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.

Our gratitude is 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 in our faculty reader staff.

Prof. Greg Blundell
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Dr. Ann Martinez
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Dr. James Seelye
Prof. Mason Shuman
Dr. Lori Wilfong

The staff of The Writing Center Review would like to extend our thanks to all of the students who submitted this year. Without our student writers, this publication would not be possible. The submissions this year were exemplary and the competition was incredibly difficult. We would also like to thank the faculty who continually encourage their students to submit. Without such support, we would be looking at a collection of blank paper. We also extend our gratitude to the Writing Center Director, Dr. Jay Sloan for his guidance and mentorship in the creation of The Writing Center Review and for his patience as we learn along the way.

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**This is Our World: The Ancient Masculine Struggle for a Meaningful Existence**

By Sarah McGill

Assignment Description: Students will be expected to complete one essay relating to an event/movie/activity to one or more of the assigned readings. The assignment should consider the comparisons and contrasts between one movie/event and the book/concept it relates to. The assignment was completed for Great Book to 1700—Honors for Dr. Keith Lloyd and Dr. Leslie Heaphy.

Imagine a man so emasculated, so discontented with his depersonalized, run-the-rat-race, twentieth-century experience that, with a mysterious companion, he creates an underground system for other feminized individuals to get back to basics: regaining masculinity by beating the absolute tar out of each other. Sounds familiar, right? Now take the scene back to the third millennium BC, to a man ruling his kingdom in all the wrong ways who meets a man from the wilderness and goes on a journey to gain immortality and change the course of his life. Similar principles, different tales—what both of these stories showcase is masculinity, but masculinity of two very different varieties. Over-aggrandized masculinity standards in the twentieth century, as showcased by Chuck Palahniuk’s *Fight Club*, has skewed the honorable “legacy after death,” as seen in traditional hero stories like the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, by intensifying and perverting the need of today’s man for a meaningful existence.

Gilgamesh was a king unrivaled in his time, and also a distinct character in history—considered the “first tragic, mortal hero,” his tale is thought to be the first great hero epic in history, hailing from ancient Mesopotamia (Sandars 7). As is expected, the hero story in general is strongly masculine centered, and conveys themes that relate back to this, such as: savagery v. civilization, “escape from the common lot of man,” and the mortal man’s desire to be above the laws of death (Sandars 7). These themes, and the others showcased in the epic, center not only around masculinity but also around struggle; these two encompassing ideas lead back to a central concept greatly celebrated in Gilgamesh’s ancient time: the idea of a legacy after death, earned by one’s earthly deeds and carried down through one’s name. The uninitiated could ask: just how would one achieve such a legacy? Expanding back out to the two leading ideas, legacy is achieved through masculine actions and the struggle to achieve these.

But how does the importance of a post-mortem legacy translate into twentieth- and twenty-first-century standards? While it isn’t so blatantly stressed as it seems to be in ancient times—Gilgamesh speaks constantly of it: “I have not established my name stamped on bricks as my destiny decreed . . .”—the desire for long-lasting fame is still apparent (Sandars 70). In the opening scene of *Fight Club*, the narrator and Tyler Durden are atop a skyscraper rigged to explode by their space monkeys within minutes. With a gun stuffed down his companion’s throat, Tyler says: “The first step to eternal life is you have to die . . . This isn’t really death. We’ll be legend. We won’t grow old” (Palahniuk 11). While a little on the radical side, Tyler’s ideas of destroying the “old” world to create his own legacy mirrors Gilgamesh’s quest to become literally immortal and perform incredible deeds that will be remembered for eons.
Gilgamesh, at the beginning of the epic, is ruling his city, Uruk, in a less than desirable way. Citizens of Uruk are appalled by his arrogance—he steals virgins away at their bridal beds, he rings the war bells at his own whim, and basically stirs up a ruckus in the city until the gods intervene. While Gilgamesh is arrogant and confrontational, Fight Club’s narrator endures a banal and tedious existence. However, these two men face a similar problem: their respective experiences are leaving them discontented and out of touch. Gilgamesh is straying from his roles as a king, a leader, and a shepherd to the people; the narrator has lost his drive to live his own life. These experiences remain stagnant until the arrival of the antagonists: Enkidu and Tyler Durden. The arrival of these respective characters causes a catalyst in the lives of the protagonists, displayed, in both cases, through a fight. Enkidu stops Gilgamesh from taking another bride when they wrestle, and Tyler encourages the narrator to let go and fight him, throwing angst-releasing punches. As each story continues now that each man has a companion, it seems like Enkidu and Tyler aren’t so much like antagonists and more like supporting characters; however, their relationships with the protagonists reveal them to be more twisted than was originally apparent—they antagonize their companions. After having a dream, Gilgamesh becomes agitated and cooks up an idea: “Because of the evil that is in the land, we will go to the forest and destroy the evil; for in the forest lives Humbaba whose name is ‘Hugeness,’ a ferocious giant.” In this way he plans to make his legacy (Sandars 71).

Despite Enkidu’s reservations about harming a guardian of the forest, he still accompanies his friend. On the journey, Gilgamesh is confident and totally gung-ho for killing anything that crosses him. But when the two finally meet Humbaba, Gilgamesh can’t kill the guardian; it is Enkidu who convinces him, almost egging him on. The wild man says: “Do not listen, Gilgamesh: this Humbaba must die . . . First entrap the bird [Humbaba], and where shall the chicks [glory of light] run then? Afterwards we can search out the glory and glamour, when the chicks run distracted through the grass” (Sandars 83). Enkidu has essentially guilted Gilgamesh into doing the deed—Gilgamesh, while desperate for fame, is too conflicted to actually commit to the actions, however gruesome, that would bring it. Enkidu does it for him. These instances, where Enkidu perhaps takes the situation past extreme, happen more than once in the epic, and are mirrored in Fight Club. For example, Tyler takes our narrator out on a seemingly unplanned chore, abducting a man named Raymond K. Hessel and threatening his life, because, as the narrator voices Tyler’s claims, “I’d rather kill you than see you working a shit job for just enough money to buy cheese and watch television” (Palahniuk 155).

Throughout both tales, the protagonists are plagued with their fears of mortality and are constantly struggling with it. Translator N.K. Sandars points out the Epic of Gilgamesh’s focus on “human concern with mortality,” which ends up being Gilgamesh’s driving purpose after Enkidu dies (7). The king ends up on a long and harrowing journey in search of immortality. While Gilgamesh’s journey is literal, the narrator goes on a similar type of journey that occurs within himself, including Tyler, as the antagonist is an internal part of the narrator. Gilgamesh travels beyond the mortal realm to the island of Dilmun; the narrator travels to the brink of insanity. In both instances, Enkidu and Tyler,
respectively, antagonize the protagonists to their extremes.

These journeys reflect the deep-seated state of man’s preoccupation with death and his fear of the unknown. And what is a journey without a guide to show the way? As Kevin Boon explains in his analysis of *Fight Club* in reference to man’s desire for violence, Tyler “surfaces to guide the narrator back toward his masculine legacy,” like some kind of dark and twisted guardian angel (272). His purpose as the guide is to preserve masculinity for the protagonist so that the latter can achieve glory. While the narrator is reluctant and even ignorant to Tyler’s purpose, Gilgamesh would have recognized it as he did after Enkidu had died. The tragedy that Enkidu and Tyler do not reveal to their companions, however, is the necessity of their deaths to become the legends they wish to be (Boon 274).

Upon Gilgamesh’s return to Uruk, he loses the flower of immortality bestowed upon him by Utnapishtim. It takes this devastating blow for the king to realize the futility of another journey; he simply takes his new companion Urshanabi to Uruk and shows him the grand walls and city, for “this too was the work of Gilgamesh, the king, who knew the countries of the world” (Sandars 117). Rather than fighting against the outcome and making his situation infinitely more difficult, as he has done many times before, he simply lets go of his endless quest, and his life as a king to his people can truly begin. Similarly, when the narrator finally begins to connect the pieces that lead to his discovery that he and Tyler are one person, his true journey to gain his life back begins, and he accepts that he is the one responsible for the building violence and mayhem. This acceptance of failure and responsibility by the protagonists is important in the making of the legacy because this becomes the pinnacle of their true masculinity. Rather than fight his destiny, Gilgamesh accepts it, and becomes one of the greatest kings of his time, and “none will leave a monument for generations to come to compare to his” (Sandars 118). His legacy is achieved through his growth as a not only a leader, but as a human being. He channels his masculinity for the good of his people, rather than for the destruction of others.

In the end, where does masculinity lead these two protagonists? How do their masculine antagonizing companions lead them astray, but eventually back on track? Gilgamesh and Enkidu were brothers of the best and worst kind: best in that they are perfect companions, “stormy heart for stormy heart,” and worst in that their combined masculinity wrought incredible havoc until Enkidu’s demise (Sandars 62). But without Enkidu, Gilgamesh would not have been pulled out of his original rut and would never had experienced his eventually enlightening journey for immortality. Gilgamesh fulfilled his prophecy as a great king and held himself to a high standard of strength, loyalty, and wisdom until his death. And while the idea of fulfilling a legacy translates into the more modern *Fight Club*, the idea of doing so with honor and loyalty is lost. The narrator may have gained wisdom, but he wasn’t able to grow from Tyler like Gilgamesh did from Enkidu—the narrator and Tyler, by the end of the book, are still very much connected and dependent of each other, and Tyler still has a destructive job to do. Their legacy has not yet been achieved, and until the narrator can rid himself of the madman inside his own body, he can never achieve the true masculine legacy that will come from wisdom and acceptance.
Works Cited


Mindfulness and Meditation as an Effective Treatment for Opioid Dependence

By Chelsea Blitz

Assignment Description: The final paper is the culmination of the entire semester’s work, incorporating research projects into an ultimate research paper. The paper should have a controlling argument: an arguable claim that helps to provide an organizational structure to the paper. The assignment was completed for Dr. Stephen Neaderhiser’s College Writing II.

The act of meditating has been used for centuries and is a well-known component in many eastern religions. Buddhist teachings and practices use meditation as a way of creating clarity, focus, and relaxation. “With practice, a meditative state can decrease stress, increase your sense of self-awareness, calm manner, and is also proven to increase your sense of empathy” (Gladding). In addition to these benefits, meditation can also be used as a treatment tool in addiction recovery. Addiction, especially to opiates and heroin, are a growing national epidemic. The American Society of Addiction Medicine defines addiction as a primary, chronic, neurobiological disease that is influenced by genetic, psychosocial, and environmental factors that is characterized by strong cravings, compulsive use, and a lack of control to stop despite the harm it may cause (Graham, Schultz, Mayo-Smith, Ries, & Wilford qtd. in Young, De Amas DeLorenzi, Cunningham 59). According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, approximately 200 million people worldwide are current drug users. In the United States, an estimated 22.6 million were diagnosed with substance dependence or abuse in 2006 (Zgierska et al. 4). With the recent reports in the community and across the nation of the rise in heroin addiction and heroin related deaths, the number of addicts is substantially higher today than when that statistic was reported in 2006: “Overall, the death rate from heroin overdose, in the 28 states that reported complete information to the CDC, increased from 1.0 to 2.1 per 100,000 between 2010 and 2012” (Reinburg). Addiction to opiates is a serious and fatal problem that is only continuing to grow. Meditating regularly, has the capacity to produce a positive emotional state, clear and concise thinking patterns, and feelings of inner peace. As part of a humanitarian effort, we as a community must do something to alleviate these deadly addictions.

The Addiction Loop

The act of addiction is simply positive and negative reinforcements acting together. As Jason Brewer explains, “Addictions often begin with a simple pairing of a drug or behavior with an affective state” (Brewer 226). Positive reinforcement is the addition of a positive stimulus to increase the likelihood of an event reoccurring and negative reinforcement is the removal of negative or unpleasant stimulus increasing the likelihood of an event occurring again in the future (226). For example, a patient is prescribed painkillers because of the chronic back pain they have been experiencing. When the patient’s back hurts they ingest the recommended dosage of painkillers. The medicine relieves the pain and leaves the body with a feeling of complete numbness and bliss. Once all the pain has subsided, the patient is left in an opiate induced state, this addition of positive stimulus is positive reinforcement. When the pain starts returning a couple hours later, this is the negative reinforcement. Because of the pain, they ingest another dosage of the opiates, which repeats the positive reinforcement.
Over time, the patient will develop a tolerance to these painkillers and it will take a larger dosage to achieve the same effect. The constant back and forth between positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement with any kind of substance abuse will produce what Jason Brewer refers to as a deadly addiction loop (226).

When discussing the addiction loop, another term that is important to understand is “dependent origination.” According to Brewer, dependent origination is how our brain processes certain cues in our environment and the world around us. This processing depends on how we recall memories of our previous experiences. They are interpreted one of two ways, as pleasant, or unpleasant. If the experience is pleasant the brain wants to continue, if unpleasant it wants to stop (226). When a substance is craved, the “craving leads to clinging or attachment to the object. Behavior that perpetuates the pleasant state, giving rise to the ‘birth’ of an identity around the object through the laying down of a memory” (227-228). Addiction is as much positive and negative reinforcement along with associative memory as it is the substance you are addicted to. Jason Brewer continues his explanation of the addiction loop by stating that “the loop has been seen in both animal and human studies, suggesting that this process is primitive and therefore often resistant to cognitive manipulation” (Brewer 226). If addiction is such a primal process, how are we to fight it?

Meditation in Addiction Counseling

The answer is simple, and has been in practice for hundreds of years. Meditation has been used in the Buddhist faith for centuries and is the core of achieving peace in the religion. One type of meditation that the Buddhist religion encompasses is mindfulness. Mindfulness involves learning to be non-judgmental and unattached to one's thoughts in order to achieve peace and happiness (Young, De Amas DeLorenzi, and Cunningham 61). Even though meditation is an ancient teaching, only as recent as the early 1970s did scientists begin to study its medical implications. Young, De Amas DeLorenzi, and Cunningham examined meditation with a scientific and therapeutic perspective. In a review of using meditation in addiction counseling, therapists have concluded that using meditation has “underlying curative mechanisms that can aid a person in recovery, including exposure, acceptance, self-management, relaxation, lack of judgment, awareness, and cognitive change” (Young, De Amas DeLorenzi, and Cunningham 67). The practice of meditation is now being more widely recognized as a tool in various forms of recovery.

Mindfulness and alternative meditative therapies are already being used as forms of treatment for intravenous drug users. In a study conducted in 1997, 548 participants over the age of 18 were recruited from clean needle exchange programs and methadone clinics in the greater Rhode Island area. All of these participants had been diagnosed with a chronic addiction to cocaine and/or heroin and were active users. These individuals took part in a study in the use of complementary and alternative medicine therapies, or CAM, on addiction recovery. For six months, participants were asked to use one or more CAM therapies, such as religious healing, relaxation techniques, meditation, drinking teas, acupuncture and massage. Members of the study reported a self-perceived effectiveness of “4.1 out of 5” in regards to CAM therapies (Manheimer, Anderson, and Stein 408). In using these alternative therapies, other effective positive outcomes were measured among users: 65%
used CAM to “help relieve or get rid of pain,” 57% to “help stop using drugs,” 47% to “help relieve withdrawal symptoms,” and 13% to “increase the effects of opiates” (408). This study effectively shows the use of alternative therapies on IDU’s and demonstrates a benefit in aiding addiction recovery. Even though many people believe that a person has to hit “rock bottom” before they can make a change, 57% of participants said meditation helped them stop using drugs (Manheimer, Anderson, Stein 408).

“Hitting Rock Bottom”

Many recovery programs such as Narcotics Anonymous, AA, and Al-Anon suggest that an addict must hit “rock bottom” before they are able to fully recover, but that is not always the case (Ries et al 862). It is possible to fully recover from an addiction without hitting “rock bottom.” The term “hitting rock bottom” refers to an addict’s life being unmanageable, completely lacking discipline and feeling yourself spiral out of control (Knaus). “People with less emotional stress and fewer severe problems showed greater motivation to kick their addictive habits” (Knaus). Making a change for the better can be as simple as realizing that you can't keep living the way you are and that you have to change something. Although a lot of the time addicts have trouble seeing that they are spiraling out of control, most addicts need help realizing that they have to make a change. “The strength of your expectations for change can ignite self-correction” (Knaus).

The Role of Stress and Addiction Relapse

It has long been known that stress increases the risk of drug abuse and relapse. In the early stages of abstinence, common symptoms include increases in irritability, anxiety, emotional distress, sleep problems, dysphoria, aggressive behaviors, and excessively craving the drug of choice. Rajita Sinha, professor at Yale University School of Medicine, conducts research about addiction. One line of research that she focuses on examining the effects of stress and drug related cues on the cravings experienced by alcoholics, cocaine-dependent individuals, and naltrexone-treated, opiate-dependent individuals. Naltrexone is an opioid receptor antagonist used primarily in the management of opiate dependence, similar to that of suboxone. Sinha and her staff at Yale “examined drug craving and reactivity in treatment engaged, abstinent, and addicted individuals who were exposed to stressful and non-stressful drug cue situations and neutral-relaxing situations using personalized imagery procedures as the induction method” (Sinha 390). She initially determined that when addicted individuals were exposed to stress imagery, it produced multiple emotions of fear, sadness, and anger. Additionally, imagery of personal stressors produced significant increases in cocaine craving as well as increases in heart rate, salivary cortisol, drug cravings, and subjective anxiety. Sinha’s research brings to life how complicated addictions can be, along with the struggles and added stress of attempting to become abstinent.

Because stress increases drug cravings, Sinha and her team also used MRI scans to examine the effects of stress on the brain. Previous brain scanning imagery results have shown that exposure to drug cues are known to increase craving and resulted in the activation of the amygdala and prefrontal cortex's in the brain. In Sinha's control study, cocaine-dependent individuals exhibited similar levels of anguish during stress inducing exposures; however, they lacked activation in emotional regulation.
areas of the brain such as the hippocampus and anterior cingulate cortex. Although the patients lacked activation in those areas that help with emotional regulation, they had increased activity in the caudate and dorsal striatum regions during stress inducing exposures. This activated areas of the brain was significantly associated with “stress induced cravings” (Sinha 390). This data clearly shows that the stress pathways are altered in addicted individuals. “They also indicate that a hyper-responsive distress state, that is susceptible to compulsive drug seeking, ensues among addicted individuals who are in early recovery” (Sinha 391). This increased sensitivity to drug craving and stress, along with the decreased ability to recover after a stress cue exposure, represents a dysfunctional state that could increase susceptibility to relapse.

**The Role of Spirituality in Addiction Recovery**

Considering the susceptibility to stress related relapse, many addiction treatment centers use a form of spirituality as part of their drug treatment plan. Addiction treatment centers use many different techniques as part of their treatment plan. Most treatment centers implement one of the four treatment modalities: physical health including nutrition, exercise, and relaxation, recreation and adventure-based activities, religious and spiritual practices, and the use of specific therapy modalities (Priester et al. 315). The 12-step program, utilized the most in Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, is also rooted in spirituality as indicated in steps 3, 5, 6, 7, 11 and 12 referring to giving yourself over to a higher power.

Prayer is also an important part of the 12-step program, calling for group prayer during meetings and encouragement to pray outside of meetings in their daily life. As Priester et al. notes “studies have shown that patients involved in twelve step recovery programs, who had abstained from substance abuse had used prayer (or meditation) more frequently than subjects who had relapsed” (316). There is something to be said for prayer as part of addiction recovery, and giving yourself over to a higher power. Although these practices are not conventional in medical detox, it is widely incorporated in addiction recovery programs. In a survey of 240 drug treatment centers Priester et al. gathered information from various treatment facilities concerning the use of holistic treatments, 12 step-programs as well as prayer and meditation. The treatment facilities were randomly selected from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Treatment Provider Directory and were asked if their program was 12-step based, if prayer and meditation are implemented as part of a treatment plan, and if holistic clinical practices were used. Out of the 240 treatment centers surveyed, 139 responded to the survey, and an astounding 91% percent of treatment centers identified themselves with a twelve-step system with implemented prayer, and meditation as part of routine treatment (Jana-Masri, Jashinsky, Jones, Priester, Scherer, Steinfeldt, Vang 319). Of the treatment centers surveyed, 26% actively included prayer and 58 percent used some type of meditation (319). This number is remarkable, considering that meditation has only been studied for its medical benefits since the 1970s. These statistics indicate that meditation is a significantly important aspect in the treatment of drug addicts.

**What Is Meditation?**

Meditation is much more than just taking a second to relax and focus on peaceful
thought, meditation is an entire “state of thoughtful awareness”. Meditation is an effective way to ease the stress and suffering in addiction, reduce craving, pain and attachment, increase mindfulness, develop a healthy way to cope, increase internal reflection, improve self-esteem, increase empathy, and change brain activity patterns (Gladding). Meditation and mindfulness based therapies possess underlying mechanisms such as exposure, self-acceptance, self-awareness and profound cognitive change that can aid a person in addiction recovery. These important milestones in addiction recovery may not be met in other treatment plans. Pairing meditation with other forms of treatment would ensure that the patient is addressing all of the emotional issues needed to make full recovery successfully. Meditation “is a state of profound, deep peace that occurs when the mind is calm and silent, yet completely alert. This is just the beginning of an inner transformation that takes us to a higher level of awareness” (“Meditation Basics”). In addition to many other health benefits like decreasing blood pressure and aiding in reaching a higher level of consciousness, meditation can be an effective tool in the treatment of opiate addiction.

How Meditation Changes Your Brain

Christopher Germer addresses mindfulness in a clear manner. Mindfulness, he says, “is a skill that allows us to be less reactive to what is happening in the moment. It is a way of relating to all experiences-positive, negative and neutral- such that our overall suffering diminishes and our sense of well-being increases” (Germer 4). Meditation is a way to ease suffering, decrease stress, and take a moment to relax and reflect on the events of the day. The act of meditating actually changes the way that your brain works.

In the article “This is Your Brain on Meditation” Rebecca Gladding addresses the six separate parts of the brain that are affected when you meditate. The amygdala, or the fear center of the brain, is responsible for emotional reactions and the “fight-or-flight” response. The insula is another part of the brain that is affected. The insula is the part of the brain that monitors body sensations. Along with other parts of the brain, it helps interpret how strongly you respond to what your body senses. The medial prefrontal cortex, or mPFC is the part of the brain that is self-reflective, evaluates your perspective and experiences. The medial prefrontal cortex is also responsible for engaging in social interactions, inferring other people’s state of mind and feeling empathy for others. There are two sections of the mPFC that are also affected by meditation: the dorsomedial prefrontal cortex and the ventromedial medial prefrontal cortex. The dorsomedial prefrontal cortex is another part of the brain that deals with empathy, and the ventromedial medial prefrontal cortex is the part of the brain that is associated with making connections between yourself and others. The last part of the brain that is affected by meditation is the lateral prefrontal cortex, which allows you to look at things from a more rational, logical and balanced perspective (Gladding).

As you begin to meditate, the connection between the ventromedial medial prefrontal cortex, or vmPFC, and the insula begin to break down and disconnect. “As this connection withers, you will no longer assume that a bodily sensation or momentary feeling of fear means something is wrong with you” (Gladding). This means that there is a significant correlation between
meditating and a decrease in anxiety. Because of the strengthened self-assessment center or lateral prefrontal cortex, you are more readily able to see those sensations for what they are and not respond as strongly to them. The second part of your brain to react to meditation is the lateral prefrontal cortex and the amygdala. After practicing meditation, the connection between the lateral prefrontal cortex and the amygdala, or fear center of the brain is strengthened. This strengthened connection means that when experiencing a bodily sensation you are able to react to that sensation with a more rational perspective rather than feel that you are in a troubled situation. The last sections of your brain that benefit from meditation are the “dorsomedial prefrontal cortex, the part involved in processing information related to people we perceive as not like us and the bodily sensation center – involved in empathy – becomes stronger” (Gladding). These strengthened connections mean that you are able to relate in a more positive manner to others, which explains why meditation increases empathy. Along with increasing empathy and increasing internal self-reflection, meditation is a great tool to use to reduce stress.

**Transcendental Meditation**

Transcendental Meditation is widely used in addiction programs where meditation is implemented. Transcendental Meditation is a meditation technique involving sitting quietly with your eyes closed with the use of a sound or mantra and is practiced for 15–20 minutes twice per day. Benefits of TM are “greater inner calm throughout the day, reduced cortisol levels, normalized blood pressure, reduced insomnia, lower risk of heart attack and stroke, reduced anxiety and depression, improved brain function and memory” (Maharishi Foundation USA). The first documented study of the effects of TM was conducted in 1971 in Sweden by Arthur Aron and Elaine N. Aron. Twenty known drug users attended a lecture on Transcendental Meditation. The twenty volunteers were split into two groups. One group of ten were instructed to utilize TM techniques and went through 3 months of group therapy. The control group of ten were introduced to 3 months of group therapy as well without the instruction in TM. In both groups all drug use was reported monthly. With the implementation of TM and group therapy, results showed a dramatic decrease of all drug use. In addition to Transcendental Meditation techniques and group therapy, various personality tests were also administered to the volunteers. The first group who were instructed in TM showed “significantly greater positive results such as strong increases in adjustment, psychological stability and decreases in anxiety, tension-restlessness, and psychomotor coordination” (Aron and Aron 4). This research clearly states the immense benefits of meditation.

**Conclusion**

Meditation and mindfulness is the future of addiction recovery. Learning how to meditate and developing your abilities is a very useful coping skill, and in fact can offer addicts a way to get through the initial suffering of abstinence. Several studies have already identified mental and physical benefits associated with meditation including an increase in self-perception and empathy; along with normalized blood pressure, reduce anxiety and depression. Meditation is a tool you can use your whole life; it’s something you will always carry with you that offers you a healthy way to cope, improve self-esteem, increase empathy, and relate to others in a more
positive manner. Considering the fact that meditation has only been studied for its medical benefits for the past four decades, imagine what more we could uncover in the years to come.

Works Cited


The Development and Dissemination of Witchcraft through art
By Carol C. Lazette

Assignment Description: Choose a topic related to the subject of witches and Europe between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, and then research the chosen topic through primary and secondary sources. The assignment for Dr. Lindsay Starkey’s Special Topics in Europe since 1500.

Art and religion have an affinity that cannot really be explained. One can exist without the other, but they both would be a little less interesting without each other. If asked to make a general association of the two, the first response of most people is the Sistine Chapel and Michelangelo. Philosophical history tells us that religion was the first cradle of art. Much thought is given to how art helped develop certain religious beliefs and reinforce others. In Medieval Europe, the notions of religious heresy and its connection to witchcraft were, without a doubt, helped along by the miniature pictures that were drawn by hand in the margins of handwritten religious manuscripts by men called Illuminators. ¹ At the time religious writings were handwritten manuscripts. These manuscripts were very large, bulky, and not available to the generally illiterate population. When the printing press became widely used, the print shops of the Holy Roman Empire, in what is now southern Germany, became the place where people congregated. These people were theologians, magistrates, artists, the artists’ patrons, and generally those who were educated. This is where the iconography of witchcraft was developed. The broomstick for flying, the cauldron for brewing potions, and kissing toads to cast spells were images that were created and spread throughout Europe, and are still in the minds of many today when asked to describe the activities of a witch.²

The images that accompanied manuscripts before the fourteenth century were devoid of witchcraft. The critical shift in thinking, amongst scholars and theologians that demonized magic and sorcery, also increased the emphasis put on demonic presence and agency.³ A human being needed a pact with the devil to make his or her evil wishes become reality, just as the devil needed humans for his evil purposes. The demonic black arts were combined with village sorcery to bind together the crimes of heresy and witchcraft.⁴

The religious movement of the Waldesians was characterized by lay preaching, renouncing the wealth of the Catholic Church as they vowed poverty, and advocating strict adherence to what was written in the scripture. Waldesians were first declared heretics by Pope Lucius III in 1184 and again by Pope Innocent III in 1215.⁵ When heresy was tied to witchcraft, it was not a stretch for the Catholic Church to say that all Waldesians were also witches. They appear as witches in illustrations that

³ Zika, Charles, The Appearance of Witchcraft. 15

accompanied the manuscript called *Le Champione de Dammes* by Marin Le Franc, who had composed the work much earlier. It was a luxury manuscript and it was considered a contribution to the medieval debate on the nature of women. The images it contains were the first known of women flying on sticks or brooms.\(^6\)

Print was firmly established as a new medium for cultural communication in the 1470’s. The number of images that came with the printed word was on the rise. In the next two decades, printers were experimenting with illustrations and were trying to create an alliance between images and the printed word.\(^7\) Print shops became a place for intellectuals and the educated to interact and, over the next century, this was the place where the visual image of the witch was developed. The number of images printed was also in direct correlation to the number of witch trials that were happening in the Holy Roman Empire and area directly surrounding.\(^8\)

The majority of the images were produced in the print shops of the German speaking area of the Holy Roman Empire. We know the area today as southern Germany and Switzerland. Many were also produced in the Alsace region in the French town of Strasbourg, and the upper Rhine region of Germany.\(^9\) The printed images of witchcraft and sorcery first appeared in large numbers in the late fifteenth century, and by the first two decades of the sixteenth century the artists who were already established in the print shops of Germany would create much of the iconography and visual language that was new and distinctive. Some would last into modern times.\(^10\)

Between 1500 and 1510, a group of artists based in southern Germany transformed the visual language of magic and sorcery into the visual language of witchcraft. The most creative of this group was Hans Baldung Grien. He drew on the work of his elder colleagues, Albrecht Dürer and Albrecht Altdorfer. Grien would establish the visual codes and cues through which the imagery of witchcraft would be read for much of the following century.\(^11\) These codes and cues would include such things as groups of women around a cauldron, and women riding goats or sticks and brooms. These images were printed as illustrations that accompanied pamphlets and broadsheets.

There were unknown artists and some of these images went on to become the most reprinted of the time. They also influenced other artists. The images that supplement Ulrich Molitor's treatise *On Female Witches and Seers* were reprinted up to twenty times in twenty years. They were a series of six images created on woodblocks that were recycled and reused.\(^12\) Ulrich Molitor’s writings were very popular and they enjoyed an extremely wide distribution. It would be problematic to overestimate the impact that these images made on contemporary perceptions of witchcraft. Every new edition needed new images, so the images underwent slight stylistic changes and were reused. They would definitely influence Albrecht Dürer.\(^13\)

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\(^6\) Zika, Charles, *The Appearance of Witchcraft*. 64
\(^7\) Ibid., 13
\(^8\) Ibid., 15
\(^9\) Ibid., 18
\(^10\) Ibid., 11
\(^11\) Ibid., 11-12
\(^12\) Ibid., 18
\(^13\) Ibid., 17
Albrecht Dürer’s engraving of the *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat* is notable for its overwhelming feel of wild energy and the illusion of sexual disorder. The Capricorn goat, with its fish or serpent tail, alludes to the Roman God Saturn. Saturn achieved his power by castrating his father and eating his children. He was also considered the patron of agricultural laborers and the poor, aged, crippled, Jews, cannibals, magicians, and of course witches. Dürer’s riding witch becomes a ‘child’ of Saturn, who unmans through sexual violence. Being on top of the goat and holding its horn alludes to the woman being in control and signifies a man who has lost his virility because he allowed another man access to his woman. This entire engraving is filled with images people would have associated with sexual disorder, right down to the artist signing with his initials in a way that was reversed from his normal signature.

As an apprentice of Dürer, Hans Baldung Grien was influenced by his work, but he played a much more significant role in the development of the visual language of witchcraft. Grien left Dürer’s workshop in Nuremberg in 1507 to start his own print shop in his home town of Strasbourg. Upon his return he got married, took out his citizenship, and became a master in the guild of goldsmiths, painters, printers, and glaziers. He then opened his own shop and introduced the letter ‘G’ into the signature of his work as a sign of his new independence. His new signature can be seen in his works produced between 1510 and 1515. Witch imagery was attracting attention from the readers in urban populations and Baldung Grien would give this interest his own particular visual form and contribute more to the creation of the new visual subject that any other artist.

The dominant images of many of Baldung Grien’s works are of naked women grouped around a cauldron, symbolically united by a triangle of forked sticks. These women are shown engaging in a ritual activity that involves food, drink, and sacrifice. The women are focused on the cauldron with its pseudo Hebraic script, the cauldron sits between the legs of one woman and the thick bellowing smoke coming from it contains toads. On the ground they are sitting on a triangle of forked sticks, which symbolically unites them. They are not pitchforks, but crude cooking tools that were common at that time. The gestures of these women and the wildly flying hair that has sexual and magical associations, along with the eerie forest setting, and the uncontrollable forces that escape the cauldron like Pandora’s Box, all provide a sense of magic and mystery. These symbols would appear over and over, and when people saw them in any new form, they would automatically associate them with witchcraft.

Goats were well established visual symbols of lust in the iconography of the late middle ages and Baldung Grien underscored this with having a torch lit from the heat of the goat’s genitals. This symbolism would later be used to show the sexual heat of witches; additionally, the cauldron is heated between a witch’s spread legs. These things, as well as sausages roasting somewhere in the picture, the wind-blown hair, and the symbols of female vanity, the brush and convex mirror, all allude to the sexuality that resonates through

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14 Ibid., 29
15 Hultz, Linda C., *The Witch as Muse*, 74
16 Ibid., 96
17 Zika, Charles, *The Appearance of Witchcraft*, 15

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the entire scene. Contemporary thought was that there could only be one male with the sexual prowess to keep these women happy. They had to be women who made a pact with the devil, and that was a crime to be punished.\footnote{18 Ibid., 12-15}

In the cases of crimes involving witchcraft or sorcery, executions in the Empire most frequently took the form of burning or drowning. Burning was meant to both cleanse societies of evil and to annihilate the instrument by which the evil was perpetrated, by having the witch burned and her ashes strewn in the river or buried under the gallows. The executioner played a vital role. In executions, he was more than the man who killed the condemned. In the art, he also is shown in this vital role, meaning he is a prominent part of the depiction. He is shown tending the fire, so there would be no missteps and the crowd would stay controlled.\footnote{19 Ibid., 196} When the depiction shows no witches, it usually meant that the guilty party was shown leniency and dispatched quickly. If brushwood is depicted in art from this time, it could mean that leniency was shown to the condemned; it could indicate the intense political nature of the event. Brushwood is the thick undergrowth (or small twigs and branches) that will generally burn hotter than larger pieces of wood. Some witches are depicted with heads shaved and completely naked. This signifies that they were searched for the ‘devil’s mark’ and as a way to humiliate and degrade the condemned.\footnote{20 Ibid., 198}

Throughout Germany and Switzerland, drowning was probably the most used form of capital punishment in the sixteenth century. Primarily it was used on women, especially those who violated religious or moral norms. It was also considered to be a more merciful form of punishment than burning. In the image shown of the condemned woman’s death, she is to be drowned because she begged for mercy and to be spared the fire. The accused had a reputation of promiscuity and it was rumored that she made her husband impotent. When she was taken into custody, she readily confessed to all of her evil deeds under threat of torture. She was shown mercy-- possibly because she was from a well-connected family in the Zurich region and powerful people had asked she be shown mercy. The image shows her tied up in the executioner’s arms, waiting for death to come quickly.\footnote{21 Ibid., 200}

The images that we, in the twenty-first century, associate with witches without a doubt come from this time. We do not read every single aspect of each image the way someone in the sixteenth century would have, but that can be credited to modern people growing up in a world where reading and science was taught in public schools. We live in a society where it is important that religion is kept separate from state. Maybe as children we believed if we could put a piece of paper with a name scrawled on it inside of a dead bird’s mouth, misfortune would find them. As educated people we know better, but our world is more colorful with this imagery from long ago.

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\item \footnote{18} Ibid., 12-15
\item \footnote{19} Ibid., 196
\item \footnote{20} Ibid., 198
\item \footnote{21} Ibid., 200
\end{thebibliography}
Bibliography


The beauty of a painting is that it is able to depict a time, person, place, or even an idea to an observer without the use of words. A painting is a visual display of information stored away inside the mind of another put down onto a canvas for all to view, study, and learn from. A personal, visual narrative from another fringe in time. The beauty lies within the story that the painting tells, and that just by looking, one is uncovering the story. In George Morland’s *The Slave Trade*, he reveals the story of human-trafficking and African enslavement during the late 1700’s.

*I personally chose The Slave Trade for the sake of studying the cruelty and foul treatment of African slaves during this time in history, as well as the obvious insensitivity of the English regarding the fact that the slaves were human beings with lives and families, just as the English were. This particular image stood out to me on the grounds of that it is altogether depicting what it must have been like for the African slaves to be separated from their families and sold to a circumstance that made death a gleeful alternative. The painting displays an African male wringing his hands in despair as he is being hauled away from what appears to be his wife and son by the English. He is being obviously threatened and brutally handled. Terror and antagonism are the indisputable emotions displayed on the faces of all Africans in the painting. Another African male who appears to be awaiting departure sits in despair with his wrists chained together. He is being pulled by what looks to be only a child, English of course. The painting captures a bleak and gloomy day, setting the sorrowful mood. The water is colored charcoal black, as well as the sky. What draws one in is the state of anguish among the family being broken apart. The woman is in obvious distress as her child reaches for her, and her husband seals his own fate with complete misery, unwillingly. One can sense the panic in the scene by only looking. Even the dog seems*
to be in distress. In the distance, there are Africans in a huddle, appearing to be marching, bent over with their heads hung low. The boat that will import them to the slave land awaits. The painting is unique in that it is not pleasing to the eye by any means, yet still summons an array of conflicting emotions. Its sole purpose is to demonstrate the intimate perspective of African slave trade.

During the time of production of *The Slave Trade* (1791), African enslavement was still a relatively thriving commodity to the American economy, particularly in the south. The northern states were calling to abolish slavery, due to their relative unimportance to the economy. According to the History Channel online, many colonists (especially in the north) linked the oppression of black slaves to their own oppression by the English. Slavery was eventually abolished in the northern states between 1774 and 1804 ("Origins of Slavery in America"). However, it still remained vital to the states of the south. In fact, slaves in the south took up nearly one third of the entire population. As previously stated, the ongoing occurrence of the African slave trade most likely had a large emotional impact on all bystanders and witnesses. Thus, this painting was a result of the artist’s desire to put the tragic circumstances into perspective for essentially the worlds’ population.

Racism was evidently not frowned upon during this point in time, as it commonly is in today’s society. The majority of colonists were not opposed to the enslavement of these black human beings. Though the African slaves were a large sum of the population, they were hardly considered American. The early Americans were all involved in the harsh and brutal mistreatment of the slaves; even if they were not intimately involved, they certainly did not stop it from happening. Though there were some parties in society that strived to abolish African slavery, the fact that it still occurred for a hundred years to come proves that the majority had no problem with conceding it. George Morland aimed to address the bleak situation to the general public, and especially those who stood by and allowed the ongoing calamity. These people were his intended audience of the piece. Considering his inspiration was a poem that illustrated the brutal hardship, the man must have been motivated to inquire the rest of the world as well. The painting aims to be perceived through the eyes of the painter himself. Just like any dramatic painting, *The Slave Trade* is a mere illustration of Morland’s inner impressions and ideas of what a scene during the separation and trade of the African slaves looked like. His goal was to adhere his own perspectives to those of his intended audience.

Any decent painting is held to some form of bias, just as the audience or observer brings forth a biased opinion when studying any source of history. Any portion of history already previously studied will affect the way one perceives or examines another. When viewing this particular painting, one takes into consideration any knowledge regarding African enslavement formerly learned. When a topic in history has already been absorbed in a particular way, it is not easily modified. Facts are facts, and history is typically taught as hard, factual evidence. Though there is not a wide range of opinions in regards to slavery (most would agree that it was considerably inhumane), everyone perceives an illustration individually. The bias in Morland’s painting was clearly that the English were disturbingly harsh, and that African slaves were miserable and hopeless. There is little argument against this.
impression; however, had his assessment been the opposite, the painting would have looked considerably different.

_The Slave Trade_ will remain throughout history an illustrated perception of what exactly African slave trade stood for. Separating families, taking human beings from their homes and lives, and replacing it with Hell on Earth are the lives that these people knew for hundreds of years. A painting has the power to visually inform on a more personal level, and that is exactly what _The Slave Trade_ did.

Works Cited


When we think of punk, we usually imagine a very aggressive image. Indeed, the punk movement is characterized by its assertive attitudes rooted in anti-conformity, anti-capitalism, and other values. Imagine, if you will, a movement that adopts the anti-mainstream values of punk, but also asserts its right to not be assertive.

Mori (the Japanese word for “forest”) is a style that emerged in Japan during the mid-2000s, but didn’t gain visibility until the early 2010s (Fujita, 2012; Shoji, 2010). Even though men are more than welcome to participate, it’s important to note that women are the most common practitioners of the mori lifestyle; therefore, this paper will primarily focus on female practitioners of the mori aesthetic (henceforth referred to as “mori girls”). Despite being developed on a social media site, the movement encourages members to embrace antiquity and a modest aesthetic that revolves around romanticizing a forest setting. Mori girls dress and act like they live in cottages in the woods, embracing a feminine and submissive image. Yet, by doing so, mori girls passively protest urbanization, nationalism, imperialism, and restrictive gender roles. While some mori girls also act in ways that reject consumerism, other mori girls also harness consumerism to further their transgressive natures. When examining the cultural and political contexts of mori girls, this lifestyle that encourages followers to be wary of aggression is actually pretty “punk.”

The punk counterculture emerged during the 1970s. By this time, the hippie counterculture had pretty much dissipated, as emerging counterculture figures (mainly those belonging to the glam movement) rejected the hippie lifestyle as being shallow and vapid (Goffman, 2005). What punks did was reject the decadence of the co-existing glam movement. Indeed, the punk counterculture was not glamorous or decadent. It was sharp and it was gritty. Punk musicians who weren’t classically trained still picked up their guitars and played in small venues, with members of the culture being largely supportive (Goffman, 2005). Members of the movement also began glorifying authoritarian slogans, whether in irony or in total seriousness (Goffman, 2005). When the once American-centered movement traveled over to the United Kingdom, an anti-consumerist energy emerged from the scene when it mixed with the Situationists (Goffman, 2005). It was then that punk became a global movement, where people all around the world from Pittsburgh to Jakarta could don mohawks and clothes covered in safety pins and rage against the system and against mainstream trends. The punk movement was not well-received, and punk musicians were even censored by radio stations when DJs refused to play their songs (Goffman, 2005). But punks didn’t care. They didn’t want any part of the system, anyways, and they were going to make it known. This is the essential nature of “punk.” Punks don’t distract themselves with the false glamour of mainstream society and capitalism. Punks critique and disengage themselves from
mainstream society and create their own lifestyles and artifacts that reflect their ideals and beliefs, and they make this transgression known. Punk is also a global movement, as globalization has brought about shared issues amongst various global communities. Punk rebels against these shared issues, but punks around the world choose how they rebel.

In 2006, a user by the name of Choco posted a set of rules on a Japanese social networking site, Mixi (Fujita, 2012). This list of 62 rules dictated how mori girls should dress and act. Mori style emphasizes a natural look, especially in regards to hair and cosmetics (Fujita, 2012). In regards to clothing, mori can be characterized by feminine details (like lace and floral patterns), neutral colors (like white, cream, beige, olive, etc.) and warm colors (like bordeaux and dark brown), garments and accessories made from animals (like fur ponchos and leather bags), flat round-toed shoes, loose-fitting garments, and layering items of clothing (Fujita, 2012; “Who are the mori girls?” 2009). The fashion is also versatile, as mori girls dress for the season by adding on more layers during the colder months and lesser, lighter layers during the warmer months (“An introduction to mori girls,” 2012). When it comes to personality, Choco encourages mori girls to be laid-back and uncomplicated (Fujita, 2012). In general, mori girls are quiet and peaceful individuals (“An introduction to mori girls,” 2012). Their personas strive to be discreet and do not adopt a sexualized image; in fact, their aesthetic is very unsexualized (Shoji, 2010). They are wary of appearing aggressive or assertive, and would prefer to “exist... on a metaphysical level” (Shoji, 2010). Yet, mori girls also strive for individuality (“Who are the mori girls?” 2009). They’re not concerned with how others perceive them, nor are they concerned with mainstream trends. They’re attracted to artifacts based on how it makes them feel, rather than how they feel it will appear to others (“Who are the mori girls?” 2009). Mori girls are also encouraged to live a more bohemian and antiquated lifestyle, shunning the fast-paced nature of city life (“Who are the mori girls?” 2009). Mori girls frequent bookstores, cafes, old neighborhoods, and the natural setting of the forest (Fujita, 2012; “An introduction to mori girls,” 2012; “Who are the mori girls?” 2009). While there are brands that sell clothing influenced by the mori aesthetic, mori is largely a DIY culture, as mori girls are attracted to hand-made items and encouraged to create their own things (Fujita, 2012; “Mori-Girl Mondays // a new blog series,” 2014). In addition, mori girls are encouraged to be artistic and creative, and girls are encouraged to take up artistic hobbies such as photography (Fujita, 2012; “Who are the mori girls?” 2009).

When we look at mori girls, this same desire to not be part of mainstream society that punks shared is apparent. Mori girls idealize life outside the confines of the city, which is very much an attitude acting against the urbanization of modern society (Fujita, 2012). Mori girls also eschew modern fashion trends, especially form-fitting clothing and loud colors. The DIY culture amongst mori girls also corresponds with a similar culture amongst punks. The way that mori girls embrace a quirky fashion aesthetic also mirrors punk’s aesthetic that purposefully rejects mainstream fashion. Like punk, mori emphasizes individuality. Yes, the aesthetic was set up by a list of rules, but it’s all very open-ended and allows members to create their own styles that emphasizes individual freedom within the aesthetic.

Yet, unlike punks, mori girls do not adopt an aggressive persona. Mori girls are
very milquetoast and feminine. This might not seem very transgressive, but considering the role of women in Japan after World War II, the submissive nature of mori girls can be contextualized as a protest against the pressures placed on women to behave in a certain manner. After Japan’s defeat in World War II, the United States occupied the country in order to demilitarize and democratize the country (Yoneyama, 2005). When justifying imperialist practices, American media outlets spun a narrative of submissive Japanese women being oppressed by Japanese men, and that the US was liberating these women during the occupation (Yoneyama, 2005). Indeed, Japanese women did gain a lot of rights after the war, although it could be argued that feminist groups in Japan were fighting for these rights before the occupation (Yoneyama, 2005). However, the American media were using Japanese women to justify robbing Japan’s autonomy as a nation, which the Japanese were not happy with. As a result, the Japanese media encouraged women to be more assertive and combat stereotypes of Japanese women presented in American media (Shoji, 2010). Yet, at the same time, Japanese society still oppressed women by enforcing strict gender roles. Japanese society still emphasized the role of women as mothers and used this to justify laws that diminished women’s bodily autonomy and to repress women’s sexuality (Anan, 2014).

In modern times, Japanese women have acted ways to rebel against repressive gender roles. Some women have extramarital affairs to assert agency over their bodies and their sexuality (Lin, 2012). Some women embrace being single and remove the stigma of doing activities alone that are typically thought of as couple’s activities, thereby asserting agency and dismantling the idea that women need men in their lives (Dales, 2014). Other women, who are usually sent to private schools to indoctrinate in them traditional gender roles in order to train them to be good wives and mothers, use the teachings and publications aimed at them to construct their own images and allowed their voices to be heard (Anan, 2014). When the post-war economy empowered these women as consumers, they utilized this new purchasing power to buy artifacts that emphasized their own aesthetics. What these women emphasized were “unproductive” bodies; bodies not intended for reproductive use or for the manifestation of patriarchal notions (Anan, 2014). The mori aesthetic best fits into this framework. By wearing loose-fitting garments and not emphasizing sexual promiscuity, mori girls de-emphasize the traditional role their bodies play in a patriarchal society and allow agency over their bodies. Even though the mori aesthetic is not inherently sexual, it still gives practitioners bodily autonomy. The assertion of passive femininity within the mori community becomes a transgression against the pressures of the Japanese media, which in itself is influenced by the pressures of the American media (Shoji, 2010). Within this context, the mori community not only becomes an anti-nationalist movement by rejecting the idea of how Japanese women should act, but also an anti-imperialist movement by rejecting the Western narrative that Japanese women have no control over their own lives (Yoneyama, 2005). Yes, mori girls adopt Western clothing in their aesthetic; however, the fashion is largely influenced by Scandinavian aesthetics and not the country that occupied their nation decades ago (Fujita, 2012).

The mori community is still very esoteric. Mainstream society regards it as inaccessible (Shoji, 2010). Shoji (2010) also...
points out that mori girls do not earn the attention of the opposite sex (yet, mori girls are unlikely to care about what men think of them). Yet, the community has become a global one. Women in Western countries who have invested interest in Japanese street fashion have become enamored with the mori aesthetic. While mori communities embrace the anti-consumerist and anti-urbanization elements of the original community, they do not carry the same historical and cultural contexts the Japanese mori girls incorporate in their lifestyles. However, global mori communities still focus on the subject of women’s bodies in the culture. Rather than discussing the bodily autonomy of mori girls, they focus on the inclusivity of different body types. In other Japanese street fashion cultures, members tend to embrace thin, petite bodies (“Mori-Girl Mondays // a new blog series,” 2014). However, in international mori communities, bloggers like Newman (2011) emphasize body diversity in the community. In fact, modern technology allows plus-size mori girls to show off their aesthetics, thereby encouraging other plus-size girls to adopt the aesthetic. This allows mori communities in other countries to decentralize the image of thin, petite women that is glorified both in mainstream society and in the mori girl community.

Despite the submissive nature of mori girls, their aesthetics and attitudes are transgressive when contextualized within the cultural history of Japan. When examining the mori community, attitudes toward anti-urbanization, anti-capitalism, and individuality emerge. Rejection of traditional gender roles also emerges as mori girls de-emphasize the role of women as baby-makers. The community has also spread amongst Japanophiles, allowing them to transgress against similar trends in their respective countries. Within this context, mori girls are truly “punk.”
Works Cited


Pulp, Subculture, Identity & Bannon’s I am a Woman

By John C. Polles

Assignment Description: Analyze a particular text through the critical lens of LGBT/Queer Literary Theory by using provided texts as well as doing additional research. The assignment was completed for Dr. Jay Sloan’s LGBT Literature.

I Am A Woman, the landmark 1959 pulp fiction novel by Ann Bannon, focuses upon Laura Landon’s move to New York and her subsequent discovery of her own same-sex attraction and eventual acceptance of a lesbian identity. Bannon introduces these themes to the reader through an exploration of Greenwich Village’s gay and lesbian subculture (especially centered around a bar called The Cellar) and discussion of forms of lesbian identity (specifically that shown by “butch” lesbian Beebo Brinker). Analysis of the works of Lillian Faderman and Kate Adams in relation to Bannon’s original text shows that the development, acceptance, and longevity of identity relies heavily upon the existence, and participation within, the subculture, and that the pulp fiction format is itself crucial to the depiction of both.

I Am a Woman’s status as pulp fiction – or simply a “paperback novel” – frames it as part of an underground movement of sorts. In her “Making the World Safe for the Missionary Position: Images of the Lesbian in Post-World War II America,” Kate Adams discusses the controversial 1950 novel, Women’s Barracks by Tereska Torrès, which Adams describes as a “paperback novel [...] which portrayed lesbianism in conventionally pathological as well as sensational terms” (257-59). The novel was the victim of much scrutiny and controversy, being described by the U.S. House of Representatives’ Committee on Current Pornographic Materials as “degenerate,” “immoral,” and “perverted.” This committee, in 1952, specifically targeted “paperbacks,” decrying their “cover art [for] featuring ‘lurking and daring illustrations of voluptuous young women’” (Adams 257-59). Though it was published in 1959, this description could easily be applied to Bannon’s novel – Indeed, Adams notes that I Am a Woman was published by the same publishing house as Women’s Barracks (259).

However, the House Committee’s scrutiny of Women’s Barracks did not necessarily have the desired impact on lesbian literature. Adams states that the novel “acted as a wedge, a way into print for other texts which would treat lesbianism more positively and radically than Women’s Barracks itself did” (259). I Am a Woman can easily be seen as an example of such a title. Adams discusses the ability of pulp novels to circumvent the “‘quality control’ mechanisms” of traditional publication and she later writes that the pulp format “allowed controversial or marginal texts to come into print” (259). Able to avoid censorship applied to “high” literature of the time, the format was already “underground.” Compounding this, due to their inexpensive quality, “paperbacks” were readily and especially available to the urban working class, such as the New York lesbians depicted in Bannon’s novel. In accordance with Adams’s research, the format also gave Bannon some leeway to discuss topics not well-understood or -received by the general public and to portray lesbianism in a more positive manner.

A prominent feature in I Am a Woman is the gay bar. In her book Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers, Lillian Faderman discusses the rise of the gay bar as a response unique
to the queer community, and lesbians in particular: “There were no lesbian ghettos where they could be assured of meeting others like themselves and being accepted precisely for that attribute that the outside world shunned” (161). The solution then presented itself in the form of bars – “dark, secret, a nighttime place” – where lesbians could meet like others and generally feel safe, becoming one of the few sanctuaries available to lesbians in 1950’s America (Faderman 161). This is shown in I Am a Woman by Laura’s habitual, if often unexplained, urge to go to The Cellar, one of the Village’s gay bars, when she is confronted with stressful or confusing situations:

Resolutely she began to walk, climbing the stairs and then starting down Seventh Avenue. She walked as if she had a goal, precisely because she had none and it frightened her. [...] Within five minutes, she was standing in front of The Cellar, rather surprised at herself for finding it so quickly. There was a strange tingling up and down her back and her eyes began to shine with a feverish luster. She walked down the steps and pulled the door open. (Bannon 79-80)

This acutely shows Laura’s urges to go to the bar; she is simply wandering the streets, and finds herself at The Cellar’s door, which is portrayed as almost instinctual. Despite the accidental nature of her visit there, Bannon provides the reader with a visceral description of Laura’s intense emotional reaction upon her arrival.

As the novel progresses, Laura’s near-dependency on the physical space of The Cellar deepens, and develops into something more social in nature. Once, while walking home from work, Laura reluctantly decides to head to The Cellar instead. She creates an excuse for herself involving paying Beebo for a drink, but even she seems to acknowledge that this is superficial reasoning. Bannon writes, “There was always a moment of fear and reluctance. But the need to be with her own kind quickly overpowered it” (126). This is in keeping with Faderman’s assessment that “[gay bars] represented the one public place where those who had accepted a lesbian sociosexual identity did not have to hide who they were” (162).

As an extension of the acceptance of lesbian identity in the gay bars, there is also an acceptance of various forms of expression of that identity, specifically through the presentation of “butch” or “femme.” Being of the more gender non-conforming of the two roles, “butch” women found the most comfort in this environment; according to Faderman, “the bars were a particular relief for many butch working-class women because it was only there that they could dress ‘right,’ in pants, in which they felt the most comfortable” (162). The “butch” identity is most starkly shown in the character of Beebo, whose description is an obvious, nearly clichéd example by contemporary standards (“black pants,” “short and dark” hair [Bannon 36]).

In the novel, Beebo’s chosen occupation is that of an elevator operator, simply because it allowed her to wear pants, which Laura cannot understand. She asks Beebo, “Are pants really that important?” (Bannon 180). However, it seems that pants really are that important; Beebo is so committed to her identity that she has made it a priority to hold a low-paying occupation which allows her to express it. This is consistent with Faderman’s assertion that “there were few jobs in the 1950’s for which women might wear pants” (162). However, this does show that there was a desire to apply these
identities in everyday life; the identity which formed within the subculture was not beginning to spill over into everyday life.

In contrast with Beebo, Laura’s identity is much less established. Aside from one former lover, there was no one in her life she knew to be homosexual before she moved to New York and began frequenting The Cellar. She had never even heard the word “gay” used in a queer context before meeting Jack (Bannon 33). In addition, she is initially ignorant of the “butch” and “femme” identities before going to The Cellar. Neither of these prescribed identities seem to apply to her; she certainly isn’t “butch,” but she does not go out of her way to emphasize her femininity, either. This shows that these identities are not inherent to lesbians, but are a direct product of the subculture represented by The Cellar, and they would not exist without it.

Ann Bannon’s portrayal of lesbians in I Am a Woman is generally much more positive than in much of the literature that preceded it, and because of this, the novel is an important one – and not only within the pulp format. This format is crucial, however, as the novel likely never would have appeared in print had Bannon attempted to go through a traditional publisher. The novel exposes a rich subculture and presents an insightful discussion about lesbian identity in 1950’s New York, and shows the inherent connectedness between the two. Upon examining descriptions of The Cellar, Laura Landon, and Beebo Brinker, the reader can see the extent of this connectedness, and the role the subculture plays in forging this identity.

Works Cited


Ken Kesey as a Counterculture Figure

By D. Ellie Howell

Assignment Description: This assignment is to study and evaluate a counterculture. The argument will need to include a definition and an evaluation. The intent of the paper is to identify and analyze a minimum of three principle communication strategies used rhetorically in advancing their cause. Clearly state why these strategies were effective or ineffective. The assignment was completed for Professor Lisa Waite’s Counter-Culture Communication.

The sixties were alive with a new philosophy, a new message, and gigantic amount of youths ready to surf the oncoming wave of social change. The Hippies sought to live for the moment, encourage the spread of love and unity towards all humans, and help campaigns grant dignity to all people. Acid became a passport to a world of psychedelic colors and experience. It changed people’s common perception and led to the individual but collective epiphany that there is a vastness beyond what we can ever hope to understand.

Because of the new incitement towards drugs for experience purposes, a new wave of creativity began a beautiful emergence into the center stage of fine arts. Ken Kesey stood out as an extraordinary writer of his day. His success as a novelist and his engagement in the acid experiments made him become a well celebrated and emulated iconic figure, legendary even today. He, along with a group of identity-rejecting, yuppie spawn called the Merry Pranksters aligned themselves in opposition to mainstream society. Independently, Kesey was able to use his arsenal of English as a communication strategy. Collectively, he and the Merry Pranksters used strategies of intercultural communication and nonverbal communication to perpetuate concepts of unity, internal strength, and love for one’s fellow human.

In the early sixties, it was known that acid use was on the rise, but with scientifically puzzling effects. During this time, scientists administered over 200 LSD studies (Mehling, 1997). Naturally, Kesey was onboard. Afterwards, he came to believe acid to be a bridge to a new frontier filled with rich exotic symbolism that only those who partook could ever experience. It was his goal and mission to encourage others to have the power to experience the world from their inner mind’s eye (Christensen, 2009). Kesey did not hesitate with his involvement in the acid test: “I felt like I was doing the American thing, as Neil Armstrong when he volunteered to go to the moon. There was a new place to be explored and we were astronauts” (Christensen, 2009, p.55). His jubilation at this new frontier expressed the idea of freedom not lost on this generation. At the end of his test, he experienced a great awakening of his senses and his purpose. The writer in him exploded. From this new awakening, his brain hatched a concrete gift to the world, a novel titled, One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest.

Kesey was able to use his writing as a key communication strategy. This 1962 splendor follows the antics of R.P. McMurphy as he feigns mental illness and sets to emancipate the minds of his fellow patients under the slimy nose of Nurse Ratchet. The concepts explored within these pages are a mere microcosm of the emancipation of the minds of the people in this decade. The patients’ response to
McMurphy, especially during the escape of the pensive Chief Bromden, was how Kesey hoped the world would react to the stirring up of one’s own perception. This incredible novel can be read repeatedly with benefit, earning it a place on the shelf of greatness. The concepts of firm opposition of authority will live on. Do not be a slave to the machine of society; think critically about everything and never settle in a position that doesn’t thrill you. Kesey wrote as a messenger, not as a scholar. Past professors recalled him as a poor speller who wrote quickly, but effectively (Christensen, 2009). Even to trivialize the importance of grammar and spelling, as a writer, is a stance of opposition. It seems that everything this man did was to the beat of his own drum and a huge following was coming his way.

His notability as a writer and counterculture symbol led to the establishment of the Merry Pranksters, another group representative of counterculture believes because of their dedication to the spread of laughter, joy, and happiness to the outside world. The exploits of the Merry Pranksters’ bus, “Further,” provided them the means to engage in intercultural communication during their Midwest and Southern travels. This wanderlust and the physical distance the group traveled was a metaphor for the distance a person is able to go beyond their limited frame of reference when drugs are ingested (Carnes, 1974). Exploring these different areas, gave them a chance to interact with others of different cultures and spread their own cultural values to new audiences. The Merry Pranksters’ passionate recruiting of the straight community was a very loving action. Today, in-group and out-group members rarely recognize others’ humanity, let alone communicate such a grand and enlightening message. This group defied the gravitational pull towards similarity and explicitly targeted the out-group. It was love that brought them to say, “Hey, I found out how to be happy! You there, in the suit and tie, I feel like you could really benefit. Come, see how I see!” This delivery of unity, power and love was why intercultural communication was so important to advance the cause. As Ken Kesey said himself, “When you’ve got something like we’ve got, you can’t just sit on it and possess it, you’ve got to move off it give it to other people. It only works, if you bring other people into it” (Christensen, 2009, p. i).

The Merry Pranksters communicated a powerful message through their nonverbal communication as well. The way they dressed as well as the flamboyant furnishings of Further were highly effective in drawing attention from the selected crowd. “They dressed in fantastic costumes, frequently those of comic-strip heroes” (Carnes, 1974, p. 35). Even just seeing the bus communicated a message. The sight of something out of the ordinary was enough to begin the kindling. The Midwest was a breeding ground for “Hippie hatred.” This was because of the counterculture’s relentless challenging of the middle class lifestyle, a lifestyle that glorified fiscal achievement and possessions (Frank, 1997). The Merry Pranksters disagreed with their way of thinking, but sought to change their minds through pleasant images, happy colors, peace signs and smiley faces. Even if the sight of the bus was met with admiration, apprehension, or abhorrence, causing someone to process something beyond their frame of reference may cause them tread along new boundaries. This could spark an internal dialogue that may have led them to investigate the rigidity of their own lives. The collaboration of these power sources was short-lived, but the success of this ideology has been intertwined inside the
counterculture spirit for nearly 60 years. Ken Kesey’s personal mission was in helping all humanity un-wedge themselves from the oppressive niche carved by society’s conformity. During his life, he realized this was not completely realistic. He then assumed a task of simply trying to affect society on a micro level (Carnes, 1974). This cannot be seen as a failing, because he did not display himself as a big shot celebrity. Through the cherished messages in his novels, he tailored a personalized message to his readers and followers. The immortality of his mission still has the ability to encourage and inspire others to seek out the truth in our world. A chapter in Christensen’s Acid Christ is titled “Kiss No Ones Ass”. This capitalizes the feeling of greatness he instills in the common person. For him the drug use was gateway to these discoveries but today people can hold those ideas but not partake in any substances. Many teens and young adults against drug use the term “straight edge,” to describe their actions, but at the same time walk the razor’s edge of nonconformity.

Today, drug use is not only discouraged, it is outlawed. However, one key principle remains the same. We have become a society of freethinkers with more breadth and depth to our discussion and our own internal dialogue. Professors welcome the argument brought up by a skeptical student and at times encourage students to play devil’s advocate during debates. America in no way can be perceived as a meek push over. People are bold and strong about their opinions and beliefs. Ken Kesey along with the other pioneers of the day helped crack this gilded world apart. He dove deep into the serene core our very existence, along with the bus of Merry Pranksters spreading joy to the routes they embarked. They proved that humanity is not mere cosmic dust thrown into a vacuum of eternity. We are so much more than that and each day we decide for ourselves just what we are to become.
References


The Power of Belief and its Effects on Health
By Daniel S. Hinshaw

Assignment Description: Construct an arguable claim which will help provide an organizational structure to the paper. The final paper should include at least 5-6 reliable research sources that clearly support an academic argument. The assignment was originally completed for Dr. Stephen Neaderhiser’s College Writing II. The version of the essay appearing here was completed for Dr. Julie Cremeans-Smith’s Individual Investigation.

There is little doubt that religion and spirituality play a role in physical and mental health, as there have been more than enough studies that have consistently confirmed these relationships. A meta-analysis of hundreds of peer-reviewed academic studies on this subject found that about 80% of the studies show a positive correlation between religiosity/spirituality and overall health (Koenig, 2012). A related study that examined religious coping and health behaviors among African Americans (who are traditionally a more highly religious group that also shows disparate health complications with regards to the general American population) found that religious behaviors (when paired with a positive view of God) were directly associated with some positive health behavior, such as eating more fruits and vegetables. However, with regards to the population of the religious with negative religious views of God (feelings of abandonment, punishment, unjust etc.) this study came up empty handed, possibly because the specific group being studied did not want to admit to any “spiritual struggle” as it could socially alienate them (Holt, Clark, Debnam, & Roth, 2014). Fortunately, others have studied this “spiritual struggle” aspect.

Kenneth Pargament examined this more negative view of God by believers, and found that those who believe in a God but also hold a negative view toward said deity may also experience higher mortality rates. This phenomenon was observed in a study conducted with a sample of 596 elderly (and chronically ill) inpatients at Duke University Medical Center (Pargament, Koenig, Tarakeshwar, & Hahn, 2001). The participants in the study who believed that God had abandoned them, was punishing them, or the devil was responsible for the illnesses they suffered from had an increased mortality rate of 6% to 10% (Pargament et al., 2001). But the most notable effect was seen in those who believed that God did not love them or had alienated them. This group of “negative” believers had a 19% to 28% increased risk of death over the approximate two-year time frame of the study (Pargament et al., 2001). Among the many possible explanations of these results, Pargament and colleagues (2001) suggested the possibility that religious struggle could cause poor physical health with depressed mood, anxiety, social alienation, or any combination of the aforementioned variables. It is worth noting however, that all of the participants within this study were religious and mostly mainline Christian, so there were no internal comparisons to any nonbeliever groups such as atheists or agnostics. However, this is one of the first studies to examine negative religious views toward God in such a delicate group, namely, the sick and dying.

Another aspect of belief that may play a role in its effects on health is the strength or certainty of belief. In fact, the strength of ones beliefs not only applies to those who believe in God, but strength of belief has also been shown to be important to atheists.
and their well-being. For example, Galen and Kloet (2011) examined this relationship by conducting a survey to compare certainty in belief between members from a Christian church, a non-denominational church and local branch of Center for Inquiry (a secular organization). The results of this research showed support for a curvilinear relationship between mental health and certainty of belief (Galen & Kloet, 2011). Participants were asked to respond to a series of Likert scale questions on mental health and life-satisfaction such as “I am relaxed most of the time”, or “In most ways my life is close to ideal”; they were then asked how certainly they believed in the existence or non-existence of God. The highest scoring participants were those at polar opposite ends of the belief spectrum; those who believed with absolute certainty that God exists and those who believed with absolute certainty that God does not exist scored the highest on both emotional stability and life satisfaction, while those with less certainty in their beliefs fell in the intermediate ranges on both constructs (Galen & Kloet, 2011).

The previously mentioned studies are just a few examples of research on the topic of religious belief and health. However, it is worth noting that these studies include very specific predictors of mental and physical health (e.g. mortality and chronic illness, negative religious views, members of religious or non-religious organizations), which appears to be very common within this field. What has been largely ignored however is whether simply belief, uncertainty of belief, or nonbelief in any supernatural being(s)/higher power is related to mental and physical health. In other words, does mental/physical health have a relationship with belonging to theist, agnostic, or atheist groups exclusively (the three main overarching categories of belief)?

Examining these categories of belief is becoming more important as the amount of religiously affiliated individuals in the world today is slowly declining. Recently the Pew Research Center found that the number of Americans who identify as “religiously unaffiliated” has grown from 15% to 20% between the years 2007-2012 (“Nones’ on the Rise”, 2012). This increase has also been observed in Canada where the number of those who identify as religiously unaffiliated has grown from 4% to 24% from 1971-2010 (Pew Research Center, 2013). In another study by the Pew Research Center, it was estimated that the religiously unaffiliated now make up approximately 16% of the earth’s population (“The Global Religious Landscape,” 2012).

One question that may be posed in light of these findings is: where do atheists and agnostics stand in this landscape of personal belief? Within many surveys that request specific religious identification, atheists are only able to identify as “non-religious”, “religiously unaffiliated” or “religious none” etc. But this “religiously unaffiliated” category (and similarly named categories) in these surveys may not provide a clear view of atheists because anyone who does not specifically identify with a certain religion may also be included in such categories. Therefore, this type of category may also include people who believe in a God or Gods (theists [monotheist, polytheist, etc.]) but do not subscribe to a particular religion. This category may also include agnostics who are simply unsure about beliefs and religion as a whole. As such, attempting to pull information on atheists from such studies is also tricky since atheists may only make up a small portion of those who identify as “religiously unaffiliated”, possibly as little as 7% (Kosmin, Keysar, Cragun, & Navarro-Rivera, 2009).
In summation, the lumping of atheists, agnostics and theists into the same category (simply because they do not identify with a specific religion) prohibits a better understanding of these groups and how their belief or nonbelief relate with their personal health, instead of just those who adhere to a major religion (Lee, 2014). Exploring this subject in a new way is especially important given the growing rate of the "religious none." Therefore, the goal of the present study was to address the limitations of previous research and to take a look at the bigger picture of health and belief.

The Current Study

The present study was created to examine the relationships between physical/mental health and personal belief. Specifically, the goal was to take a step back from examining specific religions, specific belief systems or organizations, and simply examine the root belief groups that they stem from. To accomplish this, the study exclusively examines the mental and physical health of those who identify as atheist, agnostic, or theist (or the “AAT” category). Based upon prior research that has studied relationships between spirituality/religion/atheism and health it was hypothesized that there would be significant differences between AAT groups in mental-health (M/H), physical health (P/H), and overall health (O/H).

Method

Procedure

The Institutional Review Board of Kent State University approved the following procedures. Data was collected by means of an anonymous survey distributed and collected online. Utilizing social networks allowed access to niche religious/theist/atheist and agnostic virtual communities. Online dispensation also opened up the opportunity to reach out to participants from all over the globe. Kwiks surveys.com was the site that was utilized as a host and initial data compiling/analysis engine along with SPSS v22 for further in-depth statistical analysis.

Eight surveys were filled out by face-to-face transmission when the researcher was invited to administer the survey in a classroom setting. The vast majority of survey responses came from Facebook and Reddit. Using Reddit to distribute the questionnaire allowed the researcher to focus on members of specific groups and online communities, especially religious groups such as /r/Christianity or /r/Theist. In total this survey was posted on over 50 different subreddits (or groups).

Sample

The total number of participants who identified as atheists composed 47% percent of respondents (n=1747) followed by theists at 27% (n=980), and agnostics at 26% (n=968). The average age registered for all participants (and each individual AAT group) fell in the “19-30” years-old range. This age range was expected since the survey was mostly administered through social-networking Internet sites.

Measures

The questionnaire was completely anonymous and contained one question to control for age, eleven four-point Likert scale questions for self-assessment of mental and physical health, one question regarding substance use, and a final question asking participants which category of personal belief (AAT) they most identified with. The eleven Likert type questions were composed of the two constructs M/H and P/H. The
combination of these two groups formed the larger O/H construct, and all questions were created from the main aspects of overall personal health described in *Improving Emotional Health* (Smith, Segal, & Segal, 2015). The survey was open for a total of 7 days and the total amount of survey respondents at the time of the surveys close was 3,695 (N=3,695) with a 100% completion rate of the questionnaire by participants.

The M/H section of the survey consisted of eight questions. Participants were asked to rate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with statements pertaining to contentment, zeal for life, resilience, meaning or purpose, mental flexibility, balance, relationships, confidence and self-esteem.

The P/H section consisted of four questions. Three of the four questions were Likert type where participants were asked to rate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with statements pertaining to rest, nutrition, and physical exercise. The last question in the P/H section asked participants to answer yes or no to the use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs for self-medicating purposes. In the last question of the survey participants were asked which type of personal belief they most identified with. There were three options: theist, agnostic, and atheist. The definitions and qualifiers beside each answer read as such to all participants:

- Theist (Believe in a God, multiple Gods, or spiritual)
- Agnostic (Don’t know/aren’t sure)
- Atheist (Don’t believe in any god, gods or supernatural powers)

The reasoning behind creating a four-point scale (which consisted of Strongly Agree [SA=4], Agree [A=3], Disagree [D=2] and Strongly Disagree [SD=1] response options) was to try and avoid the neutral option that many people revert to with these types of surveys (no reverse coded questions, SA=4 was always the “healthiest” choice). The neutral option is often overused when participants are hesitant to choose a side or when they simply do not want to respond to the question. With this set-up, participants had to choose one side of the scale or the other. However, there were still four responses to choose from, so participants were not simply asked to say “yes” or “no”, in this way they could still rate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each statement to some degree.

The survey was also designed to be short and easy for the respondents to use. This simplicity was used in an effort to maximize responses and encourage full completion of the survey. To accomplish this, the Likert type questions were framed in an all-encompassing manner. For example, the question regarding the P/H aspect of physical rest simply asked participants to rate how much they agree with the statement, “I get an adequate amount of sleep on most nights”. This generalized type of question was used instead of asking a multitude of questions that (when combined) pose essentially the same question, such as how many hours they sleep per night, how rested they feel upon waking or how often they might nap etc.

Another important note in the design of the survey was that the web-link (that connected participants to the survey) included in its description that the survey was studying the links between personal belief and well-being. In this way those who clicked on the link to take the survey did not enter blindly, but rather they went in with a basic idea of the subject matter to which they were contributing to and participating.
in. However, because of this information being displayed in the link, the decision was made to place the AAT grouping question last. This set-up was an effort to elicit more honest responses and also try to avoid people trying to make the particular AAT group that they most identified with look better than another.

Results

Tests

Cronbach’s alpha test was run on all Likert type questions to determine the reliability of each construct (O/H, M/H, and P/H). Once reliability was confirmed, a one-way ANOVA test was performed on each construct. Tukey post-hoc testing was then used to determine where significant differences were displayed between AAT group responses. All tests used α=.05 significance level.

P/H Construct Analysis.

A Cronbach’s alpha test assigned this construct an alpha level of .587, thus determining it was an unreliable construct to use on its own. No further tests were performed on this subgroup, though it was used in combination with the M/H construct to compose the O/H construct.

M/H Construct Analysis.

The Cronbach’s alpha test assigned an alpha value score of .835 to the M/H construct and the one-way ANOVA test determined that there was a significant difference in responses by AAT groups (F [2, 3692] = 39.782 p<.05). The Tukey post-hoc test revealed that theists scored the highest significantly (M=24.81), followed by agnostics (M=22.82), then atheists (M=22.81) with no statistically significant difference between the latter two.

Overall Health Analysis.

The Cronbach’s alpha test determined that the O/H construct, consisting of Q2-Q12 (minus Q5), had a reliability of .819. Since this construct was determined internally reliable, a one-way ANOVA test was performed and it revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the means of AAT group responses (see Table 1). A Tukey post-hoc test showed that in the O/H responses, theists had the highest mean followed by atheists, then agnostics (29.06, 28.8, and 28.45 respectively). Theists scored significantly higher than agnostics, while atheists were not significantly different from either agnostic or theist group means, rather, they were somewhat similar to both (see Table 2). These results also appear to show evidence for a relationship between O/H and personal belief (see Figure 1).
Table 1. One-way ANOVA on AAT groups for O/H.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>181.494</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>90.747</td>
<td>3.985</td>
<td>.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>84072.859</td>
<td>3692</td>
<td>22.772</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>84254.353</td>
<td>3694</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Tukey Post Hoc of AAT group means for O/H.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OverallMinusQ5</th>
<th>Tukey HSD\textsuperscript{a,b}</th>
<th>Subset for alpha = 0.05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>28.4504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agnostic</td>
<td>968</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atheist</td>
<td>1747</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theist</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>29.0571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td></td>
<td>.178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 1142.476.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.
The Removal of Question 5: Meaning in Life

Initial analysis of the questionnaire data found that there was a substantial difference in responses between theist and atheist responses to Q5 (which read “I feel there is a meaning and purpose for my existence”). This question was initially intended to be used in the M/H construct (and in turn the O/H construct as well). However, multiple atheist respondents (on the sites and subreddits that this survey was posted on) pointed out that this was a loaded question and essentially begged the question of belief in an afterlife, God or some other “higher power”. This question was, admittedly, very poorly worded and should have been phrased differently. The real purpose of this question was to see whether respondents felt purpose for their life (not “existence”), whether the said “purpose” was internally (personally) or externally (higher power) assigned should not have been implied, as it was not relevant to what the question was intended to measure. The use of the word “existence” in this question brought on confusing implications for many respondents. The skew in the responses to this question between atheists and theists was very apparent from initial analysis, which showed that only 2.3% of theists responded “Strongly Disagree” as opposed to 19.1% of atheists. Thus, because of being poorly worded combined with the survey participant feedback, Q5 was disregarded.

Question Specific Testing

To analyze the AAT group responses question by question, a one-way ANOVA was performed on each individual Likert type question and categorized by the responses to Q14 (AAT). A Tukey post-hoc test revealed significant differences between AAT groups on Q2 (contentment with life), Q3 (enthusiasm for life), and Q8 (relationships) where the theist group scored

---

**Figure 1. Chart of AAT group means for O/H**

![Chart of AAT group means for O/H](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean OverallMinusQ5</th>
<th>Atheist</th>
<th>Agnostic</th>
<th>Theist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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significantly higher than both atheists and agnostics. Q10 (sleep/rest) was particularly notable as it was the only question where the atheist group mean was shown to be significantly higher than the theist group (scoring the lowest of the three) while agnostics were similar to both theist and atheist scores (atheists with the highest mean). On Q4 (mental resilience) the theist group mean was the significantly higher than the agnostic group, and the atheist group was not significantly different than either other group. However, with Q6 (flexibility), the atheist group scored significantly higher than the agnostic group, and the theist group mean was in between agnostics and atheists, statistically similar to both. On Q9 (self-confidence/esteem) the theist and atheist group means were similar and significantly higher than the agnostic group. For Q7 (life balance), Q11 (nutrition) and Q12 (physical exercise) the AAT group means were not significantly different at the p<.05 level (see Table 3).

Table 3. ANOVA on individual O/H questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>18.571</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.286</td>
<td>17.533</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>1955.243</td>
<td>3692</td>
<td>.530</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1973.814</td>
<td>3694</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>12.206</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.103</td>
<td>11.996</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>1878.261</td>
<td>3692</td>
<td>.509</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>4.626</td>
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<td>2924.798</td>
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Question 13 (on the use of drugs and alcohol) was posed as a yes/no question and so it was not included with the other Likert type questions for the ANOVA test. Chi square was used to analyze the categorical data obtained from this question. Of the
AAT groups 62.39% of the atheist group responded “yes”, followed by 62.36% of agnostics and 48.67% of theists (Table 4).

Table 4. Chi Square of AAT for Q13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q14 * Q13 Crosstabulation</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q14</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Agnostic</td>
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Discussion

Although atheists and theists are on different ends of the spectrum of belief, they were actually quite similar to each other on the O/H construct. Results of the AAT groups (shown in Figure 1) within this study are comparable to the findings of Galen and Kloet (2011). Their results showed that atheists and theists (with atheists scoring just below theists) who believed with more certainty, displayed higher levels of well-being and life satisfaction than those who were less certain about their beliefs (Galen & Kloet, 2011). Although certainty or strength of belief in particular were not accounted for in this survey on AAT groups, the present study may illustrate that those who identified as atheist or theist might have somewhat of a higher level of commitment to their beliefs (than those who identified as agnostics) which could also imply strength or certainty of belief. Regardless, when looking at the results, it appears that simply believing or disbelieving is related to greater levels of personal health than remaining uncertain. However, the present study was a preliminary investigation of possible differences. Therefore, the reasons behind these findings are not made completely clear. Certain explanatory variables could be at play that were not unaccounted for in this study, such as community and social support in theists that belong to religious organizations, or conversely, the social stigma or alienation felt by agnostics and atheists living as minorities in a religious majority (Fiske, 2000; Morgan, 2013; Wright & Nichols, 2014).

Another result that stood out in particular was that of Q10 (sleep/rest). Although on a few questions atheists scored similarly to theists (that is they were not significantly different at the α=.05 confidence level), Q10 was the only question where atheists scored the highest, and agnostics did not score the lowest. It was also the only question where the theists mean score was the lowest (with a statistically significant difference between each AAT group). One possible explanation for these results is that atheists and agnostics may be more prone to depression and
anxiety given their more common neurotic personality traits (Caldwell-Harris, 2012) and in turn sleep more (a symptom of depression). However, the question was posed in a qualitative, not quantitative fashion. Q10 read, “I get an adequate amount of sleep most nights,” which implies that regardless of whether one slept for twelve hours or two, they felt that the amount was adequate, or maybe at least enough for them personally.

Variance in the quality of sleep between theists and their agnostic and atheist counterparts could possibly be explained by the “spiritual struggle” that has been found to have potential negative effects on health and has been receiving more and more attention in this field (Pargament & Cummings, 2010). One aspect of the spiritual struggle that could negatively affect sleep quality is religious doubt. The “religious doubt” variable was tested on a sample of the Presbyterian Church in the USA and found strong evidence for an inverse relationship between religious doubt and self-rated quality of sleep (Ellison, Bradshaqw, Storch, Marcum, & Hill, 2011). This relationship was significant in their findings even after controlling for multiple covariates and confounders such as psychological distress, exercise and the use of sleep medication (Ellison et al., 2011). But to figure out exactly why there was such a large disparity in the present study with theists (a much broader category than the religious denomination in the previously mentioned study) and sleep quality, further and more specific tests on this subject would need to be conducted. Future research could include longitudinal surveys to test how sleep and doubt may vary and fluctuate with each other. Tests with sleep labs could also prove useful where sleep can be more closely monitored, combined with blood work to monitor stress hormones, and combined with simultaneous assessment of spiritual struggles.

Although this study provided some interesting results there are a few limitations to its design. Choosing to do a shorter survey with more simplistic and broader value questions possibly allowed for more responses, but it also meant multiple variables went unaccounted for. Possible covariates such as gender, personality, level of education, income levels, race/ethnicity or even the different combinations of atheist, agnostic and theist that some people identify with (e.g. atheist-agnostic) were unaccounted for on the questionnaire. The fact that the survey was completely administered online also limited the sample of respondents to those with access to a computer.

While there were limitations to the survey, this study did show support for relationships between personal health and belief. The results provide evidence in agreement with prior studies on the religious (theist) having overall higher levels of health, but also showed that the group with the lowest scores overall were agnostics, not atheists as some might assume. These results seem to illustrate that simply believing in something (or anything with regards to theism and atheism) may actually be healthier than being uncertain. Although grouping by AAT is a decent starting point, future (more intricate) studies may grow from this, accounting for the different combinations of AAT (e.g. Agnostic-Atheist) along with other variables could prove to be beneficial for understanding topic in more depth.
References


**Appendix**

*Note: Below is the full text of the survey that was administered.*

1. How old are you?
   - 18 or under
   - 19-30
   - 31-40
   - 41-50
   - 51-60
   - 61 or over

2. In general, I feel content with my life
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

3. In general, I approach life with anticipation, excitement, enthusiasm and energy.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

4. When I feel depressed or stressed out I can usually pull myself out of it.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

5. I feel there is a meaning and purpose for my existence.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree
6. I am flexible and can work around most problems that presented to me with ease.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

7. I maintain good balance with activities in my life such as work and play or rest and activity.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

8. Even though it is sometimes hard, I build and maintain healthy and fulfilling relationships with friends and family.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

9. I am confident and think of myself with high regard.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

10. I get an adequate amount of sleep on most nights.
    - Strongly Agree
    - Agree
    - Disagree
    - Strongly Disagree

11. Nutrition is important, so I pay attention to how much, how often and what I eat.
    - Strongly Agree
    - Agree
    - Disagree
    - Strongly Disagree

12. I usually get some type of physical exercise on a regular basis.
    - Strongly Agree
    - Agree
    - Disagree
    - Strongly Disagree

13. Do you use alcohol, tobacco or any other drugs recreationally or to self-medicate?
    - Yes
    - No

14. When it comes to personal beliefs I am...
    - Theist (Believe in God, multiple Gods or spiritual)
    - Agnostic (Don’t know/aren’t sure)
    - Atheist (Don’t believe in any god, gods or supernatural powers)
The Need for Reformation in Sex Offender Treatment Programs
By Tammy Thompson

Assignment Description: Each student will write a minimum of five pages with a minimum of five sources in which they explicate an ethical issue in Criminal Justice and provide a possible solution. The assignment was completed for Dr. Kimberly Garchar and Dr. Deirdre Warren’s Ethics and Criminal Justice.

Many sex offenders are released from jail or prison and are shortly thereafter arrested again for committing another crime. The ethical issue is that rehabilitation programs could be much more effective in their methods to treat the offender before their release. While recidivism of sex offenders is not insignificant, I believe that it is not the ultimate reason for changing the structure of rehabilitation programs. Practically, we must set a standard for a rehabilitation program, but there should be variances in the program as there are variances in offenders and in offenses. In addition, we cannot ignore treating a person who has not yet committed a sexual offense, but is trying to seek preventative treatment. I will argue that in order to create a successful treatment program for sexual offenders (and non-offenders), we must pay less attention to the standard of treatment, and pay more attention to the individual (i.e. the offense, their age, their background, etc.). By understanding the nature of the person, we can create programs that treat the urges to commit these crimes as an illness, and as something that can be rectified by programs that work to build the character of the individual.

A popular argument for the reformation of sex offender treatment programs is to further reduce recidivism rates of offenders. According to the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, the baseline recidivism rate of sex offenders followed-up for five years after release from prison was 28.3 percent, broken down as: The recommitment for a new crime was 13.9%, sex offense 5.3%, non-sex offense 8.6%. The recommitment for a technical violation was 14.4%, sex offense .8%, sex lapse 1.5%, non-sex related 12.1%. The total sex-related recidivism rate, including technical violations of supervision conditions, was 7.6% of the releases. Recidivism rates differed considerably based on a victim typology: ’rapists’ (adult victims) 48.7%, teen victims (age 13-17) 31.1%, child victims (under age 13) 21.9%, all incest cases 8.6%.

Paroled sex offenders completing basic sex offender programming (level 1) while incarcerated appeared to have a somewhat lower recidivism rate than those who did not have programming. This was true both for recidivism of any type (35.4% with programming recidivated compared with 48.1% without programming) and sex-related recidivism (6.3% with programming recidivated compared with 13.1% without programming).

In these types of studies, recidivism can be a rather vague term. We should consider

that, although there is common acceptance that recidivism is the commission of a subsequent offense, there are many operational definitions for this term. For example, recidivism may occur when there is a new arrest, new conviction, or new commitment to custody. With this in mind, we could argue that recidivism rates should be lower, and that, perhaps in other states they are lower; however, I do not want to argue from the standpoint of recidivism. Of course, what we ultimately want is a decrease in the amount of repeat offenses, but I do not believe this is the main reason for a need to reform our rehabilitation programs. More importantly, it seems that we are overlooking the diversity among sexual offenders. As seen above, the victim typology drastically alters the success of the treatment program (the program worked for some, and did not work for others). Also, we are ignoring the treatment of potential sexual offenders entirely. There are individuals who may want to seek treatment for their urges before they offend, only to find that no such treatment exists. The problem seems to be that, no matter the degree of the sexual offense (whether it is the harshest sexual offense or the most minimal sexual offense), the typical rehabilitation program is presumed to be able to handle a tremendous amount of variety. For many of these programs, the only common denominator that is required among the offenders is that they have committed a sexual crime. This standard not only leaves a lot to be desired in the way of personalized treatment, but it also excludes non-offenders (who may have urges) from being considered at all.

The placement of standards in the criminal justice field is seemingly a reoccurring theme. We have standards in law, standards in policy, standards in punishment, etc. These standards are set with the idea that they will apply to everyone; however we know that they do not work in every case. That being said, it is necessary to have standards in order to form a system. We need them to set guidelines. I believe that it is important to recognize though, that these standards are in a sense, arbitrary. We need to acknowledge that the standard will not work in every case, and we must be able to make adjustments to it (have discretion) when necessary in order to have a good working system. Similarly, in regard to standardized rehabilitation programs for sexual offenders, we have to be able to make adjustments to accommodate different circumstances. When the standard treatment program is too general, meaning there is a wide mix of sex offenders that have various commitment to their criminality, the treatment in the program falls to the lowest common denominator. It seems improbable that every offender would be able to benefit from this level of treatment.

It seems obvious that treatment programs cannot be too general and at the same time remain successful. If we can focus more on the individual, and possibly separate treatment programs by grouping sexual offenders of similar kinds, this in itself would improve the efficiency of the treatment programs. One step further, I believe that sexual offenses should be treated as an illness, much like we treat drug abuse. This is not a novel idea. In the paper “Sexual Predators,” the psychiatrist James D. Reardon M.D. explored the possibility, and defended the notion that sexually violent

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predators may have a mental illness. If we accept this notion, and handle sexual offenses as something that can be treated and managed, then we can possibly reduce the stigma behind labeling individuals as sex offenders. Once an individual is labeled a sex offender, the public tends to disassociate them from society. They are placed in the category of the “other,” or seen as a person who is so different from ourselves that we dehumanize them in many ways, and we are disconnected from feeling empathy for them. If society has no empathy for the individual, then the incentive to provide them with appropriate treatment is extremely low. What typically results is the opinion that sex offenders are a lost cause, and that they cannot be rehabilitated. Even after rehabilitation, time served, and reintroduction into society, this opinion persists for most sexual offenders. In a recent study done on the families of registered sex offenders, it was found that even the “children of registered sex offenders reportedly experienced adverse consequences including stigmatization and differential treatment by teachers and classmates.”

If we could remove this stigma and the notion of “othering” the offender, not only would society be more inclined to treat the offender, but the offender would seemingly have more incentive to succumb to treatment and change their habits, because they would not have been labeled with a life sentence that makes them a “bad” person in the eyes of society.

It seems to become more evident that sexual offenses should be treated as an illness when we consider treatment for individuals who have not yet committed a sexual offense (those who have an urge to commit a sexual offense, but have not yet done so). Intuitively, certain sexual urges appear to us to be a mental illness, particularly the kinds involving pedophilia. We cannot understand how or why anyone would ever have these types of thoughts. Similarly, we cannot understand why a pregnant woman would have the desire to use drugs and harm her unborn child. I am not condoning either scenario. Either person would deserve a just punishment for their actions if they were to carry out the desire. What I am claiming is that it is clear that both of these individuals would need treatment to manage their mental illness. The difference is that the pregnant women can check herself in to a drug rehabilitation clinic, and there are no such places for the person who has the urge to commit a sexual offense. It is essential that we create programs that can help people in this circumstance. It seems odd that there are no treatment programs for individuals who have urges to commit a sexual offense, especially when the urge to commit a sexual offense of certain types seems like a clear case of a mental illness. Starting the education and rehabilitation at this point (before offending) would seem to have the highest level of success. If the person is seeking out treatment before committing a crime, then their rehabilitation is self-motivated, and this person would be the best type of candidate for successful treatment.

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The suggested treatment programs for sexual offenders and non-offenders outlined above are forms of character building. The aims of the programs are to educate individuals about their illness and train them to become more virtuous, or better people. If the treatment is implemented in a way that can help them manage their illness long term, then it can assist them in practicing their rehabilitated behavior as they are infiltrated back into society. This idea is similar to that of Aristotle's virtue ethics, where we also see this type of character building through habituation. Aristotle states in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that "a person comes to be just from doing just actions and temperate from doing temperate actions; for no one has the least prospect of becoming good from failing to do them." It is not the case that we are simply good or bad. These are not qualities that we just have. We learn to be virtuous through practice, and we become virtuous when what we practice becomes habit.

In conclusion, a popular argument for the reformation of sexual offender treatment programs is that recidivism rates could be lower. Upon further evaluation of this argument, it seems that it is not incredibly clear what recidivism even means or encompasses in most studies. I chose to abandon the recidivism argument and argue from the standpoint that the programs we currently have in place are clearly lacking in several aspects. This includes the broad scope of treatment that is much too general to successfully treat a vast variety of cases, the stigmatization that it placed on individuals who are labeled sex offenders that hinders their treatment and motivation to be rehabilitated, and the lack of a treatment program for non-offenders. Ultimately, in order to address the problems listed above, what we need are programs that take a more individualistic approach to treatment and help to build the character of the individual.

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Bibliography


A short conversation was heard in a park:

“The ball was kicked by Jack.”
“What! The ball kicked Jack?”
“Wait what, no Jack kicked the ball.”

What happened here? Where did the confusion enter between the two characters? It begins with the difference in sentence structure. The two sentences interacting in this conversation are active and passive. In the active sentence, the subject is completing the action, e.g. “Jack kicked the ball.” In passive sentence, as its name implies, the object is acted upon. The confusion enters the conversation when the second character mistakes the object, the ball, as the subject. It’s a slight mistake and one easily corrected but occurring on a daily basis. Writers and journalist are using passive sentences to describe violent acts. When they do this, they change the emphasis of the sentence and influence the way readers view the object. This small conversation in the park has now reached a larger audience with implications much worse than simple confusion. Through the structure of the passive sentence, unconscious harmful ideas are transmitted.

To understand the full implications of a passive sentence, the sentence itself needs to be defined. A passive sentence is the rearrangement of a transitive verb type sentence which occurs over a course of three different steps. First, the direct object of the sentence is switched with the subject. The verb phrase then becomes BE + [past participle]. Finally, a by preposition phrase is added (Morenberg 299). Following these steps, the sentence “The baby hit the cat” is transformed into “The cat was hit by the baby.” The main idea of the sentence has been preserved but the information has been moved around. Therefore, in terms of information, an active sentence and passive sentence remain the same. There has been some suggestion that the mind processes passive differently from active sentences or that the structure disrupts our chain of thought and requires more effort. According to Armstrong and Dienes’s “Subliminal Understanding of Active versus Passive Sentences,” the ability to process an active and passive sentence does remain the same (47). The authors, over a series of three experiments, discovered the brain unconsciously understand the basic meaning of both sentences. In their experiments, participants saw a sentence for a brief second describing a character’s action in the active or passive and then asked to choose a matching picture from two choices. Beyond chance expectations, they choose correctly (Armstrong and Dienes 44). The authors discovered the brain’s ability to process word combinations went beyond what was consciously aware of seeing. We are able to recognize and understand the information in either its active form or passive form. How then could a simple rearrangement of a sentence transmit detrimental ideas? What is the significant difference from an active sentence that changes the way information is processed? One difference lies in the amount of time it took to reach the same conclusion. Over the course of the three experiments, the passive sentence always took the participant a longer time to comprehend (43). This feature remains at the surface syntactic feature but its casual reading still affects
comprehension of and memory for language as seen later.

David R. Olson and Nikola Filby also explore these very questions in “On the comprehension of active and passive sentences.” The results of their five experiments produced a different facet to the answer – it is all about context. They found that a person would answer a prompt correctly if the information was stated in the same verb type. Essentially if the answer was originally written in the passive, it would be easier to answer with a passive question and vice versa (Olson and Filby 376). It complements Armstrong and Dienes claim that active and passive are easily understood unconsciously. As long as it remains within the same context, no additional time is needed to understand the sentence. Olson and Filby also discovered the passive sentences do not necessarily need the additional steps of reconstruction of the active sentence to be understood. The sentence simply has to remain within the context of passive to comprehend without the reconstruction of the basic structure (379). As seen in one aspect of their experiments, it is harder to comprehend a passive sentence when it is moved out of context. In three of their experiments, they asked participants to read an active sentence and then label two preceding passive sentences as either true or false. They found, on average, the false sentence took longer than the true sentences to verify. For example, the experiment used the active sentence, “the car hit the truck” (364). It was followed by the two sentences, “The truck was hit by the car” and “The car was hit by the truck.” (364). The context, on a surface level, would suggested the second sentence matches the active sentence. The order is the same; the car appears first to be followed by the truck. The false passive appears to resemble the active sentences when in reality it does not. The results of their test resembles the confusion in the introduction. Time is needed to answer the questions correctly, something lacking in that conversation.

Context, therefore, is important to understanding the differences between the ideas underlying active and passive sentences because it emphasizes different parts of the sentence (362). In Olson’s and Filby’s experiment, they asked the participant to find and label either the subject or the object. The questions themselves were “who hit” and “who was hit” (375). The answer to “who hit” was the subject while the answer to “who was hit” was the object. In an active sentence, the first question is easier to identify since the subject is doing the hitting. In a passive sentence, it is the second question that becomes easier to answer since it has the same verb type. If it was reversed, the questions would be harder to answer not only because the context changed but the needed information comes later. This is why the first part of the sentence, whether it is the subject or the object, is emphasized (Henley et al 61). Readers will also wrongly recall the information of an active sentence from a passive sentence. As mentioned previously, an answer will be easily recalled if the question remains in the same verb type. What happens, then, when a person is asked to recall an answer derived from a passive sentence with an active prompt? Mis-recall occurs (62). From the previous example, answering the prompt “who hit” with the previous sentence “the truck was hit by the car” was often answered incorrectly. The participants incorrectly cast the emphasized part of the sentence, the object, over the non-emphasized part, the subject. Therefore choosing a passive sentence, consciously or unconsciously, is choosing to emphasize the object (Olsen 363).
It may not necessarily be detrimental that the focus of the sentence is the object. However in most cases, it is. There a variety of reasons why emphasis on the object is often emphasis on the wrong party. For example, examine the following two sentences:

“In the US a man rapes a woman every 6 minutes.”

“In the US a woman is raped by a man every 6 minutes” (Henley et al 61)

These two sentences could easily be reimagined in the context of a newspaper article. Journalists often choose the second sentence because they can drop, or truncate, the by phrase. It’s important to note that the ability to drop the perpetrator is only available in the passive structure. This is where the harm occurs. By erasing “by a man,” the responsibility of the perpetrator is hidden (61). The emphasis then remains solely on the object, the victim of the crime, to the point it becomes their identity (Katz). For example, the term “battered woman” was derived from the passive sentence “the woman was beaten.” The word beaten was often associated with the word battered and soon writers were using the second word with more frequently. It was shorter and more precise to limit the whole sentence to an adjective. From this shift, the perpetrator has long left the conversation and the victim remains a person in which events happen to them. Not only has it become their identity, but they have now become passive recipients of an event.

This is when the passive sentence, used in a social context, becomes deadly. Passive has dangerous implications regarding agency. It downplays the role of the perpetrator while assigning blame to the victim. Nancy H. Henley, Michelle Miller, and Jo Anne Beazley experimented to discover the full extent of this phenomenal. They looked at verb types of newspaper articles describing acts of positive, neutral, nonviolent crimes, sexual violence, and nonsexual violence. The newspapers described sexual and nonsexual violence in the passive with more regularity than the other acts. They used this information in a following experiment to see the exact effect the passive voice has on the reader. The participants, after reading select stories, often attributed blame to the victim (Henley et al 80). It should be noted rape myths and gender also influence the passive sentences effect on the participants. Rape myths are based on the basic idea that in a just world a person will get what they deserve. Following this train of thought, the rape victim deserves to be raped because of a previous relationship or their outfit or the amount of alcohol involved or any such variable (Bohner 516). The participants were not only asked to grade the level of blame for the victim but also asked to take a rape myth acceptance test. Males generally score higher on rape myth acceptance tests and were generally found to assign more blame when reading passive sentences. Females, on the other hand, did not. Perhaps, when individuals do not believe rape myths, passive sentences can elicit greater empathy and pity and the emphasis on the object can help to perceive the victim positively (517). An exception proves this idea wrong: female groups did assign blame after multiple exposure to stories using the passive voice (Henley et al 79). Like a cliffside exposed to the relentless ocean, the use of passive sentence can subtly affect even participants more likely to show compassion.

Gerd Bohner expanded further on the role of passive and rape myths on the writer. In his experiment, participants were asked to watch a video of a sexual crime and then write a brief news article with a heading. They were presented with either two videos:
two men cornering and raping a woman in an alleyway or a man flirting and then raping a woman in a bar. Bohner predicted the second scenario, the one with higher rape myth details, would have considerably higher use of the passive sentence. In both cases, regardless of the scenario or gender, passive was used extensively compared to other actions in the video (Bohner 524). The correlation between passive and rape myth acceptance was positive but at insignificant levels. However, once the author looked at each scenario separately, there was a noticeable correlation between the two traits. In the second scenario, participants were more likely to assign blame while the insignificant correlation was found in the first scenario (525). Therefore, even if rape myth details are absent, the passive structure is still used to describe violent crimes.

In the two previously mentioned articles, the use of passive have been suggested to be used as a distancing tool. Writers are not assigning blame but rather shielding themselves from the gruesome circumstances. In “Double Standards in Sentence Structure” by Alexandra Frazer and Michelle Miller, they explored this concept. They wanted to determine if authors used passive sentences to seek distance or downplay the role of male perpetrators. Whereas Henley et al looked at an overview of multiple positive and negative acts in newspapers in their experiment, Frazer et al looked specifically at female-on-male and male-on-female violence. If it is true that authors are trying to distances themselves from violent acts, then the use of passive would be equal in both cases – this is not the case. Instead active sentences were used more frequently in the case of female perpetrators while male perpetrators were written in the passive (Frazer and Miller 68). In another experiment, they asked a group of participants to write a brief mock newspaper article with a headline. They were given only the following information: event, victim, perpetrator, weapon, date, and place (Frazer and Miller 67). Once again, passive was used in the case of female-on-male more often but there was also an unexpected side result. In the cases of the female-on-male violence, there was usually a line justifying her actions even though the participants were neither prompted nor given any information. There was no such justification in the reverse (Frazer and Miller 67). People treat domestic violence differently based on gender and their attitudes are revealed at the syntax level.

Even though the previous experiments’ focus was on the passive sentences and gender, they also affect issues of race and status. In the case of race, welfare has become a personal characteristics of young African Britons. The passive sentence steals their identity and leaves them as simple objects upon which circumstances happen to them (Henley et al 63). There is also the case of reporting police shootings. For example, the recent police shootings in Ferguson. In one BBC article, they start with the sentence “a white officer shot and killed an unarmed black teenager.” The active sentence is used and blame is clearly associated with the white officer. After this point, the passive sentence is used a total of four times to describe the death of Michael Brown. The phrase “he was shot” is repeated and the by phrase almost always dropped (“Michael Brown...”). The white officer leaves the conversation and agency suddenly becomes unclear. Agency is not only hidden in the in the written word but occurs in the spoken as well. Medical case presentations often used the passive. Language is used to decrease the doctor’s reasonability in decision-makings (Henley et. al 63). When there is suppression, passive sentences are
typically nearby. Linguistic historian Julia Penelope goes so far to claim that the function of the passive sentence is to hide, "English allows us to suppress reference to the agents who commit specific acts, particularly when the speaker-writer wishes to deny or cover up responsibility" (qtd. in Henley et. al 63).

In every single experiment, it has been stated over and over again the use of passive is probably not the intention of the writer. They are not intentionally using the syntax to associate blame with the victim. However, like a person's tell in poker, it is an unconscious and reliable revealer of the attitudes of the writer's culture. Writers are not the only ones affected; reader's perception of the victim changes when read in the passive. Victim's agencies are dismissed and they are associated with blame while the perpetrator is hidden. Grammar is often dismissed as the pet peeve of the English teacher but it is a powerful force starting at the sentence structure. It has the ability to reveal beliefs and change the way people think. It is also at the sentence structure where change can be made. When faced with a passive sentence, Penelope suggest we automatically respond "by whom?" (81).

Works Cited


Ohio’s Green Shrouded Miracle
By Matthew Cutler
Assignment Description: Write a historical geography of a place or monument/building in North America and explain why it holds meaning to people. The assignment was completed for Dr. Chris Post’s The Geography of Ohio.

Introduction

Public Law 93-555, December 27, 1974 states that Congress created the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreational Area (cum National Park, c. 2000) for two purposes: 1) “for the purpose of preserving and protecting for public use the enjoyment, the historic, scenic, natural and recreational values of the Cuyahoga River and adjacent lands of the Cuyahoga Valley,”; and 2) for the “purpose of providing for the maintenance of needed recreational open space necessary to the urban environment.”\(^1\)

This process of park creation in the valley is a small part of the environmentalist movement of the twentieth century, but represents in a larger way a shift in the ideology behind the creation of national parks; a shift from protecting sacred space to making sacred space. For the latter half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, national parks were designed to preserve sacred space, a term which is both frustratingly elusive yet also incredibly powerful as a definitional construct.\(^2\) Traditionally, the National Park Service (NPS) sought to find spaces in nature that were sacred, sublime, or that in some way could be perceived as being magnificent; God’s artwork, if you will. These spaces include Sequoia, Yellowstone, or the Grand Canyon, where the majesty (even the divinity) of the space is immediately recognizable to the human senses. These spaces didn’t have to be made sacred, they already existed and simply needed to be delineated and preserved. However, as urbanization and suburban sprawl became encroaching dangers to open green space and the recreational and therapeutic value it holds, a shift in thinking occurred that caused park creators to consider making sacred space. The Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP) represents a manifestation of this shift in thought and purpose. It wasn’t so much that the valley was sacred in the traditional sense, but with urban sprawl it began to become sacred in a different way; it was sacred only in relation to the spread of suburbia and other human development.

The valley at first glance may not seem sublime or majestic, though it certainly has its scenic wonders. However, the granite ledges, thick forests, meandering rivers, and occasional waterfalls pale in comparison to the majesty of Sequoia’s ancient redwoods or the breathtaking views of the Grand Canyon. How, then, did it gain the same classification, purpose, and value as these western parks? The answer lies in the desire of Ohioans to prevent the sprawl of two major urban centers—Cleveland and Akron—from developing away all of the open space in the valley. It also has to do, in

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a lesser sense, with the energy crisis of the 1970’s and the widespread realization that parks located so far away from major population centers weren’t of much use if people couldn’t afford to drive to them. It stands to reason then, that it’s the people of Ohio and the legislators of Ohio who embody and reify why the valley is important to Ohio and Ohioans.

There are three major points which indicate the importance of preserving, through the federal government, the natural and historical elements of the valley, and also the sense of place-attachment it holds to Ohioans: first, a large, growing number of people supporting the idea of and campaigning for the park (this was especially crucial during years of opposition—during the administrations of Ford and Reagan); second, bipartisanship in Ohio and in Congress during the push to create legislation for the park; and, third, the widespread realization of the importance of such a park to both the economy and the quality of life in northeast Ohio. By exhibiting that these three assumptions are true, the importance of the CVNP to Ohio will be illustrated. But first, a brief history of the Cuyahoga Valley will be presented for the purposes of historical context and in an attempt to illustrate the “heritage”—which for the purposes of this essay will be defined as the reified story that emerges from a complex historical mixture of private motives and public movements and which belongs to everyone in a particular group—that the NPS, and, therefore, the citizens of Ohio (indeed, the nation), have become wardens of.

The Physical and Pre-European History of the Valley

The valley and its natural landscape were formed from the interaction of bedrock, water, and ice over the course of millions of years. The park’s oldest exposed rock—blue-gray Chagrin shale—is about 400-million-years-old, while its youngest—the pebbly Sharon Conglomerate—is about 300-million-years-old. As the glaciers retreated over the Allegheny Plateau, they left end moraines (depositional features signifying the furthest point of a glacier’s advancement) that are more squeezed and contorted in shape than those in the flat lands further west in Ohio. The Cuyahoga River as it exists today was a result of the last glacial retreat and either flowed with the moraines when weak or eroded them and rerouted itself where its flow was strong, which is part of the reason for the river’s oddly abrupt changes in direction.3

There is some evidence of Paleo-Indian peoples living in the valley, and some from the Archaic Period too, but most archeological sites in the valley have unearthed Woodland culture peoples, namely the Whittlesey who were the first true maize farmers and permanent settlers in the valley. The Whittlesey left the area in the 1600’s, and eastern tribes moved into the valley after having depleted their eastern hunting grounds and because of conflict with European settlers. The Treaty of Greenville in 1795 stripped all tribes of their Ohio lands, however, and spurred the migration and settlement of Europeans into

the valley, which was part of the Connecticut Western Reserve at the time. 4

**European Settlement in the Valley and the Ohio and Erie Canal**

The first wave of settlers in the valley following the Treaty of Greenville hailed mostly from Connecticut. Moses Cleveland was sent to survey the area, and his system of surveyed ranges and sections has left a long-lasting imprint on settlement patterns in northeast Ohio. The eruption of Mt. Tambora, which created a “year without summer,” and the War of 1812 spurred many farmers and their families to migrate into the valley where they were promised fertile land to cultivate. The early economy of the valley revolved around corn, wheat, and rye agriculture in combination with pig farming. In 1810 the first gristmill was constructed at Brandywine Falls and by 1822 a distillery and post office accompanied it. Most early migrants were of Irish or German descent, the majority coming from Connecticut and Pennsylvania. 5

Life was hard for these early settlers, but generation by generation they cleared the land for agriculture and created what small business endeavors they could. Unlike industrial centers such as Cleveland, Toledo, and Cincinnati, people living in the valley had a major problem: transportation. The Cuyahoga River’s depth fluctuated frequently, and was never deep enough for large cargo ships. Unlike settlers near the Ohio River or Lake Erie, people in the valley had a harder time getting their goods to any outside markets. This all changed when the Ohio and Erie Canal opened in 1832; now people in the valley could get their goods exported and much needed supplies imported with relatively easy access to both the Ohio River (and therefore the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico) and Lake Erie (and therefore the St. Lawrence Seaway and the Atlantic seaboard).

Business boomed almost instantly as many distilleries, sawmills, and gristmills popped up along the canal, and with them, growing centers of population, though no real “urban” space was ever created within the valley, and restrictive terrain and primitive roads created cultural “islands”; separated physically from one and other, the towns within the valley were often secluded from outside contact and social intermingling—which would ultimately lead to a strong though not necessarily unified sense of heritage among residents. The canal also created a boom in boat building and stone quarrying. An economic change occurred, due largely to the canal, in which people shifted from a subsistence style of farming to a combined agricultural-, service-, and manufacturing-based economy.

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the valley saw the success of barrel makers, blacksmiths, tailors, tanners, brick makers, shoemakers, and harness makers. 6 There were also two large papermaking plants located in the valley. The Jaite Company created a company town for its paper bag enterprise, operational for many years. But the valley never fully industrialized like surrounding urban areas (big and small) largely due to

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4 Ibid, 18, 19.
the difficulty of running rails through its terrain. As railways made the canal obsolete, the valley became a bit of a farming backwater again, pinned between the metropolitan sprawl of Cleveland and Akron, and its value as an open green space increased until a strong citizen movement to protect and rehabilitate the valley began to steamroll in the twentieth-century.

Citizens of Ohio also began to recognize that there were many non-natural elements present upon the valley’s landscape which deserved protection because they represented a history and cultural heritage of the region; these included Native American artifacts and villages (many of which are presently operational archeological sites), towns, trails, farms, roads, canals, rail roads, bridges, mills, factories, mines, quarries, and an assortment of various historically significant buildings and structures. There was a heritage present upon the valley’s landscape in danger of being eradicated by modernization, and people decided it was time to protect this heritage along with the scenic beauty and recreational value of the valley which was gaining a new appreciation as a refuge from urban America. As is typical in the historiography of environmentalist thought and public perception of green space and wilderness in America, the valley went from being a perceived frontier, dangerous, God-less, and in need of taming by man, to being viewed as the very space where man could reconnect with the divine and reconnect with his spiritual roots.

**Early Calls for Parks in the Valley**

When the Ohio General Assembly passed the County Park Commission Act of 1911, something unique was taking place in the history of landscape planning. For the first time ever, a level of parks had been created which existed “between the echelons of city and state...devised principally to serve metropolitan Cleveland” forming the Cuyahoga County Park Commission (CCPC) and giving it the power “to receive in the name of such counties gifts, donations, and devises of land and property...for the establishment of parks...and public grounds outside of cities, for use of said county.”

There were some initial legal issues concerning funding and land acquisition, but by 1915 the city had invited the famous Frederick Olmstead to help prepare a county-wide plan for a string of green “islands” surrounding the metropolitan area, later dubbed the Emerald Necklace. By 1917, the Cleveland Metropolitan Park District (CMPD) had been formed, and Akron followed suit in 1920 with the Akron Metropolitan Park District (AMPD). The two public entities set to work creating parks and reservations outside of urban centers, which included, among other attractions, bridle paths, footpaths, bicycle paths, girl- and boy-scout camps, picnic grounds, and nature trails. In the pre-Depression era the CMPD would concentrate its efforts into creating the Brecksville and Bedford Reservations, and the AMPD protected Sand Run, Furnace Run and Kendall Lake (which is now under the control of the NPS within the CVNP). The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) would continue to improve these public

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spaces as well as restoring historic structures within them during the Depression era under federal funding.

As previously stated, some initial problems the CMPD and AMPD faced were funding and land acquisition. This set the stage for a rocky beginning and a constant uphill climb to achieve the goals of its supporters and those tasked with the orders. They relied heavily on donations. Enter F.A. Seiberling, the founder of the Seiberling Rubber Company and grandfather of John F. Seiberling, the Ohio state representative who introduced the bill in 1973 that created the CVNP. Between his own donations of money and acreage, and the persuasion he had among wealthy friends to do the same, it’s doubtful that any one man can be singled out more than him for contributing to the cause for park creation in northeast Ohio, particularly in the Cuyahoga Valley. The girl- and boy-scouts of America contributed significant funds to land acquisition and landscape planning for recreational purposes, as did the Phyllis Wheatley Association. Historically, then, both the CMPD and the AMPD have depended almost exclusively on donations, from the 1920’s to the 1950’s. But in his historic research study of the valley, Dr. Nick Scrattish asserts that, “no other metropolitan park district in the country can boast of having done so much with so little.” It boiled down to Ohioan’s place-attachment to the valley and both the recreational value and the communal heritage it represented to them.

These precursors to the CVNP—the metropolitan parks—then, are an interesting democratic process which included federal, state, county, municipal, and citizen cooperation on an unprecedented scale in the name of protecting open green space for the recreational use of local urban citizens—the need for which was becoming more and more paramount as suburban sprawl and industrial development exploded in northeast Ohio. This truth, then, exhibits points one and two as laid out in my thesis, as it demonstrates both the growing number of people recognizing the need for parks in northeast Ohio, and bipartisan cooperation amongst several branches of government involved in the legislative process that spawned the metropolitan parks and steered public perception of the Cuyahoga Valley in the direction of an acknowledgment of its sacredness as a space, particularly a public space. The valley’s sacredness was not innate though, it was made sacred by means of contrast with the surrounding urban and suburban spaces.

The Birth of a National Park

In the 1960’s, there was further and much more compelling evidence of a growth in citizen support for the protection of the valley’s natural and man-made landscapes, which culminated in the bipartisan support that created the national park in the early 1970’s. The first two threats to the valley which spurred citizen’s associations in its defense were the proposal from Ohio Edison to run power lines through the valley and the construction of the sports coliseum, which local residents feared would create environmental risks such as run-off issues, as well as parking lot eyesores, wildlife habitat destruction and the sort. In 1964,
there was an attempt to move the historic, yet decaying Bronson Memorial Church (est. 1835) from Peninsula to Hale Farm, which galvanized community opposition.

Local citizens had recently created the Peninsula Valley Heritage Association (PVHA) to combat the Ohio Edison plans. After successfully preventing both the construction of the power lines and the removal of the church (along with the help of the Summit County Historical Society and the Western Reserve Historical Society) the PVHA changed its name to the Cuyahoga Valley Association (CVA), broadening its focus to the entire valley, not just the town of Peninsula. In 2000, they were renamed the Cuyahoga Valley National Park Association (CVNPA) and since the parks can’t lobby for themselves, the CVNPA and its more action based group, the Cuyahoga Valley Park Federation (CVPF), have been credited by the NPS as being the “citizens’ arm” of the valley because of their ability to gather citizen volunteers for lobbying, laboring, and raising funds for the park.¹¹

This, however, is jumping ahead a little. It simply helps to illustrate that for nearly one hundred years the citizens of Ohio have gathered together in defense of the Cuyahoga Valley’s natural and man-made landscapes, and the heritage they represent, which therefore demonstrates place-attachment, illustrating the importance of the valley and the park to Ohioans. But just how exactly was the national park born?

By the 1960’s, the cities of Cleveland, Akron, and Canton were on the verge of creating one massive metropolitan region, threatening the unique rural individualism of the valley. This threat can be considered a cultural threat, or a threat to the heritage of the valley. In addition to the developmental threats already mentioned, which were prevented due to citizen opposition, there was the pre-existing condition of the Cuyahoga River as a polluted space. For decades the city of Cleveland, determined to support industrial growth, had encouraged local industry to use the river and the lake as a source of free water and to discharge wastes into the river, the lake, and the air. And although the river had caught fire numerous times (as had many other rivers near industrial centers in America) the fires of 1964 and 1969 took place in an evolving intellectual climate concerning environmental protection. Many former industrial sites near the river had been declared “brown zones” by the EPA. This further motivated citizens and politicians alike to recognize the fragile balance between human development and the ecosystem within which it took place.

The first call for the creation of a valley-wide park district (state or federal) came from the chairman of Ohio’s Tri-County Regional Planning Association, John F. Seiberling in 1965 when he encouraged Governor Rhodes to establish a park. A life-long resident of the valley and grandson of one the valley’s earliest proponents, Seiberling felt a particularly personal attachment to the valley and would go on to spend an entire career working to protect it in one way or another.

Immediately after he was elected to the House of Representatives in 1970, ¹¹ Carolyn V. Platt, Cuyahoga Valley National Park Handbook, Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006, 56.
Seiberling, along with Rep. Charles Vanik of Cleveland, introduced a bill in Congress calling for a national park in the valley. His first attempt failed, but when he tried again in his second term he was successful. There are two reasons for the success of his second try. The first was a change in the way the park idea was pitched. Seiberling was essentially re-declaring the sacredness of the valley. “For Seiberling, sacredness was something that could be imposed from the outside; it was not confined to an innate quality that a place possessed.”12 Instead of pitching the park idea in terms of its sublime value, he framed its promotion in the context of its importance as a public space which could fulfill the “recreational needs of the urban population of the Midwest.”13

The second reason was citizen and bipartisan support. Hundreds of volunteers headed to Washington to sit in on hearings and to show that public support was present. Seiberling and Vanik, both Democrats, were joined by Republican Rep. Ralph Regula, who gave full support to the park idea. Even after the bill passed and fears of a veto were rumored, dozens of Republicans pressured the administration in favor of the park.14 President Ford did not veto, despite being urged to do so by the NPS and the Department of the Interior who feared eastern parks near urban spaces would deflect funding from the NPS’s western “crown jewels” (Yosemite, Sequoia, etc.) because he was quite literally warned by public supporters and politicians alike that he would lose Ohio in the next election if he vetoed the bill.15

This was quite the accomplishment considering an NPS administrator had been quoted as saying the “Cuyahoga Valley will become a national park over my dead body,” and that just five years before, in valley town hall meetings where the park concept was initially being pitched to local residents, shouts of “they’re trying to steal our land!” were met with concerned and supportive cheers.16 The passage of the bill, then, and how it came to be, represent the truth in the first two assumptions laid out in my thesis; it was growing public support and bipartisan cooperation which created the park, and which therefore illustrates the importance of the park to Ohioans.

From Conceptualization to Undertaking and Use-Value

The third assumption laid out in my thesis asserts that since the creation of the national park there has been a widespread realization of the importance of such a park to both the economy and the quality of life in northeast Ohio. This can be illustrated in several ways. First, the complex and difficult undertaking of the environmental cleanup, land acquisition, and recreational potential of the valley which has been realized, and the constant support for funding which was especially crucial during the proposed cuts to NPS funding by the Reagan administration when it was even

13 Ibid, 73.
14 Ron Cockrell, A Green Shrouded Miracle: The Administrative History of Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, Ohio, Department of Interior and NPS, 1992, 81.
suggested that the park be completely decommissioned.  

Second, the rehabilitation of not just the natural landscape but also the cultural landscape that has evolved in the valley. And, third, the use-value that the valley offers visitors.

Initial environmental cleanup involved the reclaiming of the Krejci dumpsite, in operation since the 1940’s, which was a significant source of pollution for the river and surrounding habitats. Other reclaimed areas include two wetlands which are full of life today, but in the 1970’s were an auto salvage yard and a topsoil mining operation. There was also the damming of the river to fill in an old sand and gravel quarry which has created what is today the beautiful and serene Indigo Lake. The cultural landscape has also been rehabilitated in many ways. Hundreds of historic buildings have been rehabilitated and/or repurposed as park headquarters, museums, historic farms and the like. Reclaiming the abandoned canal was a massive undertaking, but when the Towpath Trail opened for public use in 1993 it essentially formed the backbone of the park and is a popular public space today.

There is also something somewhat unique to the CVNP which Dr. Scrattish has dubbed “quasi-public ownership” of the land. This balance of public and private land-use accounts for 2,404 of the park’s 33,000 acres and includes boy-scout and girl-scout camps, Blossom Music Center (home of the Cleveland Symphony), ski resorts, golf clubs, Kent State University’s Performing Arts Center and their outdoor lab at Stumpy Basin, and Hale Farm, operated under the stewardship of the Western Reserve Historical Society. In addition to these quasi-public use-values, the park offers visitors a wide variety of recreational opportunities including hiking, bicycling, nature observation paths, scenic rail trips, and an array of educational opportunities in both the natural and cultural sciences. With a rough average of 3,000,000 visitors per year, the park undoubtedly represents a deeply entrenched sense of importance to Ohioans (and out-of-state visitors). Its use-value has increased steadily since the 1970’s, as have the number of visitors to the park each year.

Conclusions

Efforts to increase the park’s use-value continue to grow today with the promotion of the Cuyahoga Valley Environmental Education Center to inner-city youths, increased historical interpretation and educational role-playing at places like Hale Farm and Wheaton Village, and, most recently, the park has created the Countryside Initiative, which aims to lease historic farmhouses and fields to farmers

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17 Ron Cockrell, A Green Shrouded Miracle: The Administrative History of Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, Ohio, Department of Interior and NPS, 1992, 137.


who agree to farm sustainably and sell their produce to park visitors.22

The park and its supporters are constantly working to balance the environmental needs of the valley with the cultural and recreational needs of the citizenry. Staffs from multiple disciplines work together to balance managing resources, to study the effects of urbanization on natural systems, and to balance the trade-off between historic and natural preservation. There is a delicate balance unique to a national park so close to urban spaces between the preservation of sacred space, the promotion of public space, and the negotiation of private space. Geographically, this is a fascinating paradigm, one in which multiple layers of social and natural complexities intermingle. But if one thing is made clear by linking together historical, economic, environmental, political, and cultural themes within this essay, it’s this: the CVNP is an important place to Ohioans, and is and always has been representative of a shift in landscape planning within the NPS and popular public opinion concerning the use-value of open green spaces.

Bibliography


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