Letter from the Editors

The Writing Center Review is a student publication dedicated to student writers who have shown excellence in their writing assignments at Kent State University at Stark. It is compiled, edited, and written by students with the help of the faculty on campus. The Writing Center Review is truly a place for students to showcase their talent and to also learn from their peers. The writing showcased in The Writing Center Review also exemplifies the most important goal of writing and writing assignments—to engage in a dialogue with the academic world, both regionally and outside our campus.

Our gratitude is also extended to Jeff Grametbauer and his staff at The Print Shop of Canton, Inc. for their assistance and willingness to work with us to create this publication. We also thank the faculty members who participated on our Faculty Reader staff.

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The staff of The Writing Center Review would like to extend our thanks to all of the students that submitted this year. Without our student writers, this publication wouldn’t be possible. The submissions this year were fabulous and the competition was incredibly difficult. We would also like to thank the faculty that continually encourage their students to submit. Without both of them, we would be looking at a collection of blank paper.

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The Birth of a Nation: History in Black and White Sectional Conflict and Civil War

By Jesse Curtis

This paper was for Dr. James Seelye’s Section Conflict and Civil War, discusses and analyzes the historical accuracy of the film “The Birth of a Nation.”

On February 18, 1915, the President of the United States and his cabinet gathered to watch a film at the White House. Securing a presidential audience, in the executive mansion no less, was a significant publicity coup for the backers of the new film. Titled The Birth of a Nation, the story traced the wrenching changes the country and the South in particular, experienced as it passed through the crucible of civil war and Reconstruction. A transfixed President Wilson, the first southerner to hold the office since the war, is said to have remarked, “my only regret is that it is all so terribly true.”¹ The President's enthusiastic response was no doubt helped along by the film's prominent quotations of his own written work.

The vast majority of white Americans shared Wilson's favorable impression. The Birth of a Nation became a nationwide sensation. At a time when movies were generally considered cheap twenty minute novelties, Birth was something entirely new. Clocking in at three hours, and featuring unprecedented uses of cameras and editing, with a forty person orchestra accompanying the artfully constructed narrative, it represented a leap forward in film-making. Audiences had never seen anything like this before, and they paid accordingly. Ultimately viewed by an estimated 200 million people, when accounting for inflation it may be the highest grossing film of all time.²

Indeed, in both technical and cultural importance, few films are its equal. Yet despite its enormous influence, it is much less known to modern audiences than the next generation's civil war epic of similarly dubious historicity, Gone With The Wind. This is regrettable, for few films in the American pantheon are more revealing of the deepest cultural undercurrents that animated white Americans for most of the nation's history. Perhaps that is precisely part of the reason the film is now so little known. In The Birth of a Nation, we are confronted with blatant racism that met with the approval of the average white American, not in some distant past, but in the time of our great-grandparents. We may ignore it, but we cannot fully escape it because it is still here, preserved as an indictment forever, on film.

The Birth of a Nation is based on Thomas Dixon's novel The Clansmen, published in 1905. Dixon was one of the south's most popular writers at the turn of the century, and his work found a wide audience in the north as well. His novels promoted sectional reconciliation through

white racial unity and the suppression of blacks from taking any part in the public life of the nation. Bringing the story to life on film was the job of David Wark Griffith. Born in 1875, he grew up with a deeply romantic view of the Old South and a reverence for his father, who had served as a Confederate cavalry officer in the Civil War.

After struggling as an actor, Griffith began making movies by 1908, but he had never undertaken anything approaching the scale of *The Birth of a Nation*. This did not deter Griffith, for he had a sense of messianic self-importance that was well-suited to the task. “What we film tomorrow,” he said, “will strike the hearts of the world.” He spoke of the new medium as a “power that can make men brothers and end war forever.” And with *Birth*, Griffith indeed succeeded in striking the hearts of the world, or at least, his fellow white Americans. In the following years he continued to make more films, such as *Intolerance* (1916) and *Broken Blossoms* (1919), but he never recaptured the success he had found with *The Birth of a Nation*. By the early 1920s his career as a successful filmmaker had fizzled out.

As Griffith's adaptation begins, the audience is introduced to two families, the Stoneman's of Pennsylvania and the Cameron's of South Carolina. Austin Stoneman is a rising star in Congress, father of three children, and an abolitionist. The Cameron’s are a genteel family of the planter class of Piedmont, with an elderly patriarch heading his household of five children and numerous slaves. The Stoneman's visit the Cameron's and various romantic entanglements ensue among the young men and women, only to be ruptured by the arrival of civil war. The youngest brothers of the respective families meet on the battlefield and die in each others' embrace. The elder Cameron brother, Ben, is shown leading a gallant but futile charge at Petersburg, as his Northern opponents hold their fire in appreciation of his valor.

By war's end the Camerons are reduced to poverty, Lincoln is dead, and Congressman Stoneman is now the most powerful politician in the country. He and his Mulatto understudy Silas Lynch come to Piedmont to oversee Radical Reconstruction. The Camerons are forced to endure numerous indignities, such as black soldiers claiming an equal right to use the sidewalk. Blacks are encouraged to vote by northern carpetbaggers while southern whites are disenfranchised. We're shown the disorderly black-led legislature passing a bill for interracial marriage, as the black legislators leer eagerly at the white woman in the galleries.

In his moment of despair, Ben Cameron has an epiphany as he sees two white children under a white sheet scare some black children away. Meanwhile, a former slave named Gus, with ideas put in his head by unscrupulous carpetbaggers, attempts to woo Ben's youngest sister, Flora. After a chase through the woods, Flora jumps off a cliff to her death rather than allow herself to be touched by a black man. The Klan now makes its appearance, finds Gus, and lynch him. In response, Silas Lynch lets his black troops run rampant. “Crazed” black mobs roam the streets and Lynch decides he wants to marry Congressman Stoneman's daughter Elsie. This is too much even for the radical abolitionist. He is horrified by the idea of his daughter with a Mulatto. But Stoneman is put under guard and is powerless to protect Elsie.

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Meanwhile, members of the Cameron and Stoneman families find themselves cornered in the same building, and join together to defend themselves against the black mobs. When it seems all hope is lost, the Klan arrives and routes the blacks, reunites Congressman Stoneman with his daughter, and restores white rule to Piedmont. In the final scene, Ben Cameron and Elsie Stoneman are married, as two families so recently divided by a bitter civil war are united once again in their common whiteness.

For white audiences throughout the country this was considered not only compelling drama, but truthful history as well. Many blacks thought differently. The fledgling NAACP undertook a campaign of boycotts that succeeded in getting the film banned from some cities, at least temporarily. They also tried picketing and other tactics. When a large group of blacks and a few white allies attempted to buy tickets at the Boston premiere, theater managers falsely claimed it was sold out and violently turned them away. An unsympathetic New York Times duly reported the story with the headline, “Negroes Mob Photo Play.” The NAACP felt they had to try to censor the film, for they knew that its message of racial violence was not received in a cultural vacuum. In St. Louis, pamphlets promoting a new segregation law were passed out at the theater. In Indiana, a man shot and killed a black teen after watching the film, while cries of “lynch him!” could be heard in Houston as the crowd watched the scene of Flora jumping to her death.

Black leader W.E.B. Du Bois pointed out that the number of lynchings in 1915 was greater than the nation had seen for over a decade. Most ominously, 1915 was also the year of the Klan's rebirth. And though the impetus The Birth of a Nation gave to the Klan has at times been overstated, it would be used as a recruiting tool for decades to come, bringing the white supremacist group into the mainstream of American society and politics.

The rough summation above of the major themes is perhaps enough to convince the modern reader that The Birth of a Nation suffers from severe historical inaccuracies, but it is worth delving into what exactly these errors were, especially since they represent the mainstream of white opinion in 1915. While the second half of the film gets most of the attention for its racist content, the problems of historical inaccuracy begin right from the start. The South is portrayed as a place of utter tranquility, full of happy, contented slaves. The idea that as many as a third of these slaves may see their families destroyed through sale, that they may not want to be slaves, indeed, that they may have any independent thought or agency at all, is beyond Griffith's imagination. When war comes, according to Griffith, it is simply because “The power of the sovereign states...is threatened by the new administration.”

There is no mention of President Lincoln’s clearly stated aim to not interfere with the existing institutions of the states, nor of the Republican Party’s extensive effort to appease radical secessionists. Right from the beginning, the South is portrayed as a noble victim of aggression, rather than a region held captive to its own radicalism.

The war is presented as a noble battle between valiant white brothers fighting for

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5 Niderost, “The Birth of a Nation,” 78.
the right as they saw it, an idea epitomized by the Stoneman and Cameron brothers dying together in an embrace of friendship, and Ben Cameron's gallant charge that earned the respect of his foes. This was very appealing to the audiences of 1915.

Thorny issues of slavery, race, and responsibility for the war were subsumed under the imperative of sectional reconciliation. It mattered little why the soldiers fought or who was in the right; what mattered was the common, poor, white citizen-soldier who fought with gallantry and honor. Thus, by 1915, Memorial day was a time to honor Union and Confederate dead, Robert E. Lee was a national hero, and the Republican Party's call for free elections in the South lay nearly two decades in the past. It was as if blacks had just been spectators in the war. White reunification required that blacks be rendered invisible not only in the present, but the past as well.

As the story progresses into Reconstruction, the real villains of the film are revealed to be the northern carpetbaggers who come South and put reckless and silly notions in the heads of former slaves. The freedmen, being childlike and simple, cannot possibly think for themselves. Blacks vote just because white northerners tell them to do so. The interracial state governments they set up are portrayed as incompetent, presiding over a South that is in anarchy. By 1915, such views of Reconstruction were by no means confined to the South, and they had the imprimatur of academic historians. Known as the Dunning school, a group of scholars at Columbia University advanced the notion that Reconstruction's failure was inevitable because it was not based on the great truth of black inferiority.

Starting with these explicitly racist assumptions, historians of the Dunning school could only conclude that Reconstruction was a disaster not for having failed, but for having been tried at all. The "scholarship" of the Dunning school, such as it was, fell apart in the decades after the civil rights movement, as its racist foundations were knocked out from under it. The actual reality of the Republican interracial Reconstruction governments was about what one would expect in the difficult circumstances of the post-civil war South. Large swaths of the countryside lay desolate after four years of war, while many of the citizens the new governments needed at least tacit support from were extremely disgruntled, if not treasonous. There was corruption, intrigue, and failure, but significant accomplishment as well.

For the first time, many southern states established public school systems, and in many areas both black and white children had more learning opportunities than they had experienced before the war. In other domains, too, Reconstruction governments began to build a new legal and social system on the ruins of one that had been predicated on the total control of master over slave. Alabama offered legal assistance for poor defendants, while in South Carolina, money was appropriated to provide the poor with medical care. Other laws forced white men to pay child support for the Mulatto children they fathered, and broadened property rights for married women. Laws mandating the integration of public transportation and accommodations were passed throughout the Deep South.

The Reconstruction governments consistently resisted the attempts of white

9 Grantham, The South in Modern America: A Region At Odds, 24-34.

planters to restrict labor mobility and economic freedom. Also for the first time, interracial juries and school boards could be found across the South. 11 In short, the Republican governments attempted to build societies whose outlines we can see in modern America. Though these governments made mistakes, they were hardly the incompetent and inevitable failure described by the Dunning school and dramatized in The Birth of a Nation.

Juxtaposed uneasily to the idea of the former slaves as childlike beings with no independent agency was the stereotype of the lustful Negro scheming to get his hands on virginal white women. Thus the audience sees the South Carolina legislature passing a law for interracial marriage, former slave Gus chasing Flora to her death, and Mulatto Silas Lynch proposing marriage to Elsie and locking her in the room with him when she tries to resist his advances. Numerous times during the second half of the film, we see blacks and their carpetbagger allies holding signs promoting “equal marriage,” as if this was a primary black goal.

This train of images and events centering on the black man's desire for the white female body is threaded through the whole second half of the narrative and constitutes the emotional core of the film. Indeed, it may be difficult for modern readers to grasp just how explosive and infuriating these scenes were to white audiences in 1915. They spoke to the audience's deepest fears and prejudices, and affirmed their commitment to defend the honor of white women.

The reality was quite a bit different. Reconstruction governments did not even push strongly for integrated schools, much less marriages. When it came to marriage, the black community was focused on trying to reunite and rebuild all the marriages separated by slavery. 12 A concerted drive for “miscegenation” existed only in white people's imaginations. But the film makes clear, whether marriage was legal or not, there was still the ever-present threat of rape at the hands of black beasts. If ever there was a case of mass projection, in the psychological sense, surely this was it.

Before the war, the rape of black slave women by white planters, their sons, and overseers was an incredibly common feature of everyday southern life. 13 In the decades afterward, black women continued to be more at risk, as the enormous differential in social and legal power was slow to dissipate. If a black man had sex with a white woman, he could expect to be lynched. If a white man had sex with a black woman, it would be quietly tolerated. In the white mind, this was not hypocritical, for the corollary to the black man as rapist was the stereotype of the black woman as inveterately promiscuous. Thus, interracial sex defiled a white woman, while a black woman was just getting what she wanted. 14

Another problematic aspect of the film is its treatment of the Ku Klux Klan. The account of Ben Cameron's inspiration drawn from the children under a sheet is wholly fictitious, as is the massive number of Klansmen riding to the rescue of Piedmont. The Klan is portrayed as the freedom loving organization “that saved the South from the anarchy of black rule.” In reality, the Klan promoted a uniquely southern conception of freedom: whites are not free unless they can

13 Kolchin, American Slavery: 1619-1877, 123-125.
rule over blacks. They used violence, murder and intimidation in an attempt to overthrow the new social order. Considering their political ends and the tactics they employed to achieve them, the modern reader may think of them as terrorists, though applying such a label to the 1860s Klan would be anachronistic.

D.W. Griffith was surprised by the firestorm of controversy his film caused and stung by the criticism. He did not understand how he could be accused of prejudice, for he "loved Negroes," and that would be "like saying I am against children, as they were children, whom we loved and cared for all our lives." The self-evident racism of this statement was lost on Griffith and most of his white audience. In the end, this is precisely what makes The Birth of a Nation so chilling. It was not produced by a rabid racist, but by a man who saw himself as a friend to blacks and was not conscious of any prejudice within him. It was received by audiences in much the same way. The lurid depictions on film did not reflect racial prejudice, but simply the sad historical truth of a misguided era.

A more balanced memory of the war and Reconstruction lived on among black Americans and a few whites, but it was historical memory at the margins of society. The great mainstream was swept along by the ideas of the Dunning school and The Birth of a Nation. The centrality of slavery and race to the conflict, and the tragedy of Reconstruction's failure, were forgotten. Indeed, David W. Blight has written that "The alienation of the emancipationist vision, and of the basic substance of black memory, from mainstream popular remembrance of the Civil War era received no greater long-term stimulus than when Birth of a Nation premiered across the country in the spring of 1915." The work of undoing this legacy continues to the present day.

The Journey from Repugnance to Empathy

By Dana Ivins

This paper was for Dr. Lindner’s European Arts and Ideas. It analyzes the marriage of art and science in their co-examination of the insane.

Medicine and art rarely are happy bedfellows in modern society. The practitioners of both disciplines seek to elevate their sect above all others. However, for some brief moments in history the two amalgamate beyond their base composites. During the nineteenth century art and science joined together to reexamine the nature of the insane. This period of joint enlightenment led to great strides in the treatment and care of the mentally ill. The artwork produced not only detailed the clinical observation but also the changing mindset of the public toward the treatment of those forgotten souls cast away to the insane asylums. The progress made by doctors and artists deserves recognition.

Mental illness from ancient times to the early eighteenth century was accepted to be the fault of two things. The person was possessed by an evil spirit and/or demon or lacking a strong character that led them to their poor happenstance. The idea of physical “abnormality prevalent in the Greco-Roman culture” (Karp 2) was lacking in European society before the seventeenth century. This lack of understanding led to the treatment and absence of oversight given to the deranged. It was generally accepted that family were responsible for their own unless there was a danger to the community. The majority of the insane were left to their own devices prior the seventeenth century. The Industrial Revolution would prove to be a boon and curse to the town fools. The advent of big industry introduced the dangers of idleness. This would lead to confinement or a hospital such as Hotel de Dieu in Paris or Hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem in London. The latter would be forever remembered by its moniker Bedlam.

In hospitals like Bedlam patients were forced to undergo exorcisms, isolation, and sense deprivation. Rooms were little more than stone cells with moldy straw to sleep on. Those lucky enough to have a bed could expect to be chained in position for days at a time. A common method for pacifying unruly residents was the ‘box’ or tranquilizer chair. The person was placed in restraints in a chair that had a wooden box to place over the head of the individual. The method cut the person off from their sense of touch, sight, and hearing (boxes could be insulated or cotton placed in ears of patient) (Penn Medicine). This common medical practice is still in use (sense deprivation tanks) today as a method of intelligence gathering.

Figure 1 William Hogarth, Rake's Progress, eighth plate, 1735
It is with this societal view that paintings like William Hogarth’s “Rake Progress” must be examined. The eighth engraving in the set was done in 1735 with retouching in 1763. The scene presents viewers with a variety of stages of the deranged. One man prays in his cell to the church for his salvation. The idea of healing through faith was a commonly held belief at the time. Others such as the protagonist in the front center are chained by his caregivers. He twists his body in odd contortions against their assistance. The chaining is not seen as torture but as a welcome relief from his manic self-harm. The restraints were a preventive measure to protect the mad from their self. The reckless manner of these human beings prevented them being welcome in proper society. His loss of mind and values is displayed by his disregard to his state of dress. “By the seventeenth century the idea of nakedness had become a symbolic reference for the nature of madness” (Gilman 54).

Perhaps the most striking detail in this engraving and Francisco Goya’s “Corral de locos” are the sane. Hogarth’s features two ladies sight-seeing, two hospital workers and a female visiting the protagonist. The workers are easy to overlook with their quiet dedication to their tasks.

![Figure 2 Francisco Goya, Corral de locos, 1794](image)

Each one is engaged in accommodating the newest member of their community. What role do the ladies serve? They are the representatives of moral society. There is no tittering in this place. One woman holds her fan up to block her view of the nudity of the man lost in delusions of grandeur. The other turns her head away from the bare chest of the madman. Each lady is a model example of genteel modesty and courtesy. The lone female visitor too reminds the viewer of their Christian duties to the mad.

This is a great contrast against a lone sane man in Goya’s “Corral de locos” done in oils on canvas in 1794. Goya’s aim was not to highlight the goals and benefits of the madhouse but its faults. Goya even acknowledges drawing from his own memories to paint the landscape of the insane. “It represents a yard with lunatics….. which I saw in Saragossa” (MacGregor 71). The warder beats two men as they wrestle stark-naked in the yard surrounded by other inmates. His face is a mixture of a grimace and smile. The pain and suffering of those around him matter little to his enjoyment. Those fortunate enough to be dressed and watching are clothed in little better than sack cloths. Their bodies twist in the small space as if searching for an escape. The only light available filters through the bars of their prison but does not quite reach them. They are locked in a prison of shadow and hopelessness.

These two views of the mental health profession at the time were both accepted practices. With a focus on the confinement of the unstable and protection of healthy society little was done in regards to the treatment. Hogarth displays the view of common society. He is known to have been a visitor of Bedlam where he would have been able to sketch images similar to the scenes he illustrates (MacGregor 16). Goya’s depiction may be better understood.
when his own medical history is presented. Throughout his life he suffered with illness. Indeed, some of those bouts with illness were mental. It is therefore not surprising that Goya sought to broadcast the failings in the system. Indeed, it would take a revolution of social reform to change the lack of consideration given to the unbalanced.

The Enlightenment set forth the “erosion of barriers between the creative artist and the world of science and technology” (MacGregor 7). The theory of Enlightenment has its roots in Romanticism. Supporters like Denis Diderot sought not to reject intellect and reason as previous Romantics but to combine them with their passion to seek the truth. The cornerstone of the movement was the search for answers to unanswered questions whatever they may be. It is from this fount of curiosity the study of physiognomy and phrenology sprang. Phrenology was the study of the shape of the skull and its underlying brain.

Although regarded as a pseudo-science today it was cutting edge at the time. And it does in fact demonstrate at least one accepted modern fact. “[Franz Joseph] Gall concluded that the brain was composed of separate faculties, or organs, each executing its task in relative isolation from its neighbors” (Colbert 282). This is backed by our understanding of modern anatomy. Through careful study of facial features one could identify distinctive ailments.

Physiognomy “placed their emphasis on fixed facial structures, seeing the permanent lines of the forehead and face the reflection of mental or intellectual states” (Gilman 58). These facial features and muscular structures allowed those in the arts to represent the body as it was in nature. Unlike previous artists confined by the Academy, the nineteenth century allowed a new representation of the human body as God made them. The focus was no longer on finding the perfect model or hiding the flaws of nature. Instead artists like Théodore Géricault sought “souci du detail clinique” (attention to clinical detail)” (Athanassoglou-Kallmyer 196).

“The Monomania of Envy (The Hyena)” by Géricault in oil on canvas is a leading example of the changing depictions of the insane. Painted around 1821-3, psychiatrist Etienne-Jean Georget commissioned the work for himself. The work portrays an old woman from the chest up in a state of contemplation. She is clothed in a simple dress and bonnet. The focus is not on her manner of dress or body as in previous works like Hogarth’s “Rake’s Progress”. Her surroundings have also been removed from the equation.

It suggests that the madness lurking in this woman is not a product of her environment but a state of nature. Nor is she possessed by any demon. By eliminating the misshaped bodies of the past it forces the focus away from superstition and to science. Géricault’s illumination of each line and ridge on her face for examination further supports this claim. It is meant to allow the skilled practitioner of phrenology and physiognomy to practice their skills on this example. Attention is also drawn to the mouth and eyes. The eyes glint in malice at an unknown object or person. The viewer and painter do not exist to “The Hyena”.

Now that the Enlightenment had opened the world of the insane to the public through...
the artwork of the nineteenth century, activists wanted to enact change in the hospitals and asylums of the past. A powerful illustration of the reforming nature of mental healthcare is shown in Wilhelm von Kaulbach’s Das Narrenhaus done in 1830.

![Figure 4 Wilhelm von Kaulbach, Das Narrenhaus, 1830](image)

This sketch has liberated the imprisoned patients from their dark cells into the light of the public. Any allusion to demons or poor character flaws leading to mental illness is hereby removed. Instead the artist takes time to show varying degrees of mental illness on display. Kaulbach also demonstrates his growing awareness of the irregular nature of mental conditions. The conditions are also shown as chronic, acute, and fleeting states. This idea of treatment and curing an ailment is a radical departure from the previous doctrine of confinement.

The final painting of reform is by Tony Robert-Fleury. It depicts a scene of the revolutionary alienist (today known as a psychiatrist), Dr. Philippe Pinel, commanding the release of the women of Salpêtrière in Paris. “The new ‘moral therapy’ developed by Pinel and his contemporaries in the reformed asylums was fundamentally based on the idea of freeing mental patients’ trapped humanity” (Fee). This humanizing therapy is portrayed in the concern showed by the watching public.

![Figure 5 Tony Robert-Fleury, Pinel Unchaining the Insane at the Hospital of Salpêtrière, 1876](image)

The stupor of the listless female being unchained is not ignored but instead the man freeing her supports her uneven balance and weight. The women are also not demonized for their disease. The faces are no longer hidden in shadows as previous artists used to represent the mentally ill. The raw, animal nature of the deranged is removed from the facial features. Another woman kneels next to Pinel in appreciation and gratitude. The suggestion being that the public too feels the horrors that were committed against the patients. The freedom of the patients is only part of the release being experienced. Fleury is also using a style of history painting to showcase the previously undesirable subject of the deranged.

The painting was moved beyond the handbook of doctors into the light of day. Instead of being a clinical examination used for anatomy and physiology it invites the reader to scrutinize the painting as a work of art.

However subtle the changes were over time, they could not have been accomplished without the support of the public. Treatment in Salpêtrière and Bedlam was able to continue for over a hundred
years not because of the lack of options but of the lack of interest in the people locked behind those closed doors.

It is easy to lock people away as monsters when there is no one facing the victims of the mistreatment. The humane treatment and medicating of the mentally ill came largely due to the public’s outcry after viewing pieces like Goya’s “Corral de locos” and Théodore Géricault’s “Envy”. Artists were able to reform the practices of psychiatry with delicate pen and brush strokes. Few revolutions are as dramatic and quiet as the introduction of modern medicine of the mind.

Works Cited


A Brief History of Opiates and Some Common Misconceptions Concerning the Origins of US Drug Policy

By Matthew Cutler

This paper was for Dr. Leslie Heaphy’s Honor’s History Colloquium of Modern U.S. History. It overviews the drug policy and goes into the history behind it.

Introduction

The purpose of this essay is three-fold. Sections I and II give a brief, narrative history of opiates, and, more specifically, a history of America’s first opiate users and the socio-economic context within which they operated. Section III will show that the history of drug policy is by no means stagnant and that new interpretations are being made based on fresh perspectives, and a review of the traditional data. Section IV, the conclusion, will link the several themes covered in the essay in an attempt to show their relevance today, and the importance of an accurate historical, and contextual understanding of the history of American drug policy to both the citizenry and their legislators.

Opiates were chosen over other drugs for several reasons. First, their history is rooted deeper in time than most others, and there is literature, thousands of years old, detailing both the healing and addictive potential of the drug. Second, the first anti-drug laws in the US dealt solely with opiates. Third, opiates include an interesting paradox whereby on the one hand they can provide instant relief for incredible amounts of pain, but on the other hand, they have more addictive, overdose, and biologically-detrimental potential than almost any other drug. And, finally, opium production and trade operated on such a massive, global scale that the drug’s influence reached more nations than any other drug at the time. It should also be noted that the research was cut off at the year 1930, because A) since the focus of this essay is on the origins of drug policy, it had to stop somewhere, and B) the Federal Bureau of Narcotics was established in this year, which marked the beginning of the use of much harsher penalties against opiate use, importation, and production in the US.

Section I: A Brief History of the Poppy Plant

The history of opium use by humans goes much further back in time and has permeated more cultures than many people realize. In America especially, there is a tendency to assume the poppy plant is native to the Far East, a stereotype-driven assumption that will be addressed in later sections of this essay. The poppy plant actually originated in the Mediterranean region. The use of opium was first documented in Sumerian Mesopotamia where it was called Hul Gil or plant of joy and was used for medicinal and religious purposes. 1 2 The medicinal knowledge surrounding this mysterious plant was handed down throughout history for thousands of years; the Sumerians passed it on to the Assyrians, who passed it on to the

Babylonians and then to the Egyptians. Cypriot vases engraved with images of the poppy plant have been unearthed near Turkey which historians believe to be over 2,500 years old.³

The Ancient Greeks also left behind accounts of opium’s medicinal applications. Images of the Greek gods of night and death usually bear poppies and several Greek philosophers and physicians praised the plant and its healing powers. The origins of our modern Groundhog Day evolved from an ancient Greek myth involving gods, the seasons and the poppy plant: Greek mythology said that the goddess of the harvest, Demeter, lost her daughter Persephone to Hades for six months out of the year. The Greeks believed this caused a great sadness in the harvest goddess which in turn made the earth cold and lifeless throughout the winter. Every February the Greeks would gather near Athens and consume poppy juice to celebrate the return of Persephone to her mother. Shortly thereafter the frost would disappear and spring would be in bloom. Since then, this “poppy day” festival has evolved into our Groundhog Day.⁴

From the Greeks, the plant and knowledge of its uses traveled east. The Muslims, the first to note the drugs addictive potential, wrote about its benefits despite their abhorrence to intoxicating substances such as alcohol and hashish. Apparently, its medical benefits outweighed its addictive potential and theological digressions. Accounts appear from India, where it was used to quiet infants, as an aphrodisiac, and to give courage to soldiers before battle. In none of these though is there mention of a social problem, such as is seen in modern times, despite wide-spread use in places like India and Greece.⁵

Eventually the plant arrived in China around the 15th century where encroaching European nations saw an opportunity for lucrative trade. This trade would lead to two so-called Chinese Opium Wars in the 19th century in which the victorious British would leave the Chinese government helpless to stop its growing drug epidemic. China now played a major, yet involuntary role in an extremely lucrative international opium trading network. Ironically, the Chinese saw opium smoking as a western habit (the Portuguese first brought it to their shores) and given their fondness for isolationism, it became a focal point for leaders like Chang who condemned the West and its exploitation of the Chinese people—a sentiment the U.S. would soon take advantage of as America slowly pushed her way across the Pacific toward the Far East.⁶

Section II: Early Opiate Use and the Introduction of Prohibitory Policy in the United States

A. Earliest Accounts in America

The earliest known accounts of opium use in the U.S. date back to about 1780, though it is likely that its use in the colonies dates back several decades further. A Pennsylvania farmer’s letter dated August 24, 1781, mentions quality seeds and a quality poppy harvest.⁷ As early as 1781, it was common practice on Nantucket Island for women to take “a dose of opium every

morning.” During the War of 1812, opium was used as a painkiller on the battlefield, but its low supply warranted unreasonably high prices leaving most injured soldiers to suffer.  

There were two scientific breakthroughs in the nineteenth century that had an effect on the proliferation of American opiate consumption. The first occurred in 1803 when German physicist F.W. Serturner isolated the primary active ingredient in opium. He named his discovery morphine after the Greek god of dreams, Morpheus. Morphine was a much purer, more potent and powerful drug than opium, and inherently, (not widely known at the time) more addictive. The next event that affected opium trade and use in America was the invention of the hypodermic needle in 1853 by Alexander Wood, which allowed the drug to be injected directly into the bloodstream causing it to take effect much quicker and boosting its painkilling potential.

In these early years though, opium was used primarily by physicians for medicinal purposes. Throughout the 19th century, hundreds of opium-containing tonics and elixirs could be found on drugstore shelves and doctors frequently prescribed opium or morphine to patients for a laundry list of ailments. Many American physicians labeled the drug as “God’s own medicine,” and praised its “reliability and long-lasting effects.”  

Throughout the 19th century, opium was prescribed for diarrhea, dysentery, chest congestion, fussy children, and boredom just to name a few. According to conventional wisdom though, Civil War doctors became the biggest opium dispensaries and created America’s first drug epidemic in the process.

B. The Civil War, the ‘Soldier’s Disease,’ and the 1914 Harrison Narcotics Act

The phrase "soldier’s disease" didn’t show up in literature until the early 20th century, and it has become one of the most commonly cited reasons for the introduction and continuation of anti-drug policy in the United States; indeed, all US drug policy hinges on the assumption that drug use creates a social problem (something that will be approached more directly in Sections III & IV). The ‘soldier’s disease’ has been mentioned in over one-hundred different works since the 1960’s, and is still quoted by pro-policy Congressional leaders today. Even several government-funded research commissions have cited it as fact in their analyses.  

The Oxford Companion to U.S. History uses the phrase "soldier’s disease", and says that over 400,000 soldiers returned home addicted to the so-called miracle drug they had been given for their wounds on the battlefield. The recently published Encyclopedia of Civil War Medicine, by Glenna Schroeder-Lein, cites the phrase and the phenomena as a fact—though she uses

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much more reasonable numbers; perhaps 45,000 addicted veterans.\footnote{Glenna Schroeder-Lein, \textit{The Encyclopedia of Civil War Medicine}, Maine: Sharpe, 2008.}

It’s not surprising at all that opium found a place in as many applications as it did. The Surgeon General himself lavishly praised opium’s effectiveness as a battleground medicine.\footnote{“The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War.”} Opiates were considered doctor’s best bet against diarrhea and dysentery during the war. Considering that Union medical records from the time (Confederate records aren’t as complete) show approximately 1,400,000 severe, and 200,000 chronic cases of diarrhea and dysentery (which doctors often lumped together as one problem), one must assume that there was at least a great need for opium. One Union doctor reported keeping a ball of opium in one pocket and a “blue-mass” of mercury compound in the other at all times. He’d ask soldiers, “How are your bowels?” If they replied “open,” (diarrhea) he’d give them opium; if they replied “closed” (constipation) he’d give them mercury.\footnote{“Did the Civil War Create 500,000 Morphine Addicts?” last modified on July 9, 1999, http://www.straightdope.com/columns/read/1335/did-the-uss-civil-war-create-500,000-morphine-addicts.html.}

The U.S. Secretary of War, Edward Stanton, stated in 1865 that the Union Army was issued 10 million opium pills, 2,840,000 ounces of other opiate products (such as laudanum) and nearly 30,000 ounces of morphine sulfate.\footnote{“The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War.”} The morphine sulfate and laudanum were more-often-than-not just rubbed into wounds or dispensed by surgeons galloping through the front lines doling out handfuls of opium powder to soldiers from horseback. The powder would just be lapped up by the soldiers from their own palms as they continued to fight in battle (if they were able to) as they waited for the stretcher teams to pull them off the lines.

Another major factor in the need for opiates during the Civil War was the fact that weapons technology was advancing at a much faster rate than battleground tactics could maintain. By 1861, the old-fashioned smoothbore musket was replaced by rifled barrels, and round bullets were replaced by cone-shaped Minnie-balls. The drill formations and open-field battle style of the era were not conducive at all to these incredibly accurate, bone-shattering weapons.\footnote{“What Was Life As A Soldier Like In 1863?” visited on April 6, 2011, http://www.nps.gov/archive/gett/soldierlife/cwarmy.html} A wound to the head or torso by the devastating Minnie-ball almost always meant certain death. The majority of wounds, however, were to the extremities, “probably because soldiers quickly learned to fire from cover.”\footnote{“The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War.”}

Amputation was a soldier’s best chance of surviving a wound to an extremity. Of the 174,000 arm and leg wounds reported by the Union Army, nearly 25,000 resulted in death, and 30,000 resulted in amputation.\footnote{“The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War.”} The procedure was performed in filthy conditions, often septic, and with crude tools and medicines. The wounded man, lying on the ground awaiting his turn on the surgeon’s table, would be subjected to the horrifying screams of other wounded men. The soldier would most likely be given a combination of liquor and opiates (if available) to dull the pain, and then carried past a mounting-pile of severed limbs, just
barely visible in the eerie candlelight, to the surgeons tent. Flies already gathering, he would be laid on the table, held down by three to four men, given a piece of wood to bite down on and then if he was lucky he’d pass out as the surgeon brought the jagged saw blade down on the skin of the soldier’s trembling limb. If he wasn’t that lucky, he’d be praying he had a quick surgeon, because a quick surgeon was a good surgeon.

Opium also had a laundry list of non-wound and non-bowel related uses; it was used for typhus, prolonged fever, venereal disease, typhoid, insanity and paralysis (also called cowardice). The hardships of military life also played a role in the creation of opium-using veterans. Military service entailed months away from home and loved ones, endless hours of drill, long bouts of boredom interrupted by terrifyingly intense engagements, and exposure to the elements over long periods of time. These conditions today would be considered the perfect breeding ground for drug addiction (take the unusually high volume of drug use by soldier’s in Vietnam for example).

By the start of WWI, the “soldier’s disease” was seen as America’s first drug epidemic (at least by those in-the-know). The phrase, also known as the “army disease”, was coined by feminist and moral crusader Jeannette Marks in 1914—also the year the Harrison Narcotics Act was introduced. The Harrison Narcotics Act was designed to tax and control the importation and sale of opiates; doctors could still prescribe the drug, but not to addicts since addiction wasn’t seen as a disease. The act put many doctors and physicians in jail, and pushed the opium trade even further underground, opening up a profitable and dangerous black market which has thrived to this day. Marks wrote in her 1914 book, The Curse of Narcotism in America: a Reveille, that “there is practically no old American family of Civil War reputation which has not had its addicts.” She added that “with the war that hangs over us [WWI] the drug evil will spread into a gigantism of even more terrible growth than the present.” She also claimed that there were over 4,000,000 opium and cocaine addicts in the U.S. prior to WWI.

The phrase was next used in the 1928 encyclopedic works of historians Terry and Pellens, The Opium Problem, in which they stated that the Civil War gave “chronic opium intoxication...a considerable impetus which seems definitely established.” Further epidemiological studies by these two produced an encyclopedia of information on drug addiction in America published between 1928 and 1930. These works, combined with Marks’, are considered the authorities on the matter. They have been quoted and repeated in hundreds of works since then and are largely responsible for the shift in perception of opium from a miracle medicine to a social menace. The assumption that opiates are a social menace has been implicit to every drug policy the United States has ever enacted since then. Even Richard Nixon used Terry and Pellens work to justify his War on Drugs in the 1970’s.

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21 “The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War.”
22 “What Was Life As A Soldier Like In 1863?”
23 Belenko, Drugs and Drug Policy in the United States, 47.
24 “The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War.”
25 “The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War.”
27 “The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War.”
C. Opium, the West, and the "Yellow Peril"

In 1848, gold was discovered in California, generating a massive migration of Americans and Chinese to western America. An estimated 70,000 Chinese arrived in California between 1852 and 1870, the vast majority of which were men, unable to afford passage, forced to sign labor contracts of up to ten years. Once here, they were given the most dangerous jobs in the mines, often handling crude explosive devices or laboring for hours on the railroads for low wages. As with anybody subjected to these harsh conditions, far away from home in a foreign land, these men needed an escape from their hardships at the end of the day.

Various anti-Chinese laws were passed across California, particularly in San Francisco, which made it illegal for Chinese men to vote and made it impossible for them to become citizens, further frustrating the immigrants. More related to this essay’s topic, these laws made it a crime for a Chinese man to drink alcohol. Being that opium smoking was a common practice back in China, given the proximity of many California towns to the Pacific shipping routes, and the hardships of the tasks they performed, many Chinese men turned to opium as an escape mechanism.

Opium smoking and opium dens became a staple in cities like San Francisco and Portland. In 1904, there were about thirty five shops in San Francisco advertising opium for sale, and twelve retailers who advertised in newspapers. Many grocery stores in Chinatown sold it as standard merchandise, like rice or tea. The act of smoking opium quickly became associated with the Chinese, but there are some sources from the time, often exaggerated, which tell of whites partaking in the act, too. Prostitutes especially, white and Chinese alike were often seen in opium dens.

White Americans played on this truth and newspapers from the time published articles telling tales of white women who were lured into opium dens by Chinese men with ill intent. The Press put out stories of dangerous opium dens where “yellow fiends” lured unsuspecting white women inside and enslaved them to the drug (similar stories were told of black men using cocaine in the South). In the 1890’s, tabloids owned by William Randall Hearst published versions of these stories in which white women were seduced by Chinese opium smokers. All of this, however, was a media spectacle produced to instill the fear of the so-called “Yellow Peril,” a subject addressed deeper in Section III.

The growing acceptance of the Chinese opium habit as a social menace led to America’s first anti-drug laws, though they were only enacted at the state and local level. The first law criminalizing the smoking of opium was passed in 1875 in San Francisco. Similar laws were passed soon after in Virginia City, Nevada and Portland, Oregon. In 1909, Congress passed the first federal prohibitory law making the smoking of opium and the importation of opium for smoking a crime. These laws turned many hard-working, law-abiding

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30 Hoffman, The Historical Shift in the Perception of Opiates, 60.
33 Belenko, Drugs and Drug Policy in America.
34 “A Social History of America’s Most Popular Drugs.”
35 Belenko, Drugs and Drug Policy in America
Chinese immigrants into a perceived criminal-class and jails were soon flooded with Chinese men and women. 36

D. ‘Ladies of haut-ton’ and the 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act

Today we know that women accounted for the largest portion of opium users in the United States throughout the 19th century. It may also be safe to say that the pharmaceutical industry and physicians alike, whether knowingly or unknowingly, took advantage of women during this century. Along with the accessibility of patent medicines containing opiates at local drug stores, women were able to purchase the drug and even the hypodermic needles to administer it through the Sears Catalogues—what we now call felonious possession shipped to your door via postal service. Crude surveys done by various doctors in cities such as New York, Chicago, Michigan and one in Iowa found that women averaged out at about seventy percent of the given population’s opium users. 37 It is hard to be sure, however, because many women kept their habitual use secret from those around them, fearing harsh judgments. 38 39

Paradoxically, women also played a large role in the moral crusade against opium, too, a crusade which attached itself to the Temperance Movement and ultimately doled out much of the aforesaid harsh judgment. The Women’s Christian Temperance Union, one of the major players in the Movement, spoke out against opium and heroin use. The National Women’s Party rallied against opium, too; Marks, mentioned earlier, was one of their most prominent leading figures. 40 Ironically though, the Temperance Movement helped to create many female opium users due to the stigma it attached to alcohol use, especially among women of the middle- and upper-classes—who also happened to make up the largest portion of female users throughout this time. Women favored opium over alcohol because of the ease with which it could be found, how conducive its use was with secrecy, and because its effects were seen as less degrading. 41

Terry and Pellens also commented on female opium use. They wrote that “throughout the 19th century it was considered unseemly, by both males and temperance-minded females, for women to drink [alcohol]. Yet there was a powerful temptation, particularly for women of high social station, thoroughly bored with their lot...to resort to some euphoric agent. Opium and morphine...suited these purposes well.” 42

Upper-class women weren’t the only opium users in the 19th century; many female factory workers, who were paid little wages for long hours of back-breaking work, began using the drug to ease their aches and pains. Prostitutes and lonely rural housewives made up a significant portion of female users, too. 43 Not all women used the drug for medicinal purposes either; prostitutes especially, used opium or morphine for no reason other than recreation. 44 But by large, middle-class and upper-class women were the most avid users

36 “The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War,”
37 Kandall, Women and Addiction in the United States, 34, 35.
38 Kandall, Women and Addiction in the United States, 35.
40 Belenko, Drugs and Drug Policy in America.
41 Kandall, Women and Addiction in the United States, 42.
43 Kandall, Women and Addiction in the United States, 42.
of opium until the 20th century when lower-class men and minorities took the title.45

A physician in 1871 was appalled upon discovering that opiate use among “women in high places [was] incredibly large” (apparently he had expected the prostitute population to boast the most addicts). After concluding his research, he described the typical 19th century addict as “the lady of haut-ton, idly lolling upon her velvety fauteuil and vainly trying to cheat the lagging hours that intervene ere the clockwork tintinnabulum shall sound the hour for opera or whist.” In 1885 another physician who studied addiction rates in Alabama noted that “the weaker sex are slightly in the majority, and of these, it is confined mostly to the higher- and middle-class.”46

Sexism in medical practices was largely responsible for the disproportionate amount of female opium users. In addition to the plethora of uses doctors believed it had for men, “female problems” became the most common cause for opium prescriptions. It was used for “indigestion, constipation and uterine disease,” “female weakness,” “severe flowing,” “vaginitis,” and “nervous debility,” among other things, all the result of a lack of medical knowledge concerning the female anatomy.47

One of the surveys mentioned earlier found that “the most frequent cause of opium habit in females is the taking of opiates to relieve painful menstruation and diseases of the female organs of generation.” Doctors of this era also thought that women had less pain tolerance than men—something modern medical science has proven false—and that pain related to child birth was easily remedied by a dose or two of opium. The President of the American Gynecological Society, Dr. T. Gaillard Thomas, wrote in 1879 that “for the relief of pain, the treatment is all summed up in one word, and that is opium. This divine drug overshadows all other anodynes.”48

Despite the fact that women accounted for most of the opium users in America, they had little effect on the introduction of prohibitory laws. However, some anti-drug legislation historians have said that women were responsible for the introduction of the 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act, which was not necessarily a prohibitory law, but instead required all patent medicines to label their ingredients on the bottle. Conventional wisdom states that a huge national campaign was mounted against the pharmaceutical companies caused by a fear of unknown and dangerous ingredients in the medicines being handed out ambivalently. These proponents say that it was expanding medical knowledge of the dangers of opium that motivated these women to protest for the sake of their health.49

Section III: Misconceptions: Some Recently Uncovered Myths and Causes of Prohibitory Policy

A. Jerry Mandell: Myth Buster

Jerry Mandell, professor of Sociology at Emeritus, has done extensive research into the claims made by Jeannette Marks, and Terry and Pellens. According to Mandell, the “soldier’s disease” is a myth, put forth by prohibitory policy proponents in order to justify the new anti-drug laws. Mandell

45 “A Social History of America’s Most Popular Drugs.”
46 Kandall, Women and Addiction in the United States, 45.
47 Kandall, Women and Addiction in the United States, 36, 37.
48 Kandall, Women and Addiction in the United States, 44.
49 “The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War.”
states that if the public did not believe that wide-spread drug use created an imminent social problem they would not feel as though the cost of enforcing the laws were justified. The “soldier’s disease”, he claims, creates a paradigm that has been used to justify U.S. drug policy ever since.

The paradigm he describes consists of four parts: easy access leads to wide-spread use; addiction is easy to acquire; the habit is hard to kick; and its consequences are powerfully and publicly obvious. While this paradigm fits snugly into conventional wisdom and gives justification to one-hundred years of American anti-drug policy, according to Mandell, the post-Civil War social problem simply did not exist. His research, a large part of which involved checking Marks’, and Terry and Pellens’ sources, found that very few cases of addiction were reported in medical literature of the 19th century; that only a handful of sources exist between 1900 and 1965 (most of which merely cite the works of Marks, and Terry and Pellens); and that by the 1970’s, when the phrase is most often quoted, the social problem that Marks’ had warned of was now manifest as a result of the prohibitory legislation the myth helped propagate.

Mandell scoured through medical journals and soldier’s diaries looking for mention of wide-spread opium addiction. He found entries from a doctor who visited over three-hundred hospitals during the Civil War. The doctor writes about hundreds of requests for booze and tobacco, but not one single mention of a soldier requesting opium. He found dozens of accounts of soldiers too drunk for battle, but not one of a soldier being unable to perform his duties because of unauthorized opiate consumption. Mandel even takes a look at the numbers to see if they help or hinder the claim.

“The Civil War lasted four years, with 1,500,000 three year enlistments on the Union side. Thus, those ten million opium pills dispensed by doctors average to roughly two pills per soldier per year,”—hardly an ample opportunity for addiction to fester. Despite doctor’s praise of the drug and its miraculous potential, there just simply wasn’t that much to be given out—relatively speaking.

Some have argued that a noticeable social problem wouldn’t have occurred until some years after the war ended. There is some national discussion of opium use in newspapers across the country between the Civil War and the end of the century. However, all of these accounts combined, San Francisco papers included, don’t necessarily add up to constitute a legitimate social problem. The proposition is certainly debatable, and will likely require more investigation in the coming years. And as previously mentioned, the phrase “soldier’s disease” didn’t appear in literature until 1914, the same year the Harrison Narcotics Act passed, and, coincidentally, the same time that the Temperance Movement had turned massive enrollment numbers into a soon-to-be-successful Prohibition Movement. It is easy to see how the creation of a social menace where one perhaps didn’t exist would have been useful to their burgeoning cause.

50 “The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War.”
51 David Courtwright, for example, whose work will be looked at more closely in the conclusion of this essay.
52 “The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War.”
B. Recession and Racism in the West

The Chinese men who came to our country and built our railroads were generally of exceptional work ethic— inherited from their culture’s strict theology. They were also here for one reason and one reason only: to make money to send home to their families in China. It wasn’t long before this willingness to work was exploited by whites. As previously mentioned, the Chinese were given the most dangerous and difficult jobs to perform. Their hard work in spite of these conditions did not go unnoticed by their white counter-parts and jealousies began to simmer over these “funny looking” people and their strange customs. 53

Three major economical events took place in the second half of the 19th century that helped motivate prohibitory drug policy. First, in 1852, there was a national recession that had a particularly unfortunate impact on the West Coast. Independent white miners, worried the growing number of Chinese immigrants presented a threat to them in those scant times, rioted against Chinese immigrants in mining towns across northern California. These events indicate a shift in feelings from jealousy to feelings of racism. 54

Second, after the Civil War ended, thousands of veterans migrated west in search of work. The labor market was flooded and the Chinese, without the right to assembly, were segregated and forced into lower-paying jobs. Again, in 1869, the transcontinental railroad was completed and Chinese men further flooded the labor market in search of work. After a year or two of the Chinese working for miniscule wages, whites began accusing them of undercutting their wages—as if the Chinese voluntarily worked for low wages. Tensions continued to rise between whites and Chinese immigrants until they climaxed around the time of the 1873 Depression (the third event), when racist ideology and concern for the white labor force consolidated and anti-Chinese legislation began to steamroll—fueled in large part by the spectacular Press reports of white women and the dangers posed to them by “deviant,” opium-smoking Chinese immigrants. 55

However, these newspaper accounts, in retrospect, are clearly ridiculous examples of sensationalism, and certainly do not appear in quantities large enough to constitute a legitimate social problem. Furthermore, a transcript from an Ottawa-based Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration even addresses this issue, questioning a young white prostitute named Emily Wharton. When asked if she was a “fast woman,” she replied that she was, but that we’d be greatly mistaken if you imagined that all women who come here [to an opium den] to smoke are of that character.” When asked if all women of her class are generally addicted to opium smoking, Emily replied “No, they are more addicted to drink and drink does them far more harm.” And finally, when asked about her treatment by Chinese men whilst in the opium dens she said the following: “They never interfered with me in the least. Waking or sleeping. Not one act of rudeness from a Chinaman have I ever experienced. In that respect they are far superior to white men.” 56

This is not to say that there weren’t white women addicted to opium smoking or who were victims of crime committed by opium-smoking Chinese immigrants, but the

56 “Opium in the Pacific Northwest: 1850’s to 1930’s.”

https://digitalcommons.kent.edu/wcr/vol17/iss1/1

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existence of a “yellow peril” (a social problem) is hardly merited. By large it appears the growing concerns that opium smoking was becoming a social menace seem unconfirmed and the given need for prohibitory legislation in the west was a product of racism, and that this racist ideology was a product of economic crisis. This pattern is part of a noted trend; it has been pointed out in more recent literature that law-and-order movements in the U.S. usually occur simultaneously with economic crisis.  

C. Women and the 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act: A Misrepresentation

Much of the literature that has been written on the matter claims that women were largely responsible for the passage of the 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act. The literature states that the reason they were such an important factor in the legislation is that they were the number-one users of the store-bought tonics and elixirs that accounted for the majority of opium products sold in the 19th century, and that “female problems” were the number-one cause of opiate prescriptions. The patent holders of these products were under no regulations whatsoever and often times included dangerous ingredients in their medicines. The Temperance Movement, after hearing the complaints of these women, added this problem to their agenda and began crusading against these opium-based products.  

The problem here, I believe, is that legislators took this to mean that the Temperance Movement, and the women they claimed to represent, referred to the opium itself as the dangerous ingredient, which, while it wasn’t always listed on the labels, was the reason women picked up these products in the first place. It seems irrational to assume that the majority of women who used these elixirs were unaware of the main ingredient in them. It seems more likely that the Temperance Movement’s leaders got it wrong, and that women originally began to voice their concerns over the truly unknown ingredients—adjuncts, if you will. Just take a look at the label of any over-the-counter medication today and you will find that there are more inactive ingredients listed than there are active. But, thanks to these misrepresented female opium users, at least today’s consumer knows what they are buying and ingesting because of the 1906 act.  

It is also difficult to believe that legislation was motivated by a fear of middle- and upper-class women (the largest group of users) taking to the streets and turning to crime to support their habits. A more reasonable answer to why women played such a large role in the passage of the 1906 Act appears to be the self-fulfilling misrepresentation they received from the over-zealous moral-crusaders of the Temperance Movement.  

D. Economics and Global Influences: Recently Discovered Factors of Prohibitory Policy

Recent studies have shed light upon another motivating factor in the origins of American drug policy. It all begins with the acquisition of the Philippines in the Spanish-American War. As of 1898, America was in control of the Philippine Islands, a hot-spot in the opium trade routes previously controlled by the Spanish. Influenced ostensibly by the anti-opiate rhetoric of the Temperance Movement, and concerned

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about the possibility of a drug-epidemic similar to that of China, the U.S. banned opium importation and use outright on the islands. However, a recent investigation by Dr. John P. Hoffman of the School of Criminal Studies at New York University has unearthed another underlying factor in the motives of the United States in this matter. 59

Hoffman claims that America, having learned a lesson from the ruined moral reputation of the British in the Chinese Opium Wars, had economic and imperialistic reasons behind the introduction of anti-drug legislation. Determined to push themselves onto the world’s stage, and increasingly aware of the limitless opportunities that the Chinese market could present them with, America opted for the high moral ground concerning the opium trade and its alleged detrimental effects to Chinese society (I say ‘alleged’ because this was such a complex phenomena that the debate continues today over whether it was the drug itself which caused China’s social problems or the way in which China and Britain dealt with it 60). To pacify Chinese concerns that the U.S. would merely take the place of the British, who had been exploiting China for centuries, the U.S. organized an international conference to analyze the problem. 61

The Shanghai Opium Commission of 1906, led by the U.S., consisted of thirteen nations. The outcome of the conference reassured China of America’s moralistic intentions and, not unforeseen by Congress, weakened the British stranglehold on Chinese markets. 62 By 1911, a second conference, named The Hague International Opium Conference, marked the end of British control of the Chinese market and the beginning of America’s role on the global stage. America was now recognized as a pioneer in morality and drug control, and had made itself known as a world economic leader. 63

However, a problem soon presented itself for the U.S.: It was preaching to the world about the dangers that unchecked opium use presented to modern societies, yet it had no domestic, federal drug laws of its own. According to Hoffman, these global economic factors were some of the major motivators in the introduction of national anti-drug policy. America’s first federal prohibitory laws were passed in 1909, though these laws only criminalized smoking opium, a problem generally associated with Chinese immigrants. 64 Five years later, according to Hoffman, the 1914 Harrison Narcotic Act was passed not so much because of fears that opium created a social problem, but because the U.S. couldn’t afford to look like hypocrites on the world stage. 65

Section IV: Conclusions

As previously stated, the assumption that opiate use—now all drugs—presents a growing health concern, and is a potential social menace is implicit to the conventional justification of U.S. drug policy (without a doubt, these health and social problems are of a massive scale today, but it’s important

64 “The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War.”
to remember that this essay is concerned with the potential of the social problem in relation to the origins of drug policy, and whether, in the beginning, the drug itself or the policy created the social problem. The problem with this assumption mentioned above, as this essay has addressed, is that it’s derived from information that was gathered with little diligence and forwarded onto our legislators largely by activists with an agenda, by poverty-stricken laborers with great racial prejudice, or by politicians afraid to play the part of the hypocrite.

The addictive and overdose potential of opiates has been known for thousands of years, yet only in the last century—and coinciding with other complex events—has a society done so much to condemn their use. It is hard to believe that advancements in medical knowledge concerning addiction were solely responsible for the passage of the first drug laws. In 1914, the same year Marks named the “soldier’s disease”, and while anti-drug proponents were enlisting doctors who warned of newly-discovered dangers that opiates posed to our health, heroin was used as an accepted way to kick an opium habit—just as opium was once used to cure alcoholism. In 1910, the philanthropic St. James Society began mailing free samples of heroin to opium addicts, believing, as many did at that time, that it was a perfectly logical cure. 66

Even today, doctors still prescribe methadone, another derivative of the poppy plant, for heroin addiction. This long term treatment of addiction with synthesized opiates (methadone) is considered today to be the most effective known cure. 67 The reader may then be surprised to learn that this long-term type of care, which included continued dosing of the patient, was proposed as early as 1856 by Dr. George B. Wood, who recognized that there is no instant cure for opium addiction, and that the patient needs long-term care from accredited physicians. He also recognized the need for long-term changes in socio-cultural factors of the patient’s life, and the need for addicts to be treated as patients and not as criminals. 68 The literature that Dr. Wood put out in the 19th century recommends a style of cure that is much like that of modern medical practices.

However, there were clearly not many doctors or politicians paying any attention to Dr. Wood. What type of cures did prevail? The type created and marketed by Charles Towns, a former insurance salesman who convinced Dr. Alexander Lambert (Theodore Roosevelt’s personal physician) that his method was a miracle cure. Town’s procedure was shunned by the medical profession at first; it included strapping patients to tables for days at a time, and injecting all sorts of drugs and solutions (xanthoxylum, belladonna, extract of hyosycamus). But, according to policy historian Stephen Belenko, with the backing of Dr. Lambert in Congress and all the right social circles, Towns was able to exert influence in both the medical approach to opiates, and Congress’ approach to making laws concerning opiates. 69 Clearly, advancements in medical knowledge weren’t exactly leaps and bounds.

Economics and global encroachment by the U.S. also played a largely unnoticed role in the origins of prohibitory policy. The U.S. was able to use the international agreements condemning opiates as “a vehicle for it to

66 “A Social History of America’s Most Popular Drugs.”
68 Belenko, Drugs and Drug Policy in America, 213, 214.
69 Belenko, Drugs and Drug Policy in America, 219 to 223.
become an international economic power."

The recessions toward the end of the 19th century fostered racist ideologies out west, motivating whites to materialize a social menace where there wasn’t one. This racism manifested itself in the form of prohibitory legislation which transformed hard-working immigrants into a criminal-class over night, and created incentive for profit in a black market system. Indeed, vice laws have been used as a means of locking up or kicking out unwanted immigrants and minorities ever since then—Mexicans and marijuana, southern Blacks and cocaine, John Lennon in the ‘60’s. Unfortunately, many history texts still agree that opium use by the Chinese did pose a social problem, and this generally accepted assumption lends credit to the paradigm mentioned by Mandel, which in turn justifies today’s on-going policies.

The assumption that opiate use had become a social menace, a monster feeding on American morals, was the most commonly used justification for drug policy in the first half of the 20th century (this is true of both cocaine and marijuana, too). To assume that the “soldier’s disease” was a legitimate dilemma, however, is to have blind faith in the works of Marks, and Terry and Pellen's. Also, one would assume that if this social menace existed at the time of the passage of the Harrison Act, that there would have been mass media coverage of the debate and the vote (this seems even more likely when one considers the amount of print-space dedicated to Hearst’s “yellow peril”). But the Harrison Act snuck in under the guise of a tax act and barely a dozen newspapers across the country wrote about it—and the papers only print what the people want to read.

Today, there are few historians who claim to have checked Terry and Pellen’s sources and still believe that a social problem existed. One of them is drug policy historian, David Courtwright. Even though he largely discounts the accuracy of the data available by the 1920’s, he still believes that a legitimate social problem existed in America between the end of the Civil War and the publication of Terry and Pellen’s work. He argues that the rate of addiction fluctuated at different times and among different groups, and that this fact combined with the inaccuracy of the data make it impossible to determine the effects of the laws on the social problem; in other words, he would likely say Mandell’s claim that the laws created or worsened the social problem is an immeasurable claim. Nevertheless, he insists that a social problem (in terms of Mandell’s paradigm) did indeed exist before and after the Harrison Act.

Courtwright has argued that a general lack of knowledge about addiction and its effects during the 19th century allowed mass addiction to go largely unnoticed—basically the same argument as Marks, Terry and Pellen. However, as Mandell discovered, even the medical literature of the time barely devotes much print to any potential social problem, either in warning or acknowledgment. Furthermore, the passage of the Harrison Act disrupted access to opiates for the majority of non-upper-class addicts overnight; indeed, according to

71 Belenko, Drugs and Drug Policy in America, 58.

72 For an in-depth look at media responses to the Harrison Act see Part III of Belenko’s Drugs and Drug Policy in America.
74 Courtwright, Dark Paradise: Opiate Addiction in America Before 1940, 2 to 6.
police reports at the time, the majority of inner-city addicts were forced into withdrawal due to the law (many of whom turned forever-after to the black market). The symptoms of addiction and withdrawal are not easily hidden from those around you either; symptoms include prolonged fever, suicide, vomiting to an extent that ribs are often cracked, uncontrollable trembling and wrenching, etc.. So, with or without a name to put to it, addiction and withdrawal are noticeable. This certainly sheds doubt on this part of Courtwright's argument.

Courtwright also argued that it is possible the “400,000” addicted veterans spread so far out across the country after the war that large-scale addiction wouldn’t have been noticed. However, the majority of those veterans—by far—eventually moved to expanding cities, taking part in a massive spur of urbanization that took place after the war. Gathered in larger numbers within city limits, the problem would have been easier to notice. However, even in Albany, where a suspected addiction rate of six percent existed at the turn of the century, newspapers never made a peep about a perceived social menace or criminal problem due to opiate use.

According to the work done by Jerry Mandel the consequences of anti-drug laws “provided the rationale for justifying the laws.” The social problem that anti-drug policy proponents claimed existed did not; it only manifested within the decades following the enactment of these laws. In other words, the legislation gave birth to the social problem, not the other way around—this was likely true, at the very least, by the early 20th century (I am continuing the research in order to determine how much this was true up to the 1970’s and today). Since America’s first all-out ban in the Philippines, prohibitory laws have only driven the opium market (as with all drugs) underground, creating an extremely lucrative black-market—alcohol prohibition in the 1920’s being a prime example of this dangerous phenomena. Surely, there is a causal relationship between this black market and any social problem that has ever existed.

Since then, and especially since the 1970’s when Nixon convinced the country that all drug addicts were inherently criminal (in a psychological sense), this black-market has provided an alternative source of income for young poor people (especially in inner-cities), and has created a breeding ground for police, and political corruption. Most politicians are afraid to make any radical (or even remotely outside of the status quo) proposals for reform of drug policy due to the negative stigma attached to policy change, and a general misunderstanding by the public of the history involved, and the other available policy options.

Furthermore, much of the recently gathered data, and the fresh interpretations of the relevant social, legal, and political histories doesn’t even make its way into the debate. The number-one cause of

75 Belenko, Drugs and Drug Policy in America, 53-55.
76 Musto, 100 Years of Heroin, 47.
77 “The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War.”
78 “Opium in the Pacific Northwest: 1850’s to 1930’s.”

80 For a comprehensive look at the drug policy debate, the socio-economic and political factors involved, and the American political tradition of the
incarceration in the US today are drug-related charges. What this essay is attempting to stress is that the origins of the laws that created this criminal-class, which created a social problem where one possibly never existed, and which gave America a foothold on global markets and morality at the sake of the addict are steeped in mistruths, misconceptions, and self-fulfilling bias. Now, there is no denying that many of the facts used, and arguments made in this essay are certainly debatable, and have been for a long time. However, at the very least, as the drug policy debate continues today, a clear, de-stigmatized understanding of its history is absolutely necessary for those involved to accomplish anything that remotely resembles what is best for society.


81 “The Mythical Roots of US Drug Policy: Soldier’s Disease and Addiction During the Civil War.”
Jamaica Kincaid's “Girl”; The Semicolon's Attempt to Connect Reader and Story

By Mahalia Shoup

This paper was for Dr. Robert Miltner’s Short Story class. The author defends the semicolon and explains its significance in creative and academic writing.

“What to call the thing that happened to me and all who look like me? Should I call it history? If so, what should history mean to someone like me?” –Jamaica Kincaid

A generation reveals their deepest inner self and their true identity in the stories it writes. It is in the written form that the future generation will label its longings, obsessions, and passions. The inventions of the past may only serve as machinated devices but will not expose the core reality of a human condition that persists in their time. The paintings and songs, in retrospect, may invoke certain responses and connections, but will not truly convey the fundamental desire and the very crux that drive the past generation. It is in the written form, where disclosure of the past is documented, that a semblance of reality and a clear image is painted. These written forms are often in narratives. These narratives are transcribed, persisting ideas and social issues of the day. Often, a writer will reveal the inner workings of society through these narratives, and fictionalized or not, a close scrutiny of the stories they tell will show the context of a past era.

A story will reveal the writer and her idea of the world. She will expose herself in her work and if the reader is paying attention, she will lay bare “secrets” of her thoughts and attitudes towards the world. These “secrets” do not necessarily mean the deepest darkest monstrosities that she shoots out to the world, or of a haunting of Freudian childhood atrocities. Sometimes, they are as simple and as straightforward as one's longing for the loss of culture; to Jamaica Kincaid, this is precisely the reason why she wrote “Girl.”

In the story, Kincaid presents her mastery of her own culture. She has carefully crafted this knowledge and has precisely weaves this idea in “Girl”. The story's charm comes from the narrative of a young girl who is seeking to form her identity through the many commands she remembers from her mother. Kincaid carves into the American literature the image of a girl, foreign, in contrast to the regular American girl. The author relives in this story her own experiences with her mother and looks back into her former self. The story's form is both exploratory and experimental at the time it was written. It is the author's attempt to negotiate her past identity with the brilliant writer she has become. By writing and publishing this story her own experiences with her mother and looks back into her former self. The story's form is both exploratory and experimental at the time it was written. It is the author's attempt to negotiate her past identity with the brilliant writer she has become. By writing and publishing this story, Kincaid presents to us, the readers, a portrait of herself and seeks to attempt a connection between herself and the world.

It is relatively easy for the present generation to take a photograph. By clicking a few buttons, uploading, downloading, and photoshopping, a picture can easily be posted on profiles and walls in social
networking sites. People can now judge others by clicking that picture and determine what characteristics one has just by the pose. A puckered mouth, dark eyeliners, low cut blouses—these are what some quantifiers that others are judged by. In contrast, writing a comprehensive self-evaluation and description stumps many young people today. There is a lost sense of realistic gauge on who people are at present. Presentation and the external life are the only things that matter in telling the stories of this generation.

A photograph will only communicate a superficial image and “compel the reader to enstory” (Shwalbe 178) or evaluate the other person. Easily, a photograph can “pose” an emotion, a candid moment, and create a kind of superfluousness that passes for reality. In a story however, it does the exact opposite. The careful placement of words, and the creative, artistic use of language forces the reader to make-up the images in his imaginations. The experience of reading a story versus looking at the photo becomes two extreme opposite experiences. A story allows him to step into a visceral space without physically being there. This physicality is used by Kincaid in the writing of this story. Kincaid uses the words such as “stone heaps” (Kincaid 475) as a tool to wash clothes.

This concrete description brings the sound of a river’s rushing waters, the warm atmosphere of a tropical, humid environment, and the noise coming from the chit chat of local women sitting on rocks while washing their laundry. The impact of this concreteness becomes participative and the reader’s psychic distance with the story contracts. The weaving of detailed words in Kincaid’s story allows the readers an experience which is only and exclusively imparted through words.

Words when connected form sentences; sentences attempt to convey an idea. Kincaid has used words to her advantage in this story. Beyond words, her sentence construction also shows, her playfulness and attempt to break certain “norms” in grammar rules. It is safe to say that in grammar, the over use of a punctuation mark may mean that there is little skill and thought in putting an idea together. In a story however, the absence of punctuation leads to confusion and cumbersome reading. Authors in general often use punctuations as part of “the” proper grammatical form. Kincaid uses one particular punctuation to set a mentality of “see how far the envelope can be pushed” and to set her story above the average.

Her use also invites the reader to pay close attention to the many, over-indulgent details she wrote in the story. She has used the semicolon 51 times in “Girl”; this is within a piece of writing that is only 49 lines long. Generally, 51 occurrences is not much in a seven page thesis or a book length dissertation; in one that is barely a page and a half, this is really significant.

The semicolon is a weird punctuation. “The semicolon provides a stronger break than a comma, and a weaker break than a period” (Venolia 85). In its average use, it is a grammatical device. As a reader, one could not help but question the motivation why the author used the semicolon like it was going out of style. At initial reading, it feels like an over extravagance of photography editing techniques that deem a picture grainy.

One should not dismiss the use as mere fancy or whim though; the author peppered semicolon into her work intentionally. To
understand this seeming lunacy in the writing of the story, one must have a clear understanding of the meaning behind the semicolon. In academic settings, this is probably the most hated punctuation, not for the sake of prejudice alone, but more to the growing reality that grammatical training in the present is lacking. The semicolon is often the most ridiculed, underestimated, and discriminated punctuation in punctuation-landia.

To understand Kincaid, a clear view of the histories and usage of the semicolon must be established. The basic utilitarian reason is to connect ideas. Kincaid found a way to connect her ideas in a way that the reader will not breathe a full inhale/exhale count until she presents her whole idea. Kincaid successfully exploited this out-of-breath theory by: “don't walk bareheaded in the hot sun; cook pumpkin fritters in oil”. The key word here is hot. Two different images with one theme, heat; these two smaller ideas connected by a slight pause suggests that the author wants the reader to experience the constricting breathlessness of being in an extremely hot environment. The line also conveys the stickiness, mashed with the feeling of being “cooked” under the sun like fritters. In closer inspection of the story, each idea separated by a semicolon is somehow connected to one theme, and the mixtures of interrelated themes make up for the message of her story—culture.

For the seriousness of the story's message—it is the life-long to do list that the girl chants to herself like a brainwashed robot—one cannot help but find humor in the images presented by the author. This humor will not have the same impact without the semicolon. In the use of this punctuation, her playfulness is brilliantly played out in the story. Arthur Plotnik suggests that semicolons can be the punctuation that delivers the punchline; Kincaid crafts the story like the script in a stand-up comedy routine which when read out loud, introduces a rolling punchline one after another.

Just when the reader expects something serious after reading “this is how you behave in the presence of men who don't know you well, and this way they won't recognize immediately the slut I have warned you against becoming”, she immediately presents something so ordinary and outright ridiculous with: “be sure to wash every day, even if it is with your own spit”. The visual acuity these two ideas bring are just phenomenal. The reader cannot help but laugh at the image of a girl who may “like” a strange guy, thus wanting to flirt with him but at the same time dutifully obeying her dominant mother by spitting on herself.

The funny parts in the story are cleverly hidden in plain sight and are partially covered by the overabundance of the semicolon. When a reader gets hooked and labors to unearth the different ideas in the story or is going to get a failing grade in a class if he does not, the semicolon has a sinister goal to win anyone. Grammarians believe that a semicolon creates expectations in a sentence. In the mother-daughter tension presented in the story, Kincaid uses the mother figure to command the girl and “expect” her to shy away from sluttishness.

It can also be assumed that Kincaid uses this punctuation to play with the reader some. Josephine Burnham, from the University of Kansas, says that in cases where two ideas need to bridge together and no other punctuation works, the semicolon becomes the mark of subordination—a
“paratactic construction” (536). Kincaid cleverly uses her story as a kind of subordination directed to the reader—an indoctrination of her culture to the reader, of her familiar domesticity introduced to a foreign culture. She subjects her reader to a type of semicolon. The story becomes the hypothetical semicolon between writer and reader; the story forms the slight pause and connection between the two.

Many believe, and as much as people detest its use, the semicolon is a dying punctuation. Its rarity in use and its exclusivity in visitations within writerly, creative groups, makes this punctuation so marginalized. One could not help but ask why Kincaid would resort to a vanishing symbol in her sentence structures. Perhaps, the heavy manipulation is trying to prove a point. Kincaid is trying to drive home the idea that her identity is dying and during the short pauses in her life, the author requires a solid, constant cadence of litanies; the writing of this story is essential to remind her of who she really is. Or, one can only assume, that Kincaid is obsessed with the symbol of a dot on top of a comma.

Nevertheless, the heavy use of it brings to reader a powerful visual impact on the count of randomly leafing through a book and garnering interest by odd formatting alone. The reader may not exactly quote the story verbatim, but its claim to fame is its number of semicolons.

For as much as this story is widely anthologized, its inclusion to the lists of frequently read stories plays a disadvantage to the reader. The experience of culture becomes limited to the author's frame of mind. The construction of place becomes romanticized, unchanging, and fabricated. In the same way, Yi-Fu Tuan puts it in the article, “Language and the Making of Place: A Narrative-Descriptive Approach”: speech transforms nature into a human place (688), also, transcribed narratives becomes the preservation of a cultural place. Kincaid offers a place in her story that cannot exist in real time. The disadvantage to the reader is that they are allowed only a limited perception of place whereas, life is always changing and evolving. The advantage though, exceeds any personal travels, colorful brochures, and inviting travelogue videos to the place.

When Kincaid finally connects with the reader, her experiences become part of the reader's. When the connection is formed, visiting the locale only adds to the elaborate and lush experience—reader brings his own emotional idea of the place—which deepens his intimacy with his excursions as it all becomes a complex mixture of ideas and tangibility. This only proves that the writing of the story is still needed: to install and evoke pictures into the imagination and reading them becomes the vehicle for literacy and completeness of experience. Kincaid could have easily lost her identity in the process of immigration, but in writing “Girl” she has formed that connection/semicolon to her past and present self. The semicolon has become the negotiating element in the wholeness of her identity.

In the end, if people read only for entertainment, they will enjoy a few minutes of suspending unbelief. The pleasure of the text is an experience exclusive to itself: adapted, spoken, scripted into movies, read out loud but still irreplaceable. If the writer writes with excellent craftsmanship; if the story brings the readers into a world that could only exist on paper: if the punctuation becomes the vehicle to present the ideas, he has written well.
Overall, when a well-written narrative is presented to the reader, the story becomes part of who they are, unwittingly, their cultures will evolve. The reader is enriched; she will pay careful attention to the details; and may be summoned to write her own. If one decides to write, she will do it writing in her social context, personal belief, generational attitudes. She will make use of symbols, words, sentences, ideas—and in exceptional cases, a semicolon.

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Analysis of the Song of Roland

By Zach Eckels

This paper was written for Dr. Thomas Sosnowski's History of Civilization I. It examines the traits of 'the hero' characterized in "The Song of Roland" and what was the most important character trait during the era that it was written.

On Saturday, August 15, 778, French forces led by Count Roland were defeated at the legendary battle at Roncesvalles Pass. Roland and the twenty-thousand soldiers under his command were acting as the rear guard to protect the king, Charlemagne, and the rest of the French army. The battle took place in a high mountain pass located on the border of France and Spain. The rear guard of Charlemagne's army was ambushed as they travelled through the pass; in the violence that ensued, Roland was killed and the rest of the French forces in the pass were defeated. The story of this epic battle was passed down orally for hundreds of years until it was finally recorded in the Song of Roland. This text portrays an exaggerated account of the battle at Roncesvalles Pass; although it is exaggerated, the tale still gives valuable insight to the culture and values of ancient Europe.

The Song of Roland was written approximately during the 11th century, around the time of the first crusade. Religious influence from this time period is evident throughout the text as it shows the conflict between the Christian and Muslim realms. Both realms have a common trait; they rely heavily on a feudal system of social organization. Analyzing the hierarchical structure of this system shows what character traits are prized, as well as the importance that lord and vassal relationships play in the social hierarchy of societies in ancient Europe.

In the feudal system described by the text, God is placed at the top of the hierarchy. The king, Charlemagne, is just beneath God. Charlemagne is depicted as God's primary vassal and he is seen as a direct representation of God himself, nearly perfect. Beneath him, all of the other lord and vassal relationships are positioned according to the authority of each person in the hierarchy. The success of the members of this system is dependent on their loyalty to their lord; thus loyalty is among the most prized character traits of the characters in this story.

Along with this, a breach in the loyalty of one member of the hierarchy severely limits the chance of success of the subsequent levels of vassals. God is depicted as the ultimate authority in the feudal hierarchy and Charlemagne's success in battle, and his success as a ruler, is dependent upon his loyalty to God. Beneath Charlemagne, the success of his people depends on their loyalty to the king. If a king fails to submit to God, he is punished for breaching his duty to be a loyal vassal to his lord, which results in punishment for all of the people beneath him. Submission to a higher authority, or lord, is the single most important aspect of life for people of this era.

They must first submit to those above them, then submit to their king, and most importantly submit to God. Failure to submit to these authorities result in severe punishment, and in many cases the
punishment is death. Much of the *Song of Roland* deals with these relationships between lords and vassals and how these relationships are the foundation of the feudal society.

There are many examples of these relationships throughout the text. God is the ultimate lord over the people. As the supreme authority, he has the power to reward or punish based solely on the degree of loyalty displayed by his followers. Roland is a prime example of this concept. He dedicated his life to serving his lord, Charlemagne, and measured his success in life by how well Charlemagne loved him. When Olivier warned that the Saracens were preparing to attack the rear guard, Roland had a chance to sound the Oliphant to inform Charlemagne of the impending battle so that the main French army would return and inevitably defeat the Saracen army with minimal casualties to the French. Out of pride and arrogance, Roland refused to sound the horn. He claimed that he would embarrass France; he said that he would "much prefer to die than come to shame; for fighting well, the Emperor will love us." (Harrisson 87 1091-1092) During this battle, Roland makes several references to his duty to fight bravely in order to please his king and die as a martyr.

By the end of the battle, Roland is killed in action. Even though he made a grave mistake by allowing his pride to get in the way of reason which prevented him from sounding the Oliphant, God overlooks this sin and he is rewarded for his loyalty when angels descend from heaven and raise his soul from earth into heaven. His honorable death as a martyr is a direct reward of his loyalty to his lord, Charlemagne. Also, Roland's sword, Durendal, contains several Christian relics. By keeping these relics in the hilt of his sword, it is symbolic of his loyalty to not only Charlemagne, who represents God, but to God himself. Due to this show of loyalty, Roland has been rewarded with countless victories in battle and nearly unmatched strength and skill.

Ganelon, his companion Pinabel, and his thirty other companions are another example of this concept. In this case, the text illustrates an example of the punishments that occur when a vassal does not maintain his loyalty to his lord. Ganelon, Roland's step father, grew to resent Roland's success as a warrior, his relationship with the king, and his fame among the people. Roland was essentially everything that Ganelon wanted to be. When Roland nominated Ganelon to be the messenger to the Saracens, Ganelon vowed that he would have his revenge and kill Roland. In order to take his revenge, Ganelon plotted with the Saracen leaders to plan the battle at Roncesvalles pass. In the end, Ganelon accomplished his goal, Roland was killed. By plotting to ambush Roland and the other French soldiers, Ganelon forfeited all loyalty to his lord, (Roland) to the king, and to God. He was severely punished for his breach of loyalty.

While on trial, Pinabel and the rest of his thirty companions supported his cause, claiming that he should be allowed to remain in the service of the king. They defended Ganelon by claiming his actions were not treason but merely a personal issue with Roland. In the end, the trial was decided by a to-the-death battle between Thierry, who supported Ganelon's guilty verdict, and Pinabel, who fought for Ganelon's innocence. The people believed that the winner would be favored by God; therefore, the survivor of the death match will be the supporter of the Godliest course of action. Thierry is the weaker opponent, the odds are against him. The concept of the lord and vassal relationship comes into play to decide the victor of the battle. Thierry is
remaining loyal to his lord by defending his King's judgment.

Pinabel is also acting according to his duty to be loyal to his lord, Ganelon; although, by Ganelon's decision to breach his duty of loyalty, he has sealed the fate of not only himself, but the fate of his loyal vassals as well. Since Pinabel is the stronger opponent, he soon gains the advantage in the death match and strikes a blow that should have been fatal. God intervenes and spares Thierry, giving him the opportunity to strike the lethal blow against Pinabel. This lethal blow wins the death match and confirms the fate of Ganelon and his followers.

Thierry is spared due to his loyalty to his lord, Charlemagne, who had also remained loyal to the ultimate authority, God himself. Due to Ganelon's breach of his duty to remain loyal to his lord, he is condemned to death, along with his companions. The people decide to hang the remaining of the thirty companions; this punishment is not sufficient for Ganelon's actions. Ganelon is subject to be torn limb from limb by four high-spirited, fiery, horses. This instance of Ganelon's treason shows how loyalty is the single most important character trait during this era; along with this, a breach of one's duty to be loyal to his lord is the single most despised action and is punishable by torture and death.

The social structure of the Saracens is based on the same concept of a feudal hierarchy as that of the French. The Saracen people believe that they must remain loyal to their king, Marsilla, and to their god, Allah. They adhere to the same vassal and lord relationships as the French; although, there is one crucial difference. Time and time again, the Muslim armies are defeated by the Christian armies. The nature of the vassal and lord relationships offers a clear explanation of why this is happening. The Muslims, like the Christians, are loyal to their lords, who are then loyal to the king. The difference lies in the loyalty of the kings. Charlemagne worships the God of the Christians where Marsilla worships Allah.

Due to Marsilla's means of worship, his loyalty lies with the wrong deity. According to the feudal system shown in the text, this is essentially a breach of his duty to be loyal to the Christian God which is likely to be severely punished. As was the case with Ganelon, a breach of loyalty by the lord results in punishment of that lord as well as punishment for the subsequent levels of vassals. Marsilla was directly punished by losing his right hand. He also lost his kingdom as well as hundreds of thousands of soldiers. Many of his followers are punished by losing their lives while the survivors witness a collapse of the Muslim society after the French invasion.

In battle, it became evident to the French soldiers that their God was with them. Several miracles of God are mentioned in the book showing that God intervened in the battle to aid the French. When they became aware that god was intervening, the soldiers cried out "King Charles is in the right against these pagans and God has left the verdict up to us!" (Harrison 242 2267-3368) Since Charlemagne remained loyal to the correct deity, he was rewarded by being the victor of the final battle described in the text. When he engages Baligant, Charlemagne was struck in the head by a potentially fatal blow that cuts through his armor and skin to his skull. Through God's intervention, he survives and is given the strength to defeat Baligant.

This causes the Muslim army to retreat. The narrator describes the scene by saying, "the pagans flee—God wills them not to
stay." (Harrison 262 3623) The Muslim army falls back to the city of Saragossa where they are overrun by the French soldiers who breach the walls and capture the city. Once again, the French soldiers are successful due to their adherence to the feudal hierarchy.

In the Song of Roland, the well being of any society largely depends on the loyalty of the king to the correct deity and the loyalty of the people to their king. The text shows many examples of the rewards and punishments of loyalty to a lord or the lack thereof. In the text, a hero is shown to be a noble vassal who serves a noble lord. Loyalty is the most prized character trait among the people. Those who display loyalty are greatly rewarded where those who fail to display loyalty are severely punished.
Dear Anne

By Marie A. Hlavin

This paper was written for Dr. Mary Rooks’ Literature in English II. It is a letter to a character in Jane Austen’s “Persuasion”. In the letter, the author introduces the character to the theories of Mary Wollstonecraft.

My Dear Friend Anne,

It has come to my attention your discouraged attempts at loving a man who, at your families’ request, you were not permitted to marry many years ago. In writing this plea for your understanding of two paramount considerations on this front, I am sorry to offend or incite you to harbor emotions of distrust or resentment toward me. For, Anne, I do so admire you as one admires a sweet daughter who lives in the likeness of her mother, as I have seen in you bits of my own longing for acknowledgment and true love, and I send these words to you with the utmost respect and sincere adoration.

That being said, I wish to introduce you to the influence of the most noble and forward thinking of women, who, without flattering the fascinating graces of women in general (Wollstonecraft 1461), persuades me to employ the great mind that rattles in my skull rather than the great force of my bosom that rattles in the skulls of men upon their viewing it. The name of this purveyor of the female intellect is Mary Wollstonecraft, and she has written a grand detail of the talents of women beyond beauty of face or grace of posture, namely that of the potential rationality of our sex, were it not trampled by the influence of men and the impudence that dictates the virtues of women of high social class and wealth. For you, my dear Anne, have been victim to both traits of weakness listed here, and I sense that in your realizing this through this letter, you are more capable than either of your feeble minded sisters to appreciate your strengths and qualities that make you a respectable and desirable specimen of our sex.

The first in your folly to previously secure love is the forced notion that Captain Wentworth, before he was Captain Wentworth and merely a man of no title or admired nobility, was of little worth due to his situation and status as a gentleman according to your insufferable father, Sir Walter Elliott (Austen 33). Again, I ask that you please excuse any insult directed at your father and formerly your sisters. It is my understanding that the three are rather inclined to view wealth as the highest of accomplishments in life, giving way to a lack of reason themselves. Nobility and intellect do oft reside together in this, a most trying of times for those who have neither, but what has nobility gained your father as of late when considering his need to retrench because he has simply lived beyond his means, especially taking into account the fact that this was not necessary when your dear and most shrewd mother was still with us (Austen 16)?

With this fact, I ask of you to separate in your mind the idea that only nobility ought denote intelligence and keenness of wit. Consider your friend, Mrs. Smith. You do seem to enjoy her company, enough so that you would risk the approval of your family in denying tea with Lady Dalrymple for the delights of a conference with Mrs. Smith.
and her nurse (Austen 181). Even in this, the most contemptuous of letters, I applaud your decency in visiting one so poorly off as opposed to visiting one so well off that your presence would have been of little consequence to her.

In your rebellion, I find cause to not only applaud you, but to implore you to expand your thoughts and heart to this issue of birthright and natural law. For isn’t it the Aristotelian ideal to actualize our potentials regardless of our means? Is it not God’s will that we lead fulfilled and bountiful lives with or without the baubles of the rich? I dare say that it is His wish and desire that all of His followers burgeon the mind, if not only to have lived a life of completeness; yet you are consistently and relentlessly reminded of your connectedness to high society (Austen 179) by those who don’t dare let their eyes wander to the corner of the streets where the less fortunate reside, if only as a means to dissuade you from seeing these unfortunate fellows yourself. What have they to fear of the poor, Anne, if they are so high in stature as to be seemingly untouchable? I do believe that Sir Walter is so fully adored by himself that he never sees anyone, let alone the urchins that bring him his tea or, like ghosts, prepare his bed for sleeping.

Being of good conscience and sound mind, I trust that you will take what I am about to say in good light, and nary think me too anxious or feeble myself. The fear of the wretched that lies in the minds of the rich can only be blamed on a theory of power. For, if the philosophy of John Locke is true, a mind is a clean slate until polluted by the thoughts of men (Dean, Metha, and Forbis 111). No natural law truly exists when considering the wealth of man. All men are born with the ability to navigate knowledge, yet, and this is where the fear is present, if we allow the underlings of our society too much education, they may have access to hearty discernment and realize their status as what it truly is: a reason for revolt against that which has determined their fate. As it is, a lack in rationality will almost definitely lead to a lack in morality, leading to the further perpetuation of one’s meager station in life. In this same light I feel that the tyranny of the poor by the nobility is a means to maintain an air of superiority. For if the streets’ corner dwellers were as well informed as those who keep them there, there would be no nobility.

Even as it is, I am left to wonder whether or not there is reason in the vain and greedy souls of those privy to such wealth, given that their appearance and belongings hold more importance than their affections for or relations with another. An even distribution of wealth would mean less for one like Sir Walter and enough for one such as Mrs. Smith. It is you who I charge with the task of making this known to those who would be willing to listen, Anne. It is you who has the heart and the notion to care for one without concern for their connections or nobility. For, if you don’t use the wit that you possess, I fear that the state of matters will become much worse before they are made better. Had there been less nobility in the minds and hearts of your family and friends seven years ago, you may not have been forced to wait for love to find you again.

These points as stated lead me then to the second paradox Ms. Wollstonecraft has inspired me to relay to you, which is the conclusion that women are not given by society the benefits that make men appear to be the stronger sex of our species. This last point has come to me as I witnessed you wavering to approach Captain Wentworth with your true emotions of an everlasting love for him. For seven years you have been forlorn with love, "clouding every
enjoyment of youth” (Austen 37) given you by nature, yet you sat for so long, deceiving not only Frederich but your own heart, as well. And for what? Were you not confident enough in your worth to express these harbored emotions? Have you been so ravaged by the expectancies of men merely to deafly blush (Gregory 9) at the sight of him rather than to speak in earnest of your love for him? I believe that you have, Anne, but I pray that I may convince you with these words that this behavior is fitting only for a simp of lowly intellect, and not at all a behavior I would expect from one so thoughtful as you.

Ms. Wollstonecraft is correct to point out the physical inferiority of women in comparison with men; however, the question remains as to whether it is God’s will or the will of man that makes our sex weaker in mind and, often, in spirit. Expected to inspire love as opposed to rational and conscientious thought, women are, as this philosopher of truth says, “like the flowers planted in too rich a soil, strength and usefulness are sacrificed to beauty…” (Wollstonecraft 1459). Men are determined to make us the “alluring objects” (Wollstonecraft 1460) that we have become rather than befriend us as equals sharing the ability to converse as intelligible creatures, and we have allowed them to do so. We even promote this amongst our sex as the proper way of things because we are convinced that a lack of doing so will indicate a flaw in our character.

We have become the puppets in the play directed by the opposing sex, and the men who admit to loving us insist on our acting out scenes that further weaken our senses and rational minds. It’s as if the civilized world has taken on Mahometan rationale, insisting that our sex is free from the souls that are said to be in us all and lead us to heaven or hell (Wollstonecraft 1460). But what choice are we given when our education consists of mostly domestic arts meant to make us more desirable to prospective husbands, and our own mothers contend that cunning, obedience, and strict propriety are the virtues that we must possess to be deemed an acceptable specimen of our sex (Wollstonecraft 1463)? How are we to exercise the faculties we have acquired merely through existence when we are busy with the needlework forced upon us and the sketching of the countryside that we shall likely never have the opportunity to master (Wollstonecraft 1461)?

Now, I ask you, which is truly the weaker sex? The one who is not given the chance to bloom, or the one who is so frightened by the blossoming of the female mind, eventually leading to intellectual equality, that he enslaves us in a world of childlike wonderment and perpetual ignorance (Wollstonecraft 1463)?

If only you could have repeated your discussion about what makes someone good company with Captain Wentworth, rather than wasting it on Mr. Elliott. Perhaps then he would not have thought you so fickle of mind and easily persuaded as he assumed you were given the breaking of your engagement those seven years ago. Perhaps the torture you felt leading up to his recent proposal of marriage would have been eased or avoided completely had you been encouraged to speak your mind rather than to shy away from it. Your opinions were certainly wasted on Mr. Elliott, who is of the belief that birth and the nobleman’s notion of manners are what make for a suitable partner in conversation (Austen 179). What of women who are born into poverty? What of Mrs. Smith? Certainly you have found good company in her, regardless of her lack of formal cultivation. Can it be said that she possesses an even more rational mind than,
say, your sister, Elizabeth, who doesn’t seem to have any kind of rationale between her perfectly baubled ears? Is a woman of leisure owning also a mind at rest, whereas a woman of toil possesses a mind consistently in a state of employ? I believe this is so, Anne, and Ms. Wollstonecraft has said it too, “...the rich of both sexes have acquired all the follies and vices of civilization, and missed the useful fruit.” She goes on to say, “Civilized women are, therefore, so weakened by false refinement, that...their condition is much below what it would be were they left in a state nearer to nature” (1478). So, you see, Anne, your formal education has rendered you nearly helpless in a world outside of privilege and birthright. Those women who are born into what Sir Walter and Mr. Elliott would consider to be nothing, leave life with something more than your education would lead you to acknowledge: pure reason.

And what of women of distinction who have led nations and created a path for us? What of Nefertiti and Cleopatra and even Queen Elizabeth, despite her presumed illegitimacy? Do you suppose that the fathers of these great women deemed them inadequate because of their sex? Had they done so, would we know who they are, or would they have passed through life never making historical mountains out of the mound of dirt given them by nature? I predict that if the drivel offered to fathers by John Gregory in A Father’s Legacy to his Daughters, who feigns to understand the idiosyncrasies of women and chooses to pass this ill-informed theory onto his impressionable daughters, was in existence at the times in history when these women were in power, we might never have known their names or been graced with their influence.

I can say with the utmost confidence that Mr. Gregory’s advice has passed through the hands of your father, especially after overhearing his opinion of the women of Bath. He gives them no credit of intellectual integrity when insulting their plain appearance and touting their (most unlikely) admiration of him (Austen 168). It is from this ascertainment of his which forms my opinion that he agrees with Mr. Gregory’s overall theme that a woman owning wit is a dangerous member of her sex (Gregory 10). Do you think Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth was devoid of wit? I think not, Anne.

I must conclude, Anne, and congratulate you on your engagement to Captain Wentworth. I wish to leave you with some final thoughts of the nature, or rather forced opinion of our sex and station in life. It is not wealth or connectedness that make us whole in our existence. It is not our birth into this world as women which makes us inferior or unimportant. It is the assumption by most that both of these things are what determine the successes of a lifetime. This assumption is reached in folly and proves only to harm the less fortunate and degrade the women in society, who, if seen as equals, would be more apt to live up to Aristotelian and even Elizabethan standards of self-actualization and enlightenment. Living under the thumb of noblemen has the poor becoming poorer and women of means becoming more like lapdogs every day.

It is fortunate that you have secured love in a future husband rather than to marry for convenience; though it is a wonder to me that you were able to accomplish this given your current state as a woman of nobility who was so easily persuaded. Do not lose sense of yourself through the chores of marriage and the illusion of worth because of your nobility. Be strong in mind and spirit, Anne, and you will find happiness and fulfillment in all your days to come.
My Sincerest Best Wishes,
Marie A. Hlavin

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Where the Stitch Breaks

By Patricia Cotter

This paper was written for Dr. Keith Lloyd’s Fundamental English Grammar. It compares the difference between the structure of the French and English language.

When William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy, pierced England in 1066 at the Battle of Hastings, he threaded the English language with Norman French. For years, the ruling class wore the French weave as a social marker (McArthur 382), replacing the common fabric of Latin in such areas as “education, administration, and law” (Greenbaum 405) with the silky folds of the French tongue. Within two hundred years, the British had permanently stitched over 10,000 French words into the English language (Greenbaum 405), and in 1530, John Palsgrave wrote the first grammar of French, Lesclarcissement de la Langue Françoyse, in England (McArthur 382).

Although English remains embroidered with the colorful accents of the French tongue, there remain tears in the structural unity of the two languages evidenced in their grammars. I will uncover the most obvious seam splitters, but will decline delving into the messy undergarments for now.

The verb determines the grammatical pattern for the entire sentence. French and English agree with the VT verb pattern of subject, verb, and direct object. However, when it comes to Vg verbs, English, surprisingly, is the more flexible of the two. In English we can remove the word “to” from in front of the indirect object. French mandates the use of “to” whether the indirect object follows the verb or the direct object. For example, in English we can say, “He gave an apple to Sara” and “He gave Sara an apple.” French limits us to saying, “He gave an apple to Sara” or “He gave to Sara an apple” (Sato). If the indirect object is an object pronoun (to me, to you (singular informal), to him, to her, to us, to you (singular formal or formal), to them), it is moved to the slot immediately preceding the verb. “He gave the apple to me” becomes in French “He to me gave the apple” (Sato).

The direct object in French will follow the transitive verb unless the direct object is a personal pronoun. In English we say, “I walk the dog” or “I walk it (him).” In French the sentence reads, “I walk the dog” or “I it (him) walk” (Coffman 214).

“Pour” or “à,” respectively translated into “for” and “to,” precede the French indirect object, which can only be a person or animal. Some French verbs will not take a direct object while their English counterparts will only take a direct object. Conversely, other French verbs take a direct object, when the English equivalent takes the indirect object. I found the following examples online at French Grammar: Verbs & Objects: Indirect & Direct Objects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French direct object</th>
<th>English indirect object</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>attendre un detective</td>
<td>to wait for a detective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chercher les clés</td>
<td>to look for the key</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French indirect object</td>
<td>English direct object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>désobéir à l'institutrice</td>
<td>to disobey the teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Paula Sato, French instructor at Kent State University at Stark, and I uncovered something startling about VL verbs during our interview. I showed her the sentence “The cake tastes delicious” which contains the VL (linking) verb “taste” and the predicate adjective “delicious.” In French the predicate adjective never follows the verb “taste.” The French people always convert “taste” into a noun to form the sentence “The cake has a delicious taste.” The verb becomes a VT followed by a direct object. This change in the function of a word under certain conditions prompted me to submit a list of other linking verbs to Madame Sato in order to discover whether or not there was a rule forbidding predicate adjectives from trailing linking verbs. The verbs I chose were “appear, feel, seem, sound, become, look, and smell.” Not all the selected linking verbs transformed into nouns when followed by predicate adjectives, but these did - “sounds, looks, and appears.” When the original linking verb changed to a noun, the main verb became either BE or HAVE.

We can conjugate a present tense verb in English and arrive at the same spelling for all but the “he, she, and it” forms where we add an “s” (I go, you go, he goes, we go, you go, they go). In French, each verb changes its spelling according to the personal pronoun subject preceding it (je vais (I go), tu vas (you go), il va (he goes), nous allons (we go), vous allez (you go), and ils vont (they go)). Although the spelling of French verbs varies, for many verbs four out of the six verb conjugations sound alike. “Je parle, tu parles, il parle, and ils parlent” sound identical (Sato).

Here are some interesting verb choices in French. In English we would say, “It is cold.” The literal translation in French would be “It does cold.” “I am hungry” is translated “I have hunger.” “I am twenty years old” becomes “I have twenty years.” “I eat lunch” becomes “I take the lunch” (Sato). In French there are many expressions that use the verb HAVE which are conveyed by using the verb BE in English. For example, “I have sleep” translates into “I am sleepy” in English. “To have fear of” changes into “to be afraid” (Terrell et al. 162).

The perfect aspect in English utilizes the auxiliary HAVE and the past participle. When auxiliary BE works in conjunction with the past participle, the sentence becomes passive. In French HAVE and BE can precede the past participle without making the sentence passive. The French have assigned HAVE its own past participles, and BE also has its own list. A sentence becomes passive when an auxiliary BE combines with a past participle that is assigned to work exclusively in tandem with auxiliary HAVE (Sato).

In English we might say the classic Vg sentence “Someone gave me the book.” The passive version of this Vg sentence reads, “I was given the book.” However, in French the indirect object “me” would never become the subject “I” in the sentence. Instead of writing a passive sentence headed by the subject “I”, the French would write, “On me donne le livre” which is translated “One to me gives the book” or “Le livre m’a été donné” roughly translated “The book to me was given.” In French the personal indirect object of an active verb cannot, except in rare cases, become the subject of a passive verb” (Staaks xii).

In the perfect aspect, we could say in English, “The woman had dressed quickly” or “The woman quickly dressed.” In French, a short adverb moves into the slot between the auxiliary HAVE and the past participle. A long adverb follows the past participle. “Le bateau a vite coulé”
demonstrates the short adverb “vite” placed in the slot between the auxiliary (a) and the past participle (coulé). “Le bateau a coulé rapidement” exemplifies a long adverb filling the slot that follows the entire verb. The sentences have the same meaning, but the placement of the adverbs varies according to their length” (Sato).

French is not a unisex language. The girl grammar components wear dresses, and the boy grammar components wear pants. In other words, gender plays an important role in French grammar, making French more difficult to master than English, because the various parts must be in agreement. Nouns are either masculine or feminine. Adjectives adjust themselves to the gender of the noun they are modifying. Definite articles “le and la” and indefinite articles “un and une” also agree with the gender of the noun they modify (Terrell et al. 13). Articles before nouns are plural if the noun is plural (Terrell et al. 17).

The definite article can replace possessive pronoun determiners that modify such things as body parts and clothes when the subject of the sentence is clear. For example, in English we say, “He scratched his head.” In French the definite article replaces the possessive pronoun determiner, and the sentence reads, “He scratched the head” (Coffman 54). When we are missing a person’s name or a personal pronoun subject, we place the personal pronoun determiner before the body part just as we do in English. In the sentence “Her hair is blond,” “her hair” identifies an unspecified female subject, and “Her hair is blond” replaces the sentence “She has the hair blond. Some verbs, such as “show, look, and give” emphasize the body part, so we use the possessive pronoun determiner instead of the definite article (Coffman 54).

There is a partitive article in French indicating a quantity that cannot be counted. The French substitute “du, de l’, de la” for this quantity. In English we say, “I drank coffee today.” The French never leave out the partitive article, so the sentence will always read, “I drank some coffee today” (Terrell et al. 125, 126).

The pronoun “en” takes the place of a noun and its partitive article. In the sentence “I want some coffee (Je veux du café), you can eliminate “some coffee” and use “en”. The sentence will then read, “I some want,” because “some” moves to fill the slot in front of the verb, and the reader perceives the identity of the missing noun. In a sentence with an infinitive like “I want to eat some pickles,” we remove “some pickles” and write, “I want to eat” placing the pronoun “en” before the infinitive instead of using the English expression “I want to eat some.” In English we can say, “I want some to eat,” but it is more common to say, “I want to eat some” (Terrell et al. 254).

If we say, “I wash the car,” the grammatical order of the words remains the same in both French and English. However, when people do something to their own bodies, the reflexive pronoun (myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, and themselves) kicks in. The reflexive pronoun fills the slot between the subject and verb. In French we say, “I to myself wash the hands.” In English it would read, “I wash my hands.” All eight reflexive pronouns in English are unique. In French the reflexive pronoun for “(to) himself, (to) herself; (to) itself, and (to) themselves” is the same word – “se” (Sato).

The French never use “’s” to form an inflected possessive noun. They employ “de” which is equivalent to our English word “of.” So instead of “Mom’s book,” they say, “the book of Mom” (Sato).
The last exposed seam I wish to address is the positioning of adjectives. English adjectives normally precede the noun that they modify. In French the majority of adjectives follow the noun. The adjectives that precede the noun are limited, and most of them seem to describe personal or physical characteristics of people such as the adjectives “beautiful, fat, tall, or old” (Coffman 35). Some adjectives change meaning when they change position. Mary Coffman in French Grammar offers this example. “Sa propre chambre” means “his or her own room.” However, “une chambre propre” means “a clean room” (Coffman 38).

These examples are only a handful of the broken threads between the two languages. Although English is taught worldwide for the convenience of commerce, the French people will continue to wrap themselves within the intimate cloak of their own language, preferring to glory in its sound whose effect has been maximized by manipulating word order, rather than to repair the tears between the two languages and imitate “barking dogs” (Sato).

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The historical geography of the United States of America holds a distinctness rarely found for a place that has only existed for a few hundred years. In this time, millions upon millions of people have left their homes to try and stake out a new existence on this continent. In fact, it is not hyperbolic to say that the United States is a nation of immigrants. Barring those of Native American descent, everyone is somewhere not too distant from immigrants’ genes.

To leave out the immigrant’s journey when discussing the historical geography of the United States and those who were a part of it is to miss the point entirely. Emma Lazarus’ famous sonnet located on the Statue of Liberty is the quintessential descriptor of the American ideal and dream. The latter half reads “‘Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!’ cries she with silent lips. ‘Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!’”

This description of opportunity, so beautifully expressed, is what many immigrants sought. By no means a part of the huddled masses, my great-grandparents were seeking opportunity and the chance to start a family in America. The story of my family may be unique in its specifics, but it is not in the themes and patterns they were a part of. In this family history I attempt to sketch a view of the American immigrant and the changing of American society over the past century by relaying events, themes, and social and historical phenomena in chronological order since arriving in the United States. There is a reason that the things I discuss will sound familiar without even knowing my family. It is because this story is probably your own.

Bihac and Industry’s Calling

George Markezich was born in a very small outer village of the city of Bihac (beehotch), on the Croatia side of the modern Bosnia-Croatia border, in 1888. The Markezich family lived on and most likely made a living farming their plot of land. Growing up, George received little education and started working at a young age. The family was devoutly Catholic and attended mass in Bihac (Markezich, Shirley).

It was through this avenue that the family knew the Ivancics, the family of George’s future wife, my great-grandmother, Helen. The Ivancic family was also a working family of modest means that lived in Bihac. The two families arranged for George and Helen to be married upon coming of age. However, this would not take place in Croatia but rather at a later date.
in Chicago, after immigrating to the United States.

Helen’s older brother, Stjepan, later Anglicized to Stephen, had moved to Chicago in 1909. A classic example of chain migration, this was her and George’s connection with America that would ultimately prompt them to emigrate there. The particular reasons for making the move are not known, but it can be reasonably presumed that rural living in a country occupied by foreign invaders—Austria-Hungarians—did not provide one with a rewarding or bountiful livelihood. Helen’s brother had been doing well in the U.S. and had arranged to give the two a place to stay until they acquired the means to strike out on their own (Markezich, Shirley).

Whatever the exact reasons were, the soon to be married Helen and George came to the consensus that America would provide more social mobility and a better environment for starting a family. George immigrated to the United States in 1911 through Ellis Island, where he immediately caught a train to Chicago. Despite Steve “doing well” in America, he and his wife were poor in absolute terms, as was the case with most newly emigrated eastern Europeans. The area in which Steve, and now George, had settled was a neighborhood known as South Deering. South Deering and the adjacent East Side neighborhoods were home to a large and growing Slav, Serb, and Croat population and was one of Chicago’s many ethnic enclaves (Pacyga). Most of the city at the time and up until the 1950’s could be separated very finely into these enclaves wherein immigrant families settled (Markezich, Shirley).

Chicago was booming. Massive amounts of in-migration accompanied with the continuing industrial revolution meant jobs, albeit filthy and backbreaking, were plentiful. It was a low-skilled workers ticket to a better livelihood, though. Most found jobs doing rough, manual labor, working long hours for little pay. This included Chicago’s infamous meat packing industry, and the numerous railroad lines that ran through Chicago. George found a job at one of the docks nearby, along the lake, where he worked for a short time in order to save money. After a number of months, and financial help from Stephen, he was able to buy passage for Helen to come to the U.S. Helen arrived in Baltimore in 1912 and took a train to Chicago. The two continued to live with Stephen and his wife for about a year. The two were married at Sacred Heart of Croatian Church on November 23, 1913 (Crowe; Markezich, Shirley).

The Mobile Masses

If there is one permeating characteristic of Americans throughout the country’s history, it is this: they are always moving. In a society in which mobility is cheap and easy, there is nothing stopping them from doing just that. The newly wedded Markeziches were not an exception and in early 1914, upon hearing that there was work in East St. Louis, they said goodbye to Stephen and his wife and left Chicago.

They and many fellow eastern Europeans moved to East St. Louis and began working at the Illinois Central Railroad. The Illinois Central Railroad was one of the biggest freight railroad companies of the time. It was founded in 1850 when President Fillmore signed a land grant for its construction, making it the first land grant railroad in the country. It was completed in 1856 and was the longest railroad in the world. At the time that George Markezich worked there its lines branched from Chicago to South Dakota, and south to...
Mississippi and New Orleans. During the 1920s, the railroad was a major route for southern African Americans moving to the north during the great migration.

Working for Illinois Central, George did mainly outdoor maintenance at their yard in East St. Louis. During his first winter working for the railroad, George was stricken with severe frostbite and was unable to continue working at the company.

Following this, and again after hearing of work to be had nearby in Fairmont City very nearby to the north, George and Helen once again packed up and left. This move, unlike the others, would be permanent. Upon arriving in Fairmont, they found a large Polish and Croatian population and a strong Mexican minority. These three ethnicities still to this day define the city and provide an incredibly unique blend of cultures, traditions, and food. The city also provided a very tolerant atmosphere. Being comprised almost entirely of immigrants closely related in socioeconomic statuses, as well as Fairmont being a small town, meant segregation in living and working arrangements was limited.

Permanimt Settlement

George and Helen by this time had saved a decent amount of money and moved into a new, two-story, house that they would be sharing with a family of three. They essentially had the entire downstairs, which is fortunate considering they would begin having what would become a very large family.

George found a job at the American Zinc Company’s factory less than a block from their new house. He would walk to and from the American Zinc plant till he retired some 30 years later (Markezich, Caroline).

Soon after this move, like I mentioned, George and Helen would start to raise a family, which would include eight children. John Markezich, born in 1916 is my grandfather and one of only two of the eight children that would go on to have their own children. John and the rest of his siblings attended the school at Holy Rosary parish, which opened in 1922 and remains an important part of the community to this day. He would also go on to work at American Zinc until its closure in 1967, which coincided with a lot of deindustrialization around the Midwest writ large (EPA; Markezich, Shirley).

It was around this time, when my father and uncles were in their teenage years or entering their twenties, when the family would start moving away from Fairmont City. With the closure of the American Zinc plant, there wasn’t much economic opportunity to be had other than the Garcia Trucking Company, where a few them actually did work for a short period. The timeframe of this history lines up very concisely with some of the broader geographic patterns that happened throughout the United States.

Suburbanization and Deindustrialization

Although the Markezich family has rich historical ties to Fairmont City and East St. Louis, today those ties have been stretched. Of the family, only two remain: Julie and Manda Markezich, my great aunts, who have lived in the family’s original house for the better part of the past century. Except for short stints in which they both held careers outside of the city, a Markezich has always lived in that house. Sadly, the days for which that statement continues to hold true dwindle, and when it passes, the city will be
Markezich-free for the first time since the 1910’s.

The elements pulling this metaphysical knot apart are more than just the obvious one: time. While it’s not unique to my family, or even the United States as a whole, it is one of which most people are more or less aware. Since the end of the Second World War, America and most Western countries have experienced a pattern of population growth and dispersion that is not altogether different from past eras, but the effects of which, in breadth and impact on the landscape, are indeed unprecedented in human history. It was the beginning of mass suburbanization.

Let me clarify, though, the statement that it is not altogether different from past eras. The way humans have arranged their settlements has always depended heavily, though not exclusively, on the methods of transportation available at the time period. Whether it is by foot, by horse, by wheel, or by track, these different forms of technology have a massive impact on spatial distribution. So just like the horse brought wide streets and the train brought long, ceaselessly reaching tracks that helped define the connection and dispersion of people in the 19th century, the car helps redefine our settlement patterns in the 20th and 21st centuries. The issue of importance that all these share is that they allowed people—especially the more affluent—to live further from where they work.

The technological and human processes of these changes in transportation can be broken down into three phases:

First, technological breakthrough makes possible not only a new form of transportation, but also the processes by which that form of transportation can be produced and disseminated cheaply. This does not necessarily mean the technology is cheap for an individual to own. In cases of mass transit technologies, density is a crucially important factor; affordability can be achieved through adequate cost-distribution.

Secondly, new infrastructure is built in order to allow for the new form of transportation to be used widely. For example, take the wide avenues of New York City and many cities which developed around the same time. These world renowned streets, planned in 1811, are the result of taking into consideration horse-drawn vehicles, the dominant form of transport at the time.

Thirdly, and lastly, the geographic distribution of people changes commensurate with the advantages that the new technology confers (Glaeser). As I mentioned earlier, each of these junctures in time when a new form of transportation was developed, the main beneficiaries were the affluent. And each technological improvement furthered their ability to sprawl. Edward Glaeser, an economist at Harvard who has focused recently on urban geography observed, “A half-hour commute on foot can bring an average walker only about 1.5 miles; the omnibus easily doubled that range, which enabled the growth of uptown [New York] neighborhoods that catered to the well-off. An omnibus ride may have cost only five to seven cents, but ordinary laborers earned only a dollar a day, so they kept walking. Like the car, buses started off as transportation for the prosperous.”

By selectively speeding the rich, buses began the exodus of the wealthy from the urban core. When everyone walked in New York, the rich lived in Bowling Green, a
central location with easy access to the wharves. After the omnibus, the prosperous were able to commute in from less dense quarters uptown, and the suburban pattern started." (Glaeser 168)

It is possible to plug the car into this description, and it is quite easy in fact. In 1914, Henry Ford invented perhaps the most important technological aspect of the automobile with regards to its geographic implications: ultra-efficient production, allowing for many to partake in the new technology. Since it was a small, privately owned means of transport, the car had to be affordable for a person to buy, and eventually it was.

As for the medium on which it traveled, the car did not need new infrastructure to immediately make a large impact: it was able to run on the roads produced earlier for horse-drawn carriages and omnibuses. However, although infrastructure investments could be initially deferred because of this, the popularity of the car, along with public policy and social attitudes that encouraged less dense development, did militate toward massive infrastructure spending. This phase can be said to have culminated with President Eisenhower signing the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 into law on June 29, 1956, which called for the construction of some 41,000 miles of interstate highway across the United States (Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956: Creating the Interstate System).

The third phase is evidenced in the human distribution patterns of contemporary America. Since the 1950s, city populations have grown slower than national averages, or fell. This has been the trend: those on solid economic footing, as well as those receiving benefits from government policy, e.g. the GI bill, moved away from cities to less dense areas. My family was not an exception.

One by one, the Markezich family, all of whom had grown up in Fairmont City and East St. Louis, moved away to the burgeoning suburbs and exurbs of the area—Collinsville, Maryville, Fairview Heights, Belleville, Glen Carbon, Troy, O’Fallon, Columbia, just to name a few. Again, per the standard effects of suburbanization and deindustrialization, Fairmont City and East St. Louis were not spared from the indignities of urban dereliction and blight.

The two cities still have not recovered from this. Although the greater area is quite racially and economically segregated, the levels reached in East St. Louis are staggering. African Americans make up 96.4% of the population, as reported by the American Community Survey (East St. Louis City, Illinois ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates). 38.6% of all people in the city are under the federal poverty line, including over 50% of all people under the age of eighteen. The median household income is $21,000. Unemployment is 9.8%, and almost 50% of the population is not in the labor force—ten percent below the national participation rate (East St. Louis City, Illinois Selected Economic Characteristics).

As for Fairmont City, most of the Polish and Croatian families, and others varying European descent, have moved away. The population is now comprised primarily of people of Hispanic descent—55%. The economic statistics of Fairmont are better than those of East St. Louis but only marginally. The median household income of Fairmont is just over $34,000 (Fairmont City Village, Illinois Selected Economic Characteristics).
As is common with cities not capable of reorienting to a post-industrial economy, East St. Louis and Fairmont City’s tax revenue has plummeted. With that has come infrastructure in disrepair and services that don’t properly provide for their people. Most of the schools in these two cities have been shut down and the rest have been annexed by statute to the surrounding districts.

Now, no one moves away from their city of birth wanting any of these things to happen. But they do move away, and not only does doing so send areas such as these into decline but it reshapes the human geography of America. The story of my family and its history are congruent with this theme, and so are many.

Conclusion

The history of the Markezich family in the United States encompasses years of major change and many aggregate themes. Whether it is the story of a rural people seeking opportunity in the burgeoning economic centers of the world, the upward social mobility realized by millions of Americans, or the decline of once great cities that people still bear witness to, the Markeziches have been there and played a part in it all. While the story’s specifics are unique to my family, the underlying patterns of it are not.

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Smelser’s Value-Added Model and the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917

By Jeremiah Unkefer

This paper was for Dr. Anne Haas’s Social Movements. It is a theoretical analysis of a national or international social movement of the author’s choice.

Russia in 1917 was a powder keg, and one spark would ignite a fire that would engulf the entire nation and change the future of the world forever. The Tsarist family absconded from their people, believing that if life was good for them, then it was undoubtedly good for their people. The people did not agree and men with names such as Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin were making strides to bring this disagreement to the attention of those who lived in the palaces that dotted the nation.

Historians have spent decades examining the impact of the Bolshevik Revolution and how it all came to occur. Men such as E.H. Carr have spent years researching and writing multi-volume works on it, for the revolution, according to some historians, was the beginning of what later became known as the Cold War. Lenin, in 1917 stated that what was happening was a war of ideologies, one between communism and capitalism.

In 1962, Neil J. Smelser formulated his value-added model to assist historians and sociologists alike in their examination of these types of collective action. The purpose of this paper is to implement Smelser’s value-added model in the examination of the Bolshevik Revolution, in the hopes that it will help us gain a better understanding of the events that shook the very core of twentieth century history. This model is, although not a panacea to explain all the events of 1917, it does provide us a lens through which to view the events.

The paper will begin with an overview of the historical context, and then move onto a brief look at Smelser’s model and finally an application of his model in the context of the Bolshevik Revolution.

Historical Context

In 1917, Russia was teeming with unrest and dissension. One of the main sources was what was happening in the countryside regarding the agrarian productivity of the farmers. Despite the fact that Russia in acreage was immense, what existed was a land shortage due to the inclement Russian climate. What further compounded this issue was the fact that although serfdom was a thing of the past, there remained remnants of the past feudal relationships resulting in what became known as the “peasant problem” (Maklakov 1971: 4).

This problem yielded a highly dissatisfied population, giving them a widely unpopular view of the Tsar, his family, their fellow aristocrats and the lifestyle they enjoyed. As is the case in most class based societies, the class that is resented is fairly, if not completely, oblivious to the fact that they are resented. Living in a vacuum allowed the Tsar and his family to live in isolation away from the abject poverty and misery that befell the remainder of the
The Russian citizenry was ready for change and the future leaders of what would become the Soviet Union were willing to nudge it along. The fact that the Russian people were ready for this change can be summed up in a statement by Leon Trotsky in 1935, “Russia embarked on the path of proletarian revolution, not because its economy was ready for socialist transformation, but because the economy could no longer continue to develop on the basis of capitalism” (Salomoni 2004: 98). This statement is significant, for if we remember Marxist thought, true communism would occur only after capitalism had run its courses, in essence, exhausting its lifespan before giving way to a period of transition, that would include socialism, before reaching a society that would have egalitarian benefits.

Lenin’s return from exile in 1917 hastened the pace of events. Returning from Finland, and as he began gathering more and more adherents as well as constituents, the Tsar and his family began to feel uneasy about the direction the nation was headed. The Romanov violent response to the first gathering of protesters only strengthened their resolve and made it quite clear to the Tsar that this rebellion would not go away quietly. Soon, events went from bad to worse. The royal family relocated their residence to Tobolsk in Siberia. Out of power and living in fear, the Romanovs hoped that the military would find a solution to this unrest and quicken their return to Moscow. But the solution never came and in 1918, Tsar Nicholas, along with his wife and four children were assassinated. The Bolshevik Revolution was over, but the communist revolution had just begun.

Before we begin to examine the Bolshevik Revolution in the context of Smelser’s model, it is wise to first cover exactly what his model is, and how it can applied in the study of this historic event.

**Smelser’s Value Added Model**

In 1962, Neil J. Smelser formulated his model for explaining collective action. In his immensely influential work *Theory of Collective Behavior*, he provides a definition of a value-oriented movement, “…a collective attempt to restore, protect, modify, or create values in the name of all the components of action; that is, it envisions a reconstitution of values, a redefinition of norms, a reorganization of the motivation of individuals, and a redefinition of situational facilities.” (1962: 313).

Within the context of our discussion, Smelser, in his other significant work, *Essays in Sociological Explanation* continues with the argument regarding strain and revolution, that the type of strain that can turn revolutionary is “bewildering-economic hardship, migrations of populations, defeat in war...value differences among different groups...” (1968: 99).

Within the framework of his model he included six components in this model based on the premise that in order for it to work correctly, all six components had to be present. The six components are as follows; structural conduciveness, structural strain, generalized belief, precipitating events, mobilizing for action and social control. His work, *Theory of Collective Behavior* will be cited throughout the presentation of these components.
1). Structural Conduciveness

This first premise pertains to the physical, cultural or physical context. In short, it is the environment that is present surrounding a particular event. Included in the environment would be organizations such as the church and military, as well as the system of government that oversees a respective society. Smelser posed the question, “what are the available means for expressing grievances?” (1962: 320-321). This is largely dependent on the system that exists within a society. A parallel can be drawn to Peter Eisinger’s political opportunity model. Eisinger in his 1973 article, The Conditions of Protest Behavior in American Cities, argues that change can occur when the system is neither entirely open nor closed. (1973: 11-28). This wiggle room gives allowance for the expression of the grievances Smelser mentioned.

2). Structural Strain

This pertains to the conditions and/or problems that result from the structural context. Smelser addresses the fact that many studies have revealed that value-oriented beliefs arise under conditions of severe physical deprivation, such as hunger or disease (1962: 339), and cites the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 as an example. What is reemphasized in this component is the emotional aspect that is derived from the environment. Usually there are feelings of tension or anger.

3). Generalized Belief

This component pertains to the widely held attitudes and mindset of those who are experiencing some kind of strain, or what Durkheim labeled collective consciousness, a theme that runs constant in his monumental work, Suicide: A Study in Sociology (Durkheim 1951), wherein the majority of people share similar beliefs and values. Within Smelser’s model, these beliefs are crystallized and help to explain the strain that a group experiences (1962: 348).

4). Precipitating Events

This fourth premise pertains to citing specific causes of events, or a catalyst that prompts action to be taken. This component is sometimes excluded by scholars, such as Dr. Jerry M. Lewis of Kent State University, for many include precipitating events to be included in the first two components. Lewis, in his work Sports Fan Violence in North America, excludes this component in his analysis of the Heysel Stadium Soccer Riot (2007: 155-176). According to Smelser, a precipitating event or factor is one, “that creates, sharpens, or exaggerates a condition of strain or conduciveness. It provides adherents of a belief with more evidence of the workings of evil forces, or greater promise of success” (1962: 352).

5). Mobilizing for Action

This fifth premise pertains to the specific actions taken by participants in response to the previous four components. The action can assume a variety of forms, such as protests or revolution. Smelser argues that whether a group organizes is largely dependent on the amount of social control that authorities exercise, or are willing to exercise when the collective action arises (Smelser 1962: 355).

6). Social Control

Smelser’s final premise pertains to how the authorities respond to the action(s) taken by participants. This action, like the response of participants, can vary. The
authorities may use violent means to quell a violent uprising, or they may accommodate the participants. The response taken by authorities is largely dependent on what system of authority is in place, such a dictatorship, democracy or a totalitarian regime. Again, the amount of control exercised by authorities is largely dependent on the political structure in which the collective behavior takes place (1962: 364).

Now that we have explored in some detail Smelser’s model, it is time to move on and examine the Bolshevik Revolution within its context.

**Analysis**

**Structural Conduciveness**

In November of 1917, the stability of Russia was tenuous. There was anger and resentment about Russia’s involvement in the First World War and the majority of the population was turning against its Tsarist overlords; they were looking for a change, and a drastic one at that. The current political regime was Tsarist, with Tsar Nicholas and the Romanov family dictating all policy that influenced how the common Russian citizen lived. Many Russians lived in poverty, while the Tsar Nicholas and his family lived in opulence throughout their various palaces.

The population was looking for a way out of the misery in which they existed, but was unsure how to go about gaining it, for at this time, the Tsar still held a tight grip on the military, which he used in order to maintain order. This latter sentence does address Smelser’s sixth premise, but it is relevant here for his model in this context goes full circle from the beginning to the end of the Revolution, for the Russian authorities made numerous attempts to quash the revolution.

**Structural Strain**

The obvious strain during the Revolution was the drastic and draconian system of how the classes within Russia were experienced by their various participants. The upper classes lived in grand houses, wanting for nothing, while the common Russian citizen struggle to survive regardless of whether they lived in cities or in the countryside. The members of these two classes are what Marx referred to as the *proletariat* and the *bourgeoisie*. These two terms would forever label the great struggle between the haves and the have nots for the remainder of history.

As feelings of unrest grew, even the military became disenchanted with the current regime and began to see, at the urging of the early communists who had infiltrated their ranks, that they were no better off than their non-military counterparts. The argument could be made that they were worse off considering that they were under more direct control from the Tsar than the remainder of the population.

The strike at the Kronstadt Naval Base sent a chill down the spine of those in Moscow and shook their belief that the military could be relied upon in the event of an uprising throughout the country. John Reed, an American present when all this took place, states in his account of the events, *Ten Days that Shook the World*, “at Cronstadt were twenty-five thousand sailors, convinced Bolsheviki and not afraid to die…” (1960: 96).
Generalized Belief

Those who mobilized for action did not all come from the peasant class. Many came from the military that saw themselves as being held under the boot of a distant ruler who was urging them to fight an enemy they did not understand. As the Bolsheviks began to permeate the ranks of the Russian army, they arrived at the belief that the real battle was not against Germany, but against the Tsar and his way of life. The peasants were all too familiar with hardship and welcomed the alliance of the military in their cause.

Precipitating Events

While the rest of Russia was going through domestic unrest, Lenin sat in exile in Finland. He knew that in order for Russia to be great and cast off the yoke of oppression set upon his people by the Tsar and his brethren. Additionally, first and foremost, Russia had to exit itself from the First World War. Germany knew that this was Lenin’s intention and that his return would destabilize Russia, and despite his being an enemy of Germany, Germany allowed his passage through Germany back to Moscow (Moorehead 1958: 173-187). In December 1917, Lenin signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (Kennan 1960: 37-42) officially removing Russia from hostilities.

This was a blow for the Allies, but allowed Germany some relief on the Western Front. More importantly though, for our discussion, withdrawing into itself, allowed the early Communists to pull all available resources and focus them into turning protests into revolution, and a revolution unlike the world had ever seen. Lying at the end of this paper is a timeline in which is highlighted the events that have been deemed to be those most important precipitating events leading up to the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.

Mobilizing for Action

The seeds of revolution had already been sown through the work of men like Lenin, Trotsky and Kerensky. Trotsky had been publishing an underground paper, Pravda, which would become the most prominent publication in the early days after the fall of the Romanov family and would serve as the trumpet for Lenin and the new Communist government. With Lenin now returned, the masses now had a somewhat awkward, yet charismatic leader who could now lead them from disjointed mobs into organized and purposeful action.

“Having obtained a majority in the Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies of both capitals, the Bolsheviks can and must take state power into their own hands” (Lenin 1917: 252). These words, written by Lenin in a letter to the Central Committee, makes a clear case about what the people needed to do in order to bring about change. He had written this letter to stress the importance of taking advantage that the Bolsheviks had the opportunity to take power and should not waste it, lest it never comes again.

Social Control

Despite the fact that Communists had succeeded in toppling the Tsarist regime, most evidently after the regicide of the Tsar and his family, there were those who remained loyal not only to the memory of the Tsar, but also to the idea of monarchy as the status quo. What emerged from this were two more groups, the Whites and the Reds. Whites were those still loyal to the Tsar and the old way of things, while the Reds became the army of the new Russian nation.
Discussion and Conclusion

Smelser’s value-added model is complex, just in the consideration that it contains six components, compounded by the fact that he believed that it could only be useful if all six were present when examining a historical event. This mandate to include all six does present somewhat of a problem, for as was cited concerning Dr. Jerry Lewis, not all scholars include all six components, such as precipitating events. Undoubtedly, Dr. Lewis would see precipitating events as part of structural conduciveness and not a separate component. Although Lewis, and surely others, does not include all six components in their respective analyses, it does not entirely devalue the usefulness of Smelser’s model.

Within the context of our discussion of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, each of Smelser’s components can be applied to help us examine this historic event. Following the events of 1917, the revolution as it unfolded, can in one way or another, fall into one or more of Smelser’s components. Overall, his model is invaluable, but there exists two major flaws.

The first flaw deals with the fact that the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 is so complex and detailed, that upon further examination, other theories need to be considered to join Smleser’s in order to gain a better understanding. The second flaw may be more apparent, at least to the author of this paper. The author lacked sufficient time to examine the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 in the context of Smelser’s model.

Considering the complexity of this historical event and the author’s marginal knowledge of the value-added model, the author undoubtedly only touched the surface of this incredibly intricate event.

Despite the misgivings of the author regarding his own shortcomings, the fact remains that Smelser’s model is undeniably useful to assist in a better understanding of the Bolshevik Revolution. Again, it is not a panacea, but provides us with a framework with which to begin an analysis, for Smelser specifically mentions this revolution in Theory of Collective Behavior (1962: 319).
### Chronology of Events
(Salomoni 2004: 155-157).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 9</td>
<td>Demonstrations are held in Petrograd to commemorate Bloody Sunday of 1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 25</td>
<td>General strike in Petrograd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 26</td>
<td>Violence erupts in Petrograd. The army kills 150.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>February Revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2</td>
<td>Establishment of temporary government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>Temporary government issues an arrest warrant for the Czar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 11</td>
<td>France, Italy and Great Britain recognize the temporary government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 3</td>
<td>Lenin returns from his exile in Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 4</td>
<td>The April Theses expound Communism in ten points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 3-5</td>
<td>“Days of July”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2</td>
<td>Armistice signed with the Axis Powers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Historical Sources**


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**Sociological Sources**


Writing Center Review Submission Form, Spring 2013

The Writing Center Review is a multidisciplinary journal containing selected writing assignments by Kent State Stark students that is published each spring by the Writing Center staff. Our selections highlight the excellence in writing from Anthropology majors, to English majors, to Math majors, including numerous other disciplines on campus. We showcase them as a model to future students.

Deadline: February 3, 2013

Submission Guidelines:

1. The piece or writing must have been written in the calendar year of 2012 (January 1, 2012 - December 31, 2012).

2. A professor (either the professor who assigned the work or the professor who acts as your advisor) must nominate your work for consideration; simply ask them to approve your paper. The professor signs their name on the back of this form on the appropriate line to nominate you.

3. We generally like to see papers between 750 and 2500 words (3-10 pages). We have no problem considering shorter or longer works, but longer works will need to be beyond excellent if they exceed 3000 words. This is purely base upon page limitations. We love to read longer works and shorter works outside of the above range.

4. Any written assignment is welcome, regardless of major, department, or class type.

How to Submit:

You will need-

1. One clean copy of the document. Your name must not appear anywhere on it. The title must appear on the first page. This is your “hardcopy.”

2. A copy of your assignment sheet or paper rubric. If you do not have this, we need as much detail about the assignment provided on its own sheet of paper.

3. An electronic copy of your submission. This should not have your name on it. The title must appear on the first page. You may either include it on a CD/flash drive OR email it to writing_gst@kent.edu. Place “WCR Submission” in the subject line. You only need to include ONE of these options.

4. This form with the information on the back filled out completely. Submissions without completed forms will not be accepted.

After you have both copies and the assignment details, place them along with this form into a large envelope. If you did not email your electronic copy, include your CD/flash drive inside the envelope. Address it the Writing Center, MH202. Then you just need to drop it off in the fourth floor faculty mailbox OR the main Hall, Rm. 202.
Please fill out the following form completely. Do not forget your signature, it gives us permission to print your work upon acceptance. **All information must be provided if your work is to be considered. Please print.**

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Contributor Information (Please tell us a little about yourself. This will be printed on the "Contributors Page" of the WCR):

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Submission Title: ____________________________

Detailed Description of the Assignment (You may use the assignment sheet of the rubric instead, both options need the professor's name, the Course Number, and the class' name):

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Name ____________________________ Date __________

Student's Signature: ____________________________

Name ____________________________ Date __________

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