers in the region, the Illanuns and their Taosug patrons met with their downfall.

The third and last case of piracy to be discussed is again completely distinct from the previous two. Aspiring not for monetary gain but human heads instead, the Iban people of North Borneo took advantage of this period of economic activity. The Ibans’ insurgency was the latest, the most ephemeral insurgency but also the

most murderous one in this era. Prior to its forceful suppression by the James Brooke regime in Sarawak in the 1840s, the massive Iban headhunting evoked substantial fear in every coastal and riverside settlement of Northwestern Borneo.

Like the Chinese and Sulu bandits, the Ibans also had humble origins. Termed "Sea Dayaks" by the British adventurer and later Rajah of Sarawak, the Iban people migrated down the Bornean hilltops and settled along rivers and estuaries in Sarawak. Subsisting on an economy centered on cultivating rice in the jungle, Ibans did not crave material enjoyment as the Chinese and the Taosugs did.⁴⁹ Their culture, however, endorsed the shamanic power of human heads, and their constant need for heads for religious and social functions became an important part of their cultural identity. Prior to their exposure to outside influences, Ibans obtained heads for ceremonial value through small-scale, periodic inter-tribal retaliation.⁵⁰ The early 19th century, however, witnessed the sudden emergence of huge organized headhunting expeditions around the Bornean coast, devastating both the shipping and the local populations. These expeditions were almost always conducted by the powerful Iban tribes, aided by the Malays, in the valleys of the north Bornean Saribas and Skrang rivers.⁵¹

The Malays in such cases acted both as the Ibans' patrons and their nexus with the outside world. As traditional seafarers, the Malays, especially the Bugis had engaged in an escalating rivalry with each other for trading monopolies in the thriving intra-Asian trade.⁵² Both admiring and fearing the ferocity of the Ibans, Malay factions often employed them to resolve trading disputes or just to exploit the under-defended Bornean coast.⁵³ Often times the Malay recruiters would use their Islamic religion to woo the Bruneian Sultans, who were the nominal lord of the Ibans, for the official rights to procure military service from the Ibans.⁵⁴

The latter were by all means willing to collaborate, for they were granted all the heads severed in prospective expeditions, and therefore no longer needed to fight fellow Ibans for them. Meanwhile, the Malays would support the expeditions with equipment and keep all the material booties. A perfect symbiosis, the Malays and

the Ibans devastated the Sarawak Coast for the two decades from mid-1820s until their major suppression in 1844 under Brooke.⁵⁵ An eyewitness of such violence in 1834 recalled: "They swept the whole coast from their native place... and the news of their aggression having been brought to the latter place by some individuals who had been fortunate enough to escape them... none of the inhabitants of Slaku survived to tell the tale."⁵⁶

The cooperation between the two peoples also manifested in the usage of firearms. Known as Lantaka, small artilleries and muskets were commonplace in the Malay world by the early 19th century, but the Ibans were new to it and thence exhibited great interest in using them. There were numerous incidents of Sarawak arsenals being sacked by the Ibans to acquire guns and munitions.⁵⁷ During a campaign upriver, James Brooke noticed that only the Iban communities within the Malay-influenced estuaries were able to defend themselves effectively, as the iconic Iban wooden forts needed Malay Lantakas. The wooden spears and swords that made up the weaponry of the upper-river Ibans, who had neither access to Malays nor the outside world, were much less effective against the British.⁵⁸ In the case of the Ibans, their expanding maritime exchange with the external Malays in the early 19th century granted them unprecedented martial power, as well as the necessary means of resistance under British imperial rule.

Vacancy Between Empires: Political Shifts and the Subsequent Decline of Piracy

While the economic development in the late 18th and early 19th centuries provided the various pirate groups with an unprecedented abundance of opportunities, their successful, enduring expropriation was only made possible by the lack of state agency in the area. In conjunction with the high tide of free intra-Asian trade during this period, the Western powers' systematic territorial and political domination, coined "formal imperialism" by Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, came to a low tide.⁵⁹ When this vacancy became filled by imperial energy again in the 19th century, the pirates' golden age had also ended.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, European powers predominantly employed informal imperialism in the archipelago, playing between local polities and seeking to get a share in the profitable trading routes.⁶⁰ In this process, they never established themselves as direct rulers or overlords but did succeed in significantly undermining the indigenous political structure in the archipelago.⁶¹ The Mataram and the Malacca Sultanates, both being dominant regional polities and prosperous commercial rivalries to the Dutch and Portuguese, were destroyed by the latter's superior military forces in the 16th and 17th centuries. The Europeans then left these indigenous hegemon's subjects to crumble because the Europeans were as deprived of the resources to rebuild the political structures as the natives.⁶² By the end of the 18th century, the Spanish Luzon and Dutch Java had very limited influence over the rest of the archipelago, as they suffered from piracy and raiding themselves. British imperial energy became concentrated in India and would not dominate the archipelagoes until the 19th century. Lacking any effective policing agency in its vicinity, the vast waters from the Malaccan Strait to the Celebes Sea were presently a power vacuum in the late 18th century.

The Sulu pirates did not hesitate to take advantage of such an opportunity. From 1755 on, the Illanuns, Magindanaoans, Cotabatoans, and other Sulu-influenced peoples constantly attacked the Spanish possessions of Luzon and Visayas for nearly a century.⁶³ Referred to as "Manila men," the Tagalog-speaking residents of Luzon were cherished as some of the best slaves in the Sulus' labor market and suffered heavy predation by the raiders.⁶⁴ With Spanish governing forces mainly confined to the City of Manila and a few stronghold islands like Negros Oriental, Cebu, and Bohol, the migratory Illanuns and Balangingis established settlements unopposed on the ungarrisoned islands surrounding them, using them as springboards of future prahu attacks.⁶⁵ In the south, the Illanuns cooperated with the Bugis among other Malay pirates and mounted raids into the rich shipping of the Strait of Malacca. The Moluccas Islands in the east, which were traditional suppliers of the European spice trade, fell into mismanagement in the late 18th century and

were soon infested by Illanuns and Balangingis.⁶⁶ Having destroyed the last bit of Bruneian influence in the region, the Sulu Sultanate ascended as the hegemon of the archipelago. Brunei, the previous overlord in the region, was now reduced to a mere city-state. Its destruction would indirectly facilitate the rise of the next generation of bandits, the Ibans.

Reactions from the major European powers were ineffective. In part this was a consequence of the Europeans' actual want of military force. More importantly, a paradox existed between the Western need of Sulu products to trade with China and the Sulu need of slaves to sustain their production. Dependent on trading with the Taosug datus, the Spaniards had to refrain from the idea of destroying the Sultanate once and for all, despite its grudge against a "Muslim lake" right next to Manila.⁶⁷ As the most direct victim to the raids, the pirates massacred entire villages in the Spanish Philippines and enslaved innumerable families, with even greater populations fleeing the homelands.⁶⁸ Manila's countermeasures in the 18th century were limited to the relocation of coastal settlements, the banishment of junk construction to prevent them from falling into the pirates' hands, and a few half-hearted combat patrols.⁶⁹ British and Dutch counter-piracy campaigns had more substantial actions, such as the EIC's armed cruising between Penang and Singapore starting in 1786 and the Dutch collaboration with Javanese and Sumatran victims to set up convoys in the 1770s. The British founded Penang, their first permanent strong-hold in the Southeast Asia in 1786, partly to suppress Malayan piracy in the straits.⁷⁰ These attempts, however, also met with little success.

The balance eventually shifted to the Europeans' favor with the incoming wave of Western formal imperialism following the Napoleonic Wars. From the 1800s on, European powers began to see their colonial possessions in the East not merely as trading factories as before, but as actual territories under their formal rule.⁷¹ The takeover of the Dutch East Indies by the Crown in 1800, the founding of the Dutch Royal East India Army (KNIL) in 1819, and the acquisition of the Strait Settlements by the British in 1824 were all manifestations of such a trend. Java, Malaya, and the Philippines

also began a transformation from the combination of subsistent agriculture and urban service to a plantation economy based on cash crops. With commerce diminishing and losses to piracy ever higher, Western empires in the early 19th century no longer needed the Sulu trade.

This period, therefore, saw the buildup of European military forces and the decline of piratical activities in the archipelago. Concerned with the safety of its Javanese subjects, the Dutch began to build up an auxiliary navy composed of prahus with the same agile design as the pirates' vessels.⁷² When this failed because the manpower was scattered in too many patrolled spots, the KNIL in 1834 resolved to organize a direct assault on Reteh, an Illanun strategic stronghold in Sumatra.⁷³ The British Rajahs of Sarawak also contributed to undermine Illanun activities in northern Borneo waters in the 1840.⁷⁴ The Spanish themselves finally took decisive action in 1848 when they eradicated the Balangingi pirate nests with gunboats and continued the pressure with a close blockade on Jolo.⁷⁵ Without access to the varieties of ethnic groups that engaged in its maritime industry, the Taosug in Jolo had no economic means to sustain itself, and its economic conditions diminished every year.⁷⁶ In 1878, Sultan ul-Azam and his datus surrendered to the Spanish, formally ending the century-long nightmare of the archipelago.

The advancing imperial frontier in the archipelago during the 19th century also claimed the Ibans' glory. Entering the profession rather late compared to their Illanun comrades, the Iban raiders descending from the Saribas and Skrang valleys did not enjoy prolonged Western acquiescence. In 1841, the British adventurer James Brooke was awarded the status of Rajah of Sarawak by the Bruneian Sultan, thus starting the lineage called "White Rajahs" and coming into contact with the Iban people. The Bruneian Sultanate, already reduced to the capital itself at this point, exercised nominal suzerainty over the Sarawak region even at its peak and had hardly any knowledge about its Iban vassals despite the latter's notoriety.⁷⁷ The Bruneian inaction sharply contrasted with the eagerness of the British to build up a "civilized" state as soon as they arrived on the coast, an attitude universal to the empire builders in this period.

Unlike the lengthy, painful process before the Illanuns' subjugation, Brooke's policy toward the Ibans was simple and effective. When asked by a Skrang chief about whether he could obtain just a head or two in Brooke's territory, he replied, "I will have a hundred Skrang heads for every one you take here."⁷⁸ Undisturbed by any interest to keep any good relations with the Ibans, Brooke was able to muster a force quickly made up of Her Majesty's frigate *Dido* supplemented by a horde of Dayak collaborators. This expedition in 1844 was successful: headhunting became history for the Ibans.⁷⁹ Although sporadic resistance ensued, the Ibans were no match for the British Empire.

HE REPLIED, "I WILL HAVE A HUNDRED SKRANG HEADS
FOR EVERY ONE YOU TAKE HERE."

Similarly, the contemporary Southern Chinese pirates' rise was only possible through successful exploitation of power vacancies, and its downfall was likewise inevitable once the vacancy became filled. Other than the lack of substantial Qing policing forces in the open sea, the pirates also owed their success in the hinterland to the contemporary Tây Sơn movement in neighboring Vietnam, a peasant rebellion aiming to overthrow the Later Lê dynasty (1428-1788).⁸⁰ The Qianlong Emperor of Qing immediately sent a military expedition to restore its old vassal, but the Vietnamese military defeated the three Qing armies in 1788. In spite of its victories, the Tây Sơn regime was far from solidified and was under constant threat of restoration. The wars and instabilities ravaging the Sino-Vietnam border soon created a region of anarchy, a favorable stage to any criminal actions.⁸¹

Both the Tây Sơn and the Chinese pirates exploited this geopolitical situation to perfection. As early as 1773, there were Chinese elements in Tây Sơn's service, bearing names such as the Harmonious Army and the Loyal Army. Following the loss of the bulk its fleet in the battle of Thị Nại in 1792, the Tây Sơn became ever more dependent on Southern Chinese pirates to reinforce its naval power.⁸² From the pirates' perspective, the Tây Sơn rebellion provided

them with a valuable breach in the Sino-Vietnamese maritime frontier, which was previously under stable control by both governments. Before and after raiding seasons, pirate leaders under Tây Sơn sanctuary preferred to base their fleets on the Vietnamese side of the sea to avoid Chinese patrol forces.⁸³

Until its eventual destruction in the hands of the retaliating Nguyễn forces in 1802, Tây Sơn rebels continuously employed Southern Chinese pirates. By establishing a new tributary relation with the Nguyễn dynasty, China again held a stable land borderline with Vietnam. The Southern Chinese pirates were thereafter deprived of a strategic rear and forced to organize their own confederation to keep cohesiveness. Its “banners” or contingents were led by charismatic figures such as Cai Qian and Zheng Yisao. After the death in action of many important leaders, the pirates gradually gave way to the tightening Chinese pressure.

Western powers also made clear their attitude toward the pirates, whose unhindered operations on the Cantonese and Fujian seas thwarted European and American traders. The earliest mention of cooperation attempts was in 1807, when the EIC offered to combine forces with the Qing Empire against the pirates.⁸⁴ In the autumn of 1809, the British and the Portuguese simultaneously entered negotiation with Governor General Bai Ling over counter-piracy cooperation, with the Portuguese being chosen as Qing’s partner in the coming campaign.⁸⁵ The ensuing battles were one-sided, with the combined firepower of the Chinese and Portuguese sinking 20 of the 28 pirate junks, significantly demoralizing the pirates in the following year.⁸⁶ When the last pirate leader, Zhang Bao surrendered in April, 1810, the British commented, “... we cannot be induced to look forward to any permanent relief from piratical depredations.”⁸⁷

Considering the significance of the China trade in the British economy, Britain likely would have intervened more directly if the piracy insurgence had survived longer into the 1810s. Nevertheless, the ultimate demise of the Southern Chinese pirates under the Qing indicates that with sufficient coercive means, indigenous powers were equally effective against the pirates as Western em-

pires. In other words, the simultaneous success of the South China Sea insurgencies at the turn of 19th century could not be possible without the acquiescence of either the Western imperialists or the local factions.

Conclusion and Aftermath

Although far apart from each other and lacking substantial interaction, the three piracy upsurges in the South China Sea area at the turn of the 19th century share continuities in their economic and political origins. The prospering trans-Asian trade in the 18th century stimulated the region with energetic commerce activities, creating lucrative targets and opportunities for crimes on the sea. Unable to match the military prowess of the European navies, the survival of the pirates depended largely on the latter's acquiescence and compromises. Consequently, their fortune came to an end when the advancing Western powers resorted to forceful suppression. The collective rise and fall of the three groups of pirates synchronized with the transition from "informal empires" to "formal empires" as the prominent pattern of imperialism in the South China Sea.

After the pirates' pacification, the Chinese Empire continued to withstand Western commercial penetrations, especially the increasing importation of opium, until the Opium War broke out in 1839. The Vietnamese, ending their civil war with French assistance, gradually fell to the latter's domination.⁸⁸ The archipelago in the following century became a collection of island colonies saturated with plantations. One British intellectual commented on the archipelagos later in the 19th century, claiming, "as nations, they have withered in the presence of the uncongenial, greedy and relentless spirit of European policy."⁸⁹ Piracy never resumed on a similar scale in the South China Sea. The unique circumstances of the 18th and 19th centuries were not replicable. Yet this ephemeral episode of massive maritime insurgence remained memorable as peoples of the periphery made their stand to take advantage of imperialism, rather than the opposite. 

ENDNOTES

1. Matthew Norton, "Classification and Coercion: The Destruction of Piracy in the English Maritime System" (Master Thesis, University of Oregon, 2014), 1538.
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3. Murray, *Pirates of the South China Coast*, 143.
4. James Francis Warren, *The Sulu Zone: the World Capitalist Economy and the Historical Imagination* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2007), 285; Pringle, *Rajahs and Rebels*, 84.
5. The "Land Dayaks," on the other hand, resided in the mountains in hinterland Borneo.
6. Pringle, *Rajahs and Rebels*, 19.
7. Many versions of the word "Illanun" exist, e.g., Iranun, Ilanun, Ilano, or Ilanoen. According to Oxford Dictionary of English, a *prahu* or *proa* is "a type of sailing boat originating in Malaysia and Indonesia... typically having a large triangular sail and an outrigger." See Warren, *The Sulu Zone*, xix, 149; Nicholas Tarling, *Piracy and Politics in the Malay World: A Study of British Imperialism in Nineteenth-Century Southeast Asia* (Melbourne: F. W. Cheshire, 1963), 146.
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17. Murray, *Pirates of the South China Coast*, 11.
18. *Ibid.*, 220-221.
19. K. N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 27, 39.
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21. *Ibid.*, 237.
22. Antony, *Like Froth Floating on the Sea*, 72-73.
23. Murray, *Pirates of the South China Coast*, 14.
24. Antony, *Like Froth Floating on the Sea*, 95.
25. James Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 179.
26. Murray, *Pirates of the South China Coast*, 57.
27. *Ibid.*, 71.
28. *Ibid.*, 84-87.
29. *Ibid.*, 87.
30. Aware of the superior firepower of Western warships, the pirates tended to spring surprise attack on the transport boats that carried officers and high-ranking passengers between ships and the shore. See Antony, *Like Froth Floating on*

the Sea, 45.

31. Murray, *Pirates of the South China Coast*, 86-89.

32. Muramoto, *Umi No Kindai Chugoku*, 61.

33. Murray, *Pirates of the South China Coast*, 87.

34. These local warlords included the "sea-lords" Iquan and Koxinga in late Ming dynasty. See Antony, *Like Froth Floating on the Sea*, 87.

35. Muramoto, *Umi No Kindai Chugoku*, 61.

36. Warren, *The Sulu Zone*, 201.

37. *Ibid.*, 150.

38. Warren, *The Sulu Zone*, 18-21.

39. Om Prakash, "The Portuguese and the Dutch in the Asian Maritime Trade: A Comparative Analysis," in *Merchants, Companies and Trade: Europe and Asia in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Sushil Chaudhury and Michel Morineau (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 182-183.

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41. The bird's nest is a delicacy food in China, treasured for its medical value.

42. Warren, *The Sulu Zone*, 65-74.

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44. *Ibid.*, 68-70.

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69. *Ibid.*, 169-177.

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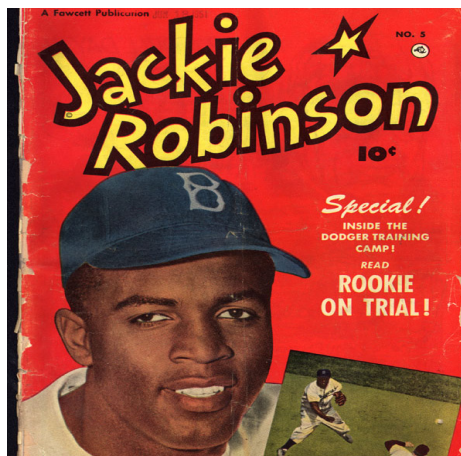
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77. Pringle, *Rajahs and Rebels*, 44-45.
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81. Murray, *Pirates of the South China Coast*, 33.
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89. Tarling, *Piracy and Politics*, 7.



BASEBALL BEHIND A MASK

Jews, African Americans, and Identity On and Off the Baseball Field

Ben Pickman is a sophomore at the UW–Madison where he is double-majoring in Journalism and History. His main interests include sports journalism as well as sports history. This paper was written in the Spring of 2016 for David McDonald and Major League Baseball Commissioner Emeritus Bud Selig’s History 600: Baseball and American Society since World War II.

In March of 1965 Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. walked together from Selma, to Birmingham, Alabama. The act not only symbolized unity between the Rabbi and the civil rights leader but also between Jews and African Americans in general. Given that both groups were committed to racial equality, there should have been a natural alliance between African Americans and Jews during this time period. However, there were particular obstacles that prevented this union from being realized. Unlike Heschel and King’s expression of solidarity, each group decided to separately fight for their place, and their identity, within the greater American social milieu.

The question of how to become American occupied both Jews and African Americans throughout the early part of the 20th century. In 1903, Abraham Cahan famously devoted part of his column

Photo: This 1951 magazine cover includes a portrait of African American baseball legend Jackie Robinson sporting a Brooklyn Dodgers cap.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress, “Front cover of Jackie Robinson comic book” (Washington D.C.: Serial and Government Publications Division, 1951).

in the *Jewish Daily Forward* to the topic of Americanization. Cahan once replied to a letter from an Eastern European Jewish immigrant who asked if sports were the way to become more American. The immigrant decried baseball as a “wild and silly game,” reflecting the harsh sentiments felt by many Eastern European Jewish immigrants at the time. In their minds, being an athlete meant being uncivilized. “I want my boy to grow up to be a mensh, not a wild American runner,” the immigrant father argued.¹ Cahan responded with a piece of advice that endured for generations within the Jewish community. “Let your boys play baseball and play it well... Bring them up to be educated, ethical, and decent, but also to be physically strong so they should not feel inferior,” he wrote.² Cahan concluded his response to the immigrant by suggesting, “Let us not so raise the children, that they should grow up foreigners in their own birthplace,” he wrote. This sentiment was one that resonated not just within the Jewish community, but also throughout various minority communities as well.

Lipman Pike was one of the first Jewish athletes that attempted to use sport as a means to integrate into American society. Pike, one of the first paid professional baseball players, was banned from baseball in perpetuity in October 1881. While *The New York Times* wrote that the league was attempting to weed out athletes classified as “insubordinate players,” it is likely that Pike’s career ended because of his German-Jewish background.³ This tension between Pike’s careerism and Jewish heritage demonstrates how he, along with multiple other Jewish athletes in the late 19th century, continued to be a foreigner in his native born country.

In spite of Pike’s negative individual experience, at the beginning of the 20th century baseball began to unite minority groups, particularly Jewish and African Americans. Jewish immigrants and African Americans bonded over their inability to afford baseball game tickets, so together they flocked to newspapers and magazines that reported the results.⁴ They sat alongside one another to watch watch the Brooklyn Dodgers, rooting for their local team with equal vigor as a collective voice. Baseball clearly had a potent role in developing their relationship; both groups were outsiders,

and the sport gave them a forum to bond over their marginalization and shared goal of assimilation.⁵ However, as the 20th century progressed, this placated relationship became increasingly divisive. On and off the baseball field, the two groups tried to become more American, but their concurrent social integration happened at each other's expense. Heschel and King may have marched together, but to use a famed Chinese proverb, the frequent tension in the relationship between African Americans and Jews made the relationship between them more like a "group of people sleeping in the same bed, dreaming very distinct dreams."⁶

African American writer and philosopher W.E.B. Du Bois addressed the topic of assimilation at length in his 1903 text, *The Souls of Black Folk*. Du Bois recognized that even 40 years after the Civil War, a "veil" still surrounded African Americans, adding that African Americans were still living under a double consciousness:

It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, one ever feels his twoness,-- an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unrecognized strivings, two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.⁷

Assimilating into American culture was a way for African Americans to rid themselves of their conflicting identities, or their "twoness" as Du Bois writes. Much like in Cahan's work, Du Bois claimed education as a primary tool to not be "torn asunder" as a vehicle for advancement. That being said, Du Bois did not suggest baseball as a useful way to resolve African Americans' identity issues and greater mission to acculturate.

Baseball was considered as a profound means of acculturation, a national religion to the masses. Walter L. Harrison cast the sport as a "badge of being American."⁸ But for the early part of the 20th century, African Americans remained on the outskirts of Major League Baseball. It was not until the late 1940s, when Jackie

Robinson rose to fame as a notable player and person that African Americans began to sport a true American badge. Before Robinson, African Americans did play professional baseball, just not in the Major Leagues; they created their own Negro leagues in the early 1920s to show their unyielding drive to be considered American, as well as to defy the norms that marginalized them. But even in a milieu that was supposed to be a safe haven for African Americans they were not exempt from mistreatment, which stemmed from Jews' involvement in their leagues. While working together, Jews and African Americans developed a hostile relationship, credited to the steadfast business objectives of Jewish promoters who sought to raise the profile of the game.⁹ The involvement of these businessmen brought African Americans to stereotype Jews as greedy, business savvy and potentially manipulative.

These feelings of suspicion and resentment were evident beyond the baseball context, as explained by African American historian L.D. Reddick in a 1942 essay, "Anti-Semitism among Negroes," which read:

To a man from Mars, it must seem strange and tragically ironic that the Jewish and Negro peoples on planet Earth are not allied. The Martian observer sees the Jews kicked about in Germany and the Negroes kicked about in Georgia; and yet both Jew and Negro continue to insist upon the privilege of facing their doom separately, whereas they could stand and fight together.¹⁰

As Reddick notes, it was "strange and tragically ironic" that African American and Jews lived in constant tension. The two groups for much of the first half of the 20th century wrestled for power, both seeking to obtain higher levels of mobility in America. Baseball, as the quintessential American game, should have been the ideal forum for the two communities to come together. However, the relationship between African Americans and Jews on the field remained complex given the role that Jewish promoters had in the

Negro leagues. This great hostility would not pacify until years after World War II.

Although it took time to build a mutual appreciation for each other off the field, each group throughout the 20th century fostered smaller communities that held contending perspectives on race, ethnicity, and assimilation. This further vexed the relationship between Jews and African Americans, but also showed how the two groups were not totally opposed to accepting one another. Communist Jews, a major demographic of Jewish Americans during the mid-20th century, fought to unify of all peoples in society. Prior to the War, they were among the first groups to advocate for total African American integration into Major League Baseball.¹¹ But their ideological vigor was short-lived. Communist Jews were quieted by the escalating tensions between the United States and the USSR in the postwar years. During this time, it was detrimental to be an American that held communist beliefs.

While before World War II tensions between the two communities persisted, after the war baseball became a game that united them under one common thread: a uniform. Through baseball, African Americans and Jews got behind a simplistic narrative which asserted that both groups were trivialized and still working to become American. Though baseball served as a Utopian oasis in which African Americans and Jews could coalesce, this was not the reality of their relationship away from the sport. To echo Cah-an's column in 1903, baseball was not a "wild and crazy game" but instead a sport in which both minority groups could assimilate and transition from being "foreigners in their own birth place" to being local heroes in their lifelong home.¹²

Masking and Unmasking: Early Forms of Jewish Identity Issues in Baseball

Jewish immigrants, like African Americans, had a distinctive marker that emulated their identity. Eastern European Jewish immigrants were identifiable by their Ashkenazi last names. In the Old World, surnames were a fundamental part of Eastern European identity. As many immigrants arrived to the New World, they

changed their names as a way to mask their Jewish heritage and assimilate, which was made easier given their white skin.¹³ Initially for Jewish baseball players little focus was put on these name changes, as other non-Jewish players had previously changed their names. However, in some instances print media called out these moniker adjustments. Because of the increased attention Jews in baseball were conflicted over whether they should publicly display their Jewish identity. But as the 20th century progressed and Jews became more accepted in American society, Jewish players became more comfortable keeping their original names.

For example, Harry Kane, born Harry Cohen, changed his name while preparing for what was a four-year Major League career. *The Sporting News* made note of Kane's Major League debut in July of 1902, writing, "his name is Cohen and he assumed that of Kane, when he became a semi-professional because he fancied that there was a popular and professional prejudice against Hebrews as ball players."¹⁴ Kane's moniker adjustment helped him hide his Judaism from his peers. But Kane is not the only Jewish immigrant to have masked his identity; many other Jewish baseball players also changed their name as a way to advance their careers. Assuming the role as one of the shortest players in the Major Leagues, Phil Cooney entered the Majors years later at the height and weight of 5-foot-8 and 155 pounds. Born a Cohen, the second baseman changed his name to Cooney, not only to avoid general anti-Semitic remarks, but also to distance himself from traditional Jewish stereotypes like being scrawny and unathletic.

Ed Corey also demonstrates this American-Jewish phenomenon of name changing in order to mask cultural and religious affiliation. Born Abraham Simon Cohen, Corey anglicized both his first and last name in 1899.¹⁵ After Corey's death, his wife told a Baseball Hall of Fame researcher that Corey and his brothers agreed to change their names to help them advance in their chosen professions.¹⁶ These examples demonstrate how Jews wanted to disassociate from their Jewish heritage on and off the field in order to adapt to a truly American life.

In spite of their efforts to assimilate, Jews in baseball in the 20th

century faced an onslaught of anti-Semitic rhetoric. The Chicago White Sox's loss to the Cincinnati Reds in the 1919 World Series led to eight White Sox players getting banned from baseball, blamed for intentionally fixing games. Although none of the players were Jewish the scandal was organized by Jewish gamblers, Arnold "Whitey" Rothstein and Abe Attell.¹⁷ Rothstein learned the crime trade from other gangsters of the era, while Attell was so duplicitous that he dubbed himself as the "Little Hebrew" as a way to draw Jews to the various events he organized. American industrialist Henry Ford, not surprisingly, took full advantage of the Jewish businessmen's illicit actions. As a notable American anti-Semite, Ford wrote a hateful column in his newspaper, the *Dearborn Independent*, in the wake of the scandal.¹⁸ *The Sporting News* responded to Ford's column with, "The Challenge to the Jew," which recommended that Jews act cautiously in sports in order to avoid negative stereotypes and anti-Semitic remarks.¹⁹

Much to Ford's chagrin, between 1900 and 1930 an average of four Jewish players reached the Majors annually.²⁰ Two paradigmatic figures in the Jewish baseball community stood out in the 1920s. Their names, Mose Solomon and Andy Cohen, revealed a new era for American Jewish baseball players. Unlike Henry Kane, Phil Cooney, and Ed Corey, Solomon and Cohen did not try to mask their Jewish identity by keeping their original names. Unfazed by the anti-Semitism around them, Solomon and Cohen became known as Jewish American icons due to their commitment to externally displaying their Jewish background.

Born on the lower east side of Manhattan, Mose Solomon was used by New York Giants manager John McGraw to attract Jewish fans to Giants games. McGraw recognized that finding a Jewish star to challenge the New York Yankees' Babe Ruth might poach Yankee fans away from the Bronx, and draw them to the Polo Grounds in Manhattan.²¹ In 1923, after learning that Solomon had hit 49 home runs in the Southwestern League, an independent minor league, McGraw signed Solomon to the Giants. But the player, dubbed by *The Sporting News* as the "Rabbi of Swat," did not have the career in New York that McGraw had hoped for.²² After one season, during

which Solomon played only two games, the Rabbi of Swat left the Major Leagues because of a slew of injuries.²³ Even though the Solomon experiment did not go as intended, McGraw's aim to attract Jewish fans through Jewish players was eventually realized. His second attempt to find a Jewish star turned out to be much more successful than his first.

Much like Solomon, Andy Cohen quickly became a Jewish hero in New York because of his last name. In the early 1900s many people with the surname "Cohen" changed their name to distance themselves from their Jewish identity. However, for Cohen that was not the case; his last name became a valuable asset. Cohen's success in the Texas League, another independent minor league, drew the attention of McGraw. In May of 1926, the Giants manager signed the Jewish second baseman to a contract. Cohen spent the 1926 and 1927 seasons in the minor leagues, but when the Giants traded second baseman Roger Hornsby before the 1928 season, Cohen received his opportunity to play in New York.²⁴ His Jewish name, as it turned out, was key to his becoming a celebrity.

Cohen's mobility in baseball not only reflected his personal success but also that of the total Jewish American experience. In a sentiment that was later echoed by Jewish first baseman Hank Greenberg, Cohen openly acknowledged that he was "hitting for the Jewish people, not just [himself]."²⁵ Cohen, with his stellar play, captivated the New York fan base, and by doing so repressed anti-Jewish attitudes that came from New York press.²⁶ In 1928, after the Giants' first game of the season, Grantland Rice's story in the *New York Herald Tribune* perfectly encapsulated the wave of "Cohen-fever":

It was Andy Cohen, the young Jewish ball player from Alabama University, who stepped into Hornsby's job at second for the Giants and lifted 30,000 frozen spectators to their frostbitten feet at the season's formal opening... You may have heard of the Cohens and Kellys in the halls of the cinema, but it was the Cohen of Coogan's Bluff who took over

the pictorial lead and kept the crowd from freezing stiffer than a Lapland iceberg...²⁷

The “Cohen hysteria” quickly became a mythical story. Enthusiasts wanted to change the name of “Coogan’s bluff,” which overlooked the Polo Grounds, to “Cohen’s Bluff.” A stadium food vendor once joked that anytime he would sell ice cream in the Polo Grounds he was not selling “cones,” but “Cohens”.²⁸ Cohen’s Jewish pride captivated fans and marked a major shift in the way America viewed Jewish players and the way Jewish players viewed themselves as Americans. Cohen was well aware of the impact he was having on young Jewish immigrants. “Remember when you and I were kids? We looked at the big league ball players as heroes,” Cohen told *The New York Times* in July of 1928. “Now that I’m a big leaguer, I try to think of myself in the boys’ place and give them what I would have liked some big leaguer to give me when I was their age.”²⁹ Cohen truly embodied just that, a hero for Jewish immigrants growing up in the early 20th century.

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By no means did Cohen’s success in Major League Baseball eliminate anti-Semitism, but it did help to hamper it and inspire more Jewish players to embrace their heritage rather than hide it. Jewish players became more confident with who they were as the troubling legacy of Rothstein and Attell progressively diminished.³⁰ Not surprisingly, Cohen’s success even inspired the Yankees to persuade Catholic player Ed Whitner Levy to go by Ed Levy to attract Jewish fans.³¹ Although the question of masking one’s Jewish identity lasted throughout the Great Depression, Solomon and Cohen provided a newfound optimism that being Jewish did not deter from the pursuit of being American. He was truly hitting for the Jewish people and his success allowed for Jewish immigrants to become more accepted in society as a whole. However, while Jewish

Americans were a minority group was able to mask their identity and assimilate, other groups did not share in their fortune.

On-Field Masks for Some, Strife for Others

During the early part of the 20th century, Jewish immigrants were able to at least partially mask their Jewish identity with simple name changes, but not all minority groups shared this luxury. African Americans, unlike Jewish Americans, could not easily mask their identity. The different social positions of each group as each tried to become more American contributed to their complex relationship both in and out of baseball.

As mentioned earlier on, tensions between Jews and African Americans were minimized in baseball after World War II. Off the field, however, especially before World War II, conflicts were rampant. And no matter the details of their confrontation, the acrimony between Jews and African Americans was predicated on the issue of masking, which spawned debates about self-interest and collective care for American minorities.

According to Du Bois, African Americans were unable to assimilate into America due to a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, a problem of perpetual “two-ness.”³² Since arriving in slave ships, Du Bois argued that African Americans were always two souls in one dark-skinned body and that this two-ness of being an American and a “Negro” prohibited African Americans from becoming fully accepted. Because of their dark skin, African Americans lived under a veil; they stood out from a white crowd, and in the earliest years of the United States their dark skin contributed to their lower social position.

African Americans battled this perception of being part of a lower class in sports along with other contexts during the 20th century. Jackie Robinson would break the color barrier in 1947, becoming the first African American to play in Major League Baseball. However, prior to this African Americans created and played in their own league as they were unable to participate in the Major Leagues. Only African Americans could play the game but Jewish promoters coalesced in the background as the Negro leagues’ chief

operators.

Baseball historian Jules Tygiel referred to these Jews as the “Shylockian villains” of baseball; they were the men who backed the game financially, but were never truly invested in its growth and development.³³ This dynamic gave rise to the problematic relationship between African Americans and Jews. African Americans needed assistance to operate their league, and while Jews filled the void it stirred the dissemination of Jewish stereotype as a money-obsessed people, who at the time commonly kept pawn shops, sold newspapers, operated clothing stores, and were low-income property owners.³⁴ In the Negro leagues, such a generalization was applicable. African Americans expected Jews to make good business decisions and have greater commercial experience.³⁵ Jews were the merchants of Western Society, viewed as skilled and manipulative. But regardless of these circulating stereotypes, Jewish promoters Ed Gottlieb, Syd Pollock, and Abe Saperstein were essential crucial to the endurance of the Negro leagues.

These three promoters soon became as much a part of the Negro leagues as Cum Posey, a player, manager, and owner of the Hempstead Grays and Satchel Paige, considered one of the best to play in the Negro leagues’ history. But the reliance on Jews to promote games designed for strictly African Americans created conflict, and an outpour of condemnation from print media. “Mr. Pollock is trying to make big money by getting a bunch of misfits together,” Cum Posey wrote in an open letter published in *The Pittsburgh Courier*, an African American newspaper.³⁶ Wendell Smith, *The Courier’s* famous sports editor, published similar frustrations about Ed Gottlieb when he wrote: “We doubt if Eddie Gottlieb lost any money in booking from 1934 to 1940 while the clubs, who were losing money paid him ten percent.” Later Smith added that “booking agents are almost a necessary evil in Negro baseball as some of the clubs are too cheap or lazy to book themselves and depend entirely on booking agents.”³⁷ While Smith’s sentiment was universally accepted among African Americans, the Negro Leagues still relied heavily on the business acumen of Jewish promoters. They truly were a “necessary evil.”

Jewish promoter Abe Saperstein famously initiated the East-West All Star Game in 1933, and the game immediately became the most popular and profitable event in the African American sports community.³⁸ Not surprisingly, Saperstein's role in the Negro leagues created conflict. As Cum Posey wrote in a guest column in *The Courier* in 1940:

This money which Saperstein gets from the East-West game is supposed to be used by him to pay the sports departments of the white dailies and the radios in Chicago. That's baloney. The real reason is the clubs of the A.N.L [American Negro League] imagine they are under booking obligations to Saperstein.³⁹

Saperstein was able to get radio broadcasts for many Negro league games, which helped to raise their profile. In 1933, the Jewish promoter, who later started the Harlem Globetrotters basketball club, was responsible for getting Satchel Paige and other African Americans to play in the first interracial baseball game since the 1880s.⁴⁰ In spite of these efforts that exhibited harmony, conflicts between the two minority groups remained pertinent.

The benefits of involving Jewish promoters, even though they created a wedge between Jews and African Americans, were extensive. For instance, Gottlieb was not only a promoter but also a financial contributor to the Negro leagues, providing them with money and store credit for new equipment from Passon's Sporting Goods, a leading sporting goods store in Philadelphia.⁴¹ Deeds like this maintained Pollock, Gottlieb, and Saperstein's dominant position in the Negro leagues. But still, their presence continued to aggravate African American owners and spectators.

Jewish promoters claimed that they were acting in the best interest of the Negro leagues. Pollock wrote in *The Courier* in response to the American Negro League's monopolization of power, "the new league is a joke."⁴² He was adamant that without him the Negro leagues would have floundered. Gottlieb used similar

arguments, saying he was always acting in the best interest of the leagues and the leagues needed him.

Effa Manley, the owner of the Negro National Leagues' Newark Eagles, resembles the competing attitudes the groups held against one another. She expressed how important Jews were to her team while also harboring powerful anti-Semitic sentiments. Like other owners, she relied upon Gottlieb and Saperstein to book her team's games and even eventually hired a Jewish public relations manager. She openly wrote to Wendell Smith that the Negro leagues did not handle business matters in the best possible way and that in her mind, African Americans were not trained enough in business.⁴³ As a result, Manley worked with Jews in order to give her club the best opportunities for success. At the same time, she did not hesitate to express anti-Semitic rhetoric when she felt it was warranted.⁴⁴

Other owners just like Manley could not resist help from Jewish promoters. Even though African Americans and Jews were working together through baseball before World War II, in no way did they emulate a strong unified bond. The sport failed to create an understanding for their similar grievances and struggles to become American. In retrospect, the two groups remained deeply divided, riven by stereotypes and hostile tensions that would eventually wane in the coming decades.

Off-Field Masks for Some, Strife for Others

Just as it had in baseball during the first half of the 20th century, the contentious relationship between Jews and African Americans remained off the field. In theory, both Jews and African Americans were outsiders that could have rallied together to form a common alliance. However, their relationship was not as simple as African Americans continued to point out major discrepancies between themselves and Jewish Americans. In the eyes of African American owners and writers, Jewish immigrants, in only 50 years, were able to impact America in a way African Americans could only dream. Realizing the marginal differences in their social positions within America, the hostile relationship between Jews and African Americans continued to amplify.

In the eyes of many African Americans, positions of power were still in the hands of white men. Jews, though still a religious minority, were light-skinned and therefore able to easily mask their identity and reap many white benefits. Even in the midst of prominent anti-Semitic threats, Jews quickly became notable forces of power, operating stores and owning property in low-income areas inhabited mostly by African Americans.⁴⁵ Jews frequently refused to hire African Americans, raised prices on poor quality goods and overcharged African Americans for substandard housing properties. According to Martin Fiebert, “blacks envied Jewish economic success and expressed resentment toward Jews as the one underdog who made it.”⁴⁶ Their socioeconomic rift further conveys the divisive nature of their relationship in the years leading to World War II.

Newspapers were a common place where intergroup tensions were voiced. According to *The Pittsburgh Courier*, the most frequent complaints during the pre-War period were registered by Negroes against Jews. These included Jewish butchers only selling meat to Irish Catholics, Negro actors getting severely underpaid by Jewish producers, and, Jewish landlords consistently showing ignorance to African Americans’ putrid living conditions.⁴⁷ These measures of exploitation enabled Jews to climb the socioeconomic hierarchy, but consequently created distance with the African American community.

In the South, the minority chasm was especially augmented during the prewar era. Minority discrimination was rampant and in many Southern areas, Jews were forced to live alongside African Americans in vulnerable, heavily targeted areas. However, like in the North, because Jews had white skin they could mask their religious and cultural roots and assimilate with greater ease.⁴⁸

Questions of civil unity came about when Jews such as Henry Moskowitz and Joel Springarn became two of America’s most prominent civil rights activists. The Jewish duo shaped many of the early policies of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, an organization whose mission was to “ensure the political, educational, social and economic equality of

minority group citizens in the United States.”⁴⁹ ⁵⁰ Du Bois’ thoughts on Springarn epitomized the conflicts between the groups, labeling him as “one of those vivid, enthusiastic, but clear-thinking idealists, which from age-to-age the Jewish race has given the world.”⁵¹ While Du Bois acknowledged Springarn’s agency, he criticized the lack of Jews who were “clear-thinking idealists” by writing that they only exist from “age-to-age.” Skepticism—like in the case of Du Bois and Springarn—between African Americans and Jews continued to characterize their relationship.

To be sure, many personal connections made between Jews and African Americans were positive. As Dr. Kenneth Clark, an instructor at the College of the City of New York and Queens College, wrote in *The Pittsburgh Courier*, mutual antagonism existed.⁵² While at a roundtable discussion titled “The Negro and the United States,” Dr. Clark noted that he witnessed Rabbi Ferdinand M. Isserman of Temple Israel, St Louis, Missouri tell his hearers that “We [Jews] must point the fingers at ourselves too.” To further complicate the matter, Clark found mistrust and scorn towards African Americans was prevalent among Jews, and such attitudes were reciprocated by African American communities towards Jews.⁵³

As World War II loomed and questions of integration became more prominent, another complication emerged in the relationship between African Americans and Jews; Jewish supporters of Communism emerged as a powerful voice that called for total integration of African Americans in baseball. Their intentions were not based on achieving economic gains but were motivated by values of justice, egalitarianism and fair treatment.

The Red Mask Over the Shared Baseball Diamond

African American newspapers, expectedly, were strong proponents for racial integration in Major League Baseball. But, far-left communist newspapers like *The Daily Worker* were some of the first media outlets that pushed for African American integration into the sport. However, while *The Worker* was a significant in the call for integration, its legitimacy would be diminished as the Cold War loomed over American political and social life. In this environ-

ment, African American newspapers disassociated from communist support after World War II, fearing that it could strip them of any gains made towards acceptance and assimilation.

In America during the 1930s, the Communist Party began what would become a 20-year peak in both size and influence.⁵⁴ Like other impactful ideological groups, the American Communist Party was not comprised of one homogenous population; a considerable part of the party was of Jewish origin.⁵⁵ To be clear, most American Jews did not affiliate or identify with communism. However, a sizeable portion did. During the middle of the 20th century, Jews were drawn to Communism because of its great emphasis on social equality. The universal principle of Marxism promised to end all distinctions based upon ethnic or religious origin. This ideological view attracted young Jews who found themselves struggling to fit in a multiethnic social environment. In many ways the ideas relating to communism and the promise of social equality were similar to the NCAAP's mission, which also promoted equality for all people. American communists were among the first Americans to embrace civil rights for African Americans, doing so long before many other white liberals.⁵⁶

Communist Jews used educational means to spread their Utopian beliefs, exploiting the Yiddish language to promote communist principles and ideas. Yiddish was an important part of traditional Judaism, as many first-generation Jewish Americans grew up speaking the language of the Old World. As a result, many Jewish communist publications promoted Jewish culture and Jewish heritage through their use of the traditional language.⁵⁷ Not only were these publications purposed to bridge the cross-generational gap between American Jews but also to "transcend the divisions of the world," to bring together people of all backgrounds, no matter, race, color, or creed.⁵⁸ One Jewish communist who did just that was Lester Rodney, the first sports editor of *The Daily Worker*.

Rodney was not exposed to communist ideas growing up, and as a student at New York University he admitted to not knowing much about the party he would eventually join. Instead, it was a mere coincidence that one of the most important figures in the call

to integrate baseball found the political ideology that resonated most with him:

What you might call my political epiphany came one day when I was walking along Forty-second Street near Grand Central Station. There, just beneath the overpass, was a guy on a little platform making a speech. He was a Communist. But he wasn't at all like the popular image I had of Communists.⁵⁹

Rodney never knew the man's name, but the two struck up a conversation that planted the seed for Rodney's communist beliefs. The anonymous man left Rodney with a parting gift, a copy of *The Daily Worker*, which instilled in him anti-capitalist feelings that deeply resonated with his frustrations of the world.⁶⁰ When Rodney joined the paper, *The Daily Worker* did not have a sports section. The few sports pieces that went to print were included in the lifestyle section. But when the paper started printing special Sunday editions, Rodney drew upon his communist beliefs to write about the importance of desegregating sports.⁶¹

In a Sunday edition in 1936, *The Worker* published its first ever sports section. Rodney wrote about the achievements of Jesse Owens at the Berlin Olympics. Owens famously won four Gold Medals in the '36 Olympic Games, destroying Hitler's plan to showcase Aryan dominance on the world's biggest athletic stage.⁶² Rodney's report foreshadowed the kind of content he would later produce about baseball. In August of that year, Rodney's article "Jim Crow Baseball Must End" was featured on the front page of the *Worker's* front page. His piece, including testimonies from fans, athletes, and the press, initiated what would become the newspaper's 11-year journey to get the first African American player into Major League Baseball.⁶³

Rodney's campaign was an example of minority groups in America finding common ground and promoting social equality. While the relationship between African Americans and Jews continued to be imperfect, Rodney's work did promote and create

greater unity both on and off the field. The sports writer initially tried get Satchel Paige, the star of the Negro Leagues, into the Majors. New York Yankee great Joe DiMaggio's high praise of Paige as the greatest pitcher the Yankee slugger had ever faced became one of the main voices featured in Rodney's stories.

In spite of Rodney's stalwart campaign, he was not successful in achieving racial integration in baseball. In March of 1939, *The Worker* ran a story on Ford Frick, the President of the National League, who was offered hope, "not think the time is far off now and with constant crusading by the press of both races, it is bound to come soon...you must keep fighting."⁶⁴ While Rodney and the entire spirit of *The Worker* fought endlessly to plant the idea of integration into the minds of baseball fans, the color barrier in the Major League remained too big to break.

Rodney's most famous attempt at integrating Major League Baseball was a series of open letters to Major League Baseball Commissioner Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis titled, "Can you hear, Judge Landis?," "Can you talk, Judge Landis?," and "Can you count, Judge Landis?," among other provocative headlines intended to motivate the Commissioner to integrate the League.⁶⁵ In Rodney's mind he was not fighting a black or a communist fight, but rather he was working toward universal equality. In his autobiography he claimed that he never considered himself less of a "[c]ommunist sportswriter" and more of a "sportswriter who happened to be writing for a communist paper."⁶⁶ His legacy was extremely powerful, remembered for using the written word as a means to encourage equality for African Americans.

But Rodney was not the only writer who campaigned for the League's integration. Wendell Smith, the aforementioned sports editor for *The Pittsburgh Courier*, also contributed to the matter. Lacking proper credentials because of his skin color, Smith was forced to do conduct all of his interviews in more informal settings like streets or at hotels. In the spring of 1938, after doing 40 interviews with National League players to gauge their pulse on integration, *The Courier* had accumulated enough information to publish an expose series on the topic. With *The Courier's* permission, *The Worker*

reprinted all of Smith's work.⁶⁷ Smith wrote Rodney to privately express his appreciation for both running the series and for Rodney's devotion to the cause. Such collaborations between the two papers helped to promote equality in the public eye, reinforcing the idea that off the field unity between the two groups could be achieved.

Rodney continued to write on the topic of integration, using his universal ideas of equality and fairness to do so. But in future years, Smith never acknowledged *The Worker's* contribution to integration publically.⁶⁸ By the time Robinson made his debut for the Brooklyn Dodgers, America's perception of communists had drastically changed. At the same time, the contribution of the Jewish communist sportswriter markedly diminished. One possible reason for the African American community's negation of Rodney was that by the 1950s communism was viewed as "the denial of democracy."⁶⁹ This negative connotation encouraged African Americans to disassociate from the ideology, which continued to be thought of as un-American.

After World War II many Jewish advocacy groups that were not affiliated with communism began to promote racial equality. These organizations feared that protecting the reputation of communist Jews would discredit the entire American Jewish population and serve as a form of social "suicide."⁷⁰ In spite of their negative reputation communist Jews maintained what Jerry Z. Muller called a "white skin privilege," or the ability to mask their ideological beliefs under their white skin much how Jews as a people could hide their identity under their white skin.⁷¹ This notion of special privilege further explains why Rodney granted certain advantages in his career unlike Smith, who could not mask his racial and ethnic heritage.

In the end, the evil perception of communists eclipsed much of the positive efforts the group made before World War II. Even though *The Daily Worker* was one of the first publications to advocate for African American's integration into Major League Baseball, postwar negativity towards communism trivialized Rodney's efforts to integrate baseball. For a brief time, through their writing, Rodney and Smith bridged the social experiences of Jews and African

Americans. Their collaboration reflected that Jews and African Americans could champion a less tense, more embrative relationship off the field.

One Uniform On the Field, Two Different Uniforms Off It

After World War II, the relationship between African Americans and Jews changed significantly. On the field, the groups came closer together with the historic solidarity between Robinson and Jewish baseball legend Hank Greenberg. Beginning with Greenberg and Robinson, and continuing onto future baseball Hall of Famer Hank Aaron and future Commissioner Bud Selig, the representative baseball figures understood that the two communities had fought through similar hardships, and both were trying not to be “foreigners in their own birth places.”⁷² Off the field, however, conflict endured. It stemmed from African Americans feeling like their social problems relating to racial injustice were being overshadowed by Hitler’s decimation of the Jews during the Holocaust. This social issue did not infringe on the progress made on the field, where the two groups lived under a singular veil: the baseball uniform.

There was a certain irony in World War II for African American troops going to fight in Germany, Italy, and Japan; they were fighting for rights abroad that they did not enjoy at home. In the 1940s and 1950s, not only did they lack the rights that they fought for during the Civil War, but the rise of Nazism also actually obscured many African Americans’ pleas for racial equality. Jewish American’s distress over the virulent anti-Semitism in Europe was given greater attention compared to African American’s disdain for their social conditions.⁷³ While the two groups might have united to fight for their nation, the same issues surrounding self-interest, which fractured the relationship between Abe Saperstein, Ed Gottlieb, and Syd Pollock and the African American Negro League owners from before, began to surface. Even though before the War Jewish Negro League promoters and African American Negro League owners and players were not totally assimilated, the former reached greater levels of assimilation compared to the latter in the postwar years.⁷⁴ Still, their relationship in the postwar years did see

growing levels of acceptance towards one another.

One measure of acceptance was in African American's sympathy towards Jews after the Holocaust. They may have never experienced concentration camps during the 1940s, but African Americans drew upon familial memories of slavery and subjugation to empathize with the Jewish plight.⁷⁵ Black nationalists frequently related their own terror and destruction inflicted by Jim Crow laws to the terror and destruction experienced at Dachau and other concentration camps.⁷⁶ Despite their shared sympathies of oppression, their relationship off the field remained vexed.

World War II provided American Jews with an opportunity to gain national prominence in business, politics and the arts. With their rise, Jews negatively affected African Americans' social progress and the rift between them intensified.⁷⁷ While some black nationalists called for unity between the groups, tensions between them grew virulent after the war. For example, black nationalist leader Marcus Garvey warned in his school teachings that Jews were "putting odds" against African Americans at all times. William Kelly, an African American writer, argued that in America, a black man always stands alone, demonstrating how African Americans felt isolated from Jewish Americans, even during a period when both groups had seen the repression of their kin.⁷⁸

While relations off the field in the postwar years remained tense, they ran counter to the new alliance formed by Jews and African Americans on the field. Although very few social, political and economic barriers were lifted for African Americans after World War II, in 1947 Jackie Robinson entered Major League Baseball and ended the sport's color barrier. Integration was not complete until the Boston Red Sox signed Pumpsie Green in 1959, but with Robinson, African Americans took a huge step forward towards becoming more American. While off the field, African Americans struggled to align with Jewish Americans, frequently seeing them as self-interested and selfish, on the field, Robinson found a Jewish ally who would help him throughout his career in the Major Leagues. The relationship emulated postwar relations between Jews and African Americans in baseball. That ally was

Jewish baseball legend Hank Greenberg. Even though the Jewish slugger was finishing his career in the Majors when Jackie entered the league, their relationship based on peace and unity, and devoid of antagonism and animosity, inspired better group relations off the field.

In May of 1947, while Greenberg was playing for the Pittsburgh Pirates, Robinson collided with Greenberg at first base after a wild throw from the Pirates shortstop pulled him off the bag. While Robinson was dusting the turf off his uniform, the two had one of the most memorable dialogues in baseball history. "Don't pay any attention to these guys when they get on you," Greenberg said. "You just stay in there and keep playing. You have the ability. You can become one of the game's great players. Just stick it out. Some day you'll make them eat their words."⁷⁹ As a minority, Greenberg could deeply sympathize with Robinson's marginalization within the sport. According to Commissioner Emeritus Bud Selig, the common understanding between them in this moment was never lost on Robinson and his family. Selig claimed it as "a very important moment for Jackie," and that "Jackie talked about it a lot. Actually Rachel [Jackie's Wife] talked about it to me one time about that. Because remember Enos Country Slaughter tried to spike and hurt him badly. Hank on the other hand said, 'you hang in there, you're doing great' and so on and so forth."⁸⁰ Smith of *The Pittsburgh Courier* suggested that had the incident involved a player other than Greenberg, it might have sparked a riot. Selig, the son of Jewish immigrants, later admitted that such a moment inspired both him and many others in baseball. In Selig's mind it represented the power baseball had and still has in drawing people together. The encounter between Robinson and Greenberg proves how baseball worked to unify Jewish and African Americans in spite of the issues that obstructed their unity off the field in the postwar years.

Smith also noted how open and accepting the two were of one another, writing how Robinson believed that Greenberg truly deserved "the position [GM of the Cleveland Indians] he now holds but because he has maintained an attitude with respect to race, color, and creed throughout his career that has been consistent." Later

Smith wrote, "one of the first to acknowledge his [Jackie] presence was Greenberg. It was not compulsory, it was not necessary."⁸¹ Robinson's openness to Greenberg permeated the thoughts and minds of the American public, showing that both minority groups were truly working towards mutual understanding and coexistence in the postwar years.

ROBINSON'S OPENNESS TO GREENBERG... SHOW[ED] THAT BOTH MINORITY GROUPS WERE TRULY WORKING TOWARDS MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND COEXISTENCE.

Greenberg and Robinson's relationship was devoid of any identity masking. The two understood the hardships that the other had encountered en route to their respective Major League careers. Unlike in the larger social context, the two men, an African American and a Jew, collaborated to demonstrate equality. In May of 1948, while Jackie was inactive for consecutive games due to an arm injury, Robinson wrote about his rooting American League interest in *The Courier* for his column "Jackie Says." Having great pride in their friendship, Robinson, without surprise, cheered for Greenberg's Indians:

Two of my best friends are connected with that club, Hank Greenberg and Larry Doby [another African American player]... Greenberg is one of the officials of the Indians and he's a wonderful man. I always admired him when he was playing first base for Detroit and Pittsburgh. He's one of baseball's great players and I also think he's one of the country's great men. I have many reasons for believing that, the most important of which is that he's a real man and believes in giving everyone a fair deal.⁸²

A genuine connection between African Americans and Jews was made much easier without hiding their respective racial and ethnic identities. Rather than negating their backgrounds, Greenberg

and Robinson embraced their common social experiences under a universal and united baseball uniform.

In January of 2000, the *New York Daily News* ran an editorial by Vic Ziegel examining the recently released documentary on Greenberg, *The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg*. In the editorial Ziegel wrote that the duo had “to the country’s great disgrace, too much in common. Robinson’s crime was the color of his skin. Greenberg’s mistake was being Jewish.”⁸³ In spite of their shared experiences of marginalization within the American social milieu, both became pioneers for equality on the diamond and in greater society. The two used their platform on the field to try to demonstrate how African Americans and Jews could assume an American identity through hard work and to encourage their respective groups to positively interact in the wider social milieu.

As Cahan wrote in 1903, American sport, particularly baseball, had a unique ability to Americanize minority groups and bridge them together. Selig emulated Cahan’s message, describing baseball’s unifying power as “remarkable... I can’t tell you why or how, it does, but it does in a wonderful way. Fans, it just links people together. Baseball dominates the culture of a community and brings people together.”⁸⁴ Tensions off the field were often alleviated on the diamond as Robinson and Greenberg proved. These figures showed how baseball could form friendship and diminish hate. But still, away from away from the field, World War II brought turmoil and separation to intergroup relationship. After the war, though, Aaron and Greenberg served as pioneers for unity on the field, wearing one uniform, the uniform, to quote Robinson, of a “fair deal.”⁸⁵

Conclusion, Baseball Without the Mask

Hank Greenberg and Jackie Robinson’s relationship in baseball laid much of the groundwork for positive relations between African Americans and Jewish baseball players in the postwar era. Years later, the relationship between Bud Selig and Hank Aaron also emulated tolerance and equality. In theory, there was no way that Selig and Aaron should have ever met. Selig, the son of Jewish immigrants, grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, while Aaron, the

grandson of slaves, grew up in Mobile, Alabama. In spite of these odds they eventually became lifelong friends. Much like in the case of Greenberg and Robinson, baseball drew them together, proving the sport's ability to diminish cultural and ethnic barriers. "Each one went through hell and each one came out on top with his dignity in tact and their friendship intact," Charles Steinberg, the former vice president of the Boston Red Sox and current president of the Pawtucket Red Sox said. "If you wanted to make the case that Bud Selig has a heart of gold, but is tough as nails you would call the movie, 'Hammer and Nails: American Immigration meets American Integration.' And it's a story of friendship."⁸⁶

Baseball initially served as the uniting factor in Aaron and Selig's relationship, but much like how Greenberg and Robinson formed a bond off the field, their friendship extended beyond baseball and remains strong up to the present day. However, it took years for African Americans and Jews to achieve this harmony. For much of the 20th century off the field, each group was skeptical of the other, questioning their self-interest and intent. But the post-war relations between the groups saw a turning point after the war with the bond between Robinson and Greenberg, who represented the ability for the two groups to rally behind a common history of discrimination in America. In this milieu, the groups truly began to march around the bases as one.

While important figures such as Andy Cohen and Mose Solomon, promoters like Ed Gottlieb, Syd Pollock, and Abe Saperstein, and writers like Lester Rodney and Wendell Smith, are integral in the history of African American-Jewish relations, it was not until the mid-20th century when Robinson and Greenberg broke the barriers between the groups that the duo represented an alliance formed around their common grievances over their shared minority status America. Oddly enough, while baseball is viewed as a quintessentially American game, in this case it did not mirror the reality of relationship in the broader American social context. Away from the diamond the relationship between African Americans and Jews was at times tense. But in baseball later in the 20th century, the group's relationship was forged through shared experience over-

came issues of resentment, suspicion, and distrust. 

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NEW YORK'S MUNICIPAL HOSPITAL CRISIS

The Creation of the Health and Hospitals Corporation

Hanan Lane is a first-year student studying Chemical Engineering at Tufts University. Her interests include scientific and historical research on public health. This paper was prepared for Senior Research Seminar at Phillips Exeter Academy under the guidance of Michael Golay.

New York State Senator Seymour Thaler entered the psychiatric ward of Bellevue Hospital on September 28, 1966, to the sight of rodents in the hallways, patients sitting alone on the floors, beds without sheets, and ceiling paint falling on sleeping patients. He and other politicians listened to accounts of patient deaths because, in a ward with four nurses for 600 patients, there was simply not enough medical staff to provide proper care. Thaler responded to the conditions at Bellevue with outrage and launched an aggressive campaign to improve the public hospital system.¹

A Bronx-born Queens Democrat, deemed a “high voltage leather lunged loner” by *The New York Times* and a man of “Instant Indignation” by his political colleagues, Thaler provoked outrage from hospital administrators and inspired praise from municipal hospital employees. On January 11, 1967, he charged on the Senate floor in Albany, “The medical establishment has presumed to act as God in the lives of the medically indigent.” He asserted that 500 mentally disabled children had been injected with hepatitis virus

for research, and that five out of 1,000 alcoholics at Bellevue died after research biopsies. Harlem Hospital, he went on, let interns and residents in surgery training remove the limbs of children with congenital deformities rather than provide therapy. His accusations revealed the growing trend in medicine of placing research above patient care as well as the toll of years of neglect owing to inadequate funding.²

Doctors, hospital administrators, and politicians fumed. In response to the charge of removing limbs, Dr. Anthony Shaw, Chief of Pediatric Surgery at Harlem Hospital, said, "It's the most incredible statement I've ever heard, it's beyond belief. It's simply not true." Deputy Mayor Timothy W. Costello broadly denounced Thaler's claims, deeming them a "heartless and reckless broadside smear attack on both the municipal and voluntary hospital system to serve his own political interests." However, a week after Dr. Luis Thomas, Chief of the Medical Division of New York University at Bellevue, denied allegations of deaths resulting from the biopsies, Hospitals Commissioner Joseph V. Terenzio publicly admitted the hospital had violated patient rights and had not obtained proper consent for the biopsies. Over the next several years, investigations into the hospital system revealed the validity of many charges of medical malpractice, including performing unnecessary surgery, experimenting without patient consent, giving experimental birth control devices without advising that the devices were experimental, and taking experimental blood tests in routine dental appointments. Thaler's allegations prompted several investigations into the hospital system, including the Piel Commission and the Burlage Report. The recommendations of the Piel Report led to the creation of the Health and Hospitals Corporations, a unified agency responsible for quality healthcare in New York City. However, this agency ultimately functioned to preserve the two-tiered system of medical care and did little to improve the conditions of the poor.³

Surrounded by controversy and in physical disrepair, Bellevue had lost its place as the gold standard for public medicine. Bellevue was founded in 1736 as a "Publick Workhouse and House of Correction" that included one six-bed ward. In the second half of

the 19th century, the institution moved to a larger building devoted exclusively to treating the sick. During the 1850s and 1860s, Bellevue transitioned from an almshouse to a renowned and influential teaching institution. The *New York Times* editorialized in 1926, “[Bellevue] is a mixture of the new and old, a symbol of progress and prejudice, of every-day toil and romance, of routine and innovation” whose history is “closely interwoven with the outward calamities that may befall any large city.” Fourteen years later, in one of the hospital’s brightest periods, *The New York Times* labelled it the “finest hospital in the world.” Bellevue rose and fell with the rhythm of the city, always demonstrating a remarkable commitment to public health. From the hospital’s best years, Bellevue boasts an array of impressive firsts. It established the first ambulatory service in the United States in 1869, performed the first Caesarean section and first blood transfusion, and founded the first American nursing school in 1887. Yet, in 1968, *The New York Times* announced, “The sad saga of the degeneration of the once proud and world renowned Bellevue Hospital is a striking example of the need for change.” By the mid 1960s, Bellevue and New York City had slipped from their esteemed position owing to years of financial turmoil.⁴

Bellevue and the public hospital system had clearly felt New York City’s long financial decline. Wracked by inadequate funding and mismanagement, the hospital had deteriorated into a “crumbling ruin,” described by New York State Senator Norman F. Lent as a “disgrace to every administrator in this city.” Just before his resignation, City Health Services Administrator Harold Brown said of the municipal hospitals, “There are two traditions. One is the tradition of helping the indigent to which I have devoted my life. The other tradition is falling plaster, lack of paint, a shortage of nurses and overcrowding.” Yet debate around Bellevue in the late 1960s and early 1970s revealed another divide in city hospitals: between municipal hospitals and those affiliated with medical schools. While medical schools often only cared for patients who furthered their research, municipal hospitals stretched their limited resources to treat all. A raft of proposals aimed to remedy the degradation of

municipal hospitals, revealing conflicting philosophies of the proper role of public hospitals within a medical industry increasingly dominated by specialized research centers.⁵

New York City's hospital system was exceptionally strained because of its greater commitment to providing medical care paired with its large impoverished population. Broad access to medical care in New York City stemmed from a civic tradition of the leading families, minority and trade union leaders, and some medical school faculty coming together to ensure care for all. The demographics of people receiving city support for hospital expenses shows the extent of this commitment. Of those whose hospital expenses were paid by the city, only 20 percent were on relief rolls; the rest were categorized as "medically indigent," a class of people not on relief rolls for whom an expensive illness would drain all funds. Additionally, the city experienced an exceptionally high need for health care. Beginning in the 1950s, New York saw much of its tax base erode through the emigration of the white middle class to suburbs. Following World War II, many middle class homeowners moved from the city, taking commerce and low-paying unskilled jobs with them. Simultaneously, poor African Americans and Hispanics migrating from the South and the Caribbean entered the city in search of work. They found that most jobs had been uprooted by the flight of the middle-class but lacked the financial means to live elsewhere. With fewer wealthy taxpayers and more of the indigent to assist, the city lacked the resources to support its hospitals in their moment of greatest demand.⁶

Exacerbating the plight of the municipal hospitals, by the mid 1950's medicine had grown more technologically advanced and demanded an array of specialized personnel. By this time, a functioning hospital needed a full staff of interns, radiologists, anesthesiologists, surgeons, radiologists, and pathologists. City hospitals lacked the prestige and monetary power to attract doctors and therefore could not attract residents and interns. In the 1960s, many public hospitals formed affiliations with local medical schools, offering access to a broad range of indigent patients who could serve as teaching and research material in exchange for the schools' strong

staff and hiring power. Bellevue had longstanding affiliations with New York University, Columbia, and Cornell, but over the decade, it grew increasingly dependent on the medical schools to attract doctors to the hospital. Affiliations with medical schools generally improved the staffing of the municipal hospitals but also widened the divide between private and public patients. The municipal hospitals served as dumping grounds for indigent patients suffering from unexceptional diseases who were rejected by affiliated medical schools and voluntary hospitals. As one health report summarized, "The ghettos of poverty were becoming the ghettos of medicine except for super-specialized centers seeking only a sample of 'interesting cases'."⁷

These factors, combined with the soaring cost of medicine, strained hospital financing. In the 1960s, New York City spent considerably more per person on healthcare than the rest of the country. While U.S. cities spent an average of \$146 per person per year, of which \$27 or 18.5 percent was funded through city taxes, New York City spent \$227 per person, of which \$68 or 30 percent came from taxes. These numbers only rose. Between 1961 and 1965, city government spending for health care increased 40 percent. This rise in the medical budget was at least partially a result of national increases in the cost of healthcare. From 1957-59 to 1964, the cost of medical care rose 19.5 percent, while the U.S. dollar inflated 8.2 percent, and reports in 1966 indicated hospital rates were increasing at five times the cost of living.⁸

Hospitals attributed this increase in cost to rising salaries for historically underpaid medical personnel and expensive technological advances. However, a 1970 study showed that these justifications aligned only loosely with reality. Though salaries for previously underpaid auxiliary personnel did increase over the period, a large portion of additional costs stemmed from a rise in the number of employees needed to care for a single patient and ballooning salaries for physicians and administrators. While the hospital orderlies' wages rose from about \$70 to \$100 per week from 1966 to 1970, the average yearly salaries of full time radiologists rose from \$26,000 to \$34,000.⁹

While hospitals blamed increasingly complex medical procedures for the price jumps, these increases largely came from the unnecessary duplication of such procedures across hospital facilities. From 1963 to 1968, the percentage of community hospitals with intensive care units jumped from 18 percent to 42 percent, with similar increases for renal dialysis programs, extensive diagnostic testing programs, and open heart surgery units. Montefiore (New York) Hospital Director Martin Cherkasky observed, "We have fifteen open heart programs in the city of New York. Seven of those open heart programs do eighty-three percent of all the heart surgery; eight of them do seventeen percent ... Do you know what it costs to maintain the specialized equipment and the specialized personnel to do one case a month?" Cherkasky's observation reflects the hospitals' indifference to running programs which effectively and economically served their communities. The rapidly growing duplicate programs and costly specialized facilities demonstrate the repercussions of granting uncontested control over funds to hospitals which were increasingly governed by prestige and research above community needs.¹⁰

On July 30, 1965, the federal government established Medicare and Medicaid, pledging to pay half the medical costs of elderly and poor Americans eligible for the programs. While the federal government set Medicare eligibility guidelines which included almost all elderly and disabled Americans, the states were allowed to set their own guidelines for Medicaid eligibility. New York City's experience with Medicare/Medicaid differed from that of the rest of the country because of its historically extensive support for the medical costs of the non-welfare poor. In many states, Medicaid considerably expanded funding for healthcare for indigent Americans, while in New York it primarily substituted federal for state dollars. When Medicaid came into effect, New York extended its previous medical support criteria to the new program. This set the income eligibility limit at \$6,000 a year for a family of four, \$2,100 higher than the next highest state, California. For the eligible, the city offered twice as many services as mandated by federal law across 21 municipal hospitals, more than 30 health centers, and all the voluntary hospi-

tals.¹¹

Medicaid inspired both hope and criticism from hospital administrators and healthcare advocates. Dr. Ray E. Trussel, Director of the School of Public Health and Administrative Medicine at Columbia University and former Commissioner of Hospitals in New York City, hailed Medicare as the solution to a two-class system of medicine. Medicaid gave poor patients the ability to choose where they went for care unlike the previous system which forced them into public hospitals. Many believed all of these patients would migrate from the public sector to the voluntary hospitals if the municipal hospitals did not improve. Trussel stated, "The difference between the private patient and the public or welfare patient is virtually disappearing." Cherkasky agreed, saying, "The historical reason for the municipal hospital system has now disappeared because substantially, through Medicaid and Medicare, virtually all people are financed." Other reports doubted the program's impact. A report by the Medical Society of the State of New York called Medicaid "nothing more than an expanded welfare program" with "substandard payments" capable only of "short-changing" and "stigmatizing" patients. Robb K. Burlage, author of a prominent health report from the period, doubted Medicaid would end medical discrimination and predicted that chronically-ill, socially unwanted, and "medically uninteresting" patients would experience the treatment previously reserved for the indigent.¹²

Burlage's warning proved to be prophetic as federal Medicaid support rapidly declined. In 1967, in response to unexpectedly high costs, the Congress placed a cap on federal support for Medicaid. As federal aid decreased, New York State cut its income eligibility limit from \$6,000 to \$5,300 and excluded almost all people between ages 26 and 64 from the program except for welfare recipients, the disabled, and the blind. After a second set of cuts in 1969, more than 1.2 million New York City residents out of a total population of 7.9 million were removed from the Medicaid program. In July 1967, municipal OPDs (outpatient departments) began charging an eight-dollar clinic fee to encourage people to enroll in Medicaid and find their own physicians. The fees prompted a dramatic

decrease in OPD visits without a clear increase in private hospital visits, suggesting patients may have been driven away from receiving any care. Following the Medicaid cuts, health planners expected patients to return to the municipal hospitals, but, instead, the visit load at municipal OPDs continued to drop. Patients were not visiting the hospitals because of the clinic fee, which had then risen to sixteen dollars. Following patient protests, the city reset the fees to a sliding scale from two dollars to sixteen dollars, but, even with these supposedly insignificant fees, clinic use continued to fall. Instead of expanding access to quality health care, Medicaid drove many indigent New Yorkers out of the health care market entirely.¹³

In this period, two major reports addressed the problems in the municipal hospital system. One report, the Piel Commission, was ordered by Mayor John Lindsay and headed by Gerard Piel, publisher of *Scientific American* and a board member at Radcliffe College, Harvard University, and the American Museum of Natural History. The other seven members on the commission shared his background; all worked on Wall Street or sat on the boards of universities and private hospitals. The other major report, the Burlage Report, was commissioned by the Institute of Political Studies, a liberal think tank based in Washington D.C., and headed by a young Texan, Robb K. Burlage.¹⁴

By age and political orientation, Burlage's perspective differed from that of Piel. Burlage brought his New Left ideological underpinnings to bear in his recommendations. Piel and Burlage also viewed the hospital system with contrasting perspectives and priorities. Burlage heavily criticized the medical school affiliation program and believed the government needed to exert greater control over public medicine. By contrast, Piel was hesitant to interfere with private medicine and centered his criticisms on bureaucratic inefficiency. The reports also differed in audience. The Burlage Report was mainly read in health care circles and was only briefly summarized in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post, Times Herald*. In contrast, the Piel Commission reached a large audience through front page coverage in *The New York Times* and warm editorial support. *The Times* deemed Piel's proposal to

free the hospital system from government red tape “ingenious and promising,” though it warned that “Mayor Lindsay’s task in carrying out the recommendations will not be simple” in a city so entangled in city, state, and federal regulations.¹⁵

The reports agreed on several problems in the municipal hospital system including a lack of primary and preventative care in many neighborhoods, a disregard of patient rights, a deficit of supplies and nurses, and paralyzing government red tape. The lack of community care resulted in increased patient days and preventable deaths as preventative care services simply did not exist in many neighborhoods. Services were extremely fragmented so that patients were often required to travel to several different clinics to receive the care they needed. Emergency rooms were far too busy to provide timely care or adequately replace primary doctors missing from patients’ communities. As Bellevue Administrator Dr. Randolph A. Wyman summarized on June 22, 1966, “If you’re acutely ill we can handle you. But if you’ve got diagnostic problems, it can take six weeks to get a diagnosis. If you’re convalescing you’re on your own.” According to City Commissioner of Health George James, 13,000 poor New Yorkers died each year of preventable illnesses owing to unsanitary conditions in their neighborhoods and lack of access to care. Though New York intended to extend access to healthcare with inclusive policies, the lack of care options in poverty stricken neighborhoods crippled these goals. The quality of care available to indigent patients begged the question, as Cherkasky once exclaimed, “What the devil good is it if you care about the poor but you don’t deliver?”¹⁶

The lack of care encompassed only a small portion of the affronts faced by indigent patients; some of the most offensive conditions were found within the hospitals. Dale Harro, an employee of the New York State Department of Health, wrote in a 1967 report commissioned by the New York State Legislature that he was struck by a “sense of worthlessness or lack of dignity or humanity” upon entering the maternity ward at Bellevue Hospital. On his tour, he saw nurseries too dark to reveal the condition of the infants, bassinets covered by netting to keep away flies, and mothers housed in

open wards. In the same report, Senator Lent criticized the hospital system for viewing "its patients with cynicism and cruelty" for "more than two decades." He recognized that the hospitals denied poor patients equipment and medicine that would save their lives, yet found himself powerless to salvage the many dying institutions.¹⁷

SENATOR LENT CRITICIZED THE HOSPITAL
SYSTEM FOR VIEWING "ITS PATIENTS WITH CYNICISM
AND CRUELTY" FOR "MORE THAN TWO DECADES."

Many of the faults stemmed from a dearth of supplies and auxiliary personnel. Bellevue and other municipal hospitals lacked linens, towels, sanitary napkins, and diapers due to a rigid purchasing system that prevented administrators from quickly acquiring more supplies. William A. Nolen, an intern at Bellevue, described how he and other interns were forced to reuse needles because there were often only two or three needles for ten patients. "One of my fellow interns," he wrote, "once he found a needle that worked well, changed neither needle nor syringe... Fortunately, none of his victims, at least to my knowledge, developed hepatitis." His casual tone effectively captures the apathy with which medical staff at Bellevue viewed their patients. In all likelihood, the staff's inability to provide proper supplies prompted such an attitude. Bellevue also suffered from a shortage of nurses. In some sections of the hospital, nurses placed the sickest patients in an open ward closest to their station so that one nurse could take care of all the patients. Though all hospitals in the city were plagued by low numbers of nurses and other auxiliary personnel, the problem was most severe in municipal hospitals. In 1966, there were half as many nurses per hundred patients in municipal hospitals as voluntary hospitals and significant vacancies in social service workers, clerical positions, dietitians, and watchmen.¹⁸

Government red tape greatly contributed to municipal hospitals' difficulty hiring personnel and purchasing supplies. Years of regulations to keep city officials accountable had created strict rules

for how funds were spent and convoluted approval processes for what would seem to be simple purchases. The Piel Commission reported that it took 15 steps in as many as four departments over an average of 88 days to make a routine purchase, a process that would take four days in a well-run voluntary hospital. Hiring an X-ray technician took 18 authorizations in three agencies each with delay times averaging nine months. Line budgets further stripped control from those running the hospitals. Instead of allocating money for programs and services, the city apportioned money for specific supplies and job titles. This meant that once the budget was set, it was almost impossible to change how money was spent or the way the hospital was run. Often authority was concentrated in offices far removed from the sites they oversaw; effective commissioners succeeded by ignoring those above them and breaking regulations.¹⁹

The reports differed most in their opinions on affiliation between public hospitals and medical schools. The Piel Commission supported affiliation but asserted that it could not and was not meant to solve all of the hospitals' problems. Piel wrote, "A summary evaluation of these contracts must find that they have largely accomplished the purpose for which they were designed: to raise the employment of competent full-time and part-time professional personnel." The Burlage Report broadly denounced affiliation and rejected many the fundamental claims of its creator, Ray E. Trussel. Championing a viewpoint shared by many voluntary hospital administrators and members of the medical school elite, Trussel had asserted that affiliation was "the only way hospitals can be equal in quality with medical schools" because medical schools and voluntary hospitals had better doctors, stronger administration, and more creative management. He believed a "triad of teaching, patient care and research" would elevate the municipal system. In his report, Burlage challenged the assumptions that doctors from the medical schools necessarily provided superior care because of their specialized degrees, that the government should provide funds while leaving planning to private interests, and that the public sector would fail even if well-funded. He supported a strong government role in health management and fundamentally disagreed with



Photo: Bellevue underwent significant expansion in the 1970's to continue serving New York's poorest.
Kenneth Wilsey. Courtesy of FEMA News.

leaving the hospitals to the private sector.²⁰

A host of claims by Senator Thaler about the corruption of the affiliation program prompted Burlage's investigation. Thaler charged, "While nurses complain there are no wheelchairs, no towels, that linen could only be changed on patients' beds once every three days, while broken windows remain unrepaired, these funds were being diverted from patients to comfort-affiliated personnel." Thaler argued that the affiliation program had misallocated city funds towards non-essential expenses and prompted widespread corruption. He asserted the city had lost \$100 million through payroll padding, equipment transfer, and waste. When accused of exaggerating, he produced a 62-page report of examples, including one hospital chief of staff who, when interviewed, could only list about 20 regular employees in his department when there were about 50 on payroll.²¹

Abuses within the affiliation system suggested differences in ideology between municipal hospitals and medical schools. Dr. Valentino D. B. Mizzia, the chief anesthesiologist at Bellevue, bluntly described the distinction: "The city concept is that you have to take care of everybody, with no resources. The medical center concept

is that you take care of nobody unless you want to and bring everything to bear on it." The medical schools' primary concern was research, and often, they did not provide comprehensive care to patients who did not further their goals. After investigating medical school practices, one prominent medical reporter questioned: "Does professional responsibility end at the exit door to the operating room and the research lab?" Burlage believed the medical and municipal ideologies were irreconcilable and argued that academic institutions would never provide quality care. He defined the goals of medical care as improving general health, not exclusively treating acute specialized illnesses, and called for an alternative to affiliation. Piel similarly recognized the differences in ideology but asserted, "The community hospital should be obliged to receive and care for anyone in the community who requires its service. The medical school and medical center on the other hand, must be permitted reasonable selectivity in the admission of patients." Instead, he argued, the city must create efficiently run community hospitals to fill this gap.²²

Selective patient admission in the voluntary hospitals often caused the care of socially unwanted patients or patients with unexceptional diseases to be left to the municipal hospitals. Burlage wrote of the practice of sending rejected patients to public hospitals through the ambulance service, "There is almost a direct association between city ambulance delivery of patients—so crucial for the stranded medically needy—and the rejection process of many hospitals." Young doctors at municipal hospitals often referred to city ambulances as "garbage trucks" and condemned the way they "dump[ed]" unwanted patients on municipal hospitals. The demographics of patients treated in municipal hospitals reflected this practice. One doctor at Bellevue asserted, "There's no question that Bellevue is a dirty old hospital, but the kind of patients who come to Bellevue are dirtier." Municipal hospitals like Bellevue were often forced to care for poor patients with unexceptional diseases. The affiliation program created an atmosphere centered on research and teaching at the expense of public health and in which patients either served doctor's personal agendas or were discarded because

of their inability to do so.²³

Burlage struggled to determine the success of affiliation through examining a variety of factors, including diagnostic service rates, autopsy percentages, prenatal care neglect, and infant and overall death rates. Diverse and contradictory criteria defined the success of a given affiliation, making it difficult to judge the overall impact. For example, a journal defending the Morrisania-Montefiore affiliation cited an increase in operating procedures as evidence that patient care had improved, while a report on Mount Sinai-Elmhurst used a decrease in operations to demonstrate doctors had made efforts to avoid surgery when unnecessary. Although looking at the specific situations in each hospital made these statements seem less contradictory, there was no single clear metric for the success of an affiliation program. Examining city wide statistics gave an inconclusive image of the success of the program. Some statistics suggest affiliation had a positive impact. The number of chest X-rays at municipal hospitals increased from 230,000 in 1961 to 256,000 in 1965, and the overall death rate decreased from 8.1 percent to 6.97 percent. Others gave a less positive image of the program. The autopsy percentage, cited as a measure of the interest of the hospital staff in running a program with high academic standards, increased slightly for the city from 1961 to 1965 but decreased considerably at Bellevue and decreased in the city overall between 1961 and 1964. The infant mortality rate decreased from 1961 to 1965 but increased during some years within the interval. Burlage concluded that affiliation over the period seemed to have slightly improved the functioning of the municipal hospitals but at an enormous cost to the city government.²⁴

The Burlage report confirmed many of Thaler's charges on affiliation. Burlage argued that the voluntary hospitals, not the patients, were the primary beneficiaries of affiliation through more research funds, greater selectivity in patient admissions, and therefore more space for paying patients and more money for new equipment. He found evidence of payroll padding, use of city funds for luxuries such as staff parties, and out of town conferences exclusively for affiliated employees. Doctors also cheated their responsibilities under

affiliation. Burlage exposed numerous accounts of attending physicians signing in and leaving or calling a nurse to sign in for them. Often "full-time" doctors worked 20-25 hour weeks and ran private practices outside of their hospital hours, including one first deputy commissioner making a \$25,000 yearly salary (more than \$180,000 in today's values).²⁵

Despite evidence of these abuses, city officials failed to control affiliated institutions. In 1967, Mayor John Lindsay announced several measures to control affiliation, suggesting that such controls had not existed previously, including regular reports of affiliate payroll, time records showing reasonable hours, and clarification of "administrative expenses" in contracts. Although sanctions requiring affiliated institutions to return unspent city funds each year and guidelines for equipment use were previously in place, Lindsay promised that the city would begin enforcing these regulations and redistributing excess equipment to places of need. Thaler's charges of affiliation abuse roused public outcry against the medical schools and inspired investigations into their operations, but much of the responsibility for the freedom taken by affiliated institutions lay with a lack of oversight by the city government. Although city officials were tasked with oversight of affiliated hospitals, these officials felt they could only attract doctors and strengthen the municipal hospitals by further delegating to private institutions. Affiliation had decreased the number of employees working directly for the city through recruitment from city positions into affiliated institutions and demoralized groups willing to fight for public hospitals. When the flaws of affiliation surfaced in the late 1960s, city politicians felt unable to limit the power of the medical schools and voluntary hospitals.²⁶

Ultimately, the city governments lacked the power and confidence to significantly restrain the medical schools and voluntary hospitals, making any proposal based in regulation of the private sector untenable. Despite the dissimilar focuses of the Burlage and Piel reports, they agreed that the city needed to create one body to deliver health services. Burlage recommended the creation of a Metropolitan Health Services agency to run all health programs

supported with city taxes that would take over the Board of Health, Board of Hospitals, Community Mental Health Board, and the role of the Chief Medical Examiner. The board would represent the interests of health care recipients and ensure that the structure of the hospital system benefited patients. Day-to-day operation of hospitals and health clinics would be decentralized to the neighborhoods and individual hospitals. His proposal ensured public input by requiring that private hospitals be put under a “board of representative consumers” to receive tax support.²⁷

The Piel Commission recommended a Health and Hospitals Corporation that would unite the current dual system of health care into one body managed by a unified agency to create clear responsibility for quality health care. This new agency would be separate from existing government structures with an independent board of 16 members, nine of whom would be appointed by the mayor. The commission hoped that the Health and Hospitals Corporation would eradicate red tape in health services. The corporation would operate all city hospitals and health centers, repair and construct facilities, create a system-wide data processing, communication and purchasing system, and promote decentralized community health services by working with the Health Services Administration. Surprisingly, the report did not mention how the corporation would achieve its primary goal of uniting the two systems. One member stated that they chose to leave this out because the relationship between the private and public sectors was unpredictable, although others speculated it was because the nonbusiness members, Piel and Eveline Burns, supported a strong public role while the others did not.²⁸

Yet the philosophies behind Piel and Burlage’s similar recommendations proved very different. Piel explained, “The heart of our recommendation is that the city of New York get out of the health services business, that it end its futile and defeated attempt to deliver services to the ultimate consumer and needer of those services.” While Piel and his commission abandoned hope in the public sector’s ability to provide medical care, Burlage warned against hailing a departure from the public sector as an escape from

the fundamental problems in medical care. He wrote, "There are especially no escapes by completely leaving these decisions to large private 'corporate' domains, no matter how well motivated or ostensibly 'non-profit.'" Where Burlage hoped to promote more effective government and consumer control of the hospitals with his Metropolitan Health Services agency, Piel intended to free the hospitals entirely of clumsy and inadequate government attempts at health care.²⁹

Piel's corporation idea proved to be the only feasible proposal. Though politicians and administrators had suggested Medicaid would allow the merging of the municipal hospitals into the voluntary system, the private sector had no interest in taking over many of the decrepit and costly municipal hospitals. The hospitals system was predicated upon two classes of patients and hospitals allowing research institutions to selectively admit poor patients as research material and discard the rest to the lower class hospitals. In 1966, Dr. Trussel said of the need for municipal hospitals, "One of the reasons for the municipal hospitals is to take care of patients nobody wants." When asked if patients were unwanted because of their inability to pay, he replied, "No, because they're not... interesting cases." The voluntary hospitals supported the corporation idea because it freed them from greater responsibility for patient care. They hoped a corporation that would take over the municipal hospitals would limit regulatory efforts by the City government and alleviate the need for comprehensive patient care outside of the municipal system.³⁰

Mayor Lindsay reacted coolly to the commission's proposal. He had hoped for a political endorsement of greater government control in health care and found the Health and Hospitals Corporation to be dominated by private interests that were only loosely publicly accountable. Community members also opposed the corporation proposal. Much of this opposition was likely based on distrust of the Department of Hospitals and exacerbated by a 1969 budget crisis that inspired fears that a corporation would be willing to close hospitals to balance books whereas the city had not been able to. The support of the medical-school elite, the Department of Hos-

pitals and the Bureau of Budget easily overpowered mayoral and community resistance. The drafters of the proposal had won private, union, and government support by promising the corporation would not force a merging of private and public hospitals, allowing corporation employees to remain city employees to protect union advances, and preserving the power of officials in the Department of Hospitals. To pacify the public, the City Council passed the proposal with the inclusion of a “community advisory board” for each municipal hospital.³¹

The Health and Hospitals Corporation, effective July 1, 1970, looked little like the politically and financially independent authority envisioned by the Piel Commission. Of the 16-member Board of Directors, 15 were appointed by the mayor, although five had to be approved by the City Council. Only the 16th member, the director of the board, was elected by the board members. *The New York Times* criticized of the composition of the board: “For the city to make a contract with such a corporation... would be very much like the city’s making a contract with itself.” Although Piel had planned that “[i]n another couple years, the present great voluntary hospitals [would] be indistinguishable from the municipal hospitals in terms of the sources of their income,” the corporation received at minimum \$175 million from the City from the general tax fund each year instead of fully funding itself through hospital profits and Medicaid funding.³²

Others asserted the corporation failed to change trends in health planning or allow for meaningful public participation. Burlage complained that the corporation failed to make the fundamental changes necessary to truly improve public health. He argued, “Until you’ve made sure that every small area, every neighborhood of the city has an adequate frontline of primary medical services, until people in [those neighborhoods] are involved in making decisions about health, the words public authority or regionalization are meaningless.” Health analyst Barbara Ehrenreich denounced the corporation’s failure to move health organization from a “private, elitist, and essentially secret” process dominated by experts and commercial interests. Her comments echoed Burlage’s complaint

that "the word advisory [was] too weak" and endorsed his preference for "community boards, period." Following the passage of the corporation proposal, *The New York Times* editorialized, "Mayor Lindsay went about halfway" on hospital reform. In coming years, this assessment proved accurate.³³

The corporation's connection to existing structures slowed its operations and limited its effectiveness. Despite provisions by the drafters of the legislation that gave the corporation more than a year to select the board, organize its structure, and decide on policy, the members of the board were seated just three months before it began operations. When it took control of the municipal hospitals, the corporation inherited the \$140 million debt of the Department of Hospitals. Although after negotiations the city agreed to cover \$130 million of the debt payable back to the city in yearly installments of \$13 million, the corporation ended its first year with a deficit of \$32.2 million. By the corporation's third year, it continued to suffer from inadequate financial resources. In the 1971-1972 fiscal cycle, \$235 million of a total budget of \$692 million came from city taxes. This lack of funds resulted in high attrition rates; from September 1971 to July 1972, the corporation reduced its 41,500 person workforce by 1,500 employees.³⁴

While the corporation reduced purchasing times to days or weeks and formed community advisory boards, it failed at its primary task of decentralizing the municipal hospital system. Several years after the formation of the board, hospital administrators and doctors complained of their lack of power to run the hospitals, and several hospital administrators left their positions for jobs in other cities due to high dissatisfaction. Jeffery N. Daly, a former corporation employee complained, "The corporation is neither in the city government totally or out of it. It is a halfway approach to a problem that needed a total solution." Much of the corporation's failure stemmed from its tentative approach to decentralization that created overlapping responsibilities between it and the hospitals. The board may have delegated more successfully had it been given more time to organize before beginning operations, but it still would have been hindered by poor relations with the hospital administrators

and its responsibility to the unions, the Department of Budget, and the Department of Public Works.³⁵

Despite the Piel Commission's hope to provide quality health-care to the indigent, the creation of the Health and Hospitals Corporation served to preserve the two-tiered system of medical care. HHC continued to struggle with funding and organization over the next several decades. A 1989 article in *The New York Times* with the headline "Crisis in Hospitals: New York Health System's Problems Resist Quick or Inexpensive Solutions" detailed many of the same issues present in the first years of the corporation. Nineteen years after the creation of the corporation, public hospitals continued to complain of overcrowding, long emergency room waits, insufficient funding, and a shortage of nurses. In 1995, *The Times* asserted with respect to needed changes in the public hospitals, "HHC is still a highly political and heavily unionized institution where even small changes require many levels of approval." In 2009, the *New York Observer* called the corporation "a cumbersome, outdated bureaucracy in desperate need of radical change." Over several decades, the corporation failed to decentralize or significantly reform municipal hospitals. The hospital system entered the 21st century suffering from the same deficiencies of the late 1960s.³⁶

Bellevue continues to provide care to patients that no other hospitals want with little support from the Health and Hospitals Corporation or the federal and state governments. On November 14, 1995, 11-year-old Yiomaris Sanchez entered New York Hospital, a private hospital in Manhattan, with her mother and an English-speaking friend. Sanchez suffered from advanced leukemia and had obtained a special visa to receive medical care in the United States. In initial tests, New York Hospital determined she had a fever and dangerously high levels of uric acid and white blood cells. They also learned she had no insurance. During the examination, another doctor, Sabina Bizzoco, called Bellevue to try to arrange a transfer. Dr. Bizocco suggested the transfer for medical reason; Sanchez needed a bone marrow transplant, a procedure New York Hospital did not do. Bellevue responded that they did not do the procedure either and that New York Hospital could likely provide

better care because of its strong pediatric oncology department. Not long after the conversation, Sanchez was discharged from the hospital. The discharge slip reading: "Diagnosis/Condition on Discharge—Leukemia; Discharge Instructions—Allopurinol, 100mg; Referral to HHC Hospital as soon as possible" provides the only evidence of the conditions of Sanchez's discharge.³⁷

A PATIENT LIKE SANCHEZ MAY HAVE BEEN REJECTED FROM THE PRIVATE HOSPITAL SYSTEM... BUT SHE ALWAYS WOULD HAVE FOUND A PLACE AT BELLEVUE.

The next morning, Sanchez's mother brought her to Bellevue where she was admitted into the intensive care unit. Diagnosed as too weak for a bone marrow transplant, Sanchez was treated with chemotherapy—a procedure New York Hospital could have provided. She died after four months at Bellevue where she received care worth approximately \$150,000. Meanwhile, press coverage of Sanchez's case prompted federal investigations into her discharge from New York Hospital. After a four-month review, the federal Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) ruled that the hospital had violated the conditions of its Medicaid funding for discharging Sanchez in an unstable condition after "only minimal treatment." Yet again, Bellevue provided care to a socially unwanted patient at a tremendous cost to itself. Throughout history, a patient like Sanchez may have been rejected from the private hospital system for various reasons—her race and economic status, her lack of value for teaching or research, or, as is the case today, her lack of health insurance, but she always would have found a place at Bellevue. The HCFA investigation prompted minimal reforms in New York Hospital but did nothing to lessen Bellevue's burden of caring for the city's poor. Numerous reports and investigations have addressed the flaws and needs of Bellevue Hospital, but none have created significant reform. At its core, the hospital's problems, blamed on mismanagement, chronic underfunding, and bureaucratic processes, stem from a political system that places little weight on the medical care of its neediest citizens, coupled with a partnership with the pri-

vate sector which cares for the poor only when convenient.³⁸



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EDITOR BIOGRAPHIES

MAREN HARRIS (EDITOR-IN-CHIEF) is a senior majoring in History and Geography with a certificate in Environmental Studies. This is her third year serving on the ARCHIVE Editorial Board. After graduation, she hopes to work in the UW System in admissions or advising. Along with ARCHIVE, she works in the History Department office and is membership coordinator for Phi Alpha Theta, the History Department honor society.

DAVID CLERKIN is a senior pursuing a major in History with a certificate in African Studies. In pursuing his History major he has conducted independent research into the culture of political assassination in Shanghai in the early 20th century, and the influence of German immigration on Wisconsin's drinking culture. He will begin UW-Madison's School of Library and Information Studies MA program in the fall.

ISAAC MEHLHAFF is a junior majoring in History, Political Science, and Economics. His senior thesis will examine how agricultural communities react to international trade by appealing to perceptions of national identity and traditional lifestyle, specifically through the lens of coffee farmers in southern Mexico in the early 1990s. After graduation, he intends to either work in international trade policy or go directly to graduate school.

HILARY MILLER is a sophomore majoring in Political Science and History with a certificate in Jewish Studies. She has focused on Jewish and Israeli history, specifically the history of Zionism in the United States. She is the president of the Student Alliance for Israel-Madison and is an editor for Sifting and Winnowing, the political science undergraduate research journal. She hopes to one day work for the Anti-Defamation League or in foreign diplomacy.

RACHEL POPE is a junior majoring in History and Communication Arts, with a certificate in German. She is currently interning at the Wisconsin Historical Society Press and at the Office of the Chancellor. During her time in the university, she has specialized in

the history of class anxieties during the 1800s cholera outbreaks in London.

LUCAS SCZYGELSKI is a junior majoring in Political Science and History. In his undergraduate research he has focused on populist movements from the Roman Gracchi through 20th century labor movements. As a political writer for the Daily Cardinal student newspaper, he got the chance to take note of similar populist impulses during the 2016 presidential election.

MADELINE SWEITZER is a graduating senior majoring in History, Political Science, and Journalism. She recently completed an internship with the Wisconsin Historical Society Press, currently serves as The Badger Herald's Editorial Board chair and copy chief, and also interns at the Wisconsin State Journal and a political research and consulting firm. Her research on Japanese World War II brides was recently published in the Vanderbilt Historical Review.

CONNOR TOUHEY is a (first year) senior, majoring in History, Political Science, Journalism, and Strategic Communication. In addition to sitting on the board of ARCHIVE, Connor serves as the opinion editor and Editorial Board member at The Badger Herald. Previously, he has spent time working in communications for Wisconsin political organizations. His historical research focuses on the history of conflict, primarily in the 20th century.

EMMA WATHEN is a senior majoring in Communication Arts and History with a certificate in Entrepreneurship. She has interned with Eclectic Pictures, Walny Legal Group, and the Office of Representative Josh Zepnick. This spring, Emma was the director of photography for her independent film capstone and completed her senior honors thesis on Wisconsin's eugenic marriage law. Following graduation, she intends to work on her novel.

BACK COVER IMAGE

Flamingos cover Bascom Hill during the first week of classes as
part of a Pail and Shovel Party prank.
September 1979

Image courtesy of
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